

Youth Work Reader

Issues and Contexts

edited by
Irena Dychawy Rosner
Krzysztof Sawicki



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and **Krzysztof Sawicki**



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Youth Reader

– Social Professions in Supporting Youth

Introduction

Irena Dychawy Rosner and Krzysztof Sawicki

For many societies, what to do about the living perspectives of young people is the key social, economic, and political question of the generation. The origin of this anthology was a European call for funds to initiate an international research network and academic collaboration, which would address an urgent societal challenge regarding young populations and develop a strategic educational partnership in higher education of social professions that encounter young people in their field practice.

Youth studies is a unique area in social sciences characterized by a high level of ambiguity, variability, and (as a result) requiring continual studies and analyses. Many variables condition this conjuncture. Firstly, “youth” is an ambiguous term. We can only say that it is a meta-description of a developmental period between childhood and adulthood in which pubescence takes place. The basic problem of contemporary social studies is that it is difficult to indicate when childhood ends and adulthood begins. The boundaries of both statuses become blurred, which is particularly noticeable while entering adulthood. This moment (from an anthropological point of view related to the experience of the rite of passage in indigenous communities) is nowadays delayed and less discerned, which is reflected in the extension of youth education, delayed entry into the labor market, or starting families.

In reflection on adolescence, we deal with different visions of this period. It is seen as a moment in which optimal bio-psychic development conditions must be ensured (Nurture vs. Nature) besides socio-environmental systems and civil society. It is also a vision of growing up into society and culture through social norms and roles assimilation. It is also a vision of adolescence as a period in which teenagers can develop their potentials and use the environment’s resources, which is crucial for successful adult life. Each narrative emphasizes different aspects of adolescence and causes young people to be perceived and understood differently.

The epistemological dimension is another challenge for youth studies. These are questions about constructing and implementing youth research to learn about the

young generation's problems, challenges, and potentials. Regardless of the preferred research model (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed), it is a complicated task because the operationalization of research assumptions and later interpretation of empirical material is carried out by people from a different generation, which carries the risk of misunderstanding or overinterpretation.

Optimal and reliable knowledge of the world of adolescents is necessary to identify the factors shaping the development of the young generation. In other words, the challenge for youth studies is to gain objective knowledge about the factors that threaten the development of adolescents and their integration with society, but also to recognize the resources that determine this development positively, both in terms of trends (statistically and quantitatively examined) as well as through case studies that enable learning about adolescents' experiences, anticipated roles, and new qualities of youth culture. Considering contemporary young people as an integral item of many systems, it is a highly complex task. Teenagers' identity is shaped not only by parental culture, school knowledge, or peer groups – especially from minor environments. According to the ecosystemic perspective, it is also neighborhood community, friends of the family, different services (legal, social welfare, media) plus broader perspective (attitudes and ideologies of the culture, global contexts). It shows how a multifaceted set of factors influences a young person whose identity is during adolescence under intensive construction. Building own identity by young persons is a process that, in particular, translates into the practical aspect of youth studies. It is a search for an answer to the question about successful youth work, behind which there are goals (current and prospective), topics (education, prevention, intervention but also rehabilitation or re-entry in juvenile offenders' case) range (casework, teamwork, institutional or environmental activities, social policy) or stakeholders (educators, social workers, probation officers, therapists). Additionally, it is also a question about the evaluation of undertaken actions, a reactive approach to problems and challenges created by youth workers to identify them quickly and adequately and implement them in praxis. To sum up: adolescence which – according to the Latin root word (*adolescere*) means the way to adulthood – is nowadays a time of a journey full of challenges, during which young people have to face many risks, problems at home, school, in the yard, or social media – and which it is worth to overcome in a way that ensures their development, self-realization and successful adult life.

Bearing in mind the issues in the area of youth studies, the concept of this book has been developed. It is a reader which is a theoretical and empirical commentary on activities in the youth work area. Its content was prepared by an international team of theoreticians and practitioners from Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, and Sweden. It was created as part of the “Social Professions for Supporting Youth in a European Solidarity Context” (SP YOUNG) Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership Project. All authors are responsible for the content of their papers, and two independent reviewers reviewed each contribution.

The main aim of this project is threefold to a) the collaborative improvement of the youth curricula in partner universities through an interdisciplinary Course Module; b) implementation – especially the Course Module that leads to promotion of positive asset-building where young people are resources for critical strategies; c) working out the methodology for the training of students to become integrated youth work change agents. Bachelor level students of social work, social pedagogy, sociology, social entrepreneurship, including LLL educators, professional and informal career educators, youth leaders, social researchers, and policymakers engaged in youth empowerment in the EU, youth organizations working with people with special needs are the target group for this project. According to the collaborative plan, this course module can be a universal educational tool implemented in SP young project partner institutions and youth work institutions in other European communities.

This anthology sheds light on young people's living conditions and experiences, meanings, and expressions based on the authors' research and literature reviews. With the support of various scientific studies, perspectives and concepts, we highlight similarities and differences, controversies and consensus, as well as successes and setbacks in young people's living conditions in today's society. The authors of chapters are researchers in anthropology, sociology, social work, educational science, medical science, and psychology. In this anthology, various exemplary influences are made that form the starting point for a problematizing illumination of the youth's living perspectives to make visible what social and personal function it carries and what norms it is enclosed in. That perspective means that young people's life situation is seen from a socio-cultural and social constructivist structure located in a space that Bauman (1990) notes as more as fluid systems and contemporary and sociological and social theoretical thinking (Burr, 2003; Giddens, 1991; May, 1996) about the world that surrounds, shapes and creates us. Therefore, the living conditions of young people can be considered socio-cultural actions with real consequences in certain social and institutional structures.

The authors have been involved in teaching, further education, research, educational leaders and managers at various faculties at Białystok University, Klaipėda University, Latvia's Kristlīga Academia, Malmö University, and Warszawa University. For many years, among the students and European institutions, attention has been paid to the development of knowledge regarding young populations and the lack of teaching modules in this area. This anthology is primarily aimed at students and professionals in social welfare work such as schools, social services, social work, police fieldwork, and social pedagogical practices. We demonstrate both major continuities and substantive changes in the youth debate in this crucial acknowledged field of social practice.

This Reader reflects breadth and diversity of thinking about youth, highlighting sensitivity to questions of diversity, successes, and setbacks in the context of shifting terrain of existing modernity. In our time characterized by globalization, young

people have become central in the debate about growing up conditions, opportunities, and care. Nevertheless, how are the young people's living conditions expressed in contexts related to growing up and establishing themselves in adult life? What do globalization and international migration flows mean for the living conditions of young people and the public sector? Which models of practice may be appropriate in developing self-confidence and empowerment? These are some of the issues that are being discussed.

Based on the described overall perspective, the forthcoming chapters of the anthology deal with the different contexts of young people and the role of helpers. We cannot represent the whole of existing aspect of the contemporary youth research, debates, and issues, but a slightly narrower scope enables us to focus upon two parts; (I) Youth in societies – structural conditions, challenges and welfare measures (II) Toward resistant adolescence and adulthood.

The first part of the anthology deals mainly with general social, cultural, and economic factors of relevance to young people's well-being and vulnerability, i.e., to some extent, the structural factors and social change in focus. From a feminist research perspective, this part can illustrate a society that can be seen as clearly gendered in the structures and outcomes but in which young people also take an active position to struggle for social change.

The second part discusses young people's perspectives. An important ambition in working with this anthology has been to let different images and research illuminate situations and realities where young people's voices, vulnerability, and subjectivity emerge. In all welfare research and related measures, different target groups and their specific problems must almost always be identified and described by an outsider. However, the ambition was that an insider's perspective is invaluable in supporting the future professionals' experiences of managing social interventions and change processes. For that reason, young people's living conditions are also discussed in this part in terms of their own experiences and the most influential interventions in reshaping young individuals' empowerment and self-esteem.

The purpose of both parts has been to present and discuss possible explanations for the end consequences of young people's subjective and structural conditions. A key issue for educators will be how these conditions can be handled to support future social professions to become active change agents in their field of practice when providing emotional and structural support resources for their young clients. The therapeutically oriented dimension and the role as professional performer means that support, in addition to formal care logic, contains specific competences for Positive Youth Development (PYD). Some of the competence is at hand in the type of expectations society places on young people and another in supporting young people's authentic form of existential work.

This book is intended to serve as inspiration and teaching aids at the university level, especially in vocational university education. It can also be used as further

training for other field workers who directly work with or can encounter the problems that young people face and need support to the process.

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PART I
Youth in Societies
– Structural Conditions
and Challenges
in Welfare Measures

Discursive Paths in Living Conditions of Young People

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ABSTRACT

This chapter introduces the societal challenges of the vulnerability of young people in modern society. The purpose of this chapter is to shed light on the complexity of young people's living conditions and risks of social vulnerability with the help of existing discourses and previous research. How to understand the mechanisms behind young people's vulnerability? In reality, based on this study, it is about two major complexes one is related to individual subjectivity position within diverse structures of power, and the other is the following establishment pattern into existing social regimes. It is difficult to get a holistic view of a network of social institutions and actors in addition to the young people themselves and their families, all of whom are involved in various spheres of interest. It is, therefore, a limited study, but there were some interesting results and both in the Swedish and transnational context. A picture emerges of young people's vulnerability summarized as a living in the waiting room for an uncertain future, both through their uncertain position of the establishment of adaptive adulthood and lived fluid constructions of the surrounding social structures.

KEYWORDS:

social vulnerability, establishment pattern, social interventions, health and society.

Introduction

You are not something, you become something by doing your living, but what you will become is not static either, but changes all the time. Such perspective may be a cause of concern. [...] Declaring attributes on the other hand, creates a kind of security, but that security is false. If we leave the attributes explanations, we face the challenge of producing more realistic maps of the terrain where it becomes possible to understand that it is not actually possible to add up it all for go together (Trost & Levin, 2018, p. 174¹).

1 Translation and interpretation by Irena Dychawy Rosner.

All individuals have the right to develop their abilities to live a good life. Certain basic conditions need to be met to make that possible. It could be economic conditions – to be able to live a life without poverty or family conditions, that is, the care children receive from their parents or others close by relationships. Research shows that there is a clear link between children coming from lower socio-economic conditions and vulnerable living conditions – such as growing up in a home with substance abuse, mental illness, and violence – to a greater extent, risk getting worse living conditions, poorer health and financial assistance as young adults, the growing risk for as well as developing norm-breaking behavior and a criminal lifestyle (Dychawy Rosner, 2019; Grander, 2018; Hammer, 2003; Rusckiené-Michaelsson & Aciené; 2019).

Several ambitious political declarations state that the young people's future opportunities are in focus, and therefore the best possible conditions must be guaranteed. But what does it mean to be young in today's society? Young people express the unique potential for mobile and dynamic identity creation, such as new music, clothing, and other cultural experiments. Therefore, the word youth is loaded with many meanings and symbolism (Cooper, 2012; Estrada, 2001; Lalander & Johansson, 2012). The youth phase has been prolonged, and today one is considered a young adult up to the age of 30. Should it be understood as freedom and opportunity, or in fact, the indisposition of the surrounding society to create appropriate chances for transition to adulthood, such as finding a permanent job, housing, and becoming a safe parent? Important is also the state of the institutions to provide basic conditions for security, education, care, and nursing (Mead, 2000; Olofsson & Thoursie, 2007). In practice, there are establishment problems in working life, poor possibilities for integration for migrants, mental illness, and essentially poverty (Dychawy Rosner, 2016; Scarpetta et al., 2010). Thus, from a general point of view, the societal climate does not appear to be particularly youth-friendly (Beck, 1992).

Young adults are not a homogeneous group, and a perspective in the present research here has the approach based on living paths regarding different sub-groups, such as young people who make their way in the societal system and a group that social professions workers encounter, among other things having difficulties with established abuse, crime, and mental illness or other mental or physical disabilities. A further sub-group that is also most difficult for social professions to help are individuals who fall between the chairs and different formal support systems. The young groups usually consist of people with diverse needs and special conditions that do not fit into collective outlines, systems, and proposals. Young people's living conditions are seen as a dynamic social process through which they integrate into adulthood integration across formal, psychosocial, and more informal discursive ways, i.e., ideas of equality, solidarity, democratic citizenship, and social support for those in need.

This chapter focuses on examining young adults as a current topic for several reasons. One important aim is to focus on a group in society with a need for the efforts of

many welfare and societal actors. Changing life patterns and social structures means that young adults' path into society has become more complicated to understand themselves and society's various institutions. This phenomenon can be seen to some extent as a general social theoretical perspective on analyzing society and its groups and studying the social reality it is about (Payne, 1997; Richmond, 1917).

General Frames of Understanding

The concept *discourse paths* means 'conversation', but refers to a whole of coherent expressions and statements – one can speak of a “youth policy discourse” or “the discourse on social vulnerability”, “youth violence issues”, etc. (Brown, 2011; Dychawy Rosner, 2019; Pickett & Wilkinson, 2015; Rauckiené-Michaelsson & Aciénté, 2019). It is believed that our relationship to reality is maintained through different discourses or that different discourses even govern us. The researcher most often associated with discourse is the French historian of ideas and philosopher Michel Foucault (1980). Foucauldian discourse theory is based on central concepts around power, knowledge, and subject positions. Discursive constructions of young's future paths can be revealed partly as subjective experience and partly as objective perspectives. Foucault's view is that discourses are not just about language in the form of text, but it also means that the discourse analysis works to map the interpretations that exist in society at a given time and within a given area and see how the subject is created within these.

Drawing on insights from contemporary social and sociological thought regarding social problems such as social theory (May, 1996) and Giddens (1991) structuration theory connecting to motivational components of action, social structures can enable and constrains people's achievements. Further, this chapter reflects a social constructivist approach (Burr, 2003) which advocates that our way of understanding the world is created through our history and culture, which means that the people who live in the social world are also a product of how that world is constructed. Another way of explaining these issues is to examine existing paths and actions taken to be more *fluid social systems* and the link between social relations and constraints regarding rules, dominant ideologies, and resources (Bauman, 1990). Bauman's theory of ambivalent modernity has drawn attention to how society's structure and functional systems in their operational ways can have a destabilizing tendency and no guarantee of being compatible with each other. It can be exemplified by the lack of political action, like in Sweden, where Eastern European beggars are a major issue of social responsibility, morality, and social rights. EU migrants suffer when they are torn between state and municipal responsibility caught in a half-finished internationalization, where the EU guarantees the right to move but where social rights are still linked to the nation-state (Larsson, 2014). It is noted that analysis of discourses provides an opportunity to temporarily study boundaries in the obvious

and unproblematic, the discourse schemes set to analyze the conditions and norms (Foucault, 1980; Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986).

In *Thinking Sociologically*, Zygmunt Bauman and Timoty May (2001) examine the applicability of sociology to everyday life. They discuss how the collective creates symbols of how to be. They believe that every collective needs the other and within each group. Therefore, opposites are created to how one wants to be. These opposites, as they sometimes are called “them”, as opposed to “we”, are not built by themselves. All categorizations mean that delimitations are made, but at the same time, as the categories are used, they may show their unstable meaning. From the applicability perspective, the analysis of a broad material (like here living conditions of young’s) should not be category-driven. However, then, the use of categories is included in several structures and should therefore be considered particularly culturally and structurally youth established patterns. For example, Wåsterfors, Edgren, and Grigoriadi’s (2018) study of women with the criminal career and drug abuse found that these experiences illustrate each woman as embedded in society and articulated to common explanations for so-called deviant normality. The results showed their criminal female gender materialized more like a dimension in personal stories rather than a fixed category behind them. Their individual stories were lined with police arrests in their early teens, homelessness, prostitution, violent crime, and stealing and drug crimes.

As Bauman and May (2001) point out, it is not important to stay on the essential meaning of concepts; the central thing is to explore how the categories work and what relationships they form. In this chapter, young people will, on some occasions, appear as a category with common features, norms, and values, but on other occasions, the diversity of individuals will be highlighted. My focus is nominalistic, which means that I search for the concrete presence of the youth issues in various texts and databases. This study has applied discursive analysis doing applicable reviews of websites representing the area under study, government reports, surveys, statistics, and current research on social practices with young people to overview the situation. The topic under investigation was focused on dimensions that have affected adulthood, conditions for establishment in adulthood, ways of dealing with adulthood, and situations in transitions to adulthood. In the reviewed material emerged discourses that seem particularly important in the construction of *adaptive adulthood*, i.e., a successful instep into the adult world of education, housing work, and own household formation. Both the Swedish and international trends were extracted.

The following presentation concentrates on two themes concerning risks for circular vulnerability. The one of discourse analysis recognized young lived situations related to an equal relationship, social equality, and identity constructions where the issuances of the existing discourses govern an individual subjectivity, social categorizations, and subject positions. The other theme deals with questions about emerged *establishment pattern* hierarchies in relational boundaries of access

respectively exclusion to societal structures, labor market, and social benefits in a context of changing welfare state in terms of the social contract as bound to the nation-state and available or reduced social reforms.

Individual Subjectivity and Structural Conditions

The individualized society creates new demands on individuals. Their needs and interest in their own achievement and career show increased awareness of collective norms and rules. In line with earlier research (Cooper, 2012; Haushofer & Fehr, 2014; Herz & Lalander, 2017), the individual lives in a chain of varied social structures and subjectivities with the potential to be subject and object in different discourses categorizations. In this way, young people can be understood based on a diversity of intersectional subjectivities or objectivities. Furlong and Cartmel (1997) clarify that in modernity, the visual styles adopted by young people through clothing consumption have become central to the establishment of identity and peer relations. It can be portrayed as the emergence of belonging to the norms among their peers and as important for their self-presentation for which identity of the others attribute to them (Goffman, 1956/1990).

Correspondingly, varied *subject positions* can be based on the individual identity that the subject identifies with or collective where certain identities are emphasized while others are ignored. For example, the collective labels of *employed* or *people with mental illness* can hide various individual differences within these categorizations. It means that collective identities work by excluding other interpretations and differences that exist within the group. For instance, the Swedish Public Health Agency report “Why has mental illness increased among children and young people in Sweden” (Folkhälsomyndigheten, 2018) found that when the authority describes mental illness caused by the labor market, then a connection with schooling and socio-economic conditions is reported. When they describe how individualization affects the risk of mental illness, factors such as family or school are not described. Instead, the expectations that are difficult for the individual to achieve and struggles that can create feelings of anxiety and inadequacy are emphasized.

Contemporary Socialization

The socialization process looks different today from what it did in the past when there were clearly identified adult stages along the way. The education was for most people much shorter, and the entry into adulthood took place earlier. With long educational paths and high unemployment, many young people have missed out on previously obvious socialization paths. The most dominant construct about young people is the expectation of the *productive citizen* who will contribute to the prosperity of family and society (European Commission, 2018; 2020). For many

young people in their teens, the attraction to their group of friends is particularly strong. The own group of friends can then constitute life's most important social arena. It is where one learns social codes, languages, and symbols associated with identity creation, both as a group and as an individual. Here, the socialization process has a significant role in positioning the subject (Lalander & Johansson, 2012). Certain discursively created interactions also follow by naming someone as a child, adolescent, adult, or addict. Other ways to deal with the situation of young people may be to choose *subcultures* with clear structures and expounding models such as criminal gangs or fundamentalist groups. Abuse of various kinds can also be seen as a solution to mark spaces.

Sontag-Himmelroos (2013) conducted research in Finland on young students' perspectives on their everyday lives and exclusion. The results revealed that exclusion was mostly associated with bullying and not belonging to the group. The youths also expressed the experience of generational conflicts with adults and when interacting with decision-makers. Various forms of youth networks and the search for meaning in togetherness or exclusions can lead young people to withdraw from social life and have no contacts outside the family. It is observed in the Japanese phenomenon called "hikikomori" and is also remarked in other forms of withdrawal, exclusion, or sexual exploitation where young people go through difficult transition stages and anxiety, either objectively or subjectively experience of stigmatization or attachment disturbance (Furlong, 2008; Sernhede, 2011; Skilbrei, 2019). Inclusion in the help system via the client role can thus be regarded as formalized deputy inclusion. The dismantling of the psychiatric care that has taken place in many western countries means for patients in these institutions an exclusion when one would enter a society which – in case the individual could not cope – ended up with a vulnerable life, many times on the street. Some children and young people with early experience of abuse and attachment disturbance may develop an additional attachment with trusted caring, mentalizing adults who can help them understand why and how other people can affect us for good or ill. The responsive encounter and opportunities to in a safe place give abused and neglected people help develop a capacity to mentalism on traumas and skills to handle their traumas (Howe, 2011). The conditions for inclusion are considered system-specific, and the different social systems constellations and their conditions can lead to different results and the development of different social roles. There is exemplified evidence that the adolescence period may be characterized in many ways by subordination and diverse forms of marginalization (Furlong & Cartmel, 1997). The individual is forced to adapt to the adults' demands for education, care, etc. The power relationship can be described as asymmetric in favor of the adults and societal images and structures. Following Lalander and Johansson (2012), with the help of their own group's power, symbolic actions, and ability, young people can change this power relationship with the established adult world.

Everyday actions are not just actions but also symbolic expressions that say something about the society in which the actor is (Bauman, 1990; Goffman, 1990; Giddens,

1991). Coe et al. (2015), researching young activists from North America and Europe, found their collective actions as a movement combining direct actions with consciousness-raising, self-help, and discursive forms of resistance orientation to cultural and societal change. Studies repeatedly demonstrate that youth activism globally indicates that young people engage in politics outside the domain of formal political spheres. Thus, the individual can be seen as an acting subject shaped through discourses and tools in the everyday social arena. Foucault (1980) uses the term individual as a subject in a double sense. It is both an active actor and, simultaneously, someone who is subordinate through the existing power relations and discourses, which is why his identity is created and expressed through constant transformation. The importance of belonging is emphasized through lived orientation in time and space and the experience of social relations in a particular social landscape. Liljeholm Hansson (2014) noted subject position as a position that individuals can take or be allocated within a given social structure. Man's subjectivity is governed by social, political, and scientific discourses where he wants to identify his own position. How the individual subjectivity is designed is governed entirely by the role a person plays in the social world and the dramaturgy of everyday life (Goffman, 1990). Broken socialization processes and following social vulnerability is, for example, highly regarded in the context of migration. Research on young people who left their country of origin without parents or legal guardians found their struggles with problems emerging, for instance, as forms of posttraumatic stress disorder, anxiety, feeling lonely like no one grieves for them, and isolated having difficulties with creating new social contacts (Fazel et al., 2005; Herz & Lalander, 2017; Wernesjö, 2014).

The literature emphasizes that children and young people who have had to be separated from their parents or have otherwise been through trauma need help and support from the environment to not get caught up in various forms of destructive reaction patterns. Factors such as poor language skills, ethnicity, culture or religion, and lack of knowledge about where to turn for health problems can hinder seeking care in the new country. Salehi et al. (2014), studying young migrants in Canada, pointed out risks for exposure for sexual ill-health and the need for access to sexual health care. Similar trends in need for support in, for example, sexual education, prevention, and the importance of religion have also been observed in other Western countries (Moreau et al., 2013). As in other countries, a low level of education and income in Sweden is associated with lower self-rated health and higher mortality (SOU, 2016, p. 55). Financial problems can also create stress and anxiety and thus affect mental health and experienced vulnerability (Haushofer & Fehr, 2014; Brown, 2011).

Conflicting Subjectivities

Aspects that can lead to conflicting subjectivities are existing paradoxes between individuals and established structural directions within and between systems and different loyalty requirements. An individual's loyalty conflicts are considered force

fields formed by different bonds that collide with each other (Arvidson & Axelson, 2021; Lewin, 1952). An individual positioning can reflect it within the existing social, societal, and socio-political structures, images of symbolic violence, and conditions linked to young people's norm breaking behaviors.

It can be exemplified by discourses around climate goals where the prevailing image is challenged by young people with the so-called "Save our planet" movement. In 2018, Greta Thunberg, then 15-year-old, started civil disobedience with a school strike for moral reasons in Stockholm, Sweden, and drew attention to the climate crisis. Her non-violent methods have been a powerful force for young people to pursue climate issues of global dimensions (Coe et al., 2015; Haynes, 2019). The subject position thus means to start from the self, what I want, while object position is about regime-established and established positions. Different types of loyalty ties to something specific that in turn collide are closely linked to perceptions of values, roles, goals, and conscience problems (Coe et al., 2015). The environment can also interpret the inability to supply on self or form a family as a reluctance or laziness. Economic vulnerability and questioning entail for those living in vulnerable situations risks of being seen as deviant. It can also have a considerable impact on a positive or negative self-image.

We face violence in some form daily. If not as a victim or perpetrator, then as a media consumer, Television viewer, or professional helper. Violence in its various forms is everywhere – in all places and within all groups. Our entire world may appear to be organized by power, which maintains states, group hierarchies, and individual positions of power. Living conditions linked to vulnerable positions are often embedded in various *power structures* that occur in everyday life. It can be about ranking patterns within various social systems such as family, at school, at work, or between friends. There are also very strong power structures and consolidated positions within the socio-political and cultural environment in which the individual lives. Cooper (2012), offering a critical contribution to contemporary debates on limitations in England's mainstream youth work practice, extended the concept of violence to *symbolic violence* expressed as diverse forms of cultural domination. Symbolic violence, for example, may occur when educators and youth workers operate in ways that maintain the illusion that, for example, activation programmes, education, and schooling provide a possibility for lower classes to attain upward social and economic mobility. Symbolic violence and power relations are shown as occurring paradoxes. For instance, developments in liberal welfare states are linked to the strong emphasis on autonomy. Anti-authoritative dialogues can exemplify it with unemployed young people, imaginative health campaigns, etc. These patterns can also be interpreted as assumptions that young live styles are unhealthy. In these situations, on the other hand, it is assumed that young people have a specific underlying need for help. A further paradox is based on notions of empowerment that aim to strengthen young people's independence while these processes require categorizations of powerlessness. These conditions have attracted attention in treatment work with drug problems. Democratic

ideals such as autonomy and self-determination clash with notions of addiction that undermine autonomy and symptom theory, where drug use is explained as an expression of underlying problems (Lindwall, 2000). Additional perspectives on symbolic violence emerge in structural conditions of social care where aid misses its goals. For example, Herz (2016), studying 13 local projects conducted by civil society organizations, found these to be a weak alternative to the state welfare sector and promote their organizations rather than their clients. Rather than being something new to try out, the projects were used to allow the project organizations to stay in business. The project-based welfare provision showed only a short-term solution for the members of society that are not being reached by the welfare state. Consequently, to an increased extent, successful transitions in contemporary societies regard social problems and human failures as individual embellishments.

Another perspective emerges in women's shelters that show cultural collision violence against young women, e.g., *honor-related* violence. It is often about the abuse of women due to conflicts associated with the family's cultural values and norm system. Reliable figures at national levels are lacking, but several researchers highlight the large number of young people in Sweden who suffer from oppression, violence, and threats with restrictions regarding sexual relationships, bodily expressions, and norms around the family formation, sexuality, and marriage (Schytter & Rexvid, 2016; Strid et al., 2018). Other assaults may be associated with rape and other sexual assaults. Raped women risk shame as the focus is often on the victim's actions and not the perpetrator's. A press article highlighted that a lawyer whose client secretly filmed his girlfriend when they had sex and spread the film online commented on the matter – "This is a young guy and there are no reasonable proportions in this, because today it is so much which is available online and the girl had gotten into the game a bit even though she was not aware that she was being filmed".

The British researcher Liz Kelly (2010) has compared sexual crimes within the EU and found that Sweden has a different view of rape than most other countries. In other countries, there is very strong opposition to considering rapes in close relationships as not sexual crimes. Sweden has reduced the frequency of cases of rape and prosecution against a person over the age of 15 from 28 percent in 2008 to 7 percent in 2017 despite the sharp increase in the number of notifications. It means that in practice, 5 out of hundred reported rapes lead to a conviction (BRÅ, 2019, p. 9). In Sweden, the prevailing so-called "penalty discount" is discussed, i.e., juvenile offenders who break the law and are under 21 years of age receive reduced sentences. There is a growing public opinion about these rebates, pushing for the significantly increased death tolls to be dealt with. In his study, Green (2012) compared two countries, namely Norway and England, and found that different socio-political cultures or systems generate very different ways of looking at children and young people as offenders.

Conflicting subjectivities can also be found connected to a range of structural levels. It is well established that socio-economic vulnerability is linked to poorer health. Two general principles may be associated with health care model systems.

The first is the principle of healing, and the second is the principle of advantage (Scambler, 2002). An extensive number of young people in Western countries are facing severe difficulties due to mental ill-health. These young people are also exposed to various and multiple risk factors such as difficulties in completing education, unemployment, and substance abuse (Almqvist & Lassinatti, 2018). Health-related needs of children and young people may also require resources that are not covered by the welfare system's financial assistance (Flinkfeldt, 2000).

Research shows that early signs of negative development where young people commit crimes can be a *norm-breaking* behavior that includes everything from aggressive behavior to not following rules or committing minor crimes such as stealing or vandalizing (Winerdal, 2014, pp. 111–112). It can also be understood as conflicting subjectivities related to normative expectations and behavioral conduct. Adolescent violence (including fatal violence) has in various ways been related to individual characteristics of the person or factors in his or her social upbringing environment. Boys and girls differ in the specific factors of crime (Shumaker & Prinz, 2000). American research brings forth that boys' murders are more conflict-related and are committed in many cases in connection with another act of violence such as robbery or rape (Sellers & Heide, 2012). Young people who commit more serious crimes are considered to have an underlying social problem that is judged to be a source of crime and a risk factor for future crime. It means that young people are seen as risky individuals (Estrada, 2001; France, 2008). Causal explanations are thus linked to the individual level, which means that structural and social conditions that affect juvenile delinquency are overshadowed (Alan, 2008). The most important, however, is that circumstances that may pose a risk of violence may at the same time show that the same young person needs protection and support.

In the European region, interpersonal violence has long been regarded as a criminal justice issue and has only recently been regarded as a public health issue (WHO, 2010). The European report on preventing violence among young people review 53 countries (those aged 10–29 years) noted that factors that can protect against violence developing among young people include development of good social skills, self-esteem, academic achievement, strong bond with significant others, good attachment to school, community involvement and access to social support. The recidivism rate in terms of crime statistics in Sweden shows that, on average, 40 percent return to crime within three years of serving time in prison. Recidivism is most common in drug crime, theft, and burglary. Just over 35% of the younger male convicts (those under the age of 30) relapse into the same type of crime – The recidivism rate for younger female convicts is almost as high (BRÅ, 2012). According to the National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå, 2020), Sweden last years suffered the highest level of murder and killing, with 124 people losing their lives through violent attacks. Forty-eight of these cases involved guns. The proportion of women and girls who fell victim to lethal violence in 2020 was 20 percent. For men and boys, the proportion was 80 percent. Corresponding distribution in 2019 was 23 and

77 percent. Ten percent of victims were boys under 18 years. The worrying situation is causing some political debates and proposals for action. However, it seems clear that criminal violence requires long-term action and social policy measures.

Establishment Pattern

An important part of growing up is the various establishment patterns in young people's development of their living conditions. The young individual struggles with a question – What should I become, what should I choose? The pressure to deal with the situation can lead to insecurity and anxiety. In these situations, it is important to have someone to meet their thoughts on different options, someone who can provide stability and advice. Young adults may have different opportunities to handle the issues on their own, and they have different opportunities for support. Young people who have grown up in an environment where they have been given space to reflect and discuss probably have greater opportunities to handle the different choices of adulthood. The current establishment age has shifted compared with previous decades and is strongly linked to the labor market and housing. In Sweden in 1990, the establishment age was 21 years in the sense that the vast majority of the age group was self-sufficient, and today the corresponding age is 27–28 years (Olofsson & Thourise, 2007).

In general, ideas about people's welfare presume free education as a universal right and include access to free health care (Morel et al., 2012). Additionally, there is some provision of social security, personal social services, and welfare economic support for people in need (Dychawy Rosner, 2019; Lyons et al., 2006). It is also noticeable that the conception of welfare is related to the social welfare condition of human well-being when social problems are managed and when human needs are met (Morel et al., 2012). It also suggests the need for micro and macro perspectives of disadvantages and attention to policies and frameworks at international, national, and local levels of initiatives.

Excluding or Including Establishment Pattern?

Hammer (2003) claims that the EU initially adopted the concept of social exclusion to avoid discussion about poverty. Social exclusion is coupled with the disintegration of the social networks that bind the individual to the community and may include a process of cumulative dimensions of marginalization and disadvantage. Surveys and reports show tendencies of growing exclusion of ever-larger groups of young people such as the long-term unemployed, ethnic minorities in parallel societies, people without a residence permit, etc. In these specific contexts, we can also talk about exclusion roles which, paradoxically, are also a form of inclusion. They are excluded from at least one of the important social systems such as the economy, education, the labor market, the housing market, health care, etc.

The concept of social exclusion is admittedly relatively new but has nevertheless had a major influence on the theoretical understanding of the political debate on issues of poverty and deprivation. According to Liljeholm Hansson (2014), the strength of this concept concerning the more traditional terminology in poverty research is its relational nature, i.e., it covers not only material deficiencies but also limitations in social relationships. The term is closely related to the concept of capability deprivation, which roughly means being deprived of the capacity to participate in social life. In their explanations why some groups are in an excluded position, some say that this is due to the outside groups themselves, while others claim that these have been actively supported by established groups. It also happens that one points out exclusion mechanisms in the existing social structure.

Many studies show fundamental patterns of change for young people's access to working life and highlight the importance of the socio-economic context for young people's establishment and livelihood conditions. There are long-term consequences of not being employed from individual and social perspectives (Bäckman & Nilsson, 2016). Skills development via labor market policy has a weak position in liberal market economies such as the United Kingdom and the United States, where mobility is high, but the opportunities for developing advanced vocational qualifications are small. Vocational education is largely school-based in Sweden and Finland, while Denmark and Norway have more developed learning education systems. There is currently 15 million youth (15–24 years old) unemployed in the OECD area (Caliendo & Schmidl, 2016; European Commission, 2018). Scarpetta, Sonnet, and Manfredi (2010) emphasize in an OECD report that many young people, even those who have reached a certain level of education, have difficulties finding stable employment even in periods of economic growth. Periods of unemployment are interspersed with precarious and poorly paid jobs. Many come from socio-economically vulnerable home conditions. Consequently, the evidence on the impact of active labor market programmes to improve the integration prospects of struggling youths on further education participation or employment quality is rare (Caliendo & Schmidl, 2016).

Recently, attention has been drawn to the young ethnic minorities with low socio-economic resources in migrant environments. Manhica et al. (2019), in a national cohort study of labor market participation among young refugees in Sweden, found this group having high risks of being in an insecure workforce. Researchers conclude that while young refugees face employment disadvantages, education has an important potential of turning out well from poor labor market outcomes in this group. Other groups are also noted as disadvantaged in the labor market. Current statistics from Statistics Sweden (SCB, 2020) show that the proportion employed is 10 percent lower among people with a disability than the rest of the population, and fewer young people are working full time. It has been shown that 28 percent have experienced discrimination, of which a larger proportion are women, and a larger proportion are people with reduced working capacity. The same pattern emerges in other EU regions and Western countries (European Com-

mission, 2018; 2020). Employers' negative attitudes are the most common form of discrimination among people with disabilities and reduced working capacity (SCB, 2020). At the same time, there is reason to be critical of the concept of work-ability. When the ability to work is tested, it is done against a labor market that is extremely varied, competition-oriented, and building on contextual and capitalistic influences.

More and more people study and are in training for longer and longer time. It is a bridge to working life. The meaning of good education is that it should benefit both the individual and society as soon as possible. In higher education, new programmes are growing, and universities develop several specialist programmes. In addition to education and research, they have the task of collaborating with neighboring communities and internationally. Students exchange and international mobility involve new movements and create opportunities for broadening horizons and developing intercultural skills (Dychawny Rosner & Christensen, 2016). At the same time, it appears that more and more people are starting university studies during periods of economic downturn and a more uncertain labor market. Swedish regular follow-up of registers concerning different background variables (e.g., gender, national and social background, and parents' level of education) shows that the social recruitment of those who started studies is dominated by those with highly educated parents (UHÄ, 2021).

Kvist (2020) talks about a form of social closure linked to qualifications. Long educations that lead to degrees and credentials of various kinds monopolize parts of the labor market in a way that restricts access for those who do not have such educational experiences. It has also been emphasized that employment processes are affected by so-called asymmetric information. It means, for example, that persons looking for a job have more information about their productivity than someone who is about to employ the person. Essentially it is about socio-economic differences related to the average level of education, labor market conditions, and local authorities. It is well established that poverty is linked to poorer health (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2015). Ayllón and Ferreira-Batista (2018), reviewing data from 28 European countries, found that the Great Recession has particularly hit young people in Europe. It was caused by deteriorating labor market conditions in several spheres of life. It influenced ill-health through growing drug consumption, probably as a resort to self-medication caused by economic and social stress mechanisms. As in other countries, Sweden's low education and income levels are associated with lower estimated health and higher mortality (SOU, 2016, p. 55). The development in the time perspective shows that the proportion of workers aged 20–24 has fallen from the beginning of the 20th century. At the same time, the proportion of young people studying is increasing sharply. Approximately 12 percent of young people in Sweden under 25 have received some educational effort within labor market policy. The corresponding shares in Germany were 59 percent, France 69, and the United Kingdom 93 percent. The downside of this relationship is a high proportion of young people dependent on some form of income support.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter stressed that most of the young population are strong young people who struggle for their future and receive support. Nonetheless, many young people also suffer from social vulnerability, social closure, and ill-health, i.e., low career prospects, the possibility to build independent life, and subjective well-being. It emerges through an individual subject position while creating self-identity and lived socialization process within existing structural frames and patterns of personal establishment for becoming a productive and beneficial citizen within current societal structures.

The starting point of this paper has been that theoretical eclectics are required to understand the complex events related to current issues regarding young people's living conditions. According to Olofsson and Thoursie (2000), when studying young people's future paths, it is important not to interpret the youth perspective too one-sidedly. Several factors of socio-environmental conditions such as gender, class, growing up conditions, family background without educational traditions, or being born in another country are of great importance for young people's future opportunities (Burr, 2003). We most likely live in progressive-era politics and a societal climate that offers conditions for legitimately destructive phenomena (Giddens, 1991; Dychawy Rosner, 2019; Grander, 2018; Thörn & Thörn, 2017). To name some of the existing situations, there are financial crises followed by migration crises, growing socio-economic gaps, a rise of sub-cultures, parallel communities, emerging populism, and the pandemic situation. Mead (2000) claims that progressive social policy entered a post-industrial age. Youth on the road to adulthood must focus on structural and political, not just behavioral youth problems, to overcome inequalities and social weakness.

We live in not always equal societies in which health and life expectancy vary depending on the place of residence (Mead, 2000; Olofsson & Thourise, 2007). In modern welfare states exists zones with lower levels of education and income as well as foreign-born that testify to difficulties in many contexts, exclusion and lack of integration as well as poor conditions for growing up (Dychawy Rosner, 2019; Grander, 2018; Manhica et al., 2019; Rauckiené-Michaelsson & Aciené, 2019). It applies to Sweden and other European countries as these perspectives are strongly connected to diverse patterns of welfare provision for young populations, which vary between countries.

In the Waiting Room for an Uncertain Future

The contemporary discursive paths in youth living conditions indicate a noticeable trend across advanced welfare states, showing an increasing risk of becoming locked into hidden *circles of social vulnerability* confirmed by low-paid work, poor housing, financial hardship, and social insecurity for young people. Access to income, employment, and education is determined by individual aspirations, choices, ability,

and prevailing social and institutional arrangements embedded in a political, economic, and social structural context. Some discourses see young people as objects, including economic welfare discourses, and where young people are seen only as intentions for social and political interests, instead of a subject with social value and human capital that invests in the future. This study sheds light that the lives of children and young people cannot be reduced to their participation, actorship, and material, social and cultural living conditions outside general societal institutions. These welfare institutions and their forces and worlds of practice must also be studied. Individual subjectivity is faced with conflicting demands within socio-cultural and socio-political conditions. Various conflicting demands force young people to constantly balance between positioning and dramaturgy of lived everyday life. It means that establishment for young people in today's society has become more complicated through their position of power or powerless and existing interactions socially, socio-economically, and socio-culturally.

The accelerating inequalities in welfare regimes over the past decades, such as living conditions, access to the labor market, or inequalities in living environments, influence young people negatively regarding social inclusion and young people's physical and social health. Despite the differences between the discourses of welfare and its obvious shortcomings, there are similarities regarding "the doing", such as doing the right thing, for example, through work, education, and what is considered moral behavior of the good. Consequently, situations arise where young people who boldly take advantageous positions also get access to empowerment and positively influence their lives. This direct influence can also be seen as a way of reducing possibilities of collective power for vulnerable young people living in poor socio-economical environments, which make them excluded from mainstream societal structures. It is consistent with some discursive patterns raising pictures of the government's designation as the responsible actor in a double sense. Regimes that have been incompetent to prevent the emergence of the problem, i.e., have not been able to keep welfare promise and also responsible for solving the ill-health problem or not able to develop young people's entrances into appropriate labor markets.

Arrived results here suggest the need for a dynamic and intersectional perspective that includes the structural, institutional, and individual levels of measures that allow gender, class, and migration parameters to be taken into the welfare system's interventional considerations. People position themselves in relation to the discourses they find themselves by following or opposing them. The position of the individual is not uniquely determined. A significant issue for society is who is allowed a subject position and who is excluded. Young people in contemporary society are active subjects with the ability to influence the conditions they act within. However, their performance may not always be considered the desired performativity.

Finally, for this situation, it may mean that we cannot predict whether today's young ones will reproduce or resist the lived power process that society has taught them as future welfare subjects. The discursive interpretations that exist in society

regarding the living conditions of the young show that there exist several groups experiencing social vulnerability and social exclusion. This social exclusion does not arise by itself but in relation to the including social regimes. However, more comprehensive socio-political and societally efforts are needed to improve the living conditions of certain young vulnerable groups.

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Hope as a Tool for Social Change. Reflections on Hope in the Context of Women's Protests in Poland

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ABSTRACT

This chapter is to understand the notion of hope referring to Paulo Freire (1998, 2004) and Henry Giroux (1997, 2002). Following them, I assume that hope has a practical or even political dimension – it is the opportunity to meet and implement the desired change. That “desirable change” could be a social transformation that leads, among others, to quality of life improvement, human equality, and respect. An example that I would like to discuss this issue of hope are women’s rights and recent events in Poland – women’s protests caused by the government’s attempts to introduce a complete abortion ban. Referring to the situation in 1980 and the workers’ strikes in Poland that led to the Solidarity movement, now we have a new symbol of free Poland – this time, it is not a working man but a woman who demands the right to have rights. My question is, can the so-called revolution of women in Poland be interpreted in terms of hope understood as a tool of social change?

KEYWORDS:

hope, women’s protests, Poland, agency, social change.

Introduction

In 2002, Henry Giroux published the essay “When Hope is Subversive”. Referring to the events of that time (e.g., reports about tortures of Iraqi detainees in Abu Ghraib), he reminds us a notion of educated hope, Ernst Bloch’s *docta spes*, an idea of “informed hope that faces the concrete obstacles and realities of domination yet continues the ongoing pedagogical and political task of ‘holding the present open and thus unfinished’” (Giroux, 2019; Benjamin, 1997, p. 10). For Giroux, educated hope can be a subversive force in a sense that it is the precondition for individual and social struggle, “part of a broader politics that acknowledges those social, economic,

spiritual, and cultural conditions in the present that make certain kinds of agency and democratic politics possible” (2002, p. 38). This chapter, inspired by Giroux’s essay, attempts to understand the current socio-political situation in Poland, women’s protests (2016-2020) in the context of hope as a “subversive force”.

I do not intend to discuss the spiritual or theological aspects of hope. I aim to reflect on the “pedagogical orientation” of hope developed by Henry Giroux and Paulo Freire. This notion of hope is rooted in the tradition of political philosophy (in particular, the Marxist and pragmatist). Therefore, hope is understood as a (pre)condition for acting politically, a force necessary to achieve social change. The most interesting aspect of hope is its performative dimension, making it possible to experience oneself as a political agent.

The chapter begins with a brief outline of the theoretical framework of hope (part 1), then I will refer to the current situation in Poland, that is, women’s protests (the so-called “Black protests” and “women’s strikes”) that have been taking place since 2016 (part 2). In the last part of the chapter (part 3), I will refer to the categories HERstory and Transition-Anger to discuss the political dimension of hope as a tool for social change.

PART 1: Homo Esperans

The term hope, as noted by, among other things, Dominique Moïsi, in *Geopolitics of emotions*, has two quite different connotations: spiritual and secular (2009). However, it is a concept with an old philosophical, theological, and psychological tradition rarely discussed systematically (with few important exceptions). For philosophers associated with existentialism and Christianity, incl. Gabriel Marcel, hope is a kind of trust. As the basic component of human consciousness, it reveals itself in a moment of a tragic event. Then it becomes a tool of overcoming despair that enables existential life, i.e., going beyond oneself to experience the transcendence of eternity (2010 [1984]). According to Marcel, hope is saturated with religious content; primarily, it is a metaphysical concept. It is different in humanistic psychology, for instance, in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Abraham Maslow assigns a certain meaning to hope in the process of human development and self-knowledge. Hope is related to the need for self-realization, and as such, it is a motivator to act and formulate distant goals and ambitions (1986).

In the psychology of cognition studies (e.g., Józef Kozielecki), hope is a multidimensional cognitive structure (consists of emotions, views, motives, causative factors), the central component of which is the belief that in the future person will achieve his/her goal with a certain probability (2006, p. 37). Prospective orientation is a distinctive feature of hope and as such also appears in pedagogical concepts, as, for example, Henry Giroux writes, “What hope offers is the belief, simply, that different futures are possible” (2002, p. 39).

Hope brings an important context in reflecting on political and social events. As Giroux states, although it is future-oriented, it is at the same time grounded in the present and has some hold on the present. Giroux places hope in the real world of real challenges (social inequalities, social injustice, the crisis of democracy, etc.), claiming that,

“hope is more than politics, it is also a pedagogical and performative practice that provides the foundation for enabling human beings to learn about their potential as moral and civic agents. Hope is the outcome of those educational practices and struggles that tap into memory and lived experiences while at the same time linking individual responsibility with a progressive sense of social change” (2002, p. 38–39).

Referring to the performative and educational dimensions of hope, Giroux emphasizes the issue of subversiveness. In this sense, hope is a powerful political force that provokes the individual’s engagement in social issues,

“Hope becomes meaningful to the degree that it identifies agencies and processes, offers alternatives to an age of profound pessimism, reclaims an ethic of compassion and justice, and struggles for those institutions in which equality, freedom, and justice flourish as part of the ongoing struggle for a global democracy” (2002, p. 39).

As a subversive force, next to agency, inclusion, or civil society, hope becomes central to contemporary social debates.

Similarly, Freire speaks of the radical nature of hope. He states that hope is rooted in people’s incompleteness, “from which they move out in constant search – a search which can be carried out only in communion with others” (2000, p. 91). For Freire, hope is essential for change, “though I know that things can get worse, I also know that I am able to intervene to improve them” (1998, p. 53). He writes,

“Hopelessness is a form of silence, of denying the world and fleeing from it. The dehumanization resulting from an unjust order is not a cause for despair but for hope, leading to the incessant pursuit of the humanity denied by injustice. Hope, however, does not consist in crossing ones arms and waiting. As long as I fight, I am moved by hope; and if I fight with hope, then I can wait” (2000, p. 92).

Concluding, hope is the opportunity of meeting and implementing a change that is desired. This ‘desirable change’ could be a social transformation that leads, among others, to quality of life improvement, human equality, and respect. Following Freire and Giroux, I assume that hope arises out of political necessity. As I intend to justify in the next part of the chapter, hope can be understood as synonymous with engagement in social issues, particularly concerning social responsibility for social reality; it is about acting for justice and an equal world.

PART 2: Reproductive Rights in Poland and Women's Protests¹

For women, the collapse of communism in Poland in 1989 was a radical change in the abortion law (during the communist regime, abortion was permitted on socioeconomic grounds). On January 7, 1993, the “Family Planning, Human Embryo Protection and Conditions of Permissibility of Abortion Act” entered into force. In this new law, there was a removal of the “socioeconomic grounds” for abortion. Termination of pregnancy could be performed only by a doctor, when: 1) the pregnancy poses a threat to the life or health of the pregnant woman, 2) prenatal examinations or other medical conditions indicate that there is a high probability of a severe and irreversible fetal defect or incurable illness that threatens the fetus’s life, 3) there are reasons to suspect that the pregnancy is a result of an unlawful act (Reproductiverights.org, 1993).

This restrictive law became even more restrictive in 2020. After the decision of the Constitutional Tribunal of October 22, 2020, termination of pregnancy is allowed in Poland only if the pregnancy is endangering the pregnant woman’s life or health (without restrictions on the age of the fetus), and when there is a justified suspicion that a pregnancy is a result of a prohibited act, incest or rape (up to 12 weeks from the beginning of pregnancy). The judgment of the Constitutional Tribunal made Polish abortion law one of the most restrictive not only in the European Union but also in the world.

Attempts to change the law have been made since 1993. However, for many years the so-called “Abortion compromise” (three cases permitting termination of pregnancy). Since coming to power in 2015, the Law and Justice party (PiS) has pursued an anti-women policy, firstly through denial of funding women’s organizations and then initiation of the legislative procedures to enact a law banning abortion in all cases and penalizing both women (including transgender people, persons with reproductive organs/a uterus) and doctors performing an abortion. The government’s actions met with widespread public dissatisfaction. On September 22, 2016, as a result of the parliament (Sejm) reviewing the draft law “Stop abortion”, the first women’s protest was organized under the slogan “Black protest”. A few days later, on October 3, 2016, thousands of Polish women went on strike to oppose the proposed legislation for a complete abortion ban. The protest was called “Black Monday”. During the protests, women were calling slogans such as, “I am, I think, I decide; I live, I love, I decide,” “My body, my choice,” or “Abortion is a law, not a commodity” (Korolczuk, 2019; Chmielewska et al., 2017). These slogans were a demand for regaining a sense of agency and the “possibility of choice” – the right for a person to decide about one’s own body. According to Police statistics, 98,000 people took part in 143 demonstrations. (wp.pl, 2016). As a result of these mass protests, on October 6, 2016, the Sejm put down the bill project “Stop abortion”.

1 The database for this part of the chapter was the calendar of events related to women’s protests in 2016–2018, published in *Bunt kobiet. Czarne Protesty i Strajki Kobiet* (2019, pp. 6–15).

However, the draft of the bill was again on the agenda of the parliament in April 2020. During the first lockdown of the COVID-19 pandemic, the controversial project was voted on in the Polish parliament again. “Abortion is a worse pandemic than coronavirus,” claimed a right-wing activist presenting the draft legislation (Chrzczonowicz & Ambroziak, 2020). The project was referred for further work by the parliament by the health committee and the social policy and family committee. Later in the year, in October 2020, the Constitutional Tribunal in Poland ruled that abortion due to fetal defects was unconstitutional (referring to article 30 of the Polish Constitution, which protects human dignity, and article 38, which guarantees everyone the legal protection of life). Thus, abortion was prohibited in the case of fetal defects, which, according to official data, account for 98% of all abortions performed in recent years in Poland (Federa, 2021; Guttmacher, 2020).

The decision of the Constitutional Tribunal caused social discontent. People took to the streets. The protests that began as cries for women’s reproductive freedom, now became anti-government demonstrations of different groups, including LGBT+ (even the term “women’s protests” became problematic at one point). Since October 22, 2020, street protests have taken place over the country for more than 14 days. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions and in the face of another lockdown, people put their health at risk and went to the streets to manifest their objection to depriving women of their fundamental rights. On October 28, there was a nationwide women’s strike under the slogan “I’m not going to work”. According to the Police statistics, approximately 430,000 people participated in 410 protests in the whole country (Gazetaprawna.pl, 2020). On October 30, around 100,000 people participated in a mass protest in Warsaw called “Everyone to Warsaw” (onet.pl, 2020). The women’s protests were quickly labeled the “women’s revolution” as one of the slogans of the protests was “Revolution is a woman” (Siedlecka, 2020).

On October 27, the activists of All-Poland Women’s Strike (Ogólnopolski Strajk Kobiet, OSK), a women’s grassroots social movement that was one of the coordinators of the October 2020 women’s protests, announced a list of civic postulates gathered from protesters. These did not concern only abortion (“We want full women’s rights, legal abortion, sex education, contraception”), but among other things, restoration of the rule of law (strajkkobiet, 2020). A new chapter in the history of Poland and the women’s movement began.

Women’s Protests as HERstory: From Anger to Hope

Women’s strikes and protests are an important part of their history in Poland. From a feminist point of view, women’s protests in the 2000s make that history in Poland is no longer HIStory. It is HERstory. Overall, HERstory (Youngberg & Holmlund, 2003) is about recovering and reclaiming women’s history, searching for their narratives, and writing the missing part of universal history. HERstory in Poland was

created in response to political attacks on women's rights and limiting reproductive freedom. This HERstory is a story about women who disagree to be 'written out' from history by the politicians. There is one goal: to recognize the existence and presence of women in public space in Poland, Europe, and globally.

Women's protests in Poland can be interpreted as the East-European feminist turn (Majewska, 2016), in particular, the manifestation of the slogan "personal is political" (Hanisch, 1970). By protesting against anti-abortion law, women create a space in the public sphere for articulating their rights as human rights. I refer to this process as the politics of HERstory. Rights that have been taken away from women since 1993 are on the agenda now. Since 2016 and the first Black protest, women have become a collective political subject who manifest publicly their right to have rights. It is an important issue in the context of feminism as well as democracy and civil society.

There are three main aspects related to the politics of HERstory:

1. Stages, dimensions, and forms of protests;
2. Language protesters speak;
3. Postulates of the protesters.

Women's protests in 2020 and Black Protests in 2016 share the same goal (women's reproductive rights) but differ in form, structure, and aesthetics. They take different ways, even if their main core is street demonstrations. There were the so-called "walks around the city" (mainly to the government houses and politicians private homes, car driving and motorcycling around the city (slow driving and frequent use of the horn), or standing in the queue holding banners, black umbrellas, masks painted with red lightning, a symbol of Women's Strike. The other forms of protests included displaying posters of "Women's Strike" at windows. Protests took place also online. For instance, people used placards with the lightning-bolt logo, posted about protests on social media, wrote petitions, or sent emails to the government (Urzędowska & Suchomska, 2020).

Women's protests were the first mass mobilization in many years in Poland. Although social demonstrations related to reproductive and women's rights have been organized since the early 1990s (e.g., Manifa's protests on Women's Day), the recent women's events, particularly in October 2020, have become unique in many ways. The protests were a massive and radical social uprising, especially considering the demographic composition and the protesters' language. Women's protests of 2020 were, in a sense, youth protests. "This is a different rebellion and a different revolution. Maybe it is a rebellion of the first generation born and raised in Western civilization? Techno-party generation" (Kozanecki, 2020). The protesters sang and danced; joy and anger were intertwined. The slogans on the banners were distinguished by spontaneity and the range of pop culture references on the one hand and by the radicalization of the language on the other (Kwiatkowska, 2021, p. 45). There

was a lot of vulgarity and offensive or obscene slogans (including “F*** PiS”). These slogans questioned strong gender stereotypes, including that “bad language is not for women”. However, profanity or vulgarity gained a specific meaning. It was to express what was inexpressible: anger, particularly anger at PiS’s ruling, dominated by hatred, homophobia, and inequality politics.

This anger can be related to the concept of “transition-anger” by Martha Nussbaum (2015, 2016). Nussbaum introduces this term to refer to this kind of “acceptable and healthy anger” directed toward achieving change and social welfare. She sees this kind of anger as free of irrational thoughts of payback. Its entire content is emotional, “How outrages. Something should be done about it” (2016, p. 35). Therefore, it is the anger ethically and politically transmuted into a zeal for social change; anger that contains hope. Social change, the priority of women’s protests, is reflected in the protesters’ postulates addressed to the government.

The postulates submitted by the protesters include 13 demands for changes in major policy areas, including a return to a secular state, liberal in the European sense of equal rights for women, a restoration of the judiciary’s independence, protection of the environment, and changes in labor law (strajkkobiet.eu, 2020). The right to abortion, an initial aim of the protests, extended to a broader range of goals directed toward social change and democracy². Hence, women’s protests are no longer “just” a protest over the abortion law. Since young people with their postulates have joined in large numbers, women’s strikes have become a symbol of the fight for freedom, a secular state, and the rule of law. Referring to the situation in 1980 and the workers’ strikes in Poland that led to the Solidarity movement, now we have a new symbol of free Poland – this time, it is not a working man but a woman who demands the right to have rights.

Conclusion

The power with which women stood up for their rights in October 2020 is the consequence and continuation of the protests and political struggle initiated with the Black protests in 2016. It is HERstory, another breakthrough in the struggle for the political subjectivity of women in Poland. Women’s rights are recognized as political issues that the ruling party cannot ignore anymore. The issues that previously interested mainly feminist activists suddenly in 2016 and again in autumn 2020 seem to be significant by various social groups, both women and men, including young people who did not engage in civic activities in recent years (Pazderski, 2019; Krzywosz-Rynkiewicz & Zalewska, 2015). The pedagogical context of women’s protests is strongly related to youth participation in the protests. The young genera-

2 To work on these postulates the Consultative Council was established. It is similar to the Belarusian Coordination Council, a body created to translate the submitted postulates into legal solutions.

tion of Poles recognized themselves as political actors who have the right to express themselves and protest for values proclaimed and postulated in the EU and the world, with climate justice and health rights being top priorities (Eurostat, 2019). Youth in Poland are young people with a strong European identity (Pazderski, 2020).

The hope for change that emerged in 2016 with the first Black protest has entered the next stage now: educated hope. Referring to Giroux and Freire, educated hope should be understood as a transition from the state of “incompleteness” (the lack of full rights) and “hopelessness” (manifested by silence and passivity) into a state of change possibility. To paraphrase Nussbaum and the transitional-anger logic, it is a transition into “forward-looking, constructive work and hope” (2016). Women’s protests are pedagogical and performative practices that enabled women to learn about their potential as political agents. And being a political agent is to face concrete obstacles as ongoing pedagogical and political tasks. In this regard, these protests are a manifestation of the hope that Giroux describes as a subversive force, in the sense that these protests empowered people’s voices, as reflected in the language and aesthetics of the protests, the slogans, and postulates.

With the revolution of women, there is a revolution of hope. What is of great importance is recognizing that the present situation is ‘not-yet’ finished or complete. Thus, social transformation is possible. It is not about wishful thinking that any protest will change the realities of domination, but it identifies social change with specific actions that need to be taken. Having acknowledged this possibility of change as probable involves people’s participation in the ongoing struggle for democracy. Thus, the social transformation does not only concern social structures, but it begins with individuals and their mode of consciousness – and here, the pedagogical dimension of hope emerges, the sense of social responsibility for social reality.

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Anthropological Crisis as Demolisher of Welfare System in Democracy

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ABSTRACT

The current transition from agrarian societies to industrial ones around the globe carries a shift of values along with – namely, from traditional to self-expression. The shift has been described by analysts of the World Values Survey Association (WVSA). In much described R. Inglehart & Ch. Welzel's cultural map of the world, the Baltic states are positioned somewhere in the middle between the poles.

The article sketches dangers arising from one-sided over-emphasizing benefits of democracy and self-expression. Societies undergoing a fast transition between their former experiences and current challenges testify to frictions, and they may be described as torn societies. The author uses the term “plastic man” coined by Martin Heidegger – in whom the changing part of the personality is increasing whereas the steady side is decreasing. As sociologist Arnold Toynbee puts it, the man of today is a “man running away from God”. Consequently, his plasticity takes over, and man is not able to control his own choices and changeability. The article offers a Christian anthropological view of man in his relations with God. The reminder refreshes knowledge of European Christian roots and challenges current social development.

KEYWORDS:

anthropological crisis, values, traditional and self-expression values, democracy.

Introduction

Conferences worldwide show that regardless of the lack of uniformity, society thirsts for stable value-oriented criteria. The truth behind the need is simple – the criteria described as “stable” would help to live through the turbulent and conflicting, albeit beautiful age.

Research recently published by the World Values Survey Association (WVSA) describes two mutually correlated value directions in European countries, namely,

traditional values *versus* rational-secular values (*Findings and Insights*). Traditional values emphasize religiosity, national pride, and respect for authority, obedience, and marriage. Secular-rational values emphasize the opposite on each of these accounts. However, the overall value system is linked to the political and economic performance of the given society. Consequently, the survey points to interaction between the traditional values versus rational-secular values on the one hand and Survival values versus values of Self-expression on the other. Survival values involve a priority of security over liberty, non-acceptance of homosexuality, abstinence from political action, distrust in outsiders, and a weak sense of happiness. Self-expression values imply the opposite on all these accounts.

Reflections

Interaction is attention worth in many ways, particularly because the Baltic states are located somewhere in the middle between the opposing poles, as Inglehart–Welzel cultural map shows (Sterbenz, 2014). No doubt, Latvia and Lithuania experience dynamic changes within society. Both societies undergo a transition from a more traditional orientation to the paradigm of self-expression, openness, and freedom. And they just repeat what other European countries have gone through before: “Since the first world values survey in 1981, every western country has shifted markedly along the spectrum toward greater self-expression” (*Living with a Superpower*, 2003). These latter values are seen as more important for the “natural” development of personality, and there is no doubt that the tendency will grow in the future.

As emphasized, both dimensions suffer from internal contradictions with the opposite and acceptance / non-acceptance depending on different national cultural contexts in various European countries. Axis of traditional / rational-secular values has helped to describe differences between societies where traditional Christian values are still valid on the one hand and societies that strive to ignore their historical roots of Christian culture on the other. Traditional values emphasize national pride, among other values, respect for authority, obedience, and marriage. Consequently, societies with higher national self-esteem and a high level of national pride emphasize values that work for the healthy development of the society:

1. Importance of parent-child ties, deference to authority, and traditional family values.
2. Non-acceptance of homosexuality, divorce and abortion, euthanasia, and suicide.
3. Defense of self-respect of man/woman, and recommends registered marriage.

Transition experience moving from agrarian to industrial society, depopulation of Latvian countryside is sad and illustrious. Losing people in rural areas work for big changes within society. Consequently, the largest shift from traditional values toward secular-rational values happens in this phase of national development.

So far, characteristics of the region we know the best. New challenges arise after the European Social agenda has announced a shift from industrial society toward the so-called knowledge society (see UNESCO World Report “Towards knowledge society”). In this regard the UNESCO emphasizes: “The future [is painted] in both promising and disquieting tones, promising because the potential offered by a rational and purposeful use of the new technologies offers real prospects for human and sustainable development and the building of more democratic societies; disquieting, for the obstacles and snares along the way are all too real”. As promising as it may sound, the document also expresses some concerns in regards to loss of some key characteristics and attributes of humankind, be they professional or moral: “But do not the information technologies, by automatizing knowledge, provide grounds for the fear that we may witness the disappearance of know-how and traditions that, only a few decades ago, constituted the daily way of life over much of the planet?”

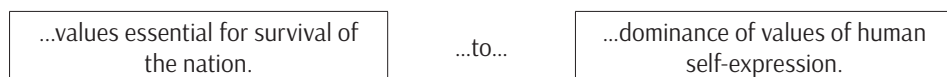
The issue of values is taken up by further conclusions. Due to widespread and not foreseen use of the Internet, changes also occur on human identity level:

“The Internet offers, moreover, radically new possibilities for experimenting with personal identity, thanks to the recent instituting of exchanges that are fixed up without the parties’ physical involvement, in an entirely anonymous, disembodied and synchronous way. By enabling virtual selves to be superimposed on real selves, the web establishes a wholly new realm of self-expression. On the one hand, it fosters the tendency toward depersonalization and self-forgetfulness; on the other, it creates dynamics enabling individuals to multiply their virtual identities, under cover of an almost infinite number of pseudonyms” (UNESCO World Report “Towards knowledge society”).

A culture of innovation also characterizes the knowledge society: “In a global knowledge economy, where the touchstone of competitiveness will be capacity for innovation, the fostering of a culture of innovation is a matter of encouraging the rapid spread of inventions and new ideas throughout a society”. The spread pushes the innovation process to its limits. Consequently, innovations often mean breaking away from traditions, the well-known. It is where values of self-expression come into the picture. The UNESCO document warns against the threat to human basics: “It is precisely because innovation has become largely unforeseeable that it is important to concentrate on the conditions that favor the emergence of the process of innovation... We also have to watch out for the human cost of these transformations, keeping in mind that innovation is truly a process of “creative destruction”: *the destructive mechanisms inherent in innovation must be paid special attention so*

that their social and cultural consequences can be mitigated". "The technological revolution underpinning the rise of the knowledge society carries, like any other, a serious danger of making some social relations and the position of some social groups precarious. Does recognizing this necessarily mean accepting the idea that certain individuals or whole generations may find themselves being sacrificed on the altar of change? Knowing that there is often a violence inherent in times of foundation, can we really not envisage that, on the contrary, this challenging of established practice and knowledge will itself crucially depend on the development of individual and collective capacities? This is the true issue for societies, which are going to need to be both knowledge societies and innovation societies – and must therefore become learning societies".

The much-quoted UNESCO document and the WVSA's survey show that the knowledge society is characterized by solid conviction – sustainable persistence of society is secured by sticking to values of self-expression. Societies undergoing a swift shift over to knowledge society may experience sharpened tension between its former experience and current challenges. It may be described as a shift from...



In the value discourse, human developmental dynamics may be formulated as follows:

$$\text{Quality of life} = \text{subjective welfare} + \text{subjective self-expression}.$$

The overall paradigm of the knowledge society points to the self-expression of its members as an essential value. Knowledge society would be unable to reach its goals unless values of self-expression are put in the center. "Knowledge societies cannot function effectively without highly educated workers, who become articulate and accustomed to thinking for themselves. Furthermore, rising levels of economic security bring growing emphasis on self-expression values that give high priority to free choice" (Inglehart & Welzel, 2010, pp. 551–567). What is the spectrum of self-expression values?

From the WVSA survey follows that self-expression values are characterized as emphasizing individually taken freedom and satisfaction of subjective will of self-expression. It envisages toleration of:

1. Questioning of ethical protonorms of human existence,
2. Profanation of religious norms,
3. Carelessness toward the value of life (e.g., legalization of euthanasia, surrogate motherhood, legalization of abortions, etc.),
4. Ideology of same-sex marriages,

5. Repudiation of children in the name of the comfort of adults,
6. Decline from hard work while delegating it to immigrants.

The overall tendency is described as creating danger to the very existence of democracy. Inglehart & Welzel (2010, p. 553) indicate that “Mass publics become increasingly likely to want democracy and increasingly effective in getting it. Repressing mass demands for liberalization becomes increasingly costly and detrimental to economic effectiveness. These changes link economic development with democracy”. Paradoxically, the danger is facing the very same system giving birth to the value of self-expression.

It seems the logs of human self-identity threaten that process of democracy. The identity may be described as the concept of the following aspects:

1. The outward concept of the self,
2. The inward concept of the self,
3. Awareness of changing and steady sides of the self,
4. Awareness of the protonorm.

Following M. Heidegger, the man of today is called “plastic man” (Hollis, 2012), in whom the changing part of the personality is increasing whereas the steady side is decreasing. As sociologist A. Toynbee puts it, the man of today is a “man running away from God”. Consequently, his plasticity takes over, and man is not able to control his own choices and changeability. Because religion offers standards of unchanging protonorms crucial for the survival of humanity, in this situation, is there any need for instruments to oppress the changeability and plasticity? – Of course, no. Rather, what is needed, may be called “self-hermeneutics”, i.e., certain criteria for self-understanding.

Let us use a simple example to show that human identity cannot be reduced to his / her professional activity; rather, image and likeness of God” is used as the definition of the identity of man:

Who am I?			
Lawyer	Student	Pupil Professor	Politician

“None of them is ME, because there are thousands of specialists in each mentioned field. Man has been created in God’s image and likeness”.

In Christian tradition, man is characterized as a creature possessing dual nature. He can think about himself as being self-sufficient and ignoring his Creator, and still, he can recognize himself as a person endowed with the capacity to become a “likeness of God”, as the Bible describes him in the book of Creation (Gen. 1:26).

<i>A man of secular society</i> “...made from the dust of the earth” (Gen. 2:7, 19).	<i>A man with the capacity to become “likeness of God”</i> “Created a man (‘adām’) and endowed with life-giving breath (‘neshama’)” (Gen: 2:7). “God said: let us make a man (‘adām’) according to our image and likeness” (Gen. 1:26).
Consequence: Anthropological border and value perception are short-limited.	Consequence: Anthropological border and value perception are limitless.

Willing to be free and “understand the self” are universal attributes. However, they should not be practiced on behalf of values essential for human existence. If basic conditions of human existence (family, positive demography, the virtue of work, mutuality) are respected, then the self-expression values are not threatening for society. Otherwise, “democracy” may lead to the “culture of death” (Pope John Paul II, 1995) and the slow destruction of society essentials.

Conclusions of WVSA point to threatening the development of society (also feared by the early American politicians in their own country) in two directions:

1. Fear from aggression from outside,
2. Fear *from pseudo-democracy may take to values reducing society’s capacity to survive and sustain itself*. Satisfaction of the need for egoistic self-expression taken on the level of ideology may threaten the very existence of society.

Democracy and self-fulfillment have become specific ideologically engaged mindset. Perverted democracy and the so-called emancipation may lead to an anthropological crisis. How is anthropological crisis manifested? It has been described as “individuation, in other words, the individual and self-fulfillment increasingly taking precedence over community”, “perverse effects that this glorification of individual freedom is having” (Lipietz, 2014, pp. 66–68). It is worth quoting well-known philosopher Y. Lotman (2004, p. 172) – within the context of the current political development based on freedom of subjective opinions, democracy forgets that “culture takes its origin in limitations, in rules aimed to limit instincts”. It is an axiological counter-revolution, as WVSA analysts recognized it. The process destroys not only family life but also the basics of a democratic state.

The anthropological crisis should be balanced by the concept of the structure of a human being described by Church fathers in between the 4th and 7th centuries. The view has been encompassed by European Christian tradition.

Thinking	Will	Heart	Awareness	Conscience
It is NOT a brain function, but rather the energy of rational activity, the synergy of the Spirit of the Lord, Christ, and human consciousness. Results – inspiration, revelation, discovery, intuition.	It is NOT an item-oriented motivating function of the psyche, but rather spiritual uniqueness of soul, synergy – power satisfying needs of the soul.	It is a spiritually emotional organ of the mystical content of the soul, the key object of pedagogical impact.	The activity of the Spirit of the Lord manifesting in the sphere of consciousness and soul. Leads to personality. Man in unity with Christ is a free personality. It regulates goals of human values, self-evaluation, self-respect.	Organ regulating spiritually emotional life of the soul; the place where Spirit of the Lord acts.

Conclusions

1. The system of “traditional versus self-expression values” has been widely used to describe changes occurring worldwide. The Inglehart & Welzel cultural map of the world positions Baltic States right in the middle between the opposites – pointing to fast changes of societies both politically, economically, socially, and culturally. Moving from agrarian toward industrial society causes values to shift.
2. Now, the move from industrial society toward the knowledge society makes the issue of values even hotter. Societies with traditional values promoted and supported for centuries are facing the fast development of democracy. In some instances, new liberal-democratic values are met with suspicion – as mentioned in the article. However, the development of democracy requires the promotion of values that work for initiative and individual creativity of citizens.
3. It should be pointed that radically new possibilities for experimenting with personal identity, thanks to the recent instituting of exchanges that are fixed up without the parties’ physical involvement, in an entirely anonymous, disembodied, and synchronous way, creates a new type of anthropology – alienated from that of European Christian foundations.
4. The duality of humans is a well-known topic in Christian anthropology, stemming from the Biblical account of the creation of man. M. Heidegger has described the man as possessing mutually related “changing” and “steady”

sides. The very idea of democracy may be threatened by the one-sided self-sufficiency of man with a tendency to ignore his Creator.

5. Christian anthropology speaks about “protonorms” as essential for human co-existence (family, procreation, roles of mother and father, etc.). In case these protonorms are ignored, society is at risk of degrading its spiritual tradition and following the way of the “culture of death” (Pope John Paul II).
6. Although M. Heidegger uses the term “steady” side of man, Christian anthropology describes it as being in dynamic and creative relationships with God. Spiritual creativity – and not the outward one – should be protected in the current development of society basics.

All nations have common basic protonorms, and all Europe shares common roots in Christian culture (anthropological notions). Now, different attitudes met in various cultural entities called “nations” toward values of self-expression may be treated as “different cultural scenarios” (a term from social psychology). Following those basic values, each nation develops own behavioral type – illustrating what people mean by freedom, what are limits of freedom, how do they celebrate weddings, how a mother cares for her child, how father speaks to his son, how the stronger one cares for the weak, how the living ones bury their dead – all these basic cultural scenarios determine particular lifestyles.

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“Invisible Children” – Life Situation and Needs of Young People Whose Parents Have Served a Sentence. Research Review

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ABSTRACT

Early adulthood is a particularly interesting period as it can take a huge toll on human life. Many difficulties during this phase are experienced with high intensity. On the one hand, adolescents reach the pick of their energetic potential and strength by that time, enabling them to act on many levels. On the other hand, they have to face a whole spectrum of challenges in adopting new social roles. Therefore, problems of adolescents and young adults whose maturation was intervened with parental imprisonment are interesting. In literature, children of prisoners are described in various ways, starting from forgotten victims of a criminal offense, orphans of justice, penology cinderellas, and invisible victims of a prison boom. Research shows that serving a sentence by a parent has both direct and indirect adverse effects on his child. Evidence of this is the overrepresentation of such a group among adolescents and young adults experiencing mental and emotional problems, those withdrawn from school or social life, low achievers, and those who adopt antisocial attitudes or engage in criminal activities. The purpose of this article is to highlight the most important problems and difficulties in the life of children whose parents were sentenced to imprisonment.

KEYWORDS:

invisible children, imprisonment, prison.

Introduction

In literature, children of prisoners are described in various ways, starting from forgotten victims of a criminal offense, orphans of justice, penology cinderellas, and invisible victims of a prison boom. Unfortunately, such children are forgotten by theorists as well as practitioners related to social rehabilitation pedagogy. Therefore, there is still not enough data on the number of children of people who are located in

penitentiary units, and little research about the influence of parental imprisonment on a child and the living conditions of the "invisible children".

Presenting precise statistics showing data on children of prisoners is impossible. The number of children of people convicted to a prison sentence in each state of the European Union (EU) is unknown for various reasons. Although, specialists try to compensate for these shortcomings with the help of the so-called parenting rates for the prison population. It is estimated that in countries of the Council of Europe, 2,1 million children are separated from their parents and 800 000 children in the UE.

Estimates based on data gathered by the Children of Prisoners Europe organization show that the largest number of children separated from their parents due to serving a sentence by them is in France (131 410), followed by the United Kingdom (107 728), Poland (106 747) and Germany (97 634) (COPE, 2020).

Parental imprisonment, without a doubt, has an impact on child development and their future. Especially if they have to cope with the traumatic situations from their childhood or adolescence. Often only in early adulthood, the individual realizes how previous experiences of the parent's imprisonment determined their fate. The period of adolescence and young adulthood is the time when the individual faces many developmental tasks.

R. Havighurst (1981, pp. 10-89) presented a theory whose main assumption was assigning individual stages of human development to social requirements and expectations. Research participants were given developmental tasks to determine their well-being and the degree to which one is accepted by others. According to Havighurst theory, the key tasks of adolescence are the ability to develop more mature relationships with peers of both genders, accepting one's physicality, achieving emotional independence from parents and other adults as well as the acquisition of a set of values and an ethical system that will serve as a guide for socially responsible behavior. Conversely, the time of early adulthood is when the individual should choose a life partner, start a family, find a profession and acquire skills related to performing specific family roles. Children of prisoners additionally have to deal at the same time with a complicated situation which is parental imprisonment.

The results of the review of researches concerning children of prisoners are presented below. It is worth mentioning that the cited studies are based on two age groups adolescents and young adults.

Socio-Economic Situation of Prisoner Families

Analyzes carried out on the issues of children of persons serving a sentence of imprisonment are part of a broader stream of research on the families of prisoners. In many of them, special attention is paid to the particularly unfavorable socio-economic situation in which their members find themselves.

According to L. Fishman's research, the convict's family may experience condemnation and stigmatization in many spheres of social life, like at school or the workplace. Inmate's children are particularly vulnerable to malicious comments and taunts. The social environment uses commonly known proverbs such as the "apple does not fall far from the tree" or "like father, like son" all the time to look for evidence of inheriting criminal characteristics in the child of the prisoner. The author emphasizes that aggression toward a stigmatized child often appears when he wants to defend himself against harmful behaviors (Fishman, 1990, pp. 184–213). Parent's stay in the penitentiary unit deteriorates childcare. It is especially visible in the field of education. Children of prisoners have low self-esteem, more often feel frustrated, and use violence, especially when they compare their social situation with their peers. All of these factors increase the number of school failures and the "teacher's misunderstanding" (Friedman, 1965, pp. 55–59).

R. Condry carried out an extremely interesting analysis in this area. The researcher looked after the children of people who had committed murder and sexual crimes. It is worth emphasizing that these are the groups of convicts most stigmatized by the community. Condra's research was based on Goffman's stigma theory, making it easier to understand the mechanism conferring criminal characteristics on the convict's family. Treating the inmate's closest relatives "as one" with him is particularly characteristic for the mechanism of conferring criminal characteristics on the family of the convict. Very harmful is also giving a new social role such as "son of the rapist" or "child of the murderer".

The researcher drew attention to the stigma placed on the children of the person who committed a serious crime and the emotions associated with realizing that "everyone knows about who I am" (Condry, 2007, pp. 51–59).

When analyzing the effects of parental imprisonment, these cannot be ignored as well as financial consequences. Especially since many criminological theories assume a strong correlation between the crime rate and the economic situation.

The first researcher who became interested in the impact of serving prison sentences by men on the economic situation of their families was P. Morris. He found that 63% of the 469 examined children of prisoners had experienced a significant deterioration in their financial situation after their fathers were convicted. This author emphasized at the same time that the deterioration of the financial situation could not only result from the loss of an important and sometimes the only source of income but also was associated with the emergence of new expenses (Morris, 1956, pp. 45–46).

It is worth emphasizing, however, that the economic situation of the families of prisoners is influenced by many different factors and depends primarily on the individual characteristics of the family. If the convicted had a job and his income was above the poverty line, and at the same time, he was not an addict and did not use violence against his relatives, it was certainly his imprisonment that negatively affected the economic situation of the family. On the other hand, when the imprisoned parent

was burdensome and harmed the family, then his "disappearance" from the family system is perceived as an event that brings relief, peace, and a sense of balance (even at the expense of material losses) (Gordon, 2009). The vast majority of prisoners' families experience deterioration of their home budget. The stronger the closest people at large try to maintain relations with the convicted person, the worse their economic situation is (Hairston, 2002, pp. 45–47). Many families already struggle with a difficult financial situation, which is mainly related to unemployment, social assistance, and the help of closest relatives. The sentencing then undoubtedly aggravates the existing difficulties. It should be noted that some of the prisoners' family members are forced to resign from a paid job to look after children, which entails further losses in income. Aleksandra Szymanowska, on the other hand, emphasizes that the daily maintenance of the family becomes more difficult not only because of the loss of income (often minor and irregular) of the imprisoned parent but also due to the obligation to pay court fees, pay lawyers or travel costs of visits. Paradoxically, despite a noticeable deterioration in material status, families support prisoners financially and materially (Szymanowska, 2003, pp. 31–33). As a result, there is the necessity to take up additional employment by the remaining parent or transfer some of the duties of ensuring the family's existence to the children. Sometimes, the children take up part-time jobs or try to give the other parent a chance to work, as they also look after the home and younger siblings. Sometimes they also become members of criminal groups, which Cloward and Ohlin pointed out as a part of the concept of diversified possibilities (Siemiaszko, 1993, pp. 165–182).

C. Hairston also drew attention to grandparents who raise their grandchildren due to the imprisonment of one or both parents. In his opinion, the results unanimously indicate economic problems as the main cause of childcare difficulties (Hairston, 2007, pp. 14–26).

J. Hagan, on the other hand, in his research on the families of prisoners, pays special attention to the direct effects of economic scarcity. He refers primarily to theories of crime and deviation, including the theory of diversified possibilities and the theory of anomie. He argues that while the direct effects are mainly related to loss of income, the indirect consequences are related to the loss of social capital. Participation in the life of the child of the parent who remains at large is limited. It is mainly related to supplementing the economic shortcomings. That, in turn, results in a weakening of ties and the relationship itself. (Hagan, 1996, pp. 19–28).

Mental and Emotional Problems

The family is essential in shaping the individual. A family environment is a place in which the child gains first emotional experiences. In recent years the discussion on the situation of children of persons sentenced to imprisonment has drawn the attention of many specialists, including psychologists and educators, who ask themselves

key questions: how parental imprisonment affects the child's psyche and how to deal with this particular group?

When analyzing the mental and emotional problems of children of prisoners, researchers often refer to the research of J. Murray. In his opinion, about 30% of prisoners' children suffer from mental health problems, which is three times more than in the general population (Murray, 2007, pp. 55–81).

According to the research of S. Friedman and F. Esselstyn, children of prisoners were assessed below the school average in terms of psychological, social, and educational skills much more often than their colleagues. In addition, they experience a sense of shame, anxiety, loneliness, fear, anger, guilt, which in the future may result in depression, sleep problems, withdrawal, manifestations of aggression, truancy, running away from home (Friedman & Esselstyn, 1965, pp. 55–59).

The moment when a parent is being arrested is usually a traumatic experience for a child. Research by C. Noble confirmed that the pain experienced by a child during the imprisonment of a parent is similar to the one experienced when someone dies. Especially in the initial period of imprisonment (Noble, 1995, pp. 67–71).

R. Park and K. Clarke-Stewart, who analyzed numerous English-language studies, indicated that the vast majority of children who witnessed their mother's arrest (the mother had the sole responsibility of care) were under 7 years old. These dramatic experiences strongly influenced their behavior and caused educational problems, school avoidance, violence abuse, and self-harm (Park & Clarke-Stewart, 2003, p. 199).

D. Johnston, while studying the long-term effects of parental imprisonment, drew attention to an important factor, which is the child's developmental age at the time of separation from the parent. He pointed out that the consequences of such separation depend not only on the ability to understand what happened and express emotions but also on the particular needs at specific child development stages. Possible negative consequences of parental imprisonment are as follows (Johnston, 1995, p. 68):

Development stage	Characteristics of development stage	Developmental tasks	Risk factors	Results
Infancy (0–2 years)	Full independence	Affection and trust	Separation parent-child; permanent trauma	Weakening of the bond parent-child
Toddler (2–6 years)	Increased perception and mobility; not full individualization	Sense of autonomy, independence and initiatives	Separation parent-child; permanent trauma	Fear, developmental regress; post-traumatic stress disorder; feeling guilty

Development stage	Characteristics of development stage	Developmental tasks	Risk factors	Results
Childhood (7–10 years)	Increase of independence, skill of inference, engagement in a group	Diligence, skill of undertaking constructive activity	Separation parent-child; permanent trauma	Post-traumatic stress disorder; reactive behaviors
Adolescence (11–14 years)	Abstract thinking improvement, future-proof thinking, aggression, puberty	Skill of undertaking constructive activity with other people, control of emotions	Separation parent-child; permanent trauma	Reactive behaviors; rejection of limitations
Late adolescence (15–18 years)	Emotional crisis, feeling lost, achieving sexual maturity, abstract thinking, independence	Shaping identity, engagement in mature activities and relationships, conflicts resolution	Separation parent-child; permanent trauma	Premature termination of parent-child relationship; Intergenerational Inheritance of Crime and Imprisonment

The research shows that the guardian's gender also affects how difficult and traumatic experience is to a child the imprisonment of a parent. It is separation from the mother that is considered more painful and burdensome. It is related to the so-called primary attachment and changes that progress with the mother's imprisonment (Bloom & Steinhart, 1993, p. 15).

The research of T. Fritsch and J. Burkhead showed a significant correlation between the sex of the convicted parent and the type of behavior presented by their children. Father's stay in prison was correlated with the child's hostility, use of psychoactive substances, truancy, and criminal behavior. The mother's imprisonment was mainly associated with emotional withdrawal, lack of involvement in play, fear of school, excessive emotionality, and nightmares (Fritsch & Burkhead, 1981, pp. 83–88).

Antisocial Behavior of Prisoners' Children

Research analyzing the issue of the intergenerational transmission of antisocial behavior occupies a special place in literature. Among them, there can be distinguished studies and theories referring to biological factors, i.e., genetic predisposition to antisocial and criminal behaviors, and social factors, i.e., values, norms, and patterns of behavior acquired in socialization and recreated in adulthood by prisoners' children.

The transmission model of criminal behavior assumes that traumatic experiences (such as those experienced by children of prisoners) lead to behaviors based on permanent patterns of reaction in various situations (including difficult ones). During childhood and later in adulthood, individuals reach for them in situations where they do not have the ability or skills to meet their needs in a socially acceptable way (Johnston, 1995, pp. 80–81).

Much research has been done to show a strong correlation between serving a sentence by a parent and their children's tendency to antisocial behavior. A study by L. Glaze and L. Maruschak on 18 000 convicted parents indicated that as many as 49% of them had at least one person serving a prison sentence among their closest family (Glaze & Maruschak, 2008, pp. 7–10). In Great Britain, on the other hand, 43% of studied inmates were related to another person serving their sentence, while in the general population, it was only 16% (Social Exclusion Unit, 2002).

A particularly important social aspect from the perspective of research on prisoners' children is the replication of deviant and criminal behavior by successive generations of prisoners' families. According to J. Murray, the probability of antisocial behavior among these children is higher than in the case of their peers, and there is at least five times higher risk of them being sent to prison. In his research, he also draws attention to the fact that the stigmatization process that affects a large proportion of prisoners' children can take on an "institutional" character. It means that the stigma affects the child frequently in places that are supposed to support them. That, in turn, increases the probability that the inmate's child will repeat the fate of its parent in the future and will commit a crime (Murray, 2008, pp. 273–279).

It is worth emphasizing that both the sentencing of the mother and father to imprisonment more often affects families already struggling with poverty, inadequate housing conditions, mental illness, and violence. A. Cunningham's research on a group of Canadian families of female prisoners showed that the mother's imprisonment brings more dramatic effects than the father's imprisonment. Over 50% of women staying in Canadian prisons are daughters of former prisoners. The cited studies have shown that due to the mother's absence, children much more often go to youth centers. They also step more often on the criminal path (Cunningham, 2001, pp. 35–36).

On the other hand, research conducted by scientists from Cambridge showed that 48% of the surveyed boys, whose at least one parent stayed in prison, committed criminal offenses. It was also noticed that the parents' imprisonment in many cases had a very negative effect on the mental health of their sons. Different kinds of disorders appeared much more often than in the control group. It is also worth emphasizing that they were permanent. The same researchers, analyzing about 165 studies focusing on the issues of children of prisoners, identified 16 of them that met the methodological requirements. The selected materials were subjected to secondary analysis to determine whether and how a parent serving a sentence affects their children's mental health. Analysis showed that the probability factor of the occur-

rence of antisocial behavior and mental problems was relatively high. That, in turn, led the researchers to conclude that the parent or both parents' imprisonment may be considered an indicator of undesirable changes. Scientists concluded that

"even if imprisonment of parents does not directly cause antisocial behavior or mental problems of children, the very fact that it largely allows to "predict" these effects shows that such situation may be strongly related to other factors leading to problematic behavior of children" (Murray & Farrington, 2008, pp. 273–279).

Reflections of Young Adults on the Imprisonment of a Parent

Losing a parent due to serving a sentence of imprisonment affects a child's life in many aspects. Researchers dealing with the issues of parental imprisonment, despite many difficulties, are still trying to broaden their knowledge of this subject. It is hard not to admit that adjudication about the long-term consequences of this type of separation is a huge challenge. Many theorists assume that the analysis of the social situation of prisoners' children should be based on long-term research and studies involving a large population so that the obtained results can be generalized – which is extremely difficult. However, it is worth emphasizing that the vast majority of research devoted to the families and children of the convicted was conducted in qualitative research and provided a plethora of important conclusions.

Therefore, the interesting research carried out by O. Helton, D. Young, and C. Allen should be mentioned here. The main goal was to capture the experiences of young adults facing trauma related to their parent's imprisonment.

O. Helton's research had five respondents who declared that their parents went to prison when they were between 13–18. The data was collected using partially structured interviews. The researcher raised topics related to economic problems faced by young people, relations with the closest environment (family, teachers, peers) and the parent in prison, and asked questions related to psychosocial development. Adolescents, in most cases, admitted that they were in a tough financial situation during their parent's stay in prison. In more than one case, the parent who was imprisoned was the main breadwinner of the family. All respondents also declared that soon after this event, they undertook part-time jobs to improve the family's financial situation. After the arrest of one of the parents, as many as three respondents went to foster families. Furthermore, those who remained under the other parent's care described their relationship with him/her as complicated, full of uncertainty, and lacking support. Relations with teachers, on the other hand, were usually described as neutral. Only one of them confessed that his tutor was not only a teacher for him but also a friend and mentor – someone who helped him a lot through this difficult time. In all statements, peers were described as positive characters, providing support and help. In research conducted by O. Helton, the relations with the imprisoned parent were described most extensively. The researcher distinguished three types

of such a relationship. The first one was characterized by no contact with the parent and the child's reluctance to contact him. A lack of contact also characterized the second, but in this case, the child declared willingness to resume it. The third type of relationship was based on maintaining a relationship with a parent (contact was regular or occasional). The last aspect that the researcher took into consideration was psychosocial development. All respondents confessed that they have struggled with shame and low self-esteem. At the same time, they are constantly trying to be perfectionists in every area of life. They strive to achieve the highest possible results at work to achieve the financial stability that they have lacked so far (Helton, 2019).

Fourteen men aged 18 to 28 participated in the study by D. Young. The main criterion for selecting the research group was the fact that the respondents were from 12 to 17 years old when the parent was sentenced to imprisonment. The researcher decided to conduct qualitative research, and the used technique was a partially structured interview. In his project, D. Young focused mainly on the diagnosis of self-image and the relationships formed by the respondents with relatives, i.e., their partners and children. The vast majority of respondents did not have children and declared that they would not have one. Their main argument was a lack of parental instinct and the fear that they would not cope in this role because they did not have good role models. Two of the respondents became fathers during university studies. They admitted that they had not planned it. At present, they maintain occasional contact with their daughters. Just one of the interviewees claimed to have a good relationship with children. Love relationships created by surveyed men were mainly characterized by a lack of stability and trust. Most of the interviewees admitted that they could not build a lasting relationship because they were afraid that they would be betrayed and abandoned. They present themselves as people with many problems. Half of them confessed to addiction to alcohol or drugs. Two respondents attended therapy due to personality disorders. Furthermore, as many as four men followed their parents' footsteps and served prison sentences (Young, 2019).

The latest studies worth paying attention to are those carried out by C. Allen. The researcher focused mainly on three aspects of the experience of adult children of prisoners. Analysis of the collected material was based on the theory of ambiguous loss and the concept of resilience. The concept of ambiguous loss is a theoretical construct proposed by the researcher P. Boss to define the loss, which is unclear, as is the case of a parent being sentenced to imprisonment. P. Boss distinguished two possible types of such "unclear loss": when a family member is physically absent but psychologically present, and when a family member is physically present but psychologically absent (Boss, 2009). On the other hand, the theory of resilience focuses on explaining the phenomenon of the good functioning of some individuals despite unfavorable living conditions, adversity, or traumatic events (Rutter, 2006, pp. 1–12). Based on the collected material, the researcher distinguished three key aspects of the young adult experience. The first one concerns the trauma associated

with the moment of arrest and then the parent's imprisonment. According to C. Allen's research, children, for the most part, perceive this moment as an ambiguous loss of a parent. Some admitted that they felt lost because of it. Another aspect that the researcher paid particular attention to concerns communication between the child and the parent at large. Often the children did not see the other parent's imprisonment or find out about it too late. Because of that, they often felt uninformed and sometimes also excluded. The respondents stated that they were accompanied by sadness, regret, fear, a sense of emptiness, and hopelessness during the entire period of parental imprisonment. Moreover, they all experienced stigma. Based on the theory of resilience and the obtained research results, C. Allen identified the factors protecting the children of prisoners and the risk factors. The former includes membership in a positive peer group, supportive adults (teachers, mentors), involvement in constructive activities (access to sports clubs and volunteer clubs). On the other hand, the risk factors that Allen pointed out were antisocial role patterns, lack of bond with the parent, low self-esteem, and early occurrences of problematic behaviors (Allen, 2019).

Conclusions

Existing studies and analyses prove that children of people serving prison sentences belong to a group particularly exposed to negative phenomena such as poverty, difficulties at school, psychosocial problems, mimicking antisocial behavior, and sometimes even recreating their parents' criminal careers. Additionally, the children of prisoners are still "invisible" in the justice system and social policy. That, in turn, makes it impossible to take preventive actions. According to Ann Cunningham, child punishment is the flip side of parental imprisonment and the dark side of the justice system. Moreover, it is a rarely raised topic in public (Cunningham, 2001, p. 35).

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Activities of the Local Community to Prevent the Social Exclusion of Children and Youth

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ABSTRACT

The own task of the local government in Poland is to develop and implement a strategy for solving social problems, with particular emphasis on social welfare programmes, prevention, alcohol-related problems, and others. These programmes aim to integrate people from special risk groups. The annual resolutions aim to implement and support people at risk of social exclusion, especially children and adolescents. Contemporary prevention assumes a positive development and a positive course of the socialization process, for which the participation of its entities is essential. The essence of the article is an analysis of initiatives undertaken in the city of Siedlce toward children and young people resulting from the adopted strategy based on the synergy of activities of many institutions (families, schools, etc.) in prevention, including activities aimed at achieving the assumed goals, i.e., providing knowledge of social risks and the development of key skills to avoid risky behaviors. Surrounding minors complement the mentioned initiatives with aid activities of support organizations in situations requiring external interventions.

KEYWORDS:

prevention, social exclusion, strategy, minors, local government.

Human resources, including the youngest generations, are the future of every society, and preparing them actively and creatively for functioning in society is one of the most important challenges of the present modern country. The human being functions in a natural, cultural, and civilizational environment, forming the place for existence and realizing natural activities. The social environment is created by interacting with people who create the environment and determine appropriate social roles.

To a great extent, the modern world is characterized by diverse problems in relations between people and difficulties in the appropriate (according to social expecta-

tions) fulfilling social models. Observed growth of social pathology, starvation and demographic problems, wars, military conflicts, terrorism, social exclusion, ethical values crisis, natural environment degradation, the uncontrolled influence of media (especially the Internet), general availability of addictive substances are only some of the factors which influence psychosocial disorganization of a person, his family, and the social environment. The phenomena, more and more characteristic of present days, vitally influence the socialization of human being, which is achieved according to the environment (Berger & Luckmann, 1983, p. 87).

The phenomena are especially dangerous for young people who are not able to face them and protect themselves against them sufficiently, on account of their emotional and social immaturity, which is especially visible in their relations with social surroundings, approach and the way they fulfill their social roles (Cialdini, 2000).

In a world where the social space involves a lot of inconsistent values, ideologies, and truths, it is difficult to act in a socially indisputable way, which substantially influences the level of complacency, which constitutes an objective obstacle in the process of shaping the correct, true, and reality-based picture of themselves, the world, and their mature ethical and social attitudes. Present-day ideologies that shape the view of the world and personalities of the youths head to accept such rules and standards of behavior that undermine the sense and the essence of a human being – toward nihilism and narcissism (Malicka-Gorzelańczyk, 2003, p. 378). People's lives concentrate on multiplying material assets and providing for their own needs, often at the expense of neglecting moral and spiritual values. Narcissistic presumption of the human being renders to be more and more dangerous for himself, his physical, mental, and social health, leading him to alienation and confusion. The consequence of the process is developing of disorganization of human development, especially adolescence, and intensity of various forms of his behavior indicating to his problems with adopting indicating downright to the disability of social awkwardness nature (Dobijański, 2018, p. 48).

Political transformation in Poland, which took place at the end of the previous century, caused certain consequences that contributed to numerous dangers and concerned the individuals and social groups. Consumerism and crisis of traditional values, the gradual disintegration of the family and weakening of the family ties, depreciating social institutions, including schools as the place of influence and support for parents in bringing up process contributed to showing lack of respect for norms and social rules, growth in aggressiveness, showing egocentric and hedonistic attitudes marked by passivity and indifference toward other members of society. The lack of the skill to handle the difficulties became the cause of escape for younger and younger people in the world of drugs, alcohol, and other psychoactive substances. Inability to handle the new reality became characteristic for the educational environment (family, school), while dysfunctional behavior stopped being characteristic for the dysfunctional or pathological environment.

Theoretical Model of Preventive Effect

The deliberations show that providing, especially a young man, with educational care is a pedagogical challenge on his way to socialization. Undertaking different pedagogical measures has the task of influencing the behavior, system of values, and ethical and moral attitudes of young people. The disturbance of the socializing process may, in consequence, lead to social exclusion, ergo to recognizing the adolescent as antisocial, demoralized, or socially awkward.

Identifying the potential disorders in human development appearing in relation to himself or the society demands the assessment of the direction of the disorders. It forms the basis for deciding about initiating the procedure to correct worrying (negative) behavior. The actions may be achieved according to the salutogenic model, the essence of which is the emphasis on keeping health (not on curing the disease) or pathogenic, the essence of which concentrates on the causes of the illnesses and the factors increasing the risk that they may appear.

The choice of one of the ways of acting demands:

- Diagnosis of the patterns, modes of behavior, and other symptoms indicating adaptation or becoming a maladjustment member of the society;
- Diagnosis and identification of mechanism responsible for the correct social adjustment or maladjustment;
- Assessment of the influence of interactions of the biopsychical, socio-cultural and environmental factors forming correct or incorrect behavior indicating or not to occurring adjustment disorders.

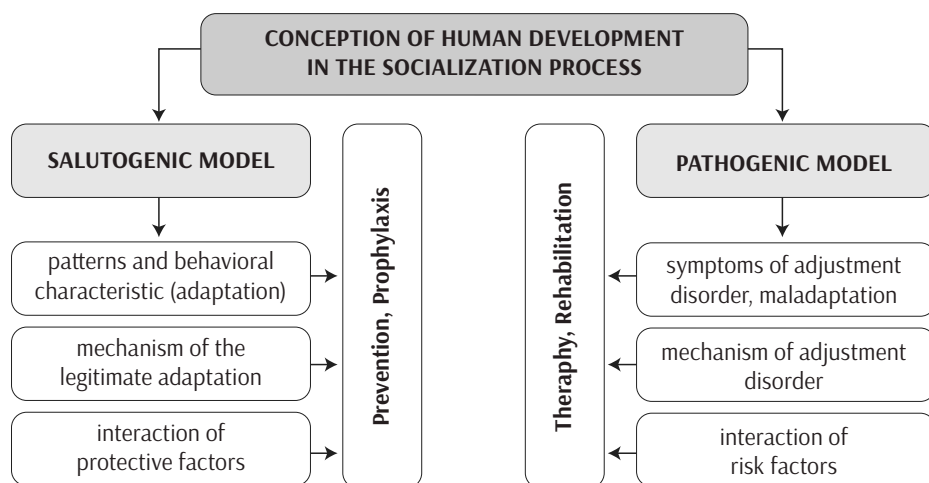


Figure 1. Model of identification salutogenic or pathogenic development of a human being

Source: Dobijański, 2018, p. 48.

Depending on the intensity of occurring socializing problems and the need to take defined countermeasures in connection to them, the decisions concerning taking preventive (prophylactic) or therapeutic (corrective) measures are taken. Without going into details, it can be claimed that preventive measures, the essence of which is protecting a man from exposure to the consequences of different risky behaviors. Consequently, there is the need to take therapeutic measures toward the person, which are socially and economically desirable.

One of the aims of prevention is the identification and elimination of the risk factors.

That meaning of prevention inevitably has to be connected with a negative connotation such as do not do this or avoid that. (...) Negative prevention is a defensive action, which is difficult to communicate to the youths. The perspective of appearing any health problems in connection with drinking or smoking is far enough for them. Thus they are not motivated to abandon them. If one wants to convince the youths, an offensive strategy, which is going to encourage, stimulate to develop, strengthen and positively “wind up” will be unnecessary (Ostaszewski, 2006, p. 6).

Such a positive development aims at developing strong points and resources which a human is provided with, thanks to those actions, they are supposed to become more resistant to the risk factors and at the same time be more prepared to struggle with the problems waiting for them in their life. Negative prevention assumes eliminating risk factors (whereby it is hard to assume the possibility of exclusion of their influence on human development completely – genetic factors, mental illnesses, pathological or dysfunctional family). Positive prevention requires focusing on the factors that enhance (protect) the human being from outside threats, i.e., its social environment. Positive strategies demand offensive actions concentrated on encouraging and motivating the human being to take actions, which should result in obtaining the skill to face the hazards of civilization. Positive development programmes involve:

- developing and strengthening individual potentials,
- starting and developing relations with significant pedagogical people,
- creating a friendly and development-hospitable social environment (Ostaszewski, 2006).

The consecutive aim of the prevention concerns prevention of demoralization, reduction of social maladjustment, and counteracting social pathology. The essence of the preventive activities is reducing the scale of potential moral, cultural and social threats, resulting in undesirable behavior deviations of the human being. Prevention is thus the supporting action of the socializing process (Kamiński, 1972), which task is to neutralize the impact of the factors which can be potentially dangerous for the human being (Wroczyński, 1976). The actions create “the system of methods and measures which aim is the removal of causes of minor social phenomena and

measures and create the conditions for normal functioning and development of the individuals and social groups” (Hołyst, 1994, p. 545), so protecting the individual and social groups from disorders, which are connected with “the system of impulses disenabling very often a positive social adaptation” (Kuberska-Gaca & Gaca, 1986, p. 112). Prevention activity is inseparably connected with the practice of social pedagogy and searching for the answers to questions involving social conditioning in the functioning of the human and the influence on his correct development.

The accomplishment of the preventive actions demands adopting a strategy of proceeding. As far back as in the 1970s in Europe and other parts of the world, there were, most of all, informational strategies employed, used mostly in addiction prevention. Provided information aimed at bringing out emotions, fear, which aim was discouraging to use drugs.

After a few years of implementing such programmes, it turned out that informational actions, especially frightening, do not bring the desired effects but contribute to increasing the number of intoxicated. Under the influence of more and more often reports of the harmfulness of informational actions, in the USA in 1973, it was forbidden to do such actions and to produce materials about drugs (Śliwa, 2013, p. 55).

At present, the applied strategies are educational, depending on developing and forming skills that allow using the socially desirable norms and rules instead of undesirable norms (normative education) in personal life. Youth leaders are included in the prevention actions, whose task is to model the right behavior of their peers (peer education). The other strategy concerns shaping the life skills (assertiveness, communication, building a positive picture of themselves), thus allowing them to avoid risky behavior. The next strategy is the strategy of alternatives, which aim is to offer safe, free of the dangers to their development, forms of activities to the youths. Some other strategies are also worth mentioning: strategy of educators and attendants (teachers and parents) development; strategy of development of environmental resources, a strategy of building ties with the school, a strategy of intervention or at last strategy of reducing the damages, which aims at preventing already existing social tinderboxes from spreading (Malinowska, 1989).

The entire elimination of all the threats that influence their socialization process from human life is not possible. Therefore, desirable actions that seem reasonable and can bring expected results are actions in human personal resources and resources coming from their relationship with immediate surroundings or local environmental resources. Among the most important categories of protective factors in particular areas, worth mentioning are cognition, temper, optimism, serenity, social skills, positive picture of themselves, motivational process (individual resources area); parent-child relation, constructive peers, good and competent adults (the area of the resources resulting from the relationship with closest relatives); good school, commitment in constructive activities, friendly and safe neighborhood (local

environment area). Positive prevention aims to develop life skills that allow them to deal with everyday problems, including communication and building interpersonal relationships, dealing with stress and negative emotions, forming self-confidence, and making their own decisions and critical thinking (Ostaszewski, 2006).

Taking measures in prevention in the local environment is the real challenge for the local community. Depending on accepted concepts and local strategies, prevention can be pursued in varied ways. A lot of local communities in Poland use tested and popular solutions applied abroad. Especially, the solutions applied in Northern Europe are worth being mentioned where in the system of preventive actions applied in the local environment the specialists are used who are indirectly arranged in prevention conducted by the so-called family coaches, street tutors, or friends of street children.

“Family coach” works indirectly with parents of the children showing the symptoms of social awkwardness. His task is to make a diagnosis of the family situation, determine the needs and the range of help on the part of the services, institutions, and family support organizations, conduct the mediation, organize participation in the family therapy, interim intervention, help in solving conflicts and pedagogical problems, conduct consultations, and open counseling. It is also a person whose task is to improve relations in the family, to target the objectives, pursuit of the goals and aspirations of a family and also indicating to the good ways of spending free time. “Street tutor’s” task is to prevent social pathology and socially unaccepted behavior of children and the youths by organizing their time and developing their interests. His task is to organize interesting forms of spending free time, such as leisure time activities, sports activities, team games, art clubs, going to the cinema or on trips, and offering his help in solving interim difficulties and problems. The place of his work is the street, pitch, yard, bus station, and other places where the youths gather. His activity aims to strengthen the positive attitude of his protégés, develop life aspirations and possibilities of implementing them in society. “Street friends” are people who take care daily of children neglected by their parents, fostered outside the family environment. Their work aims to consult, encourage the use of the assistance of pedagogical institutions and people by neglected children and youths, including making contact with them, assisting the children from dysfunctional families, and preventing them from demoralization. The essence of pedagogical work is to create conditions enabling the children to find themselves in their lives, avoiding falling into the bad company, handling the crisis, stimulating desirable behavior, and awakening interests and passions (Makowska, 2001).

Prevention conducted in a social environment requires the support of the nature of social assistance. At present, there is an increasing conviction about “the need for the wide range of development and applying various social measures toward these individuals who are thought to need those measures by a society” (Nowak, 2003 p. 343).

The aim of social assistance is the support of pedagogical actions through fulfilling the existential needs, “what may be and is in more and more specific range

an antidote to social problems” (Kantowicz, 2005, p. 68). Implementation of tasks by a social worker depends on giving professional help to people from the so-called groups of risk and their families, which allows them to identify and solve their personal and socially conditioned problems, which interfere with development and obtaining social skills. The role of a social worker is to enable to overcome the difficulties through supportive, rehabilitation, protecting, or corrective actions. “The essence of social work is to aid in creating the minimum social conditions necessary to lead a life according to the law system (employment, accommodation, material support, counseling, and so on)” (Stępnia, 1998, p. 147).

The social prevention system must be coordinated. It must have a clear and legible concept, be complex, internally consistent, targeting in solving previously diagnosed and described problems. Only then the preventive measures will be able to contradict the crime and demoralization of children and the youths. The substantive background, allowing to increase the effectiveness of taken measures (teachers, parents, mentors, and other adult people dealing with the work with a child, must be provided with permanent access to up-to-date knowledge in social pathology) and the infrastructure background so that prophylactic actions will have the appropriate conditions and instrumentation.

The essence of prevention in the social environment are actions leading to organizing and integrating the society around social problems, contradicting malfunctioning of pedagogical environments, activation of social powers, and initiatives on the efficient and effective solution of problems appearing in society. Such prevention requires penetrating diagnosis and current, permanent monitoring of appearing in this field needs. Then, it allows to take immediate measures: toward threats of a young child and his family – basic health center;

toward the threats and negligence of the kindergarten and primary school children – kindergartens and primary schools respectively; toward adolescents – schools of appropriate levels; toward the youths endangered with demoralization or demoralized – relatively curatorial centers, correction centers; toward juvenile or adult offenders – social care centers, probation centers or prisons (Ambrozik, 2010, pp. 167–168).

Certainly, to get a defined configuration of powers and institutions engaged and to initiate all variety of actions, the responsible and solidarity cooperation of all entities being part of the preventive and correctional system is required. Such system functioning requires the proper style of work of the people, institutions, and organizations that create the system (which constitute a part of its structure).

European Standards of the Quality of Prevention

In Europe, the efforts to standardize preventive measures that lead to gaining the highest quality effects, planning preventive measures, and applying tested preven-

tive methods are observed increasingly. One of such measures is the European standards of the quality of drug addiction prevention, published as a coursebook No. 7 by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA). It was created within a programme Partnership for the Standards in Prevention which has developed European Standards in 2008-2011 within the Delphi project. The document was created based on reviewing existing standards in drugs addiction prophylaxis, both in Europe and other parts of the world and after gaining more than 400 opinions of specialists working in counteracting drug addiction from 6 different European countries.

European standards of quality in addiction prevention create the first European system concerning implementing high-quality drugs addiction prevention. The standards reflect integrally consistent and long-term policy in the field of preventive measures, appreciate the importance of applying integrated methods of working with young people, and also appreciating and rewarding the participation of the professionals. The standards determine necessary tasks in planning, implementing, and evaluating preventive programs (EMCDDA, 2011, p. 35).

The essence of the standards is to identify the weaker sides of proposed preventive programmes and improve their quality. They are also used for creating new programmes to comply with their achievement with standards existing in Europe. The standards allow everyone who deals with prevention to identify fields that achieve positive criteria for the practice in European understanding.

Europeans Standards of the quality of prevention of drug addiction were developed through the synthesis of 19 existing documents, including national and international standards (...). Some of the documents covered by the project in the direct way were relevant in the field of alcohol and drugs preventive measures. (...) Prevention do not have to concern a particular substance. Many European Standards can be successfully used in every health or social intervention. This happens because European Standards focus on the content of action less, more on the organization and practice required for high quality intervention. Thus, the topic can seem to be different, organization and required practice is very similar (Brotherhood, 2014).

The standards allow for planning, implementing, and evaluating preventive interventions. They are also the source of reflection connected with the ways of planning preventive interventions.

European quality standards in prevention demonstrate the project cycle of prevention project beginning with the “development phase, through realization and ending with evaluation” (EMCDDA, 2011, p. 46).

The proposed project cycle is an optimal proposal for realizing preventive measures and gaining quality standards, although the measures can be organized differently in practice. It does not seem to be a mistake to adopt standards to own

conditions, resign from some of the components of the cycle, or change in their sequence on account of local circumstances. Some of the standards can be more useful at the organizational or strategic level than at the programmes' level.

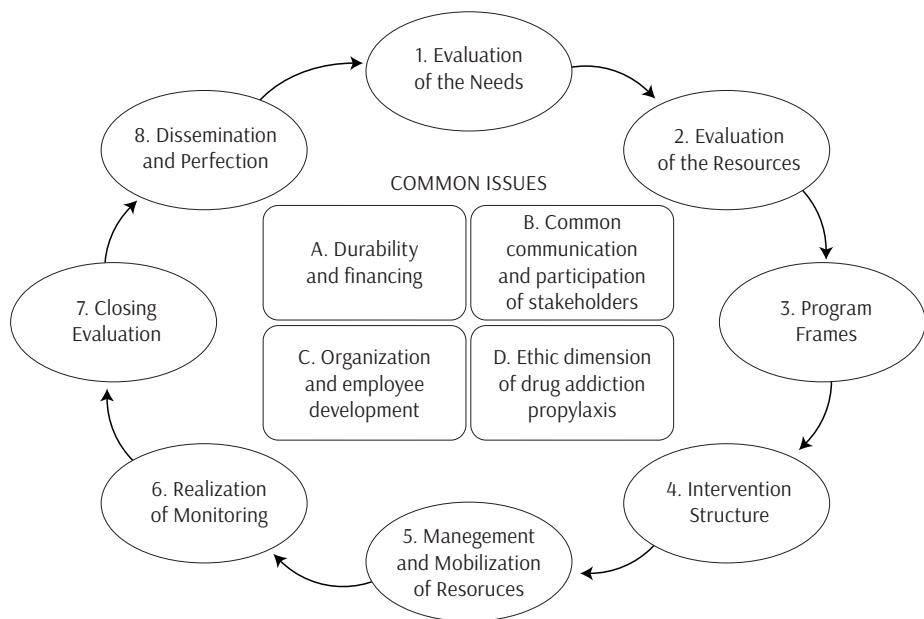


Figure 2. Project cycle of prevention programme

Source: EMCDDA, 2011, p. 46.

Practical Preventive Measures on an Example of the Local Community in Siedlce¹

The local community in Siedlce implements preventive measures developed and described in the Urban Prevention and Addiction Problems Solving Programme. The scheduled tasks are the effect of conducted in the second half of 2020 diagnosis of local social threats in the city of Siedlce. The analysis was based on the research done among the adult inhabitants, the owners of points of alcohol sales, data received from Urban Family Assistance Centre, Police, Municipal Police and other institutions and associations working on behalf of a child and a family, but most of all the youths learning in local primary and secondary schools.

¹ Information included in this part of the article comes from Urban Prevention and Addiction Problems Solving Programme prepared by Representative of the President of the City of Siedlce for Addiction Problems Solving PhD Katarzyna Marciniak-Paprocka, accepted to be executed by the Act of the City Council.

The authorizing officer of the budget and the coordinator is the Representative of the President of the City of Siedlce for Addiction Problems Solving. In the programme's implementation participate natural and legal persons, entities working in public benefit and volunteering, and units included in the public finances sector who possessed the required knowledge, experience, and staff potential regarding the tasks included in the programme.

The research concerning adult people involved cognition of social attitudes and issues connected with psychoactive substances, alcohol, nicotine, gambling or electronic media addiction, and domestic abuse. It was diagnosed among the most important social problems indicated by the adult inhabitants of Siedlce that the problem of unemployment is a cause of such phenomena as depression, alcoholism, and poverty. Among numerous research results are those indicating that alcohol is present in the lives of the adult inhabitants of Siedlce. 52% of the respondents think that people drinking alcohol are dangerous or rather dangerous for the local environment. 74% of respondents think that there are no difficulties purchasing alcohol by the juveniles. Adult inhabitants of Siedlce, asked about the presence of people in their nearest environment who use psychoactive substances, indicated to at least one person who uses narcotics (marijuana and cannabis – 28%, amphetamine – 17%, molly – 6%, LSD – 5%, heroin – 2%) and boosters (12% of subjects), and 20% – use of drugs in a harmful way. What is more alarming, 23% of people confessed that they know where to buy psychoactive substances. The analyses of the results into beliefs of the respondents in upbringing indicate that the vast majority of respondents do not show the parental attitude that uses violence as the parenting measure. Nevertheless, only 15% indicate that parenting based on physical punishment should be forbidden by law, but 34% of adults are convinced about the effectiveness of occasional physical punishment as a parenting method, and 14% of respondents declare that they are familiar with people who experience the domestic violence.

The aim of the research in the school environment of children and the youths was the recognition of students' attitudes and beliefs concerning psychoactive substances – alcohol, drugs, and boosters. 1692 people (898 from primary schools and 804 from secondary schools) have participated in the research. Conducted survey research shows that the social climate of the educational institution is one of the reasons of taking risky behavior by children and the youths. The majority of the surveyed students declare that they do not experience violence at school or experience it only a few times a year, although students admit that there are some schoolmates at school who they are afraid of – the phenomena is mostly visible in 4-6 grade primary school children. The phenomenon of the „wave” is vestigial at schools. Most of the students feel very good or rather good on every educational level in their classes. However, in every of the three age groups, there are from 2% to 5% of people who feel so bad in their environment that they would prefer to change it.

Recommendations resulting from the research of the students in Siedlce concerning the form of preventive measures addressed to that group involve:

- strengthening the positive attitude toward the teachers and creating the spirit of cooperation between teachers in the school and supporting constructive interests and children and the youths' after school activities;
- strengthening the positive contact with parents, parents' monitoring of free after school activities and places where children and the youths spent time;
- supporting educators and teachers about professional burnout, taking care of the good condition of teachers' mental health;
- supporting students in developing their passions, interests, and attitudes focused on generativity, creativity, and motivation for learning new positive things;
- strengthening the sense of belonging, effectiveness, and agency in students;
- creating the positive atmosphere of cooperation that will enable the students to make decisions freely and take responsibility for them;
- attention to preventive actions focused on teaching life skills connected with a sense of assertiveness, constructive conflicts, problem-solving, or supporting their self-esteem.

The programme's main aim is to form the social policy by conducting activities connected with prevention and addiction problems solving and social integration of addicted people, especially people addicted to alcohol.

Specific objectives are:

- 1) promotion of healthy and active lifestyle and constructive forms of spending free time;
- 2) The change of the way of drinking habits and developing the awareness regarding using the psychoactive substances (especially alcohol), behavioral addictions, and other risky behaviors of the inhabitants of the city;
- 3) Developing the assistance system and support toward addicted people and their families;
- 4) Contradicting to developing and removing the threats resulting from addictions (especially overusing alcohol);
- 5) Providing the conditions of operation for institutions and non-governmental organizations whose aim is to promote sobriety and abstinence, influence on people overusing alcohol, and provide help for their families;
- 6) Supporting work of non-governmental organizations in the mentioned sphere;
- 7) Cooperation with the catholic church and other religious organizations regarding upbringing in sobriety and contradicting alcoholism.

The objectives are obtained with:

1. Conducting prophylactic information actions and educational actions regarding solving alcohol problems and contradicting drug addiction for children and the youths in particular – including conducting after-school sport classes and actions to feed the children who participate in after-school caring and therapeutic programmes.
2. Providing psychosocial and legal help for families with alcohol problems and especially protection against domestic violence.
3. Increasing the availability of therapeutic and rehabilitation help for people addicted to alcohol.
4. Supporting the institutions, associations, non-governmental organizations, and neutral persons working on alcohol problem-solving.
5. Taking interventions for the infringements at provisions of the Act on Upbringing in Sobriety and Alcoholism Prevention and appearing in court in the character of the public prosecutor.
6. Supporting social employment with organizing and financing social integration centers.
7. Limitation of availability of alcohol.

The tasks were included in aeries identified in National Health Programme accepted for 2020–2024.

Area 1 – Mental Health Promotion;

Area 2 – Prevention;

Area 3 – Reduction of the damages, health, social and professional rehabilitation (reintegration, readaptation);

Area 4 – Supporting of institutions, associations, non-governmental organizations, and neutral persons working on addiction problems solving (especially alcohol);

Area 5 – Taking interventions in connection for the infringements of the regulations concerning advertising of the alcoholic beverages and the rules of selling them and appearing in court in the character of public prosecutor;

Area 6 – Supporting social employment with organizing and financing social integration centers.

Tasks for realization were written in particular areas for 2021, and there were qualitative and quantitative indicators described, based on which objective verification will be achieved. The tasks are performed with the participation of schools and educational institutions, institutions working on behalf of the protection and promotion of health, the court, police and legal entities (non-governmental organizations), and natural persons.

Conclusions

Preventive actions are the major condition of functioning in modern society, in which every human being will be able to find its own place and space for activities and achievement of his life goals. They allow preventing social exclusion and degeneration, not only the individual affected by the problem but also to prevent people in his nearest environment from negative consequences of the degeneration. The implementation of preventive actions must meet specific standards allowing to gain the highest quality of initial preventive objectives, including also to prevent situations in which, as a result of their defective structure, wrongly accepted assumptions or lack of professionalism while conducting the preventive activities would affect one of the major ethic rules, which people involved in helping others should be guided by is *primum non nocere* (first, do no harm). Prevention requires financial resources whose holder is the local authority. It is where the major directions of preventive measures, compatible with the national strategies' assumptions and – most of all – local needs and social problems, must be set. It is the role of the local community to diagnose and monitor factors that become a danger to the proper development of local society, especially its youngest part, which are children and the youths. The local community in Siedlce constructs its local prevention policy based on a local diagnosis carried out both with traditional methods and with cooperation with institutions (court, police, social aid), non-governmental organizations, and entrepreneurs conducting business regarding trade in alcohol. Those widespread measures have the opportunity to assess the social risks correctly and to prevent their negative results. What is more, the variety of taken preventive initiatives, concerning actions of universal or selective character and also indicating. Suggested measures are designed to protect a human being from the consequences of risk behaviors, strengthen the work of factors that prevent them, and return to society the people who struggle with the problems that exclude them.

The prevention is cheaper than treatment of the results of its negligence. It does not mean that there are enough financial resources. The majority of them come from the funds from excise taxes or the programmes that local communities can use on every level (from European funds to county funds). Nevertheless, lack of the funds for broader preventive actions is a fact, and obtaining additional funds from local budgets is not simple, even as a result of shared belief in the society about the low efficiency of the prevention or other important, in a social sense, social needs. The accomplishment of the main preventive strategy (especially visible in the school prevention) which is the complete lack of tolerance for alcohol, nicotine, or drugs, in the context of cultural changes that are happening in the society (especially in the society of the youths) does not bring the expected results. There is no social acceptance for implementing programmes based on harm reduction or including elements of intervention or other preventive work with the increased risk groups. It is hard to accept that in most cases, we can delay only the initiation of risk behavior

of a young person and begin to experiment with different kinds of substances and behaviors that may endanger his development. Therefore, it is of so much importance to engage more and more people from the society in the activities toward modification and creating a friendly social environment, development preventive competences of people involved in the area of education and care of young generation, and also searching for more effective and efficient working methods with young people by the scientific community. It would also be worthwhile to make the expectations concerning prevention real to the society, thus preventing the discouragement and sensation of wasting public resources for the activities that, in the common opinion, do not concern the majority of the society. Experience of the local community in Siedlce shows that taking preventive actions that use the potential of numerous entities operating in widely understood social services allows obtaining the effect of synergy, which would not be possible without coordination and unification of the aims. Communitizing them allows building social awareness for the need to take actions that prevent social exclusion of the individuals, which for various reasons and in various stages of life, face difficulties that they cannot overcome. The conclusion is important that, unfortunately, preventive actions in many places are still treated as immediate measures, mostly taken when there is a specific problem, losing their preventive character, and taking on therapeutic action features, thus more expensive and unfortunately less effective.

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PART II
Toward
Resistant Adolescence
and Adulthood

Perception of Base Values by Latvian Students

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ABSTRACT

The current article analyzes various approaches in dealing with “values” in Latvian and foreign psychology. It provides results of analysis of the base values among Latvian students today. Characteristics of the key terminal and instrumental values for students and types of motivation are provided.

KEYWORDS:

base values, terminal values, instrumental values, motivation types for values, students.

The current situation in Latvia's society may be described as a somewhat peculiar vacuum in terms of worldview ideas because certain values and norms have left the stage, whereas others have not formed themselves yet (Austruma, 2012). The last decade in the EU has been saturated with reforms and crises that worked for contradictory developmental tendencies in all spheres of societal life. The formation of the new value system is burdened by contradictory tendencies and is marked by critical analysis of the previous value system. Unfortunately, that approach often leads to rejection of experience accumulated by previous generation (*Jauniešu iespēju, attieksmju un vērtību pētījums*). Consequently, the spiritual life of youth in Latvia is a picture of complicated dynamics of changes. People with a different vision and attitude toward personality, its integrity, and society enter active adult life. However, they lack a uniform vision for development. Research studies conclude that traditional life values in Latvia are changing step-by-step (Austruma, 2012). The process is uneven and inconsistent. Therefore, an analysis of the life values of today's youth – reference points for life and relevant behavior – becomes topical. Any sort of management of the societal behavior processes becomes impossible.

The Uniform definition of “values” does not exist neither in Latvian nor in foreign psychology literature. Values are seen as 1) an object with a certain capacity to satisfy particular people’s needs, 2) societal ideal, 3) reference point or norm, 4) meaning for a man or social group. These interpretations reflect the real side of values, and they are not mutually exclusive but rather supplementing concepts of values. They have different foundations, and they are related to various subjects of the value-attitude (Артюшина, 2017).

Following S. Rubinshtein, values derive from interrelationships between the world and people. They pronounce the perception of the world and reflect values created by humans in the history process, i.e., what has been found important for people (Payne, 1968). Values represent the importance of something in the world of man. Values created in the process of culture will be effective for people only if they obtain personally accepted sense (Волков, 1983). They speak about what is most desirable, emotionally attractive, and they deal with means by which the ideal condition of people could be described. Values are manifested as life goals that direct the activity of the subject. B. Ananyev described values as basal, primeval characteristics of personality, which prescribe motifs of behavior and form dispositions and character of personality (Бызова & Гиммельштейн, 2013). В. Bratusj describes personal values as consciously accepted general meanings for life (Братусь, 2001). Values do not exist beyond subject-object relationships. Value is not a hallmark of the object. Instead, it characterizes the subject within its environment. Values are described as trans-situative goals: final (“terminal”), which serve as goals, “instrumental”, which serve as instruments, i.e., they pronounce interests (individual, collective or both) (Бобнева, 2005). Thus, we have a description of values as generalized goals and instruments how to reach them. They play the role of fundamental norms. Values provide for the integration of society by helping individuals to implement a socially acceptable choice of behavior in life-important situations. Specifics of values are found in that different, sometimes contradictory values may coexist in the mind of the same individual. Individuals relate themselves with more than just one value; they operate regarding their combinations. The same could be said about society in general in a post-modern world.

There are many contradictions regarding the true meaning of values. They are described as principles (F. Kluckhohn, F. Strodtbeck), convictions (M. Rokeach), schemes (N. Fezer), criteria (R. Williams), standards (M. Kohn, K. Schooler), tendencies (G. Hofstede), goals and cognitions (B. Verplanken, R. Holland).

F. Kluckhohn (1951) presents the following definition of values – they are recognized or not recognized notions of what is preferable for an individual or a group and direct the choice of goals, taking into account tools, resources, and ways of action. F. Kluckhohn and F. Strodtbeck define values as complex principles arranged in some specific way that work for particular and meaningful motifs for human thinking and action in solving general human challenges (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). According to Rokeach (1993), value is a stable conviction that some behavior is individually and socially preferable over others in an analogous situation.

According to Williams (1989), values are criteria for the preferred; Kohn and Schooler (1993) offer a similar definition of values as standards for the preferred. Hofstede (1990) sees values in a broad sense as a tendency to prefer a particular stand over others. Values offer socially permitted or not permitted behavior types (Hofstede, 1990). M. Hechter (1993) points that values are relatively general criteria for inner evaluation of the given situation. E. Feser (2019) describes values as abstract structures or schemes that could be imagined as a network of associations where central values are linked to various manifold opinions and convictions.

Schwartz (2010) sees values as preferred trans-situative goals with different importance, which serve as guiding principles for people's lives. For B. Verplanken and R. Holand, values are cognitions that may help in the evaluation of the situation and pinpoint goals and offer manual for action (Волков, 1983).

Most authors agree that the characteristic mark of value is its evaluative potential, which points to the desirable hierarchy of phenomena. Also, some researchers point to the generalizing character of values, their close connection to self-evaluation (Kohn & Schooler, 1993), impact on behavior (Rokeach, 1993; Williams, 1989). Finally, values call for positive and negative emotions (Rokeach, 1993), and consequently, they are essential providers for emotional experience (Kluckhohn, 1951).

Kowalski (2020) characterizes values as part of the motivation system of a human personality. On the top of the hierarchical system, there is a global tendency toward a particular worldview. On the next level, some values are included in meaningful goals in their own right, e.g., the building of careers and relationships. On a level below, there are contextual values, e.g., personal preferences.

Our empirical research of the base values of young people in Latvia was carried out using the Schwartz (2010) questionnaire. The number of respondents was 50, age group 19–20 (20 boys and 30 girls), and they were chosen among Latvian University students' body. During this age, intensive self-determination of personality is observed, esp. in the field of values. Young people choose values and make good use of them in their life strategy, in guiding lifeline, and accept norms and ideals they will try to follow.

We got the following results. The most important terminal values were the safety of family, true friendship, inner harmony, and self-respect. Also, the meaning of life is of rather high value for young people, mature love, and rights to study (these values occupy 6th, 7th, and 8th place, respectively). On the other hand, many young people try to free themselves from the family guardianship and parents and immerse themselves in their peers' community. Therefore, freedom, friends, self-respect, and love become important for them. Freedom is characterized by the ability to perform according to their own interests and goals, by choosing their own behavior line in various circumstances – for young people, it is highly important. They try to find their formula for the meaning of life and integrity to free themselves from parents' guardianship. Therefore they insist on their right to stay independent.

Less important values are: social order (stability of society), the world of beauty (beauty in nature and art), being in nature, authority (rights to be a leader or to command), social power (control over others, domination) and constantly changing life (life full of problems, unexpected challenges, and changes) – these values occupy the 25th–30th places respectively.

Among the instrumental values, there are health, purposefulness, wisdom, independence, and responsibility (1st–5th places).

The least important values are influence, environment protection, honesty, life acceptance, and obedience (these values occupy the 23rd–27th places, respectively). Within this group of responses, the rebellious and protesting spirit was observed, which is typical for young people who are not willing to obey and be “honest”.

According to Schwartz (2010), values may be classified into ten motivation types. Ranges 1 to 3 were occupied by value types that present high importance for respondents. Ranges 7 to 10 testify to their low importance. As we can see, the most important values for young people are independence of the self, kindness, and achievements; among the least are stimulations, power, and traditions.

Table 1. Base values of young people

Type of values	Range
Independence (independence in thoughts and actions)	1
Goodness (protection and raising of the well-being of close people)	2
Achievements (personal achievements related to societal standards)	3
Safety (safety and stability of society, relationships and own)	4
Hedonism (satisfaction or sensual pleasure)	5
Conformity (reserved actions and drives which can do harm to others and don't match social expectations)	6
Universalism (understanding, tolerance, and protection of well-being of all people and nature)	7
Stimulation (agitation and newness)	8
Power (social status, domination over people and resources)	9–10
Traditions (respect and responsibility for cultural and religious norms and ideas)	9–10

Among the first for young people are values pertaining to individualistic character linked to practical success and achievement of personal well-being, intensified orientation toward independence, and personal freedom. We in Latvia can observe the atomization of the youth community, its collapse into fragmented individuals. Young people want to stand out above others. They want to shine as bright individuals who do not live like others. In this regard, researchers point that during the last ten years, the orientation of young people toward modern values of individualism,

achievements, independence, and competitiveness has increased (Austruma, 2012). Personal success, personal responsibility, unaided thinking, and freedom to choose ways of action, be it in creativity or research activities, autonomy and independence are all important.

Even the fact that kindness and goodness appear in the 2nd place does not change the situation because this value is linked exclusively to the well-being of the close people. It is a positive wish and strive for positive direct cooperation with personally important people against the background of universalism to protect all people and nature.

However, personal success is not related to striving for high social status and prestige, control or domination over people, to possibly fit into the power structures. The fact that respondents practically do not rely upon support from institutions of public power protects them from potential disappointment. State institutions are on the periphery of youth expectations, and it may have traumatic consequences in the future. Due to feeling of independence and irresponsibility before the state, young people are not willing to invest in the functioning of public institutions. The image of the merit for achieving personal goals is seen as an effective standpoint for individual progress. However, in the context of social integration and solidarity, the idea may turn to be destructive (Jauniešu iespēju, attieksmju un vērtību pētījums). It was observed that young people do not respect and do not accept traditions and cultural ideas; however, they also do not strive to create something new.

Finally, our data correspond to results from other Eastern European researches regarding the dominance of “pragmatic” orientations against “romanticism” of the previous generation of “adults”. Crisis manifestations in the socio-economic sphere that also touched our country works for an atmosphere of instability of life where mistrust in social institutions grows. Young people demonstrate a tendency toward individualism, which helps them to adapt to new situations (Jauniešu iespēju, attieksmju un vērtību pētījums). Consequently, our research affirms the dominance of individual values among young people, and they match the overall “marketing” tendency of the Eastern European society development.

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Alcohol Consumption by Youth

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ABSTRACT

Alcohol consumption strongly contributes to a global burden of disease and injury, with dependence-producing properties causing significant social and economic problems in societies. The main preventative strategy to reduce the negative effect of alcohol misuse is to avoid or postpone premature alcohol consumption as long as possible. Early onset of alcohol consumption creates a biopsychosocial risk to youth, developing into life-long problems at the individual and social levels. One reason teens are more vulnerable to alcohol is brain development at this age, and impulse control is not fully matured. It may lead to problems with peers at school, university, or in the family, also impaired mental health and cognitive disabilities. Early onset of alcohol consumption is also linked to increased risk for addiction problems in later life. However, underage alcohol consumption is preventable with individual, family, or organization-based interventions that are well proven or research-based.

KEYWORDS:

alcohol, youth, prevention, biopsychosocial, health.

Introduction

This chapter represents the background for understanding alcohol usage in youth, provides the context for understanding the complexity and severity of the problem, and emphasizes the need to use a multidisciplinary approach to respond. Alcohol usage is a severe biological, psychological, and social problem that needs a multidisciplinary approach for effective prevention and intervention to succeed in the changing and demanding youth lives in today's society.

Section 1 provides a basic understanding of alcohol usage as a health problem, the consequences of its usage, and its detection. The signals of probably problematic

alcohol usage are central in dealing with the problem. Diagnostic tests are provided to determine the level of the problem. *Section 2* presents alcohol usage in youth prevalence with a focus on trend changes by time, gender, and age. *Section 3* describes why alcohol usage in youth is dangerous, risky, and leads to lifelong consequences. *Section 4* explains the reasons for usage, explains the diversity and interplay in risk and protective factors, and describes the most important areas where the social profession can interfere. *Section 5* presents the model and steps in the prevention and intervention of alcohol usage in youth. This part aims to provide the fundamentals in understanding why alcohol usage in youth is a health, social and psychological problem and what interventions could prevent or reduce the negative effects of this problem.

Section 1. Understanding and Detecting Alcohol Usage Problems

Alcohol usage is one of the leading risk factors for overall health worldwide (WHO, 2018). Alcohol is the main risk factor for global disease burden and leading to premature death and disability caused among populations aged 15–49 years old (Griswold et al., 2018). Alcohol addiction is the most severe form of a substance use disorder, which may be described by increasing quantity and usage frequency, cravings to use the substance, abstinence when not used, neglecting other parts of life, and others (Table 1). Alcohol use disorder is a medical condition characterized by an impaired ability to stop or control alcohol use despite adverse social, occupational, or health consequences (NIAAA, 2021). Alcohol is also the most often used drug among youth, leading to physical and psychosocial problems in the present and contributing to adult health problems in the future (NIAAA, 2021). Drinking at a young age is associated with a range of risky behaviors, co-occurring drug use, lower school performance, worse mental health, and others (Windle, 2016). Underage drinking has extremely negative consequences for the underages themselves, their families, communities, and society as a whole (Harding et al., 2016). Early-onset alcohol use is associated with increased odds and severity of addiction, greater impulsivity in usage, stronger withdrawal complications, and antisocial behavior (Das et al., 2020).

Early detection of alcohol abuse can prevent significant harm in later life. Therefore, if you notice a person, who repeatedly goes over self-defined alcohol usage limit and wakes up with a hang-over, who is constantly waiting for a happy hour to have a drink or two or gets defensive when asked about his/her drinking, those might be the signs that someone is drinking too much.

Table 1 presents the criteria for Alcohol Usage Disorder, which can be divided into mild, moderate, and severe based on the number of recognized symptoms. Although there is no age limit for DSM-5 Alcohol Use Disorder criteria, some considerations are present in the scientific literature. For example, an underage person simply did not have time to develop alcohol usage disorder, but she might be engaging in risky behavior, a symptom that is highly relevant to young age alcohol usage

(Ryan et al., 2019). Withdrawal is another symptom not very typical at a young age, and tolerance also develops with longer alcohol usage time (Kaminer & Winters, 2015), so both of these symptoms (withdrawal and tolerance) are not very common in the underage group. Despite that, knowing the general alcohol abuse criteria may help sense the tendency in youngsters' alcohol usage patterns.

Table 1. DSM-V Alcohol Usage Disorder Criteria

In the past year, have you	Yes (√)	No (√)
Had times when you ended up drinking more, or longer, than you intended?		
More than once wanted to cut down or stop drinking, or tried to, but couldn't?		
Spent a lot of time drinking? Or being sick or getting over other after-effects?		
Wanted a drink so badly you couldn't think of anything else?		
Found that drinking – or being sick from drinking – often interfered with taking care of your home or family? Or caused job troubles? Or school problems?		
Continued to drink even though it was causing trouble with your family or friends?		
Given up or cut back on activities that were important or interesting to you, or gave you pleasure, in order to drink?		
More than once gotten into situations while or after drinking that increased your chances of getting hurt (such as driving, swimming, using machinery, walking in a dangerous area, or having unsafe sex)?		
Continued to drink even though it was making you feel depressed or anxious or adding to another health problem? Or after having had a memory blackout?		
Had to drink much more than you once did to get the effect you want? Or found that your usual number of drinks had much less effect than before?		
Found that when the effects of alcohol were wearing off, you had withdrawal symptoms, such as trouble sleeping, shakiness, restlessness, nausea, sweating, a racing heart, or a seizure? Or sensed things that were not there?		
The presence of at least 2 of these symptoms indicates Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD). Mild (2–3 symptoms); Moderate (4–5 symptoms); Severe (6 and more).		

*Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2020.

Another shorter and well-adopted in youth (12–19 years) screening tool is AUDIT (*the Alcohol Use Identification Test*), or its shorter version AUDIT-C (see Table 2). Both AUDIT versions enable early provision into possible alcohol abuse problems (Liskola et al., 2018). AUDIT-C has the capacity to screen youth at risk for alcohol misuse, but it can also predict developing alcohol problem use – AUDIT-C positive scored youth had a 51% increased probability of having alcohol problem use one year later (Liskola et al., 2021).

As mentioned, in school-aged students warning signs are a bit different. Besides, it is not always easy to simply ask the youngster to fulfill an alcohol usage scale. That is why a specialist should also focus on other behavioral signs that may reveal an existing problem. Despite some obvious signs such as noticing alcohol among young person's things or seeing a youngster drunk, there are fewer apparent signals. Among them, mood changes may occur, and a youngster may become irritable, express greater anger reactions and defensiveness. Mood swings are a specific warning sign in problematic alcohol usage in youth, when a student may exhibit aggressiveness but soon after express unusual agreeableness. Problems in the academic field may start with skipping or disrupting class, not preparing homework, or starting to get failing grades. If a youngster changed friends, became secretive about going out with them, or defensive when asked about activities in free time with new friends, it might signal substance abuse. It often comes with a „nothing matters” attitude, losing interest in hobbies, or even one's appearance (Jones & Waite, 2013). All of these warning signs show a potential alcohol abuse problem that should be addressed immediately and seriously.

Table 2. AUDIT-C screening for alcohol abuse

AUDIT-C Questions	Scoring system					Your score
	0	1	2	3	4	
<i>How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?</i>	Never	Monthly or less	2–4 times per month	2–3 times per week	4+ times per week	
<i>How many units of alcohol do you drink on a typical day when you are drinking?</i>	1–2	3–4	5–6	7–9	10+	
<i>How often have you had 6 or more units if female, or 8 and more if male, on a single occasion in the last year?</i>	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily	
TOTAL:						

SCORING:

- 0 reflect no alcohol use in the past year
- In men, 4 points and more is considered positive for alcohol misuse
- In women, 3 points and more is considered positive for alcohol misuse
- The higher the score, the more likely is the person's drinking is affecting his/her health and safety
- (!) In youth (12–19 years old), 3 points and more is positive for alcohol misuse
- (Liskola, 2018)

*Source: Bush, 1998.

Alcohol usage at a young age is hazardous when it affects the natural development of the brain and results in damaging cognitive functions like learning, decision making, and impulse control (Squeglia et al., 2014). It may explain why underage drinking often results in risky behavior – alcohol simply impairs the capacity to control behavior. A high percentage of dangerous activities at a young age is preceded by alcohol. Driving, violence, sexual assaults, suicide attempts, vandalism, and other risky tasks after drinking may result in injuries, illness, even death (National Research Council, 2004). Underage drinking is also associated with abusing other drugs, poor academic achievements, interpersonal violence, and others. (SAMSHA, 2021). Alcohol usage at a young age raises the risk of developing addiction in later life and often goes with psychiatric comorbidities such as depression and anxiety (Richter et al., 2016). The younger age of alcohol initiation is, the more severe consequences appear to be. Therefore, delaying the time of a young person's first drink may reduce the risk of later drinking consequences (Newbury-birch et al., 2009).

Section 2. Prevalence

Although in many countries the minimum legal drinking age is 18, data shows that around 25% of 14–15 years olds in the US (2019) reported having drunk at least once (NIAAA, 2021), and every two in three adolescents aged 15 have tried alcohol at least one time in a lifetime (Europe) (Inchley et al., 2020). Few recent US and Europe large-scale national and international surveys provide regular data on substance abuse (alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, etc.) among school-aged children and youth – European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD); Health behavior on school-aged children (HBSC); Monitoring the Future (MTF).

European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) is the largest cross-national research project evaluating adolescence (15–16) substance abuse behavior in more than 40 European countries. The latest report (2019) indicates a steady decrease in alcohol use among adolescents in Europe since 2003 when 91% reported having used alcohol in their lifetime, and 63% revealed having used it in the last month („current use”), compared to 2019 survey results showing that an average of over three-quarter (79%) used alcohol in their lifetime and almost a half (47%) reveal current use (in the last month). Heavy episodic drinking (binge drinking – over five or more drinks in a row) reduced to 35% (from 43% in 2007) (Molinaro et al., 2019).

Health behavior on school-aged children (HBSC) is a WHO monitored cross-national study, providing information about health behavior of 11-, 13-, and 15-years old school children in nearly all European countries. The latest data (2018) show that almost three in five (59%) of 15-year olds have drunk alcohol and 37% in the last 30 days. Although boys tend to drink more, e.g., 38% of boys reported having drunk alcohol compared to 33% of girls, the gender gap is narrowing around 15. Moreover,

study results show that the sharpest increase in alcohol usage is between 13 to 15 years old (Inchley et al., 2018).

Monitoring the Future (MFT) is a long-term study supported by National Institute on Drug Abuse conducted annually since 1975 and evaluating substance use among American schoolchildren (eighth, 10th, 12th grades). Data from American youth research Monitoring the Future (MFT) indicate a reduction in alcohol consumption among high school children, and based on the study report in 2020, more than half (55.3%) last year high school children (12th grade) consumed alcohol in the past year. In 2018 the percentage of alcohol consumption „more than few sips” at some time in their lives was 59%. However, binge drinking showed only a very slight reduction (around 1%) since 2015 in all evaluated age groups (12th graders 17.2% to 16.8%, 10th graders 10.9% to 9.6%, eighth grade 4.6% to 4.5%) A gradual decline in past-year alcohol use is slowing too (12th graders 58.2% to 55.3%, 10th graders 41.9% to 40.7%, eighth grade 21% to 20.5%) (Johnston et al., 2020).

These large-scale international studies provide a comprehensive analysis of alcohol (and other psychoactive drugs) usage at a young age and are updated by a particular time. Therefore, these documents could be studied for more detailed information (see the reference list).

Section 3. Brain Development and Alcohol

Alcohol usage at a young age is hazardous due to natural development processes in the brain during that life period, which, when affected by alcohol, takes damage to such cognitive functions as learning, decision making, and impulse control. It may explain why underage drinking often results in risky behavior – alcohol simply impairs the capacity to control behavior. Understanding how alcohol affects the brain and how this results in disrupted behavior and emotional processing helps understand why young age is so important in alcohol prevention and why addiction is so persistent and devastating.

The brain develops at a young age, and during adolescence, undergoes dramatic changes (Ewing et al., 2014). The prefrontal cortex, responsible for planning behavior, assessing situations, making decisions, predicting outcomes of activities, keeping desires under control, and regulating social behavior, is still maturing (Shaw et al., 2020). It naturally puts underages at risk for trying substances – the critical part of the brain responsible for inhibitory control is still in progress, while the dominant affective system says „yes” to any immediate reward (Windle, 2016). Moreover, reward/motivation and emotional neuronal circuits are developing faster at a young age than prefrontal control circuits (Walker et al., 2017), meaning that alcohol directly affects the brain reward system and is even more addictive. If used in this sensitive period, alcohol and other substances cause brain changes that have long-lasting outcomes.

We need to know how our brain works to better understand why alcohol is so addictive. The feeling of pleasure reinforces beneficial behaviors. Our brains try to do everything to repeat pleasurable activities, such as eating, socializing, sex, and others (NIDA, 2021). The neurotransmitter dopamine is the main figure in this reward circuit (a group of nerve structures responsible for regulating our ability to feel pleasure) (Ikemoto & Bonci, 2014). A burst of dopamine signals that something pleasurable is happening to the person and that it is important to remember this activity. To do this, dopamine causes changes in neural connectivity that make it series to repeat the pleasurable activity repeatedly, sometimes even without thinking about it (Berridge et al., 2016). Such consistent repeat forms a habit and motivates our behavior.

Just as a sweet piece of cake results in an increase of dopamine, alcohol, and other drugs, also do so, just in much higher amounts. The higher surge of dopamine, the more powerful the reinforcing in the brain, the greater the pleasure. Large surges of dopamine „teach” the brain to seek the substance or activity that had given it a pleasure. The addiction begins when the brain gets tired of a large amount of dopamine, producing fewer neurotransmitters in the reward circuit. As a result, natural, pleasurable experience is reduced. It is how a person abusing alcohol or other drugs eventually feels lifeless, depressed, unable to enjoy previously liked things (NIDA, 2021). And now the person has to continue taking alcohol to finally feel a little bit better. Continuous alcohol influence on the brain becomes the „new norm” for the organism, meaning abstinence or feeling bad when alcohol is not conceived. Therefore, understanding the impact of alcohol on the brain and its consequences may help interpret the situation we are dealing with, and facilities search for prevention and adequate intervention.

Section 4. Reasons for Alcohol Consumption

Experimentation with alcohol in youth is common. Some undergrads will experiment and stop or use it occasionally, without serious consequences. While others may engage in this activity more and more, experience urges to use, and step into more severe conditions and psychosocial problems. Why does this happen? Why do some teenagers try alcohol once or twice, and others even develop alcohol usage disorder?

The risk for addiction is a complex interaction between many factors. For example, genetic factors contribute to almost half of the risk for addiction (Tawa et al., 2016), meaning that if a person is born with a predisposition to alcohol from family history, an individual’s biological response to substance abuse is altered. Another source of great alcohol abuse risk in youth is peer pressure. Social saliency, or the belief that drinking will bring social benefits, is one of the biggest motives for consuming alcohol at a young age (Anderson et al., 2011). Peer interactions are important developmental tasks in adolescence and young age (Anderson et al., 2017).

Therefore, peer drinking contexts and peer pressure are major contributors to teen drinking (Gordon & Anderson, 2011). Obtaining social benefits in safer ways is an important strategy in young age alcohol prevention (Goldberg et al., 2002).

Understanding the predictors, risks, and protective factors is essential for the early identification of alcohol abuse in the youth population. Simply, direct questions about using alcohol are not easy to answer due to social disapproval of substance abuse at a young age (Ferreira, 2018). The set of risk and protective factors also explain why youngsters so differ in alcohol usage behavior. For example, low parental control with a family history of alcohol abuse may result in family attitudes that favor alcohol usage, which comprise a high risk of abusing alcohol at a young age. Social deprivation in early childhood impairs brain development, resulting in increased child's impulsivity, which in later years raises the sensitivity to alcohol abuse (Volkow, 2018). On the other hand, a person may be born with a predisposition to alcohol usage (from family history), but a safe and caring home environment or supportive adults/teachers/coaches/friends may lessen the probability of such alcohol usage problems in the future. Importantly, interventions that provide social support and care may lessen or reverse some brain impairments that occurred due to social deprivation in childhood, reducing sensitivity to alcohol dependence (Sheridan et al., 2012). Or, if a youngster with low-self esteem is experiencing high psychosocial stress and does not receive adequate social support from family or friends, the probability of alcohol usage problems is high.

On the contrary, a healthy family climate, firmer moral beliefs, and good interpersonal relationships lower the possibility of alcohol misuse. Self-esteem, refusal skills, resilience, and mental health are essential protective factors against alcohol usage in youth. Therefore, using prevention strategies to improve resilience and self-esteem can be highly effective (Garza et al., 2018). Table 3 shows the comprehensive list of protective and risk factors. In short, protective and risk factors comprise a continuum. At one edge, the odds of drinking alcohol rise, at another decrease (Table 3).

Table 3. Risk and protective factors in underage alcohol use

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Aggressive behavior	Impulse control
Lack of parental supervision	Parental monitoring and support
Poor social skills	Positive relationships
Drug experimentation	Anti-drug attitude
Favor to alcohol attitude	Anti-alcohol attitude
Community Poverty	Neighborhood resources
Not living with mother	Full family composition
Depression, anxiety	Good mental health
Social deprivation	Social support
Community indifference	Community involvement

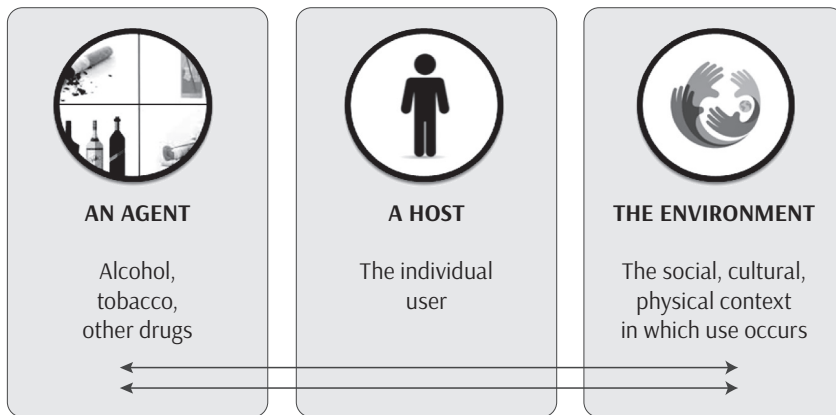
Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Availability, easy access	Difficult access
Low assertiveness	Self-efficacy (belief in self-control)
Low peer refusal skills	Drug resistance skills
Low interest in education	Academic competence
Lack of rules about alcohol usage	Strick disapproval of alcohol usage

*Source: Garza et al., 2018; Komro & Toomey, 2002; *The Alcohol and Drug Foundation*, 2019; NIDA 2021.

Indeed, considering alcohol usage risk and protective factors once again reflects the biopsychosocial model of human development, which states that biological, psychological, and social factors all play a significant role and affect each other. Therefore, there always is a path to help a person create skills against alcohol usage or help recover from risky usage or even addiction while manipulating biopsychosocial factors.

Section 5. Prevention and Intervention Strategies

Starting an intervention in alcohol and other substance use means that we are trying to affect how people think, feel, and behave about alcohol and other substances (SAMSHA, 2017). A multilevel strategy has to be followed to positively affect young people's thinking about health issues, change their minds, and redirect their actions. Substance usage issues arise not in a vacuum. It has three parts (a substance, a user, and context of usage). Therefore, lasting prevention has to address all of these three parts (Picture 1).



Picture 1. Prevention targets in substance abuse

* According to Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Focus on Prevention. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 10–4120. Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Substance Abuse, and Mental Health Services Administration, Revised 2017.

The main feature in underage drinking prevention is multifacetedness. The intervention programmes have to incorporate proximal variables at the individual, family, or organizational levels, together with distal variables including state, community policies, norms, price, taxation, media, and others (Harding et al., 2016). The search for evidence-based policies to target social media concerning alcohol use in youth is an important line, as well as support for the educational system in providing general health education, mental health, wellness promotion, community programmes, and skills in teaching about alcohol abuse (Quigley, 2019). Intervention can also be directed at education and training, peer groups, cultural mentoring, recreational activities (Martin et al., 2020). Early intervention, referral programmes, alcohol screening, and brief counseling are effective prevention strategies for underage alcohol abuse (Harding et al., 2016). Young people are involved in multiple systems (family, peers, community, school, laws, policies, and culture), and each system may potentially increase or decrease the risk of alcohol use (Galson, 2009).

For intervention strategy to be effective, noticing, understanding, and manipulating many factors at once is essential (according to SAMSHA, 2017):

- starting with a focus on young, school-aged children and their families is the basics to prevent negative behaviors before problems become deep-rooted,
- prevention strategies have to be adopted according to target group age and gender,
- prevention activities have to be developed in more than one context,
- more than one risk factor has to be addressed at a time,
- reducing exposure to risk factors while enhancing protective ones,
- follow the strength perspective – build on individual, family, and community strength.

Implementing an intervention strategy can be a challenge, but analyzing many possible paths that lead to a problem (at the same time – that direct to solution) may help find the hot spot from which the most effective intervention arises.

Conclusion

This chapter covered the essential information to construct a basic understanding of alcohol usage in youth. As a psychoactive drug, alcohol interferes with the brain's functioning. It can lead to direct consequences expressed by risky behavior, poor judgments, impaired motivation, cognitive disabilities, or mood disorders, which can further develop into more severe biological, psychological, or social problems. The early age of alcohol initiation increases the risk of becoming addicted. Therefore, adolescence is a critical time for preventing alcohol addiction in later life. In other words, the best prevention is to delay the usage age as long as possible, keeping

in mind that the safest level of drinking at least until 21 years old is none (Griswold et al., 2018; Quigley, 2019). However, at least 25% of adolescents have already used alcohol (NIAAA, 2021), and this number is rising with age. Therefore, social professionals should direct their actions toward minimizing the risk factors and maximizing protecting factors of alcohol usage at an early age.

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Learner Identity Struggles to Become a Student in Multicultural School Context

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this chapter is to describe what promotes and hinders the construction of a student's dynamic learner identity. We will do that by giving three different stories. The first part recounts the young people's experiences of introductory class for newly arrived students and their starting in the regular class in Sweden. The second part is the story of Amal who, after a difficult basic school period, through a fellow student in the care and nursing programme, finds out that she can learn things in school and that over time she develops a dynamic learning identity and becomes a student who masters the school and who can perform. The third part is the story of Magd and Radhi, two students in the care and nursing programme. The chapter is on how these students construct a fixed learner identity and develop helplessness in their schoolwork, even though they long for a different relationship with school and teachers.

KEYWORDS:

learning, identity, newly arrived, multicultural school.

Introduction

In class, I'm a girl with a veil. I may be a little different, I'm not like everyone else. I have to be extra good to show "here I am, I exist, I can be seen". There are a lot of demands placed on me. Very high demand (Amal).

If I do not succeed here, then the chance is there. If I do not succeed there, then I have the chance here. If I succeed nowhere, we'll see. We'll see. So, when I said type life is about finding yourself, what you are good at then fighting for it (Magd). I think everything that does not hurt you, makes you stronger. That's true indeed. I'm sometimes talking shit about you, fucking negroes here and there. [...]" Yes, I know I'm black. Yes. Yes, I know about my skin color. Yes, I know where I'm coming from, anyway. And if you do not like that, I'm here, you know, I'm shitting on you." As simple as that. Do you understand? (Radhi).

School researchers and those involved in the education often ask themselves why a large proportion of students belonging to a different ethnic and cultural background than the majority society to a greater extent than their peers fail in school. In a Swedish context, we can state that research and studies of various kinds have long emphasized gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic factors as strongly contributing explanatory variables to why students with a foreign background, and especially those who attend schools with a large number of students belonging to immigrant minorities, fail to a greater extent than their Swedish peers (PISA, 2019). Of course, these explanatory variables are important and relevant, but just as the introductory quotes show, young people in multicultural schools also face a dilemma about finding out how to go about gaining recognition for their cultural identity and, at the same time, deal with life as a student in a school world where Swedish ethnicity is the norm for school and education.

Students who struggle with their cultural, ethnic, and religious identities, like all other students, are expected to focus on school and education and acquire a learning identity to achieve school success. Young people with an immigrant background must, in other words, build an identity in which education and learning are central, at the same time as they must also find their place in the society they belong to.

Theoretical Tools

My interest in the student's learning identity comes from the realization that the individual's different experiences of being a student and becoming one also affect his or her opportunities for school performance. In the same way that some people, in general, may recognize themselves as belonging to a professional group, it should also be natural for a student to be able to identify himself as a student. I believe that educational research has neglected how the school's recognition of young people as students in practice goes and what a lack of recognition can result (Falsafi, 2010). While young people's identity development is often described in different types of identity such as gender and ethnic, religious, and cultural identity, the discussion about the student's learning identity is not singled out as a central issue, nor how it is related to issues of recognition. My interviews with students of immigrant background indicate that the concept of learning identity is a central factor in understanding and explaining how a young person becomes a student who believes in his ability to learn in an educational context.

The ability to say with certainty "I am a student, and I can learn things in school" is not acquired overnight. Students' learning identity can be deeply rooted and defended in relation to the experiences gained over time (Kolb & Kolb, 2005a; 2005b). For most of us, our learning identity is a mixture of fixed but also dynamic beliefs. We may feel that we are good at learning a certain subject (for example, sports and health) and less good at another subject (for example, mathematics). Dweck (2006) believes that learning theories are domain-specific, which means

that we believe, for example, that intelligence is fixed and biologically determined, while morality is about a dynamic learning process. However, any success or failure can trigger a reassessment of the individual's learning ability, whether it is subject knowledge or the individual's moral values.

Becoming and being a student, according to Dweck's theory, can mean two things. First, the student can develop a fixed learning identity with a static view of oneself, which risks reinforcing a negative self-image and can be characterized by avoiding risks and failures, but which is also threatened by the success (s) of others. These students often end up in a pattern of helplessness. Second, a dynamic learning identity can be developed, which means that the student learns from their mistakes and uses the success (s) of others as a source and inspiration for learning. These students can develop a self-mastering pattern. Therefore, a student must find and develop strategies to meet the various challenges within the family, school, and society to develop a dynamic learning identity. According to Dweck, developing a dynamic learning identity is essential for a student to perform in school.

Previous School Experiences and Learner Identity

In this chapter, I got to follow Amal, Magd, and Radhi, who at the time of the interview were between 17 and 18 years attending the upper secondary school. They have their own stories of success and struggle in school. At the time of the interview, they had just over a year and a half left in their upper secondary education within the care and nursing programme. They have all lived in other countries before coming to Sweden. When they came to Sweden, they attended introductory programmes and Swedish primary school. Their stories are about the importance of family, friends, and teachers who recognize and take an interest in their lives and how these actors and contexts have shaped them into students and, in the long run, responsible citizens on the way to adulthood.

The school and the teachers that the student meets play an important, central, and often crucial role in building a positive learning identity. Magd was born in Iran, but his mother is from India, and his father is from Iraq. He lives with his parents and two brothers. Radhi also lives with his parents and siblings and has roots in Somalia. Magd and Radhi came to Sweden in their teens and took an introductory class to learn Swedish before they got to start in a so-called regular class. Amal came from Iraq when she was ten years old. She lives with her parents and is the second youngest of five children.

The three students mainly have positive experiences from the teachers and peers in the introductory class and their first time in school, but they also talk about the difficulties of making themselves understood the first time and getting used to the Swedish school system. When asked if Amal remembers what it was like to move to Sweden and start in an introductory class, she says:

The first thing I thought of, “how do they laugh? Why are they laughing? Haha, oh, what are they talking about? No, I will not learn this. No, it’s very difficult, and I want to move back home. No, I do not want to live here. It’s nice, it’s green but no, I do not want to be here. I want to go back to my friends” and so on. It was a lot of work, but then I had a very kind teacher. I was so close to her that I never wanted to let go of her.

Amal talks about the teacher she mentions in the quote above with warmth and says: “So you felt like her child. We were such a family, and so when we left, she held my hand, and it was lovely indeed.” Amal remembers that this teacher paid for private lessons in order to learn to speak Arabic in order to communicate with Arabic-speaking students:

“She is all Swedish. And so, she went to private lessons. And she paid a lot of money just because it was interesting for her to be able to teach us. She wanted us to achieve something. That we would understand as well. It was very difficult. Because sometimes she wrote very nicely on the board, “Is this the word [in Arabic] do you understand?”, And so on. Do you know Arabic?! Oh!” she was a very kind teacher. Very nice.”

The teacher’s attitude, interest, and ambition to reach her students were fascinating for Amal, which also meant that she did her utmost to learn the knowledge that the teacher was trying to develop in her. The close and non-authoritarian relationship between teachers and students that Amal describes was something that Magd was surprised by during his first years in the introductory class. He did not understand how students could speak out against their teachers. It would never have happened in his former homeland school. He had expected a school where teachers are treated with great respect. He tells of a situation that arose when he went to introductory class:

In the preparatory class, when I went to X-school, there was a class next to us, fourth grade, so I saw students looking at their teacher and I’m there. “Now he will hit them”, i.e., the teacher will hit the children, “Now he will hit her, now he will hit them”, the teacher instead talks quite kindly to the children: The student says: “You must not do that!” “Shut up, who the hell are you to tell me ?!” And such. There I was surprised, thinking, “No, this had never happened in our home countries. This had never happened”. Teachers come in, and everyone stands up: “Good morning teacher”, then when he says we should sit down, we sit down. When the parents come, we get up, then we sit down. So, Sweden has a lot of freedom for the children.

The first time the students were interviewed in Sweden was a time of contemplation and reflection. They already had a picture of what school and teachers should be like – an image often characterized by teacher-led lessons, where the teacher has a monopoly on knowledge and dictates how children should learn and behave. According to their description, the school is where the student learns things often decided by the teacher. The students’ stories about their previous school experiences

indicate that the teacher's knowledge and authority were at the center. There was no room to discuss or negotiate with the teacher. "The teacher knows best". The interviewees state that the students had neither the authority nor the right to question what they learned or how the teacher taught. The students in this study had developed a learning identity where the school in the home country involved learning a predetermined content and a strong distinction between the teacher who decides and the students who must adapt. The experiences from the introductory class contradicted these previous experiences, where the relationship between teachers and students consisted of negotiation and equal order of authority.

However, Amal, Magd, and Radhi describe their time in the introductory class as a safe environment with positive experiences of teachers' treatment and recognition of their previous social and cultural experiences. In the transition to the regular school, however, there is a change.

Being a Student in a Regular Class at Primary School

The security that the students describe arises in the introductory class often is broken quite abruptly and in some cases mercilessly when the students are moved to the regular class together with other students who are either born in Sweden or have been here for many years and have adopted a different youth culture. Amal shared her experiences when she moved to her regular class after a year:

"When I talked, they [classmates] laughed. When I talked, they pointed, talked like this, whispered and like this [shows]. So, it was not so easy [...] Because it sounded funny to them, that I could not speak Swedish. They have not gone through what I have gone through, so they could not understand. "She points out that the classmates were not "Swedes": "They were students with immigrant backgrounds. It was just tough guys, who knew Swedish well and dressed nicely." Amal describes a feeling of loneliness and vulnerability: "I was completely alone, but I longed for breaks, so I could go to my second class [introductory class]." She also could not turn to anyone (such as parents or teachers) to talk about it because of a lived-in shame about the situation, so Amal chose to deal with it on her own: "I cried. I was like a little child."

But the worst was not the new classmates who laughed and ridiculed what Amal said. She tells of an incident in which a teacher inexplicably diluted what her classmates exposed Amal to:

"Amal, now it's your turn to go to the board and you will read an article." So, I read a speech [a number], and it was wrong. I should not have said this. Because I can read numbers. But I did not know what it was in Swedish. So, she laughed [the teacher] [...] I can never forget this teacher. I hate her! [...] She said: "It is her Swedish. Do not worry."

This incident had negative consequences for Amal during upper-secondary school when she never dared to raise her hand or speak in front of her classmates, which in turn led her to voluntarily choose to isolate herself and pretend to be “unsocial” to protect herself from being laughed at again:

“Then I was silent. I never raised my hand. Never. Never ever. Seven, eight, nine. Never. I never dared to raise my hand. [...] Yes, it was safe to be quiet. I’m a social person. I love hanging out with people. I chose to lie and say, “I’m antisocial. I’m very calm. I cannot talk to people”.

Although Amal’s schooling consisted of a mixture of positive and negative experiences, she managed to avoid ending up in a pattern of helplessness and instead developed a learning identity that was characterized by “I can! I’m good enough!”

Becoming a Successful Student

In the self-mastering pattern that a dynamic learning identity carries, the student remains focused on successful learning despite challenges. The student with self-mastering ability thus does not give up hope of success in adversity. Self-efforts to succeed are intensified. New paths to knowledge are being tried. The harder it gets, the self-mastering student thinks, the more I have to try. Dweck calls it “self-motivating instructions” (Dweck, 2000, p. 10). The most basic thing is that adversity does not lead to self-accusations and evidence of one’s own inability. Not even failures here determine one’s own self-image. It just means that the student must be persistent and find new ways of learning. Amal says:

Because I want to show others that I can. It’s for me, it’s clear that the first thing I think of, but to compete with other friends. Lol. I’m good. Do not think I cannot. Just because I could not in the first, does not mean that I cannot in the second. I can!

The name “Amal” means “hope” in Arabic, which is exactly what Amal is, hopeful. After a setback in life where she failed at school and was close to marrying a person she today experiences as the “brake” of her dream.

He [the fiancé] was in Sweden but he was crazy. he was like this, “You should not study, you should sit at home. We are getting married. I’m having children. I’ll provide for you. And it will go very well for us. Fantastic life! We are going to live so well!” [...] In the beginning, I skipped school because I was with him. So, I skipped school to meet him. I skipped school because he did not want me to go to school. I skipped school because I did not feel like becoming anything. But then I thought, “No, what the hell am I doing? That’s enough now. It’s not good for me”.

One of Amal's close friends saw what was happening and tried to make Amal realize it. The friend has also helped Amal realize her potential and that she can also succeed in school if she just wants to. After the first year at upper secondary school, she realized for the first time what had happened after receiving her grade. Amal got bad grades, and she did not want to:

My friend showed me her grades. And she had lots of B and A. And I did not even want to show my grades. I had D, D, and barely C. But it was C. And then I thought: "No, but why not me?" Yes, it was he [the fiancé] who braked.

When asked how she came to realize that the future fiancé was not good for her, she says: "When I started working. When I really started to study, and become knowledgeable, and understand that 'No, here in Sweden I can find many paths. Not just one way: And that's not getting married. And sitting at home'. That was one of the reasons why she "made up for herself", mobilized and started investing in school. The second reason was the friend who supported her in not marrying at a premature age and the friend's good school grades at the end of the first year of study at upper secondary school.

Amal's story shows how she went from feeling helpless during primary school to developing self-determination patterns in upper secondary school. She has found a way to increase her school performance and knowledge of how she can argue for her cause and convince her family that her decisions in life are the right ones.

The first step was to end his relationship with his boyfriend/fiancé. There is a perception among some girls that, in the long run, marriage means financial security, says Amal. And that the family should be happy, she continues. But Amal, who now has a different belief, does not want that: "I can support myself. I can be safe without a man." The second measure was to close her Facebook account to avoid distraction from schoolwork and thus discipline herself. Amal has decided to succeed in school, and it is over with dropping out of lessons: "I go to all the lessons. I'm sick when I'm really sick. So, I do all the homework. I submit on time, do tests and get so happy after the test. Now it has gone well."

What I want to show with Amal's story is that under certain circumstances, it is possible for students with an immigrant background and who are limited by their social contacts and cultural structures (fiancé, marry and have children) and have a previously negative image of the school, due to being publicly stigmatized by teachers in the classroom, to reverse this downward spiral and improve their school performance. In Amal's case, above all, through a classmate who shows the way and makes Amal mobilize a learning identity that makes her take control of her life and school situation. For Amal, this has led to her taking greater responsibility for her learning, and that she has developed strategies for this to happen:

Being social with other people. To be able to ask. To study at home. It is the most important. To not just be here and chill around. And talk to others about unneces-

sary things. Without being involved, asking all the time and being active during lessons, discussing, showing off, that I am here.

Another interesting aspect of Amal's story is that she tries to be a role model for the other girls in her class. She tries to motivate the others in the class by talking about herself:

Before, she could [talk about another friend] not so much, but now she can do a lot.

"I can also". So, I said to them, "Do you see how I was last year? I was nothing. Almost. I was a zero. I knew nothing. I could not discuss, could not raise my hand. I sat with my mobile and texted. I also skipped a lot. But now I can, now I study, now I am successful". I enjoy my life. I see my life from different angles. Different perspectives. So, I thought, a girl she always got IG, too. But now she's on the verge. It's great that she's started to develop a little anyway.

Thus, positive role models in the class create a culture where other students also try to improve their school results. Improved school performance, in this case, is about a school culture where the girls help and motivate each other and that they see the opportunity to free themselves from patriarchal family traditions through education. It also shows that small groups of friends have the potential for their school performance and strengthening each other emotionally and socially. It does not always have to be formal class councils that stand for a social change in a school. Even smaller groups of friends carry the potential for change and political action. Seeds of grassroots activism can be stimulated and nourished in a school context. A culture is created where others who have changed want to contribute their knowledge in a wider social context. Amal's reactions to the letter that we in the research group sent home to selected students is another example.

Learner Identity and Recognition

When I received the letter of this research, so I thought, this is interesting. I've been through a lot. And someone needs to know about it. Someone needs to know that you can change. You can take several steps forward. Not just one step. Several steps. continuously." Amal

Amal's desire to share her own story may mean that she has overcome the shame of not coping with her schooling. She has gained an inner recognition that makes her dare to talk to individuals she does not know before. The attitude of sharing her experiences also reflects Amal's desire to be involved and not stay outside. She does so hoping that her story can help others in the same position as she once was. She shares a path that includes several steps to success. It indicates, from an individual perspective, a developed self-image and self-esteem for Amal. Although an individual's identity is perceived as a unique personal resource, it is also constructed

through interaction with others and in different ways depending on the situation and context (Falsafi, 2010). In other words, it takes at least two individuals to construct an identity. But no matter what the social and relational construction and use of identity is, the subjective experience of the individual's 'I' is always required – who am I in my own perception, and how do others perceive me? This view is relevant for understanding how young people share a personal story and strive for change and development. It helps us understand how young people develop different and alternative educational paths, within which they can see other life chances in connection with reflecting on their individual history together with peers, teachers, and parents. Through such a reflection, they can see their value and significance in the collective history of the school and society. To be able to share their experiences can therefore be seen as a way to get recognition. Amal's expressed joy at having received a letter from us in the research group, with a request to be interviewed, is an example of this.

Obstacles to the Development of Learner Identity

Unlike Amal, however, the young men Magd and Radhi seem to have ended up in the pattern of helplessness when it comes to school. Magd's negative experiences from school have led him to develop a fixed identity in relation to school and learning:

I did not behave so well in the lessons because I did not understand. I did my best, but I did not understand. For me it is so. If I do not understand, I do not. If I cannot, I cannot. For me. It's that easy.

He tells how he tried to deal with his failure and how he let it take over. Magd developed a feeling of "I do not know this! I'm not good enough" and "School is not my thing!":

Before, I listened to the teachers. A long time ago, then. If we say the first year here. I listened to the teachers; I did my best but did not succeed. But my thought was always elsewhere. I could not concentrate when any teacher was talking. For me, I was not so damn good at Swedish either, so when the teacher spoke, I tried to understand what the teacher said. While I was trying to understand what the teacher was saying, I do not think about what the teacher is saying right now, so I go back, and then the teacher continues, I think: "What did she say? Ah, shit, it's not worth it, I still cannot catch up with her. I'm sitting and disturbing myself now." Then I'm quiet. I talk here and there with people. I take some noisy ones with me too. But we did not disturb others. We talked [...] I only disturbed the one who wanted to be disturbed! So, I disturbed in a good way.

Magd continues to talk about relational aspects that are important in building that student's learning identity. How the teachers' attitude can be decisive for what attitude the student develops towards school and learning:

Now I go to school just because I cannot cope with the teachers. Now I understand what the teacher is saying. But if it's a teacher I do not like. I never listen to the person. I shit in what he says. Or what she says. I do not care. And the teachers who make mistakes against me. I do not care about her. in total. I'll see if there is any student who respects me. I give even more respect back. Is there anyone who wants to play games with me? I give back in an even worse way. So, I give more than they expect. That's how I have become. My own personality, after what I've been through.

Magd strongly emphasizes that teacher-student relationships must be characterized by mutual recognition and a "human love". For a student, the teacher's treatment of the student must be characterized by respect to develop a learning identity where studies and learning are in focus. He talks about various incidents in school and in society that make him unable to cope with school. Together with Radhi, he talks about racism and discrimination both in school and in the rest of society. Such a story is reproduced in the quotation below:

There was a teacher who called a Somali girl, outright, a "nigger". Straight out. I and all the other students were in the class. I was called stupid boy. They threatened to call my parents. I was 18. And they know how I feel about Dad. I'm having a hard time. That's why they said it. We [the students] report this to the principal, and she tells us that I will take care of the situation, but you have to prove it. I just said, "There were people who heard," she just said, "No, we do not want witnesses." But how else am I to prove it? I did not record it. It was in class, everyone was there! All students, but she did not want witnesses. But she still wants proof. Between the teacher and a student. It is not possible to win over the teacher.

The fact that they, as immigrant students, are constantly being questioned is something they experience almost daily. The struggle for these young people is not only to cope with school and succeed in getting on to university or working life but also to become part of society, be recognized and accepted. Radhi believes that life is a struggle to be respected. He says:

I'm thinking about my future. I will have a wife, children, an apartment. Everything you know. I do not have too big dreams. To get rich or drive the finest car in the world. Live in a big house and stuff like that. I want my normal life. I want to be respected for what I do. Do you understand? And I'm fighting for that. Because otherwise, you do not get the normal life either you know. You have to work for a normal life. Yes.

Teachers and school administrators can lose an important thing to establish rules and get the order in the school, Radhi and Magd say. And that is learning itself. Sometimes the interviewed students notice that school and teachers do not always live up to the school's values. When students point it out, nothing usually happens, they further say. Pupils, teachers, and school management are often aware that discrimination and racism occur in schools, but measures are rarely taken. Instead, such incidents are

discussed away and reduced to a simplified one-off event that does not need to be “enlarged”. It puts its mark on how students can experience school, and instead of focusing on their learning, students are forced to defend their ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. That, in turn, can make it more difficult for students to adapt to school norms and lead to students’ focus on defending their actions and trying to establish redress for teachers’ ways of dealing with them. It is time-consuming and creates a lot of annoyances between students and teachers. An atmosphere can easily be created that is characterized by a “we and them-thinking”.

The development of the learner identity for Radhi and Magd is influenced and disturbed by the environment. The teachers’ way of dealing with these young people, combined with the students’ previous experiences of being perceived as different, complicates their struggle for recognition concerning school, family, and society. The experience that Magd has is that if a conflict arises between a teacher and a student, it automatically means that “it is not possible to win over the teacher”. It is the lack of trust between teachers and students that hinders the development of the learner identity.

In an attempt to get students to come to school and participate in teaching, teachers in good faith can use methods that can be perceived as offensive and incorrect by students. It means that students’ motivation decreases, and the school’s and teachers’ methods have the opposite effect. Magd talks about how teachers can use methods that reinforce his contempt for school and his sense of helplessness. Regarding absence and that CSN (The Swedish Board of Student Finance) withdraws student support in the case of excessive absence, Magd believes that very few teachers point out to the students that it is precisely the knowledge they are losing not just the student support.

Radhi confirms Magd’s statement and believes that knowledge and learning become subordinate things when the school and teachers use CSN as a way to both scare and attract students to the school:

They call me. I’m in this class here. I usually sit there, and the teacher is here. Then he says, “If you do not come to school, you will not get your CSN.” There is no feeling. That the teacher is genuine. That the teacher wants to help you. And stuff.

Getting these young people interested in going to school by “luring” them there or through various so-called “scary methods” – “if you are not present at school, you lose your student money aid” – has proved unprofitable if not completely impossible. The purpose is probably well-meaning, but at the same time, it complicates the students’ and teachers’ relationships with each other, which in turn results in learning becoming a by-product. What Dweck calls “the helpless pattern” thus becomes a fact in which both students and teachers end up in a resigned state and learning in exception. Radhi and Magd also do not have, unlike Amal, a group of friends at school that can strengthen them in relation to their school performance.

How Should Learner Identity be Built

The young people I have met are very aware of what is required and needed to build a learning identity. Their stories indicate the desire not to end up in a pattern of helplessness, and they, therefore, demand tools for how they can manage their schooling by the teachers focusing on imparting knowledge and not just rules. A pattern of self-determination is acquired through the transformation of students' unconscious abilities into potential conscious ones. Magd says: "That the teachers they should not just give the knowledge. They should kind of teach us how to cope. Give examples of things, 'That's the way to do it. You should do so, and so, and so'. Not just 'You give it, and this and that'. To build oneself. To give knowledge straight out."

They share several examples of how a teacher should act and be. Radhi talks about his experience as a teacher he has had before. A teacher who taught him several subjects:

She's a very nice teacher. She was always with us. That's why we came so close, you see. I'm talking about me, and she's talking about herself. Do you understand? We understood each other more. And stuff like that. She helped me a lot. But I did not take the chance. Do you understand? Because I was really noisy before, you know. Yes, but now I have calmed down. Do you understand? Now I know what I'm doing. Yes, and I actually succeeded that year.

The importance of a relational pedagogical approach where knowledge and not threats of missing CSN is put in the first place by the teachers is, according to the students, a must for them to feel safe, appreciated, and dared to have an open approach where they can also talk to their teachers about how they learn best. Radhi believes that it is important that the teacher sees and recognizes the students' cultural identity, at the same time as it is also required that the students agree to what is to be done in school. Axel Honneth (1995) believes that recognition is a universal human need, and its lack forms the basis for conflicts. Social relationships characterized by recognition are crucial for the individual's ability to develop and maintain an identity and develop a "basic self-confidence" and self-esteem. Radhi shares a reflection on how teachers and students should both contribute to mutual recognition of each other's identities, feelings and actions:

In fact, I think they should ask, "What do you want to do with your life?" And: "how do you want to succeed?" And such things you know. Is there anything that bothers you? What do you think about me?" and such things so that the student says what the problem with the teacher is. And the teacher says what the problem with the student is. You know how to understand each other. What the problem is between them. Not that the teacher threatens, students threaten, yes, so that both fail. Do you understand? And it rarely happens that you know. That the teacher asks: "What is it that makes you shout at me? What makes you hate me? Do you understand what I mean?"

Dweck (2000) argues that the change from a fixed to a dynamic learner identity requires a safe study environment, a space that is characterized by unconditional positive attention. This space reduces the defensive behavior that students usually have on, for example, mathematics, and allows students to experience themselves as students and their learning in a new way. Magd reasons and reflects on his own learning and how he can develop a learning identity in the following ways:

Maybe you can force me to come to school. But you cannot force me to gain knowledge. You're forcing me to school for money. You cannot force me to gain knowledge. It's not possible! I love my teachers who teach me through fun things.

In their stories, Magd and Radhi have shown how important it is for the teacher to see and recognize his students for who they are and that their experiences are important in the classroom. A teacher can never force students to learn. Students must first accept the school's work methods and knowledge content and mobilize themselves to students as others in the school appreciate. Radhi says:

I'm not kidding, you know. And I'm pretty smart, but not so smart. But in fact, there is something else, you know. Which is not even about it, you see. It is my goal to succeed. And that's what I see. Because I'm here for a reason. I'm not here for how others see me. Do you understand? But I think that in front of others I am a good person, I think. So, I'm not such a bad person, you know. No fights or yelling at teachers. Or do something that makes others think of me as a bad person, you know?

Teachers' recognition of students' cultural identities and the students' mobilization to be students interested in the school's content are two central aspects in Magd and Radhi's stories about how it should be in school.

Conclusions

For students in multicultural schools, the quest to become students is full of obstacles and challenges. The chapter points to an important result, and that is that learning identities are possible to change. Young people who have had a static learning identity can develop a dynamic learning identity in another school context characterized by recognition from teachers and supportive friendship groups.

The chapter also points out how a previously dynamic learning identity can be changed to a static learning identity when the school context fails to recognize students' opportunities for good school performance, which we have seen can create counter-reactions and cause students to distance themselves from the school world. It becomes especially clear when friendship groups that could act as a shield and support in knowledge issues are also lacking. Maybe there is also a gender dimension to think about here.

Is it a coincidence that young women form themselves in support groups where schoolwork is placed at the center? Could it have to do with codes about the importance of behaving in school and striving for respectability in school contexts be more widespread among young women than young men? But perhaps, as Amal describes, the friendship group that works for school performance is also a way to find support in issues that have to do with women's place in family and society. Young men from the suburbs can also find great support in each other but may, on the other hand, self-confirm a behavior that contributes to a double differentiation, that is, a reproductive order that is found both in the young men in this chapter and in high school they go to (Lund, 2008, p. 163; Lund, 2006, pp. 198–199). They are simply seen and heard more than girls and more often in a way that is interpreted by the school world as a distancing from learning. It means that they struggle to change the school culture to be recognized as learning individuals despite their way of being seen and heard. If it were possible, the repertoire of being a successful student would probably also be broadened in all students in Swedish schools.

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Unaccompanied Minors and Their Everyday Life in Kinship Care – An Example from Sweden

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ABSTRACT

The chapter sheds light on the everyday lives of unaccompanied minors. A literature review and a questionnaire answered by the social workers in charge of unaccompanied children's placement in kinship care constitute the empirical foundation. In addition, a small pilot study has been conducted with some unaccompanied minors to get their point of view. A core question is whether these unaccompanied minors in kinship care are more vulnerable than other groups of children in Sweden? On the one hand, yes, as the conditions for placement in kinship care have not always been optimal. On the other hand, the results suggest that placement with relatives often are better than other placements. Minors in kinship care have ordinary better health, and kinship care is more stable than other placements. The interviewed minors also convey a great sense of security in the kin families as the connection with their ethnic background is so stated. Behind the general picture of kinship care, the minors' own stories also show a large variation concerning opportunities and conditions for unaccompanied living like this.

KEYWORDS:

unaccompanied minors, foster home placement, kinship care, everyday life experience, vulnerability, social work.

Introduction

Unaccompanied minors have a special situation as they often travel alone to a foreign country. Upon arrival, they must get used to the new situation and often a new language, culture, habits, and acquaintances. According to the UN definition, unaccompanied children are asylum seekers in a recipient country where neither parents nor other guardians are present (Backlund et al., 2014; Brunnberg et al., 2011; Kohli &

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Mitchell, 2007; Wernesjö, 2014). In Sweden, this means that unaccompanied minors covered by the Act on the Reception of Asylum Seekers LMA (1994, p. 137) are “separated from both their parents or another responsible adult who may be considered to have taken the place of the parents or who after arrival is abandoned by and stands without such a deputy” (Fälldin & Strand, 2010; National Board of Health and Welfare, 2013a). During the last decade, there has been an extensive increase in asylum-seeking unaccompanied minors in Sweden. The number has gone from a few hundred to thousands of children per year. The culmination was reached in 2015 when more than 35,000 unaccompanied minors arrived (Swedish Migration Agency, 2016). The increase of unaccompanied minors in 2015 put pressure on the Swedish authorities. Not least, the social services had to make major efforts to meet the minors’ needs for care and housing. There are different placement alternatives for unaccompanied minors in Sweden: institutional care, foster care, and kinship care. This chapter focuses on how the everyday lives of unaccompanied minors in kinship care are expressed.

The Arrival Process and the Task of the Social Services

Various Swedish laws regulate the responsibility for unaccompanied children who come to Sweden. When unaccompanied minors arrive, it is reported to the Swedish Migration Board. As soon as possible, the minor receives a legal guardian whose task is to act as deputy guardian for the child until the age of 18 (legal age). If the minor has an extended family in Sweden, a temporary placement can occur with these relatives. However, the social services must have approved the home as appropriate (Swedish Migration Board, 2017; Unicef, 2010). In other words, an essential task for the social services is to investigate whether the relatives are suitable and have stable conditions to receive the minor (Andersson & Böö, 2012; Rosenlund & Wesser, 2014). The approval is often based on a screening of criminal- and social services registers and a home visit by a social worker.

If placement with relatives is considered unsuitable, another placement is requested. The child’s best interests must always be a guiding principle in all decisions concerning the minor, and all decisions must be made in consultation with the legal guardian. Every six months, the social services must follow up on the minor’s situation in the family and, if necessary, provide advice and support. Due to many unaccompanied minors, it has been challenging for the social services to complete these investigations on time. Hence many minors live with families, pending a more comprehensive investigation of their suitability. These initial placements enable the minors a safe environment where they are in a well-known context. At the same time, kinship does not have to mean a close relationship. Without a thorough investigation, the real situation of these minors can be difficult to determine. Some studies also indicate that the investigations and follow-ups performed in these families are

not as accurate as in other cases of foster care placements (National Board of Health and Welfare, 2013a; Unicef, 2016).

Previous Research

Internationally, there are today an increasing number of research studies on unaccompanied minors. Most publications originate from the USA and Canada, but there has been an increase in articles from Europe during the last ten years, not least from countries such as Sweden, England, Spain, and Germany. The research touches on several aspects related to the lives of unaccompanied minors. The intention is often to understand the individual and structural conditions that affect minors' everyday lives. Eide (2005) states that research on unaccompanied minors has mainly focused on three main areas: policies and laws, children's rights, and the psychosocial situation of unaccompanied minors. Not least, the latter category and studies of mental health have strongly dominated both medical and social science research on unaccompanied minors over the past decade. Experiences of trauma and abuse, stress, and the occurrence of psychiatric illnesses are some examples (ibid; Eide & Borch, 2010).

A general picture of the psychosocial health of unaccompanied minors entails that these children often carry difficult experiences from their home country and show varying degrees of mental illness (Huemer et al., 2009; Jakobsen et al., 2014; Marquardt et al., 2016; Reed et al., 2012; Seglem et al., 2011). Experiences of witnessing violence, war, or losing a close relative make many minors suffer from stress and anxiety (Jensen et al., 2015). However, many studies indicate that although mental illness may persist for a longer period (Vervliet et al., 2014), the situation gradually improves, and the health of these minors becomes equal to that of other children of foreign origin (Eide & Hjern, 2013; Geltman et al., 2005; Eide, 2000). In addition to children's different experiences of trauma, other factors such as age, gender, country of origin, educational background, care, and living conditions affect the child's opportunities to obtain stable psychosocial health and opportunities for recovery (Brunnberg et al., 2011; Backlund et al., 2014; Save the Children, 2017). Only a few studies compare how placement in institutions, foster care, or kinship care affects the well-being of unaccompanied minors (Hedin, 2012). However, some results suggest that placement with relatives often are better than other placements. In Stretmo & Melander's (2013) study, social workers and legal guardians find that children feel secure in a well-known environment and that the probability of moving minors placed in kinship care is significantly lower than if the minors are placed with people they do not already know. The language and culture are common, which facilitates contact with relatives in the country of origin. The study also noted that minors in kinship care had better health and generally required fewer health interventions from primary care and psychiatry.

However, some studies highlight the risks of placement in kinship care (Stretmo & Melander, 2013; Fälldin & Strand, 2010; Unicef, 2016). Several problems can arise already after the arrival phase, as the handling process often is reversed. Normally, an investigation is conducted by the social services before the minor is placed. However, unaccompanied minors may already live with their relatives (kin family) when the investigation occurs. An unconditional investigation can therefore be difficult to carry out (Backlund et al., 2012). The National Board of Health and Welfare (2013a) also points out several difficulties linked to kinship care. These minors are, for example, often placed with relatives with insufficient financial resources, are unemployed, and live overcrowded in marginalized and exposed housing areas. The relatives themselves can also be in the middle of an asylum process (*ibid.*). In the long run, this can have a negative effect on children's opportunities to get an education and enter the labor market. Research shows that social networks rooted in the majority of society are directly decisive for entering the labor market and that this is a major difference between migrants and natives (Behtoui, 2006; Hessle, 2009; Sjögren & Zenou, 2007). The risk for unaccompanied minors placed with relatives is thus that they have poorer opportunities to create social contracts outside the kinship family than children who are placed in another way (Iveroth, 2015). The legal guardian, school staff, and the social workers who make follow-up visits are the minors only or main contacts with the surrounding community. It can have long-term consequences for the minor. Wallin & Ahlström's (2005) follow-up study of unaccompanied minors who have been in Sweden for ten years shows that many of the children managed to establish themselves in the labor and housing market, but that their social networks were still small and mainly limited to people from their own country.

Studies based on interviews with social workers show that it could be more difficult to have solid contact with unaccompanied minors placed in kinship care than in other families (Unicef, 2010; Save the Children, 2017). Although the social services offer kinship families guidance and education, the response is often poor (Backlund et al., 2012). Challenges with the language and inadequate communication (use of interpreters) can, in some cases, explain the distance between kinship families and government officials. The often reverse initial contact with the minor and the family also contribute to an increased distance (Unicef, 2010). The difficulty in entering kinship families entails a risk that fewer and more superficial follow-ups are made and that the social services, therefore, collect less information about these minors (Backlund et al., 2012; Unicef, 2010).

Even minors may experience that the placement with relatives has a downside. The minors may not dare to tell how they really feel based on a debt of gratitude to the relatives who let them live with them (Backlund et al., 2012). Kohli & Mitchell (2007) also describe that many unaccompanied minors find it difficult to initially distinguish between different government officials and their motives, giving "thin stories" about their current and past life situations. According to Kohli, it requires purposeful and

long-term work to understand and interpret the silence of unaccompanied minors, “listen to the silence”, and gradually lead the contact forward towards longer and coherent stories (Kohli, 2006). Considering the above, what is the minors’ experience of being placed with relatives, and what does their everyday life look like?

The Situation of Unaccompanied Minors in Kinship Care

The material in this study has been collected using two different research methods; a questionnaire completed by 60 social workers with responsibility for placements of unaccompanied minors in Malmö¹ and a small interview study (pilot) with three unaccompanied boys living in kinship care. At the time of the interview, the boys had been in Sweden, between 9 and 14 months. The questions in the survey provide a more general picture of the circumstances surrounding minors in kinship care and serve as a background for the qualitative study.

The Questionnaire

In 2015, more than half of all unaccompanied minors in Sweden, originating in overseas countries such as Syria, Somalia, and Afghanistan, were placed in kinship care, i.e., with relatives. The socio-economic status among these families could not be deduced from the survey. On the other hand, it turned out that most adults in these families had a very scarce higher education. In these kinship care placements, it was common with other children, which can be seen as positive. However, problems can arise if there are too many children, both in terms of paying attention to the minors, individual needs, and overcrowding, per se. In 2015, many unaccompanied minors arrived directly to their relatives in Malmö. It had negative consequences for the investigation procedure, as the time aspect did not allow a “traditional” investigation. For the relatives who did not master the Swedish language, it was difficult to use common methods. A complication with a lack of language skills was that an interpreter often had to be used, whereby misunderstandings and limitations in comprehension could arise. Lack of language skills could also create barriers for families to complete an education linked to kinship care. About 8 out of 10 affiliated families were stated to have not attended /received any education. However, with the kinship families of unaccompanied minors, more preparatory meetings were held in 2015 than with those families where the minor had no connection. One shortcoming, however, was that there was no more extensive exchange of information between social workers, legal guardians, and relatives to obtain the best possible placement. When placing unaccompanied minors in kinship care, carrying out both prepara-

1 Ann-Christin Rosenlund, coordinator for family housing in Malmö, has been invaluable through her assistance with the survey and initial data processing.

tory meetings and information exchanges can be perceived as particularly important as the relatives often do not have this experience. Lack of experience was evident among kinship families in 2015, which explains that the collapses in kinship care had a small increase. Although most of the unaccompanied minors were examined by a doctor in connection with the placement, it was not clarified what the need for measures was regarding the children's health.

Unaccompanied Minors' Own Voices About Their Everyday Lives

The unaccompanied minors interviewed in the study are teenage boys who have fled the war in their former homeland, Syria. In this chapter, the boys are called; Hadi, Omar, and Ejaaz. In the story below, Hadi's brother is also expressed in a description.

The boys' journey to Sweden has been risky, even if it took place together with other family members. For one boy, Hadi, the traveling companion consisted of his sisters, a brother-in-law, and a newborn nephew. The other boy, Omar, traveled with his grandmother and his uncle's wife, and a cousin. Ejaaz traveled with an uncle, grandfather, and some cousins. For Hadi, the journey began with a car ride across the border to Turkey followed by a longer walk, a boat trip between Turkey and Greece, and then various means of transport such as train, car, bus, and on foot to finally come to Sweden by ferry. For Omar, the road out of Syria started with an inflatable boat across the sea followed by a bus, on foot, a taxi, and a bus. Ejaaz describes his trip to Sweden similarly: *I rode a car / --- / then I rode the rubber boat .. then I went on foot .. Then I went by train and ferry*. The three boys have thus been on a similar road to Sweden where, under difficult conditions, they have crossed Europe with a great deal of uncertainty hanging over them about what is to come next. Once in Sweden, the boys were initially placed with relatives. Hadi first lived in an apartment with his aunt but was then placed as kin to his older brother. Hadi lives with his brother, sister, brother-in-law, and niece in a three-room apartment. Hadi experiences it as "great" to live with his siblings and expresses it as: *"I live with the family. Dad and mom are in Syria, but I almost feel at home.... all is well!"*. None of the siblings are perceived as particularly strict but are considered equal in their reprimands. Hadi also has other relatives in Sweden, but contact with them is scarce.

Omar lives with his grandmother and his uncle's wife in an apartment rented by a relative. The apartment has two rooms and a kitchen, and a living room. The grandmother and Omar live in one room, the uncle's wife in another, and the living room is for them all. The uncle lives nearby but in his own apartment. Ejaaz was placed with an uncle, the uncle's wife, and three cousins aged six, twelve, and seventeen. The apartment where Ejaaz lives consists of three rooms and a kitchen, and Ejaaz shares a bedroom with his cousins. Ejaaz feels that life is good where he currently lives with his uncle's family.

The difference between the three boys' placements is that Hadi is placed in a home where his legal guardian (his brother) has established himself well in Sweden. His brother, who came to Sweden a few years earlier as an unaccompanied minor, speaks fluent Swedish, has got his own apartment, and works today at a pharmacy. Like Hadi, Ejaaz has a placement with a relative who has already lived in Sweden for a while, but it is unclear how established this relative really is in Sweden. Omar lives with his grandmother and aunt, none of whom have yet established themselves in Swedish society. When it comes to housing, the children live in apartments with limited space. For two of the boys, their extended families consist of another four to five persons in the household and who, together with the minor, share three rooms and a kitchen. The desired housing standard in Sweden means a room for the parents and separate rooms for children or other family members. In this case, it is not fulfilled. However, it is important to note that it is not just about space and the number of rooms in a home. Overcrowding also means an experience of congestion and excess interaction.

All the informants still have parts of their family in their country of origin. Hadi has her parents and a sister, Omar has his parents, a brother, and two sisters, while Ejaaz has his parents and a little brother. Everyone tries to maintain as continuous contact as possible with these family members. Hadi uses the conversation tool Viber almost daily to communicate with the family in Syria. If he cannot talk to his parents, it would be "very, very, very difficult". Ejaaz also states that he talks to his parents on the phone every day. The informants experience that it is difficult to have their parents and siblings so far away, and they do not know what will happen from day to day. The family members with whom the informants live in Sweden are very important but cannot fill the entire void that exists in the absence of their parents.

The Everyday Experience

Hadi describes his everyday life as relatively ordinary and routine, where the school occupies most of the day but where there is also room for friends and various hobbies. Hadi enjoys school and says he prefers to spend parts of the evening studying and staying on social media. Online, he often hangs out with friends and family in his former homeland. Every morning, before school starts, he also checks for updates on Facebook and if anything special has happened in Syria during the night. He also spends much time watching Syrian TV series. His brother says:

Considering that he has already watched them [the Syrian TV series] many times, it is strange that he does it all the time again /---/. There is something about him watching these TV series.... they mean something. I did it myself when I came, and you feel a little more at home. But he watches every day. I try to stop him a little so that [he] might be able to learn a little Swedish.... look to the future instead and not backwards, but it is difficult ...

In the same way, Omar's everyday life is characterized by strong ties to the family in Syria, but he may be in a clearer transformation process where he emphasizes the importance of the future and finding ways into the new country, not least through education. He spends much time with his uncle and his Syrian friends. He attends a class with children from Somalia, Afghanistan, and Syria, all unaccompanied and have gone to Sweden themselves. He spends much time studying in the evenings "to get on" in his life. The goal is to become a doctor, and he already speaks, in addition to Arabic, Swedish, English, and French. Ejaaz's story is also characterized by educating himself, aiming at becoming a teacher, and working at school. He describes how his previous everyday life in Syria was framed by the school, leisure activities, and friends, "it was a great sovereign life", and how he tries to build a similar situation here in Sweden. He likes the school where he meets other children from many different countries. He also speaks several languages; Arabic, Swedish, and English, and his free time is dominated by football and swimming. Like Omar and Hadis, Ejaaz's companionship is dominated by other former compatriots, and he mostly spends time with his three cousins with whom he also lives.

In summary, the interviewed unaccompanied minors' stories show how they all move on a continuum between the "old" life in Syria and the "new" life in Sweden. Contact with friends, relatives, and family in Syria is vital for the experience of security in Sweden, and the opportunities for daily contact are great through the internet and social media. The informants also maintain important ties with Syria through food, TV series, and contact with other Syrians here in Sweden. All three boys go to school with other Syrians or with children from other countries who have also fled to Sweden, and their acquaintances are entirely dominated by this situation. At the same time, they are also clearly on their way to a stronger establishment in the new country. They perceive school as a way forward, they are engaged in various leisure activities, and they all have dreams of professions that require longer education. However, they have different conditions to receive support in this process. Some live with a relative who speaks good Swedish, have an education, and are well established in the labor market, while others are placed with relatives in much more marginalized positions.

Conclusion: Unaccompanied Minors' Everyday Life in Kinship Care

This chapter focuses on the everyday lives of unaccompanied minors in kinship care and whether these minors are more vulnerable than other children in Sweden. Our study shows that the hosting families of unaccompanied minors generally have a lower level of education than other families with children under 18 in Sweden. They also often lack previous experience of being a kinship family. In many cases, their Swedish skills are poor, and they have rarely taken part in any education to be a home for kinship care. In addition, the material shows that the placements seldom are preceded by a professional discussion about the best conditions for the child.

The wave of refugees during the autumn of 2015 meant an extensive strain on the reception system. It strongly contributed to the difficulties to effectively place unaccompanied minors in kinship care. If you add to this previous research according to which placements in kinship care are often negatively affected by general structural conditions, the picture is further darkened. It is often a question of families living in marginalized and exposed housing areas with a lack of financial resources, severe overcrowding, widespread unemployment, or own asylum processes (The National Board of Health and Welfare 2013a). In this regard, minors placed in kinship care seem to be more vulnerable than other children.

At the same time, the material in this study also shows several positive characteristics of these families. For example, unaccompanied minors in kinship care are often examined by a doctor before being placed. Furthermore, they also have, in general, a lower degree of collapse in placement than others. The boys interviewed also convey a great sense of security in the families and through contacts with their origin such as the remaining family in the home country, relatives, food, popular culture, etc. Furthermore, their stories show that despite the generally challenging conditions, the picture of kinship care is not homogenous. For example, some children are placed with relatives with high education, strong language skills, and a solid establishment in the labor market. The conditions can be of decisive importance for the child's future, including the ambitions they express, the educational path they take, and how they establish themselves in the labor market. Previous research shows that social networks are directly linked to how well one enters the labor market and that this is a major difference between migrants and natives (Hessle, 2009; Sjögren & Zenou, 2007; Behtoui, 2006). Therefore, it is important to consider the short- and long-term effects of placements of unaccompanied minors in kinship care.

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Youth at Risk and Delinquency – Understanding, Identifying, Acting

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ABSTRACT

The subject of this article is the description of the specificity of adolescence as a developmental period, the complexity of socio-cultural determinants that determine antisocial behavior and juvenile delinquency. Additionally, the attention is paid to action models they are reduced to confined to (depending on the problem and youth at risk/juvenile offender status) taking initiatives in prevention, intervention, therapy, social rehabilitation, readaptation, and reintegration. The article aims to empower the development of understanding the phenomenon of youth at risk and juvenile delinquency. In particular, it concerns identifying symptoms, understanding the causes, analyzing dynamics, and taking initiatives to minimize them in the individual, group, or environmental dimension. It is linked with implementing the current state of knowledge about youth at risk and juvenile delinquency, with the special attention devoted to contemporary theories and concepts (Positive Youth Development, Evidence-Based Practice, restorative justice).

KEYWORDS:

juvenile delinquency, risk behaviour, youth at risk, restorative justice, Positive Youth Development.

Introduction

Adolescence is a special developmental period of human life, perceived as the transition from childhood to adulthood, manifested in pubertation (biopsychic dimension) and juvenescence (socio-cultural dimension) (Lerner & Steinberg, 2011; Steinberg, 2011). Intense changes experienced by young persons linked with emotional tensions constitute a complex of specific individual properties which – in combination with environmental factors (family, school, peer groups) form their basis for self-creation (Larson & Wilson, 2004; Lerner et al., 2006). Despite numerous educational efforts

leading to optimal integration with the society, this process may take place in various ways and (in conspicuous situations) may lead to adaptative problems (Marte, 2008). Juvenile delinquency is a special example of unsuccessful enter in teenage and adult social roles.

The main aim of this chapter is to analyze the delinquency phenomenon in the context of risk. We perceive it as a dominant contemporary epistemological perspective related to the understanding, identification, intervention, and rehabilitation of adolescents in the Positive Youth Development (PYD) context (Benson et al., 2006; Damon, 2004; Lerner et al., 2005a; 2015). Particularly we present basic terminology and specificity of risks experienced by contemporary youth. Additionally, we analyze connotations between risk and adolescence, perceiving Positive Youth Development as the basic perspective for youth work. We do not shun from highlighting critical remarks about this concept. Additionally, we also present contemporary models of work with youth at risk, with a particular focus on delinquency.

Youth and Risk – Basic Terms and Concepts

Engagement in problem behavior is perceived as a property of adolescence. According to Richard and Shirley L. Jessor, this is a value judgment and a set of activities that contradict social norms perceived by society as a cause for concern and often become a reason for interventions (Marte, 2008, p. 3). Importantly, as soon as the age of majority is reached, the analyzed behaviors are no longer considered a problem and become legal in their own way.

Problem behaviors fulfill many functions in adolescents' life. They are a source of acceptance in the peer group, emphasize independence in relations with parents, constitute a form of resentment and dissatisfaction with formal requirements enforced by adults (teachers, representatives of the authorities); in addition, they are a panacea for frustration and form of subcultural group identification (Ostaszewski, 2014, p. 25).

Antisocial behavior (ASB) is perceived as is different and more clinical than the problem behaviors activity (Clarke, 2011). It is a very complex concept, which includes Antisocial Personality Disorder (ASPD), Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), substance use disorder (SUD), risky sexual behavior, and activities that are contrary to social norms and may take the form of criminal activity. Like problem behaviors, it is also an evaluative concept, where behavior is perceived as contrary to social norms.

In turn, risk behaviors are perceived as a result of problem behaviors. Generally, bad habits jeopardize individual activity in the health (both somatic and psychological) and socio-cultural dimensions (Jessor, 1991; 2018). Recently, risk (as a term or concept) has gained importance in social sciences, going beyond the area of health studies (U. Beck, 1992; M. Beck & Kewell, 2013; Brown, 2015). Psychologists or

social workers use it for people who experience emotional or adaptive problems (Austen, 2009; Bernat & Resnick, 2009). This term is defined as a set of presumed cause-effect dynamics that place an individual child or adolescent in danger of future negative outcomes (McWhirter et al., 2016, p. 33). Importantly, that “at risk” term designates a situation that is not necessarily current but that can be anticipated in the absence of intervention. Sometimes, it also means real risk experienced by a person and leads to multifaceted threats (McWhirter et al., 2016, p. 33).

Several categories of risk behavior are raised in the literature. School drop-out is a risk that is identified at the earliest stage of education. Problems related to school stress (Collie et al., 2012) and poor academic performance affecting the manifestations of school resistance (Maag, 2000; Willis, 1977) cause that students increasingly play the role of school outsiders or wounded learners (Olson, 2015). In effect, it manifests itself in truancy and an increasing scale of educational negligence that hinders professional success and self-fulfillment in adult life (Giele, 2002; Moffitt, 2003).

Substance use and addiction are another group of risk behavior (Marte, 2008; Sanders et al., 2010). Intoxication is a crucial form of activity, and its effects are determined by several variables: substance (potential or real health problems depend on the taken drug), the purpose of use (for fun, visions or increased activity), frequency (incidental, occasional or regular drug use), and context (individual behavior, group influence, or cultural premises). In addition, regarding biological development and personal reaction to intoxication, it depends on how this form of risk will determine an adolescent’s reaction because it can be an unpleasant memory discouraging drug use or – unfortunately – it will increase and lead to drug abuse.

Sexual behavior is the next risk behavior category. It manifests itself in premature pregnancies, which – in effect – leads adolescents to assume the “adult” role of a parent, making it difficult to function as a student or to abortion trauma. Risk of sexually transmitted infections (Craig et al., 2006; Dumas et al., 2012; Greif & Knight, 2016) (STIs), including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), is an additional risky consequence of early sexual initiation. The lack of adequate knowledge of adolescents about prevention is one of the key reasons causing this problem. The area of risky sexual behavior also includes other forms of activity and trauma: prostitution, sex-related violence, or sexual identity difficulties.

Youth suicide is another manifestation of risk behavior during adolescence (Kim et al., 2018; McNeely & Falci, 2004; Prinstein et al., 2001). It includes thinking about suicide, attempted suicide, and the death of a person due to one’s actions. Suicidal risk behaviors are perceived as manifestations of the individual’s resistance to external factors caused by internal (mental illness) or external (experienced trauma) factors.

Youth violence and juvenile delinquency are the special forms of risk behavior related to breaking social norms, especially legal rules (Bohm & Vogel, 2011;

Josine Junger-Tas et al., 2012; Marte, 2008; Siegel & Welsh, 2011). Violence can take various forms, from self-inflicted acts through aggression toward peers, younger, weaker but also the elderly persons, acts of vandalism, non-index forms of antisocial behavior, like truancy or running away. They are also behaviors perceived as a delinquent activity, which may take the form of crimes against property, health, or life (particularly: theft, robbery, larceny, and gang membership). In the case of minors, crimes are seen as forms of delinquency. It means that adolescents committed a crime, but due to their age (according to UN and EU documents, juveniles are people who committed a crime before the age of 18 and rehabilitation treatment is carried out up to a maximum of 21 years of age), they are treated specially by the courts (Council of Europe, 2003).

The last decades have been characterized by a dynamic increase of information technologies in adolescents' social life (Eurostat, 2017). They have become an important communication channel in the families, peer relations, education, formal and informal contacts. The reorganization of interpersonal relations caused by the coronavirus pandemic has strengthened the importance of cybertechnology. It should be assumed that it will remain ongoing. In effect, cybertechnologies have also become a special area for different risk behaviors (Owen et al., 2017). They are noticed as cyberforms of current activities (cyberbullying, online harassment, online drug dealing) and as the new forms of online risks (sexting). Online contacts via social media or cloud services are linked with private data that increase the risk of being made public. Such situations are also the new form of risk for both: senders (being a victim of cyberbullying, committing a cybercrime) and recipients of content (contact with content that is inappropriate for the recipient's age) (Owen et al., 2017).

Above mentioned forms of risk behaviors can be included into specific stages, determined by the size and specificity of the potential or real threats (McWhirter et al., 2016). Minimal Risk – concerns adolescents who successfully play students' roles, have positive relations and support from family members and have an average or above-average socioeconomic status. In their case, risk cannot be ruled out because, at any time, young people may face an unexpected threat, trauma, or problem (e.g., loss of a loved one). They have a strong buffer of protective factors, but their adolescent features (age, level of personal development, emotional instability, or invulnerability) can intensify their risky reactions. Attention can also be paid to external factors, such as family members, teachers, colleagues, or youth workers, and their reactions and attitudes toward adolescents in a potential threat situation.

Remote Risk occurs when its probability is possible and real – this type of risk results from statistically and environmentally conditioned indicators. Low socioeconomic status, limited access to education, dysfunctions in the environment, and poorly developed infrastructure are the factors that young people encounter during socialization and education. They can be seen as circumstances in which young people are more exposed to negative experiences. These factors are cumulative.

Growing up in a conflicted family with a low level of educational competences or criminogenic behavior patterns, combined with limited access to education, makes risk behaviors real.

High Risk – refers to situations in which external, environmental factors (dysfunctions in the family, low quality of educational services in the environment) interact with the adolescent's attitude, manifested in specific behaviors and emotional expressions. It may have an external (aggression, violence, provocative behavior) or internal (excessive withdrawal, anxiety) form. High risk may be perceived as a lack of social competences or the effect of mental problems. Both areas have a heterogeneous cause-effect character and constitute a background for the occurrence of risky behaviors.

Imminent Risk – Individual features manifested in externalizing (or internalizing) behaviors find their outlet in gateway behaviors – initial forms of activity that are the starting point for more severe deviations. Experimenting with psychoactive substances is the gateway to drug abuse, aggressive behavior is the beginning of the criminal activity, depression leads to suicide attempts.

At-risk category activity is when risk behaviors are constant elements of the adolescent's activity. They may escalate but also affect other behaviors, becoming an increasingly antisocial integrated model of personal activity, leading to the more complex models (drug use affects the risk of school drop-out or violent behavior). It is a situation where we deal with multiple problem youth – those who commit criminal acts, use psychoactive substances, and have mental health problems (Elliot et al., 1989).

Understanding Adolescence in Risk Context

Richard Lerner and Lawrence Steinberg (2011) indicate three narratives about adolescence shaping the contemporary meaning of the analyzed term. The first perspective began more than a century ago with Stanley G. Hall's book (1904). The author emphasized a specific gap between human nature and the concepts of upbringing the young generation (Nature vs. Nurture). The basic tasks carried out during adolescence are the so-called great or fundamental theories of development, passing on generational inherited features and gaining competence to maintain tradition, history, culture, and social order. The specificity of milieu, the changeability of the surrounding world, the role of culture and history in the development of young people are emphasized to a lesser extent. From a risk perspective, these theories constitute a platform for the perception of adolescents' disorders in the behavior from an individual perspective, primarily by defining their role in the structure of personality. In other words, there is a situation in which an adolescent does not function following the social norms, has been "badly brought up", is linked with the "bad seeds" concept, or was "ill-breed" and – in effect – is linked with youth at risk.

The second phase of the adolescence theory began in the 1960s with longitudinal research on the life cycle in various social realities. Attention has been paid to the phenomenon of adolescents' personal flexibility and their adaptation to living conditions. Social situations began to be seen as a special area of youth formation. According to this theoretical perspective, adolescence is perceived as a key stage in the human life cycle, in which the process of creating one's independence takes place. According to Anthony Giddens (1991), it is a construction of an identity project, where the concerned person is responsible only. Therefore, studies on adolescence are a contextual analysis of the individual activity in the environment based on specific capital and culture. The source of adolescents' adaptation problems and risk behavior are perceived in their inadequate interpretation of the reactions of the others to their behavior.

Habitus is another factor that shapes different reactions of adolescents and how they find themselves in different social situations. In other words, it is a question about how they perceive, evaluate and react following the patterns established in their environment, a lifestyle related to their social classes.

Importantly, regarding the analyzed perspective, there were also interesting attempts to understand and interpret adolescents' positive social adaptation despite experiencing by themselves unfavorable environmental conditions. It was reflected in the resilience concept. It is a positive adaptation to the environment, characterized by resistance to potential or real factors that jeopardize the development of the individual; it is personal competence to survive a stressful, difficult situation, to return (even if such situation will take place in the future) to normal functioning (Lerner & Steinberg, 2011, p. 172).

The third phase of reflection on adolescence opposes the mentioned assumptions where thinking on youth was dominated by broadly interpreted problems, such as intoxication, sexual initiation, acts of demoralization in the broad sense. The positive context of youth development was the key issue, and Positive Youth Development (PYD) became the main theoretical construct. It was manifested in a new quality of youth-society relations, based on promoting and strengthening the positive aspects of growing up and socialization (Benson, 2007; Catalano et al., 2004; Damon, 2004). According to PYD involvement of educators and persons responsible for social policy in actions for the benefit of civil society is perceived as substantial activity in supporting actions for youth development improvement. Therefore, it can be concluded that the essence of the PYD is the symbiosis of the world of science and social policy in the name of the common goal of supporting the development of individuals during adolescence. It is an approach in which the point of reference is a young person in the environment influenced by many social factors, from the micro (family, peers) to the macro scale (education system, social welfare) (Vo & Park, 2009, p. 353).

What is important in PYD is the perception of factors that threaten the development of adolescents, which were specifically demonized in the previous concepts.

In this context, young people are viewed holistically, not as a group characterized by specific risk factors, but as having resources that should be developed (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). It is a significant perspective for preventive, educational, and social rehabilitation activities because – as Karen J. Pittman claims – release from problems is not synonymous with preparation for adult life (1991, p. 2). William Damon draws attention to the universalism of the above assumptions in work with youth at risk. In PYD, adolescents' real potentials are emphasized (instead of the alleged disabilities), including youth from the most disadvantaged backgrounds or experienced by turbulent events of the past (Damon, 2004, p. 15). Damon also defines the goal of PYD, which is to understand, educate and activate the young generation instead of correction, therapy, focusing on maladaptation or so-called disorders (Damon, 2004, p. 15).

In a complementary way, the assumptions of the model are specified by Richard M. Lerner and his colleagues, who – developing the Five Cs concept – propose the so-called the PYD lexicon (Lerner et al., 2005b), including:

- 1) Competence – positive evaluation of one's activity in various areas;
- 2) Confidence – a sense of acceptance, self-confidence;
- 3) Connection – positive relationships with people and institutions in the local community;
- 4) Character – respect for social norms, cultural values, sense of morality;
- 5) Caring / Compassion – understanding and empathy toward others;
- 6) Contribution – getting involved in life and activities for the community (this is the sixth additional element postulated by authors in their later works).

The presented three narratives on adolescence constitute a basis for analyzing risk and protective factors that are the basis for identifying a youth threatening situation and for taking preventive, intervention, rehabilitation, and therapeutic measures.

Youth and Socio-Cultural Risk and Protective Factors

Although it is known that there is no one specific reason for committing crimes, many different circumstances influence their commission, which in the literature are referred to as risk factors. This concept derives from medical sciences, from research on the epidemiology of diseases, and enables the calcification of the occurrence or severity of disease states. This assumption has been adapted in research on adolescents to explain the reasons for engaging in risk behaviors. These factors are also important in analyzing juvenile delinquency because they can be defined as certain elements whose presence increases the likelihood of criminal behavior. They occur in various dimensions, including individual, social, and environmental (Ostaszewski & Zimmerman, 2006).

The first group includes psychological, behavioral, and mental factors (Shader, 2000). They also take into account prenatal and perinatal factors. Therefore, individual factors are personal characteristics that determine individual behavior. The category can include personal inclinations, habits, beliefs, attitudes, and emotions (Assink et al., 2015). It involves early antisocial behavior, emotional factors (such as high behavioral activation and low behavioral inhibition), poor cognitive development, low intelligence or hyperactivity, among others (Wasserman et al., 2003). Addictions to alcohol and other toxic substances are also placed in this category.

The social dimension, in turn, combines all possible criminal influences from the social environment, including family, school, and friends (Bobbio et al., 2020). It is largely related to the family structure or peer influence. The first may include family structure such as large family size, incompleteness, including parental divorce. In addition, this dimension consists of various types of family abnormalities such as violence, abuse, family antisocial behavior, or teenage parenting (Wasserman et al., 2003). On the other hand, the peer component is mainly rejection by peers or contact with deviant peers and their negative influence.

Environmental risk factors are all situations and opportunities that precede crime and may facilitate or stimulate it (Graif, 2015). These include school factors (lack of connection to school, poor academic performance, low academic aspirations) and social factors (living in a low-income family, disadvantaged neighborhoods, disorganized neighborhoods, increased criminal peer groups, access to weapons) (Wasserman et al., 2003).

Moreover, it is important to recognize that no single factor can explain criminal behavior (Shader, 2000). Particular factors do not act alone but are intertwined. For this reason, analyzing them is not an easy task but is nevertheless necessary for explaining and preventing crime (Bobbio et al., 2020). Specifying risk factors enables action to be taken on protective factors, i.e., characteristics, situations, conditions that increase resilience to risk factors (Ostaszewski & Zimmerman, 2006). Indeed, protective factors are crucial in reducing the likelihood that youth will engage in delinquency and other problem behaviors such as violence, substance abuse (Group Development Services, 2015). Thus, identification facilitates the specification of activities and interventions that can potentially reduce the risk of delinquency. The ratio of protective factors to risk factors is also important, as the former can offset the impact of exposure to the other.

Common protective factors at the individual level include personal characteristics such as sociability, positive moods, low irritability, low impulsivity, and high IQ (Group Development Services, 2015). In addition, the literature also mentions characteristics such as female gender, pro-social behaviors, such as empathy, during the preschool years, and good cognitive outcomes.

The social structures that emerge in an adolescent's life and the social roles associated with them are not insignificant. The growth of these roles is particularly noticeable during adolescence and can be a source of role conflict and increased

risk-taking behavior. Appropriate activity patterns or roles, expressed in relationships with others, may be helpful, as properly built relationships and ties with the environment indirectly affect the performance of social roles. Positive relationships with family are thought to be particularly important. The parental authority built on close relations, closeness, contacts, support, parental control, or shaping pro-health behaviors is favorable in this respect.

Protective factors in the social dimension are generally related to the local environment. Important are economic, recreational, and educational opportunities. It includes the degree of accessibility to local institutions and the activities they offer. Not insignificant is the broader social support and other characteristics that influence the successful functioning of the community and its members, including positive attachment to school or identification with a pro-social peer group and a sense of support and care.

Positive results can be achieved through streetworking programmes or activities that develop leisure time skills. Appropriate actions focusing on breaking criminal career paths and support in fulfilling pro-social roles in adulthood are a potential for a better life of youth (Dzierżyńska-Breś & Matkowski, 2020).

Toward Practical Solutions

For a long time, punishments and punitivity had been seen as the most effective means in the fight against crime. Although the juvenile justice system was created to help, not to punish young people, the concept of punitiveness has been transferred with time into juvenile delinquency. Although similarities and differences can be found in the measures applied across countries, the golden mean has still not been found. Practices in the justice system range between remedial and criminal approaches, depending on the beliefs of the public opinion and government officials about juvenile and juvenile offender rates (McKee & Rapp, 2014).

The increasing emphasis on restorative justice while incorporating rehabilitative justice such as comprehensive assessment and multilevel treatment is of great importance. Restorative justice is an approach used in the juvenile justice system to remedy the damage caused by crime and bring together those most affected by it (Bergseth & Bouffard, 2012). Its participants are mainly three parties: offenders, victims, and community members. Whereas the most popular models of restorative processing are: victim-offender mediation, family group conferencing, circle sentencing, reparative board (Bergseth & Bouffard, 2007).

Restorative justice is distinguished by the fact that the responsibility to compensate rests with the perpetrator, who is obliged to compensate for the harm done or repair the damage caused. In this way, we avoid stigmatizing both the victim and the perpetrator, which could adversely affect entities in the future. In addition, it makes it possible to satisfy the victim and other members of the community by holding

young people accountable for their actions by sanctioning payment of reparations, completing community service hours, or taking other forms of action.

This approach has gained increasing popularity since the 1970s due to its many benefits (Bergseth & Bouffard, 2007). These include resolving conflicts in a non-violent and reconciliation-oriented manner, rebuilding relationships within the group, and ensuring order. In addition, a big advantage is also taking actions to solve the problem of violence by improving communication, building mutual understanding, developing constructive rules. Moreover, this approach is characterized by a non-adversarial process to promote offender accountability (Bergseth & Bouffard, 2007). It is important to highlight the attitude toward the victim, who is treated subjectively in contrast to retaliatory justice, where victims are treated objectively.

Over the last years, it has been recognized that tightening penalties and the insulation associated with it is not the right strategy to prevent young people from committing a crime. Research has shown that many criminal and rehabilitation approaches have not been effective, and some punitive actions have increased anti-social behavior and recidivism (McKee & Rapp, 2014). As a result, the twentieth century was characterized by many changes and reforms in this area, searching for a balanced approach. It was realized that children should undoubtedly be held accountable for their conflict with the norms and rights of the community, but at the same time, the welfare of young people should remain a priority (Ogletree, 2015). The aim of the new approach should be to harmoniously combine public safety with the safety and well-being of young delinquents.

Thereby the stay of minors in rehabilitation centers should not be seen as a punishment but as a form of therapy. It must be remembered that youth in juvenile justice settings are particularly vulnerable, and their mental health needs are high. Therefore, a significant step in the social rehabilitation process is identifying and diagnosing mental illness and mental disabilities, as it is often the cause of criminal behavior (Ogletree, 2015). Besides, mental and substance-related disorders are significant public health problems affecting detained youth. Proof for it is that most young offenders meet the diagnostics criteria for a mental health disorder (Aalsma et al., 2015). Among them can be people who do experience their mental problems temporarily and those who have chronic mental health issues and will likely need clinical treatment well in adulthood (Underwood & Washington, 2016). In addition, some people can function properly despite symptoms, and others present limited functionality. Therefore, it is important to consider those circumstances in the rehabilitation process and include different levels of mental health care with a variety of treatment options (Underwood & Washington, 2016).

At the same time needs of the individual should be taken into account. Thus, addiction therapy should be included as a separate element of the rehabilitation process for people struggling with addiction. At the same time, it is important to act focused on working with behavioral problems. The treatment response to those issues is important because of the link between mental health difficulties and later

offending behavior and delinquency, which are linked directly and indirectly (Heilbrun et al., 2015). Research shows that providing appropriate behavioral health care can help substantially lower recidivism (Aalsma et al., 2015).

The issue of recidivism in terms of mental health is a very complex problem. It should be taken into account that after returning to their native communities, adolescents largely lose the ability to treat mental health problems or problems with substance abuse, thus increasing the likelihood of a return to crime (A New Juvenile Justice System). For this reason, it is essential to use therapies that are based on various levels. An example may be multisystemic therapy, functional family therapy, and multidimensional treatment foster care. These types are recommended because of the three levels they cover: mental illness, maladaptive family dynamics, and behavioral problems (Aalsma et al., 2015). Regardless of the selected therapies, it is important to include youth, family, victims, and communities in the process of rehabilitation, readaptation, and reintegration.

Due to the changes in the discussed approach, there has been a sharp increase in interest in research on the effectiveness of social rehabilitation practices. The importance of the results of empirical research began to be appreciated, and, as a result, based on them, new programmes and strategies were developed and implemented (McKee & Rapp, 2014).

The evidence-based practice originates from medicine and has been implemented over time in social sciences, and is increasingly common in prevention and rehabilitation (McKee & Rapp, 2014). It consists of searching for the most effective solutions by applying the results of scientific research and relying on the resources of the environment and institutions in working with minors. It is related to the principle of “what works” and more and more often extended to the question ‘what works for whom’ (Souverein et al., 2019).

Although the programmes are based on the results of scientific research, programmes for at-risk youth are still not perfect, and their evaluation is ongoing. They are used both in working with minors in an open and closed environment. In addition, programmes are often based on the idea of empowerment. The goal is to make participants independent and to strengthen their competences and skills acquired during programmes. An important assumption is a focus on personal resources. It is also recommended that rehabilitation activities pay attention to the individuals and their environments (Dzierżyńska-Breś & Matkowski, 2020). It may have a positive effect not only on short-term risks but also on long-term behavior change, as a result of which it is assumed that these activities have a high potential for long-term benefits. They can shape a better future for young people at risk.

Although the great potential of the programmes is indicated, prevention and intervention strategies are not always implemented. Financial, demographic, and socio-political considerations are identified as the main reasons (Souverein et al., 2019). As noted in the literature, there are many challenges for EBP, including the complexity of coordinating and implementing projects (Greenwood & Welsh, 2012).

These are important factors because the goal of implementation is to effectively use the introduced innovations by practitioners (Greenwood, 2014).

The implementation of projects based on Positive Youth Development looks different. Prioritizing the protective factors enables taking more effective preventive and intervention measures than using strategies to protect minors from broadly understood problems (Roffman et al., 2001, p. 86). The added value of this model is that the projects that grow out of PYD make it possible to reject youth at risk stigma and build self-esteem free from the excluding strain. Participation in organized forms of activity plays a special role in youth work. They enable developing social and cognitive skills, and a sense of self-agency. It also applies to activities organized as part of out-of-school activities that enable the development of positive forms of interpersonal relationships, cooperation, or mutual support (Catalano et al., 1996). They are also helpful in developing adolescents' social, educational, and emotional predispositions. Young people who are more entrenched in the environment achieve better academic results and economic stability more easily (Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995). Participation in organized forms of extracurricular activities plays a significant role in this process. It is confirmed by the fact that spending time in clubs or drop-in centers correlates with lower rates of violence (Marsh, 1992).

There should also be stated that different forms of activity should be flexibly linked with attention paid to action taken by youth workers and school climate. Mentorship is perceived as a special form of cooperation between youth and adults where mentors are positive role models and sources of knowledge about the world or practical information.

PYD is a concept that constitutes an important conceptual background of contemporary youth work, but not always its implementation allows for ideal solutions. It is argued that skipping deficits is not an appropriate strategy as they often become unresolved problems (Holsen et al., 2017). It is also debatable which areas of adolescents' development should be included in the PYD youth work. In addition, research indicates that sociopaths show a high level of self-confidence – an important part of the Five C element (Competences). It may lead to a situation in which a teenager will function under the PYD assumptions. However, it will risk parasitic developmental regulations (Geldhof et al., 2014; 2019).

Additionally, striving to develop empathy can lead to depressive feelings among youth. The causes of this problem are seen in the excessive care for adolescents and exercised by the relatives (Tone & Tully, 2014). It may also concern the correlation between empathy and individual traits (personality predispositions) or socialization experiences (growing up in a problem family). Probably a noticeable change in youth studies, leading to a shift from developing positive behaviors (such as empathy) to discouraging, is a desired solution. The balance between protective and risk factors is a particularly proper option for working with youth at risk.

Conclusions

Youth at risk in delinquency context is a particular challenge for contemporary youth work. Civilizational progress, the dynamics of socio-cultural changes, and the world shrinking to the global village size are the factors that shape the young generation. Therefore socialization, maturation, and adolescence are processes rich in content, norms, and values that modern teenagers must struggle with. It also significantly affects the specificity of contemporary juvenile delinquency, which goes beyond the “classic” model based solely on violence or theft, as evidenced by the increasingly common cyber-crime forms.

Contemporary youth has to grapple with a new quality of risks. There should be noted that from the presented typologies and concepts perspective, diagnose of trends and changes in dynamics of delinquency is a significant challenge for youth work. Regarding PYD, risk and protective factors identification is an additional challenge for juvenile delinquency prevention leading to take appropriate action on a wide range of youth work tools: education, intervention, therapy, or rehabilitation – they should minimize negative socialization experiences, but also motivate to socially positive behavior change and develop competences based on personal and environmental resources. “Leave No One Behind” – the key slogan reflecting the social dimension of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals is therefore also a philosophy of contemporary work with youth at risk.

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Education for Positive Youth Development. Implications for Those Who Learn and Teach

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It has always seemed strange to me that in our endless discussions about education so little stress is laid on the pleasure of becoming an educated person, the enormous interest it adds to life. To be able to be caught up into the world of thought – that is to be educated

Edith Hamilton, educator and writer (1867–1963)

ABSTRACT

In education, relatively much attention is paid to the transfer of knowledge, the development of practical skills necessary for young people to find their way on the European labor market, teaching and shaping youth competences of key importance for the developing economy. Education is treated in a very pragmatic way, too often being only a means to reach a high professional or social status. Much less importance is attached to supporting and developing the individual potentials, capacities, and socio-cultural resources contributing to healthy, full, active participation in social life and initiating social changes for civil society.

This study aims to draw attention to the role of selected elements of Positive Youth Development (PYD) (e.g., promotion of bonding, development of competences, fostering positive identity, providing recognition for positive behavior, providing opportunities for prosocial involvement) that play an important role in young people education.

The paper presents and develops five selected elements of the PYD concept that contribute to the overall youth development, support interpersonal relations, and increase the well-being of whole societies. The research results were also presented, which show the undisputed effects of educating young people by developing selected elements from a discussed theoretical construct. However, what is particularly important, these elements should find their application in the structured study programmes, non-formal and informal education activities for future professionals who will work with youth: teachers, pedagogues, social workers, and

the youth themselves. Designing adequate educational activities can be inspired by the examples of good practices presented in the text.

KEYWORDS:

education, youth, Positive Youth Development, empowerment.

Introduction

Nowadays, education is increasingly often perceived by both learners and teachers in an extremely pragmatic way: as a source of professional success, financial gratifications, or competences that allow them to achieve a higher professional and social status. Meanwhile, suppose we treat education as an element of creating a better world, self-development, and satisfaction that we can derive from harmonious, orderly interpersonal relations, well-being, and authentic being-in-the-world. In that case, it will turn out that our knowledge and practice are still insufficient. The Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach, presented in this paper, shows a different dimension of education: based on resources and potentials, emphasizing the strengths, not weaknesses, related to holistic development and encouragement of young people.

The paper aims to present selected elements of PYD as a proven approach worth disseminating in youth education and based on the resources, strengths, and potentials of young people.

The assumptions and justification for the PYD idea were exposed in the research of Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003a, 2003b), who reviewed several dozen studies on youth development programmes. They stated that young people should be seen not in the context of the problems they cause (for themselves and others) but the resources that should be developed (Bowers et al., 2015). From the perspective of the PYD concept, an important report was issued by the National Academy of Sciences (Eccle & Guttman, 2002), concerning the methods of implementing youth development programmes, which indicated the principle of 5 Cs: “Five Cs”: competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring as significant and worth including in the activities aimed at positive youth development.

PYD combines what is best and most valuable in this difficult period of life that is being young. On the one hand, strong attributes of a young age such as self-governance, self-control (or self-regulation), hopeful future expectations, and on the other hand, school engagement, support from the social world such as warmth and monitoring by an engaged mother or father or sustained relations with a caring and competent mentor or a youth programme leader (Bowers et al., 2014).

In this paper, five selected PYD components were presented: promotion of bonding; promotion of different competences: social, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and moral; fostering positive identity, providing recognition for positive behavior, providing opportunities for prosocial involvement. The development of chosen ele-

ments enables young people's holistic and multidimensional growth through appropriately designed educational activities. The chosen elements are of key importance during education that promotes youth development based on their strengths and potentials rather than weaknesses and problems that contribute to the overall youth development, support interpersonal relations and increase the well-being of whole societies. Moreover, the research results and impact of developing these five areas on the individual and socio-cultural functioning of young people are presented, as well as examples of good practices to inspire those who learn and teach for resource-based youth education.

Scientists can use this paper to reflect on how education is perceived in the PYD perspective; practitioners (teachers, educators, social workers, etc.) to design and implement educational activities with young people based on the PYD assumptions; politicians to design legislative and political solutions considering the PYD approach; and youth to increase awareness of the role of individual and environmental resources in self-development.

The Role of Selected PYD Elements in Youth Education – Theoretical Assumptions

When thinking about youth education, whose aim is young people thriving and flourishing, it is worth considering key elements from the PYD concept such as promotion of bonding; promotion of different competences: social, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and moral; fostering positive identity, providing recognition for positive behavior, providing opportunities for prosocial involvement.

The specificity and quality of closer and further environments are fundamental for the way children and later young people establish, maintain, and last in social relations. Bonding is defined as an emotional attachment and commitment that youth makes to social relationships in the family (parents and siblings), peer groups (friends and partners), school (teachers and schoolmates), community, and culture (Catalano et al., 2004; Lee & Lock, 2012). Resnick et al. (1997) claim that bonding to parents and school was identified as the primary protective factor. Family and school are the places that can best protect young people from engaging in any risky behavior, that is why connecting with members of these groups plays a vital role in whole-person development.

The first environment in which a child learns to build social bonds is the immediate family: parents or primary caregivers. The way in which a young person experiences the formation, maintenance, and duration of a bond with the first significant adult is directly reflected in the manners in which she or he will interact with other family members, peers, space of the school, community, and culture (Ainsworth, 1978; Bowlby, 1973; 1979; 1982). The style child's developed attachment to the primary caregiver is later reflected in how young people build relationships with

representatives of other environments. Later, youth bonds with peer groups and school. School bonding was defined by Hawkins and Weis (1985) as an attachment to prosocial peers, engagement in social and academic activities at school, and compliance with established norms for adequate school behavior.

Another component of the PYD approach is the development of social, emotional, cognitive, and moral competences. Developing these competences is necessary for young people to become aware of their resources and to be able to cope with problems. Social competences are defined as effective dealing with social situations (The Corsini Encyclopedia of Psychology). It is also getting along with others, forming and maintaining close relationships, and other adaptative abilities. Cognitive competences are referred to as an ability to understand, read and interpret social cues, solve problems, make decisions, understand the perspective of others, and be self-aware (W.T. Grant Consortium, 1992). The PYD approach also emphasizes the importance of moral and emotional competences. Moral competence includes an ability to ethically evaluate and act in various situations, respect for rules, a sense of social justice, and distinguishing good from evil (Kohlberg, 1963). Emotional competences, on the other hand, include awareness of emotions (both of one's own and the and others), self-control and evaluation of one's behavior, ability to maintain a connection to others and recognize common interests, communicate negative and positive emotions, being empathic (The Corsini Encyclopedia).

Another element in the PYD concept that would be worth developing in educational activities is positive identity. Youth establishes its identity due to individual as well as socio-ecological settings. The continuity and change of both the biopsychological characteristics and the socio-cultural environments in which young people function contribute to shaping the unique identity of an individual (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Beyond the development of the individual, it is crucial to create opportunities for young people to safely experience and explore previously unknown areas of life, accompany them in the process of developing their identity, as well as encourage them to decide what is important in their life, what they choose and make commitments. These activities may contribute to building a clear and positive identity among young generations.

The development of clear and positive identity involves building self-esteem; facilitating self-power by exploring new socio-cultural environments and making a commitment to issues recognized by young people; shaping a sense of life purposes and creating a positive view of personal future by fostering different role formations and possible achievements (Catalano et al., 2004; Tsang et al., 2013).

In the case of recognition for positive behavior, it concerns the positive reaction of the members of the social environment (family, significant others, school, peers) to the desired behavior of youth. According to the theory of social learning, these are the so-called positive social reinforcements, which motivate similar behavior in the future. Behavior is strengthened through reward (positive reinforcement) and avoidance of punishment (negative reinforcement) or weakened by aversive stimuli

(positive punishment) and loss of reward (negative punishment) (Bandura, 1973). The unconditional positive regard, acceptance, and respect of the closest environment (especially family and friends) also play a role that strengthens and stimulates the positive behavior of young people.

Young people need satisfactory contacts with peers and adults, a favorable atmosphere for participation at school and in the social environment to develop socially. It is also important to encourage participation in school and extracurricular activities to introduce programmes in which young people can learn new roles and support their colleagues. It is worth emphasizing the importance of warm parenting based on clear rules and discipline, which affects a higher level of emotional sensitivity in young people and a greater tendency to social involvement (Carlo et al., 2011).

Promotion of the five distinguished elements contributes to the self-development of young people and strengthening different socio-ecological resources, thanks to which the well-being of young people and whole societies increases.

Impact of Selected Elements of the PYD Assumptions in the Holistic Youth Development – Exemplification in Research Results

Comprehensive, resource-based development of young people – as shown in the research presented below – is possible if we provide them with a high-quality pro-development environment and support from parents, significant others, and peers. Selected elements of the PYD approach discussed in this part of the study: promotion of bonding; promotion of different competences: social, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and moral; fostering positive identity, providing recognition for positive behavior; and providing opportunities for prosocial involvement – are the examples of a holistic approach, enhancing the potential of young people.

There are several examples of research results regarding the impact of the quality of youth relations with parents, significant adults, peers, and school on different spheres of youth functioning. Bonding with parents, peers, and school as the main protective factors contribute to healthy and whole-person development and reduce the impact of many developmental risks faced by young people.

Children who have developed a secure attachment to their parents have a greater chance of becoming healthy adolescents and then adults in the future (Bowlby, 1982; Schofield, 2002). During their life course development, they will improve, for example, such individual characteristics and skills as high self-esteem, self-confidence, self-understanding, self-regulation, social competence, and better skills in problem-solving and building quality friendships (Bowlby, 1982; Carter et al., 2005; Schofield, 2002). Moreover, healthy and positive relations with adults establish trust in themselves and others (Catalano et al., 2004), thus increasing the capacity for adaptive responses to changes. Moreover, warm and supportive youth-adult rela-

tionships facilitate a sense of belonging and willingness to learn, which are crucial elements of internalizing positive self-image delivered through such programming (Jones & Deutsch, 2011). Other research results indicate that the quality of relationships with adults significantly affects youth academic achievement and life satisfaction (Catalano et al., 2004b; Maddox & Prinz, 2003).

In conclusion, bonding with parents and other significant adults contributes to building such features as high self-esteem, believing in oneself, better self-understanding, and regulating one's own emotions and behavior. In addition, it results in greater social skills related to building relationships, strengthening the level of trust and a sense of belonging to others, or the ability to cope with changes and problems experienced. Young people who experience healthy relationships with adults are also more likely to learn new things and generally feel more satisfied with their lives.

Friends, along with parents, are an important component in the process of youth social development. Young people having friends with positive features contribute to greater involvement in the school and increase the feeling of being socially accepted (Berndt, 2002). Moreover, bonding with positive peers diminishes any probability of problematic behavior (Crosnoe & Needham, 2004) and decreases the risk of alienation (Hurrelmann & Engel, 1992).

Young people spend many hours at school, so the quality of the place itself, people with whom they contact, and opportunities offered by the school affect the students' development. According to the PYD assumptions, creating a supportive school environment with clearly defined boundaries, expectations toward academic work, and behavior is important. Bonding with school helps young people build more supportive friendships, demonstrate higher achievement motivation, increase school attendance, and achieve better academic results (Eccles, 2004; Ryan & Patrick, 2001). School connectedness prevents problem behavior, fewer incidents of delinquency, and decreases involvement in bullying (Catalano et al., 2004; Goldweber et al., 2013; Waasdorp et al., 2013). Similarly, Resnick et al. (1997) show that school bonding can protect youth from harm. School connectedness may buffer against delinquency and deviant behavior, act as a preventive force for school dropout, and protect from negative influences.

In conclusion, students who participate in a supportive school environment bond with teachers and schoolmates better. Moreover, they are more motivated to achieve better academic results, demonstrate higher involvement in school life, and have fewer behavior problems.

Recently, both in the literature on the subject and in the educational practice (also in the field of public pedagogy, implemented, among others, by the European Union), more and more importance has been attached to the research on competences. Depending on the approach to the analysis of competences, they focus on treating them as a developmental outcome (Weissberg & Greenberg, 1997) and as

activities aimed at increasing them as a factor preventing negative behavior (Botvin et al., 1995).

There are also views that competences should be treated as an important outcome itself, indicative of positive development (Catalano et al., 2004); but also what we should strive for in educational activities: working on developing skills to integrate feelings (emotional competence) with thinking (cognitive competence) and actions (behavioral competence) to help young people achieve specific goals (Catalano et al., 2004).

Social competences are the abilities to handle social interactions effectively (The Corsini Encyclopedia of Psychology, p. 1623). They refer to getting along with others, forming and maintaining close relationships, and responding in adaptive ways in social settings. Given the complexity of social situations and actors, Orpinas and Horne (2006) defined social competence as a “person’s age-appropriate knowledge and skills for functioning peacefully and creatively in his or her own community or social environment” (Catalano et al., p. 108).

Kornberg and Caplan (1980), after the analysis of 650 papers, indicated that the most important elements influencing the strengthening of social competences include adaptive and mental health behaviors. In general, social competence promotion programmes were designed to enhance personal and interpersonal effectiveness and prevent the development of maladaptive behavior through:

- a) teaching students to develop mentally appropriate skills and information,
- b) fostering prosocial and health-enhancing values and beliefs,
- c) creating environmental supports to reinforce the real-life application of skills (Weissberg et al., 1989; Catalano et al., 2004).

Cognitive competences are referred to as the “ability to develop and apply the cognitive skills of self-talk, reading and interpretation of social cues, using steps for problem-solving and decision-making, understanding the perspective of others, understanding behavioral norms, a positive attitude toward life, and self-awareness” (W.T. Grant Consortium, 1992, p. 136). On the other hand, cognitive competence is related to academic and intellectual achievement: using logic, analytic thinking, and abstract reasoning (Catalano et al., 2004).

A behavioral competence is related to effective verbal and non-verbal communication and the ability to consciously make decisions about behavior (helping others, walking away from negative situations, participating in positive activities (Catalano et al., 2004). On the other hand, moral competence is the ability to evaluate and act in various situations ethically; it also involves respect for rules and a sense of social justice. Therefore, moral development is the process of acquiring the ability to distinguish good from evil due to the choices made in the face of moral dilemmas (Kohlberg, 1963).

Emotional processes related to social competences include:

- “the ability to be aware of emotions both of one’s own and the and others’, and understand verbal and non-verbal communication of emotions;
- ability to calm down in difficult situations, use self-control, and evaluate one’s behavior before acting;
- maintaining a connection to others – being able to recognize common interests, communicate negative emotions (e.g., anger, frustration, disappointment) while maintaining the relationship, and communicate positive emotions (e.g., affection, pride in others’ achievements);
- being empathic or taking social perspective, that is, understanding the social interaction from the perspective of the other person” (The Corsini Encyclopedia, p. 1623).

An element of PYD programmes is working with emotions: ER (emotional regulation). There are two strategies for dealing with emotions in adolescents: reappraisal and suppression. Reappraisal is an “ER strategy wherein a young person tries to alter emotional “inputs” (an emotion-eliciting event, e.g., a parent telling you that you cannot participate in an event with your peers because you neglected doing a school assignment) before it generates full and perhaps problematic emotional responses (e.g., showing a high level of anger, along with associated behavioral agitation and “yelling and screaming”). Reappraisal changes the way one thinks about emotion-eliciting situations to alter their impact (Gross, 1998). This strategy might entail seeing “the bright side” or “the bigger picture,” such as interpreting parents’ discipline as caring rather than controlling” (Bowers et al., p. 40).

Skill training showing young people how to apply ER strategies adapted to the situation, personal resources, and context can contribute to their greater self-awareness and thus better well-being.

In conclusion, working with young people should also consider activities for the development of competences, especially emotional ones, which increase not only the self-awareness of young people but also improve their relations with others.

In the case of youth identity, it affects youth cognitive and emotional state and how they behave in various situations and circumstances. Several studies reveal how integrated and positive identity influences how young people function in individual and socio-ecological contexts.

On the one hand, in the case of individual settings, positive and integrated identity is related to a better understanding of one’s meaning in life, greater psychological well-being, and fewer health-compromising behaviors (Schwartz et al., 2011). Moreover, adolescents with an achieved sense of identity present themselves as more stable and declare experiencing a greater level of purpose and focus in their life than youth with other statuses (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). In the case of mental health, in particular, identity commitments, which contribute to constructing a more stable self-concept, are associated with lower levels of depressive and anxiety symptoms. (Schwartz et al., 2012).

On the other hand, in the case of socio-cultural settings, the positive identity of young people mainly depends on family, peers, school, and cultural experiences. Positive identification related to achieving educational success, as well as constructive identification with other social spheres, is strongly associated with academic attainment and achievement (Oyserman et al., 2006). Likewise, positive perception and affirmation of ethnic identity, and awareness and understanding of the history of one's own ethnic group also are associated with better academic achievement among ethnic minority youth (Nasir et al., 2009; Supple et al., 2006).

Other research shows that active engagement in positive behaviors with prosocial peers and caring adults constitute the greatest protection against negative behavior (Nakkula et al., 2010). Recognition of positive behavior promotes different individual characteristics, interpersonal skills, and conduct that enhances thriving. When adolescents' positive behavior is recognized and rewarded by significant adults, they develop a sense of self-fulfillment, feel proud of their achievement, and as a result, manifested behavior enhances their self-esteem. Moreover, involvement in positive behavior contributes to developing an individual's morality (Cheng et al., 2006). From other studies, we know that recognition of positive behavior affects physical health and identity formation, as well as encompasses several cognitive and social skills such as bonds with family members, developing social perspective thinking, aiming for academic achievements, adherence to cultural norms, and contemplation of transcendental values (Law et al., 2013).

Recognizing positive behavior refers not only to empowering young people but also to the learning environments in which young people function, where rules are established, expectations are set, and messages are formulated and expressed regarding the behavior that is to serve the well-being of the individual, as well as contemporary societies.

Another component of PYD is prosocial involvement, which should occur at school and outside school hours (out-of-school-time: OST). Both children and adolescents should experience satisfying social contacts, both with adults and their peers. It is also important to engage in roles where they can contribute to the group, be it family, school, neighborhood, group of peers, or a larger community (Dryfoos, 1990). An opportunity for prosocial involvement may be the presentation of events and activities across different social environments that encourage the youth to participate in prosocial actions (Catalano et al., 2004).

When it comes to school, there are at least three well-measured components of school engagement: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive (Li & Lerner, 2011; 2013). Behavioral school engagement entails involvement in academic activities, participation in school-based social activities, positive conduct, and the absence of disruptive behaviors (Fredricks et al., 2004). Emotional engagement involves a student's emotional reactions to the school, the teacher, and schoolmates (Stipek, 2002). The cognitive dimension of school engagement is related to a student's "thoughts" about learning and education (Bowers et al., p. 58; Li & Lerner, 2013).

The high level of school involvement of young people in all three areas in the 4H study was associated not only with higher grades and lower susceptibility to problem behaviors but also with a higher level of happiness). The experience of school successes promotes greater school engagement and influences a higher sense of effectiveness (Bowers et al., 2014).

Important factors influencing the level of prosocial behavior are a cultivation of prosocial involvement as an element of school culture, positive models of prosocial activities of both adults and peers (adult mentoring, peer mentoring) in schools and valuable prosocial experiences in the family, school, and in other socialization agencies. It is especially worth emphasizing the importance of warm parenting based on clear rules and discipline, which affects a higher level of emotional sensitivity in young people and a greater tendency to social involvement (Carlo et al., 2011).

In conclusion, the social involvement of youth is the result of satisfying social contacts with adults and peers, engaging in social roles, and emotionally positive involvement in school activities. Students who think well and warmly about their school have a better chance of learning success and social relations.

Inspirations for Implementation of PYD Assumptions for those who Teach and Learn – Examples of Good Practices

Many educational and preventive activities can inspire to take steps to develop different PYD assumptions among young people. The examples of good practices presented below focus mainly on five distinguished elements of the PYD concept discussed in this paper. The first case relates to bonding promotion by developing relations that young people build with their parents and schoolmates as the main protective agents in everyday situations.

Positive Adolescent Training through Holistic Social Programmes (P.A.T.H.S.) was initiated to promote the holistic development of youth by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust in 2004. P.A.T.H.S aims to strengthen developmental ties that young people establish, especially in the peer and school space, to develop health and flourish. The programme assumes the implementation of five elements related to establishing, maintaining, and continuing in a relationship: creating opportunities to belong, cultivating supportive and intimate relationships, promotion of positive social norms, support for efficacy, and promoting skills for involvement and interaction.

Families and Schools Together (FAST) – the programme aims to empower parents and strengthen families by developing social networks and supporting schools and communities for the well-being of children and youth. The programme focuses on working with family, school, and the local community in three different areas:

empowers parents through the development of parenting skills, builds positive relations and social capital between families and schools, creates a supportive community engaged in fostering children's well-being and education. As part of the FAST Program, multiple families meet once a week in a dynamic after-school gathering. During those 2,5-hour sessions, families are guided by a trained FAST team through a structured agenda of evidence-based activities that develop positive parenting skills, enable spending time together, reduce family tensions and promote family bonding. As a result, the programme supports the following protective factors related mainly to child's interpersonal bonds, family system, parent-to-parent support, and school and community affiliation. More at: <https://www.familiesandschools.org>

An important element of the positive development of young people are programmes focused on developing positive bonds, building good relationships with adults and peers, self-awareness, and self-development.

The Learning to BREATHE Program (Metz et al., 2013), a modular mindfulness programme consisting of six modules: body awareness; understanding and working with thoughts; understanding and working with feelings; integrating awareness of thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations; reducing harmful self-judgments; integrating mindful awareness into daily life. By participating, young people can influence their emotions and learn to manage them (Metz et al., 2013). More at: <https://learning2breathe.org/>

BIG BROTHERS/SISTERS is a programme based on the approach that the primary mechanism of changes in competence (social, behavioral, emotional) is based on the development of a consistent adult-child bond in a mentoring relationship. The goal of a lasting, trust-based relationship between a young person and a mentor should be creating opportunities for children to absorb new information and knowledge and practice specific skills (e.g., coping, decision making, self-management, frustration tolerance, impulse control, refusal/resistance, life skills, and academic mastery) (Catalano et al., 2004). More at: <https://www.bbbs.org/>

Distinguished elements that constitute clear and positive identity can be developed and strengthened by proposing a variety of educational and preventive activities concerning the development of individual characteristics as well as socio-cultural environments, inspired by the examples of good practices presented below:

Esteem Builders Curriculum – it is a tool for self-esteem evaluation created by Michele Borba (1989). Self-confidence can influence identity formation, emotions, and performance related to it (Harter, 1999). Borba distinguished five components of authentic self-esteem: (a) security – a feeling of strong assuredness, which involves youth comfort and safety as well as awareness of rules, limits, and expectations toward them, (b) selfhood – a feeling of individuality and youth self-awareness of

the sources that influence them; (c) affiliation – a feeling of belonging and social acceptance, especially in relationships that are considered important; (d) mission – a feeling of purpose and motivation that reflects in establishing realistic and achievable goals as well as taking responsibility for the consequences of youth decisions; (e) competence – a feeling of success and efficacy in things that are considered valuable by youth, additionally, awareness of own strengths and weaknesses.

Evaluation of the elements shaping youth's self-esteem contributes to increasing awareness of developed areas and those that require reinforcement in case of developing self-esteem as an element of clear and positive identity.

Best Possible Self – one of the tasks related to developing youth identity is imagining and planning the anticipated future. Best Possible Self is a tool that allows youth to design the future in areas related to family life, relationships with friends, educational and professional space, and defining the meaning of success in an individual opinion. As part of the task, students can be asked to complete the Best Possible Self handout, which includes, for example, such categories as life tasks and priorities, passions, as well as significant people in life. A positive image and planning the future can not only contribute to the development of goal-management skills but also increase social engagement and school involvement, which directly reflect in fostering positive identity. More at: <https://ggie.berkeley.edu/practice/best-possible-self/>

Based on strength-based PYD perspective, especially parents and teachers, who contact with young people nearly every day, can model positive behavior and structure everyday situations and schoolwork to promote cooperation, respect, and acceptance and, in result, build a positive climate of those educational settings.

Positive Behavior Strategies (PBS) – this approach assumes that youth thrives in safe and predictable settings, where expectations are adequate and clear, necessary for social functioning skills are trained, acts of positive behavior are noticed and reinforced. Promoting positive behavior of young people takes place on three levels: general support for all students, targeted support for some, intensive support for a few. At each level, five cyclically successive stages are implemented. It begins with setting clear and positive expectations, followed by modeling, in which educators model positive behavior and present how it looks and feels. The next stage of consistency is to consequently and permanently continue the chosen style of functioning so that young people know what to expect in the future. In comparison, acknowledgment consists of noticing, appreciating, and informing about positive behavior in the school space and other learning environments, for example, the family. The last stage is to evaluate the merit of each strategy to check whether the actions are taken to fulfill their function. More at: <https://www.monash.edu/education/teachspace/articles/five-ways-to-use-positive-behaviour-support-strategies-in-your-classroom>

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a strategy that can be used both in families and schools to teach children and youth expected behavior. The basic assumption in this approach is that we cannot teach young people what they should do instead of the unwanted behavior by punishing and disciplining them. The easiest way is to pay attention to the issues that young people do right for the benefit of themselves and others and directing and supporting youth toward a new way of dealing with a problematic situation. The basic element that enables the family to cooperate with the school environment in this strategy is building positive relationships by recognizing the needs of the family and the way the family perceives the relationship with the school. Another strategy is engaging in meaningful two-way communication, which involves a regular exchange of information about the needs and preferences of the family and the school possibilities to respond. Ensuring equitable family representation involves strategies employed by educators to support families' knowledge, skills, and efficacy for youth effective learning, which empowers families to be supporters and partners in youth learning. The final strategy relies on formulating meaningful decisions, which is manifested in the family's involvement in making decisions related to supporting the child. More at: <https://www.pbis.org/>

An important role in constructing prosocial involvement is played by those activities that build emotional ties with adults and peers, promote peer mentoring, where young people learn positive involvement from their colleagues, and teach how to spend time actively, focused on development.

Using Positively Engaged Students as School-Engagement Models and Mentors. 4H studies showed that positive peer group support for school-related activities was positively related to behavioral and emotional school engagement (Li et al., 2011). A useful tool at work can be a map of the different social networks within the school to generate and use development strategies to enhance school engagement and prevent the problematic outcomes of having troublesome friends and low engagement. An example of such practices is the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC: www.militarychild.org), which has developed a peer mentoring programme – Student-To-Student (S2S) – which fosters the positive and successful introduction of new students to the school (Cozza & Lerner 2013; Bowers et al., 2014). More at: <https://www.militarychild.org/>

OST – programmes (Out-Of-Schooltime-programmes) aimed at providing the youth with valuable and wholesome ways to spend their OST hours and enhance the capacities or skills of young people (Bowers et al., 2014; Vandell et al., 2015). They develop artistic, creative, sporting talents or interests, academic ability, entrepreneurship, religious education, active citizenship, or life skills (Lerner, 2004; Vandell et al., 2015). OST activities provide safe spaces for the youth and involve three key programme features: positive and sustained relations with a caring and competent

adult, life skills development, and opportunities for young people's participation and leadership of the valued family, school, or community activities (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003a; 2003b). Lerner (2004) indicates that these three programme features of OST activities are "The Big Three", which are an indispensable element of an effective youth development programme (Bowers et al., 2014).

The examples of good practices are projects and activities that can help all those who teach (e.g., pedagogues, teachers, educators, and social workers) achieve PYD objectives and support resource-based development by the youth themselves. Strengthening the potential of young people, comprehensive and holistic development may affect their well-being and self-development and contribute to the creation of a positively empowering society.

Conclusions

From the perspective of youth themselves as well as educators, PYD is an important approach to development, still not very popular in many Central and Eastern European countries, which accents resources, not only of young people but also of educational environments and socialization agents, extracting from them what is particularly valuable in the process of upbringing/education. The experiences of researchers and practitioners who introduced and evaluated PYD programmes clearly show the tasks and challenges associated with this approach.

Researchers should continue studying the activities and strategies that enhance the development of youth's clear and positive identity and the results of the socio-cultural functioning of youth demonstrating achieved identity. The task of practitioners should be to implement into different curricula clear and positive identity development work that is an element to build youth development programmes. The main challenge for policymakers should be to make PYD the main focus of youth policy at regional, national, and international levels.

It is important to create a friendly PYD environment (in the local environment); understand and promote it in educating young people, and enhance the partnership of local institutions involved in education.

PYD programmes should emphasize the cooperation and training of entities important from the perspective of young people: not only the family, peers, and school environment, but also significant others and people who can have a significant educational impact on young people. An individual approach to the designed and implemented PYD activities should be promoted; research indicates that they should consider, e.g., gender, resources of the family and school environment of young people, quality of peer relations.

What is essential in the PYD approach is positive reinforcement, social rewards (including affective ones), as well as supporting activities to build strong bonds with parents and other significant adults, positive peers, and school (peer mentoring,

adult mentoring), which contribute to building such features as high self-esteem, believing in oneself, better self-understanding and regulation of own emotions and behavior. It results in greater social skills related to building relationships, strengthening the level of trust and a sense of belonging to others, or the ability to cope with changes and problems experienced.

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