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SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND HATRED TOWARDS CHILDREN FROM ALCOHOLIC FAMILIES IN PEER ENVIRONMENT. PECULIARITIES OF PEDAGOGICAL SUPPORT

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Abstract. The article emphasizes that the family is the main environment of life. If it is a dysfunctional family, all its problems can have a negative impact on the development and upbringing of children. Unfortunately, the key dysfunction in the case of Poland is alcoholism. Therefore, the study emphasizes that the situation of a child growing up in an alcoholic family depends on many factors related to the functioning of the family environment. The addiction of one or both parents, the degree of degradation of family life and the availability of external support are of particular importance here. All of this can lead to social exclusion and hatred of children growing up in families with alcohol problems by their peers. The author proves the need to help children growing up in problematic families, since they are characterized not only by social isolation, but also by bullying or cyberbullying. It is pointed out that the traumatic experience and suffering of such children often go beyond the family environment, where they experience academic failures, difficulties in relationships with peers, etc. The article notes that the consequences of various traumas in the educational or family environment experienced in childhood can have a long-lasting impact on their lives; some of these minors may also become addicted to alcohol, imitating their parents. Therefore, it is important for educators and social workers to develop appropriate strategies for effective psychological and pedagogical support of such families, in particular while raising children.

Keywords: social exclusion, hatred, children, alcoholism, alcoholic family, peer environment, social competence.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social exclusion and hatred are negative social phenomena characterized by the lack of engagement in customary and social activities. The threat of exclusion can affect children, adults, families, and groups of people for various reasons. This includes a lack or restriction of participation, influence, and access to fundamental public institutions, which should be available to all, especially individuals from dysfunctional backgrounds, such as alcoholic families.

Social exclusion is often associated with the expulsion, isolation of individuals, exclusion from society, and a lack of acceptance in the community. The most significant factors contributing to this phenomenon are unemployment, alcoholism, and drug addiction, as well as poverty and mental illnesses. The most common causes of social exclusion in Poland are indeed unemployment, alcoholism, and poverty.

In this article, I will focus on discussing the impact of alcoholism within families on children who are at risk of social exclusion and hatred. The primary objective will be a thorough analysis of how these phenomena influence various aspects of the children's social lives. Despite numerous sociological and

economic studies, the issues of social exclusion and hatred are not yet fully understood. An essential aspect is also identifying actions aimed at effectively preventing and reducing social exclusion and hate, by addressing the reduction of alcoholism in Polish families. This article serves as a complement to existing knowledge in this field. Special attention has been given to digital exclusion, as despite the increasing access to the Internet and the development of information technology infrastructure, it remains a significant problem for a portion of Poland's population as well as the entire European Union. It should be noted that the utilization of modern technologies increasingly determines full participation in social and economic life.

2. CONCEPT, CAUSES AND AREAS OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

The concept, causes, and areas of social exclusion in Poland, the European Union, and the world have remained unchanged for many years. The phenomenon of social exclusion has a long history and dates back to ancient times (e.g., ostracism in Athens). However, the term "social exclusion" emerged in the 1970s in France and referred to limitations within the French social security system (Golinowska, 2005). This term quickly found its application in the field of social sciences as early as 1974. One of the first authors to address this issue was M. Weber, who characterized social exclusion as a form of social closure (Weber, 1946). This viewpoint gained recognition rapidly, was expanded upon and was subsequently used by P. Parkin to describe and interpret processes of the emergence and isolation of social groups what contributed to the creation of many social inequalities (Parkin, 1979).

In Poland, the term "social exclusion" appeared relatively late, only in the early 21st century. Earlier works focused on issues of social exclusion but they were not yet able to identify this phenomenon. The first studies focusing on this phenomenon are considered to be analyses of beggars. These were conducted in 1995, and terms like alienation, uprooting, exclusion, isolation and loneliness were used in their descriptions. Subsequent researchers such as Z. Bauman used terms like redundant, unwanted, rejected, or marginalized in relation to individuals now referred to as excluded (Bauman, 1998).

It is important to emphasize that the concept of social exclusion, much like marginalization is inherently often equated with poverty, social inequalities as well as discrimination, leading to the emergence of a subgroup within the social structure categorized as the underclass (Silver, 1994). However, research has shown that social exclusion is not synonymous with poverty. Poverty, in its fundamental material sense is a one-dimensional category, whereas social exclusion is a multi-dimensional concept encompassing issues that indicate both deprivation and non-participation. As such, social exclusion is a complex, multifaceted, and multi-dimensional concept, resulting in various definitions. The most common definition characterizes it as a lack of participation or the inability to participate in crucial spheres of collective life (Frąckiewicz, 2005) such as social, economic, political, and cultural domains as well as in normal activities characteristic of a given society. When analysing this issue, it's important to consider it in a narrow context which allows it to be categorized into three types:

- Exclusion from the sphere of work,
- Exclusion from the spheres of education, culture, and access to information,
- Spatial exclusion, including homelessness.

Grotowska-Leder categorized the available types of definitions of social exclusion and divided them into analytical, working, and official definitions (Grotowska-Leder, 2005). Analytical definitions maintain that social exclusion possesses distinct features, dimensions, mechanisms, and manifestations. This perspective aligns with Giddens' concept (Giddens, 2006). He emphasized that exclusion is the result of various social impairments which prevent an individual or a social group from fully participating in social, economic or political life to which they belong. Representatives of this definitional approach among researchers included S. Paugam (Paugam, 1991), R. Castel (Castel, 1995) and M. Xiberras (Xiberras, 1994).

The analysis of the essence of explanations for exclusion is pivotal here and two perspectives can be

distinguished: participatory and distributive. The participatory approach pertains to the restriction or absence of participation by individuals and groups in important spheres of social life (Levitas, 2000). The second, so-called distributive approach focuses on the limitation or lack of access to socially significant resources and services. Those resources include: access to the labour market including job offers and gaining income, consumption, the educational system, social security including social benefits and healthcare. It is precisely within this second group of socially excluded that children growing up in families where alcohol is abused are categorized. These families often have such significant dysfunctions that they impede or restrict access to many resources for their children.

Subsequently important aspect of this issue highlights the deficits in social rights belonging to individuals or social groups (Frieske, 1999). Another type of definition of social exclusion is a statement found in documents functioning within the sphere of social policy in Poland, which vary. In this perspective, social exclusion is identified and examined within at least a dual possibility. The first is a descriptive approach which concerns the identification of areas of deficiency and individuals who are poor or excluded. The second one refers to undertaking actions in the pursuit of defining exclusion within the context of social policy.

3. EXCLUDED PARENTS MEAN EXCLUDED CHILDREN

The family is the primary and most crucial environment in a person's life. It is a community of individuals that constitutes the fundamental form of individual life and the basic unit of social existence. This means that family members maintain close contact and interact with each other. The family is the first environment that provides individuals with the opportunity for comprehensive development and the satisfaction of many needs. It also introduces individuals to the world of values and social norms. Everything we teach a child within the family remains with them throughout their life. It should be emphasized that the condition of the entire society later depends on the nature of the family and how it fulfils its functions (Geddes, 2005).

There is a strong correlation between the phenomena occurring within families and social issues. Families teach children proper norms and behaviours while also shaping their life needs. As a result, parents are the most important teachers for a child as they, rather than teachers, are the child's first educators. Therefore, early childhood education should be a priority (Geddes, 2005). Unfortunately, numerous socio-economic transformations in Poland have led to a significant increase in the number of families struggling and facing material and upbringing challenges. Areas of poverty and destitution have also expanded and a lack of security is palpable (Porąbaniec, 2008).

Unfortunately, there is currently insufficient caregiving for children and adolescents. This might be a consequence of the transformations occurring within today's families. Especially in the case of families struggling with alcohol-related issues, the lack of care is particularly dangerous. This absence of care is most strongly felt among the youngest children. Neglected or completely uncared-for by their parents, they often struggle to cope with numerous difficult problems which then lead to further issues. Alcoholism frequently leads to a form of marginalization and consequently - social exclusion.

4. BULLYING – A NEW PHENOMENON OR THE RESULT OF FEAR?

The term "hejt" is derived from English "hate". In Poland, it is a colloquial phrase primarily used in internet slang and everyday speech. The urban slang and colloquial speech dictionary presents four definitions of "hejt", which can be combined into a single concept. "Hejt" is a statement expressing negative views or opinions about events, objects, and individuals, from which the author - a hater - derives pleasure (<http://www.miejski.pl/slowo-Hejt>). The meaning of "hejt" is similar to the English word "bullying".

It strongly depends on evoking negative emotions among people - fear. Analysing world history since ancient times, numerous examples of periods of heightened hatred resulting from fear can be

observed. Such an analysis can reasonably explain the causes of contemporary hostility directed, among other things towards foreigners. It should be emphasized that even a member of a peer group can become foreign. The phenomenon of bullying has been known for centuries but has been referred to differently. Moreover, it continuously transforms, creating an ever-expanding pool of meanings and content. Defining bullying ("hejt") is not simple as the concept is relatively new and the term used to describe it is broad and vague (Gitari, 2015). Bullying is commonly used to describe many collectively perceived phenomena, which seem to be distinct issues. Among them, the following stand out:

1. Hostile language, also known as hostile speech. Markowska emphasizes:

"In comparison to the classically understood hate speech, the language of hostility is more dispersed. Therefore, it does not create a coherent image of an enemy but uses a series of connections, chains of associations, implications, metaphors, and chaotic references. [...] While hate speech has a clear addressee the language of hate prevents us from deciphering a clear message of 'who the other is,' and certainly does not provide a rational answer to why the 'other' is the enemy" (Markowska, 2013).

2. Hate speech. Karwat defines it as:

"Hate speech can be described as all codes and resulting signs that are an expression as well as the instrument of propagating and imposing on the environment attitudes of hatred and related negative emotions regarding specific groups and social categories—such as disdain, loathing, disgust, obsessive mistrust and suspicion leading to 'preventive' hostility, vindictiveness motivated by real, exaggerated, or imaginary grievances" (Karwat, 2010). Such hate speech reaped its toll during World War II, where victims were individuals with no control over their skin colour, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, etc.

3. Mechanisms of stigmatization and labeling were presented by Goffman (Goffman, 2005). Stigma and stigmatization have been included among phenomena related to hate due to their current presence among children and on the Internet (Apospor, 2003).

4. Trolling is a phenomenon involving engagement in discussions not for the purpose of exchanging arguments but to ridicule, insult, defeat the opponent or lead them to formulating judgments that are impossible to defend. Trolling is particularly prevalent among children and adolescents (March, 2019).

Numerous difficulties arise in precisely capturing the specificity of bullying, partly due to the fact that context is crucial in the analysis of virtual communication. Bullying, including hostility, language and hate speech, share certain characteristics: they function as a product of authors' pre-existing psychological states and beliefs and subsequent verbalization or publication is just a consequence. Social media, which have numerous forums, chats, and image boards play a significant role here often enabling the distribution of hatred (Dewey, 2015).

5. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SITUATION OF CHILDREN GROWING UP IN FAMILIES WITH ALCOHOL-RELATED ISSUES

The first source of threat to a child regardless of their age is a state of continuous tension and stress (Apospor, 2003). Living in constant uncertainty and unpredictability generates a sense of instability and lack of order in a child's life, leading to a lack of control over their own life.

Research indicates that a child in an alcoholic family learns three principles:

1. "Don't feel too much."
2. "Don't trust."
3. "Don't talk."

The first principle teaches that if a child feels too much any time, they receive attention from their parents it hurts or is terrifying. The second principle teaches that promises made were broken multiple times and not kept. Therefore, nothing is certain and no one can be trusted. Consequently, the child should not talk about their parent's alcoholism, how they feel, or what they think about it. The third principle instructs not to talk about what goes on at home and the consequences of alcoholism. Such actions result in the breakdown of communication not only within the family but also in relationships

with peers. This creates a set of forbidden topics, family secrets that children must guard out of shame, fear and in hope that things might get better. These actions lead the child to adopt a defensive and closed-off attitude towards the surrounding reality.

As a defense mechanism against alcoholism family members unconsciously start assuming roles that minimize the consequences of the alcoholic's behaviour allowing the family to continue functioning while maintaining an appearance of normalcy. These roles form a collective protective system providing children in particular with a sense of stability and security while also diverting the attention of external observers such as teachers at school from the real problems.

It is important to emphasize that children experience many traumatic situations related to violence, the destruction of parental roles, chaos, and conflicts. They often witness various forms of violence, including physical, emotional, sexual and intellectual abuse, as well as neglect. When discussing their emotional states, children commonly mention feelings of shame for their parents, a sense of guilt, fear of their parents, isolation, anger and even hatred towards their parents.

6. HARMING CHILDREN IN AN ALCOHOLIC FAMILY

It is estimated that in Poland, approximately 2 million children live in families affected by alcohol-related issues with nearly half of them facing situations that pose significant threats to their health and development (source: www.parpa.pl). Consequently, the social exclusion of children from families where parents abuse alcohol can be manifested in various ways:

- Living in unfavourable economic conditions, especially poverty (Barnes, 2002);
- Facing negative consequences from societal changes related to sudden and dynamic processes such as deindustrialization, economic crises, or abrupt declines of industries which can lead to loss of parental employment and influence the overall household material and psychological circumstances (Swartz, 2008);
- Not acquiring the life skills necessary for a normal social position, appropriate qualifications, entering the job market, or establishing a family. Such deficiencies can hinder their adaptation to changing societal and economic conditions, leading to further exclusion in adulthood (Barnes, 2002);
- Lacking proper access to institutions that facilitate the development of life skills. As children they might not realize the possibilities available to them and as adults, they may struggle to effectively use various institutions and public resources;
 - Experiencing discrimination due to developmental delays, cultural biases, and stereotypes;
 - Their personal characteristics such as disabilities, addictions, chronic illnesses, or other traits can hinder their access to societal resources (Duffy, 1995);
 - Falling victim to various harmful actions of other people including violence and blackmail;
 - Can be a subject of violent behaviour of other people e.g. violence, blackmail, indoctrination etc. (Geddes, 200);

These are some of the most common examples of social exclusion, underscoring the multidimensional nature of this phenomenon. The evolving socio-economic reality constantly adds new symptoms to the list of social exclusion that makes it hard to define. To measure, identify and analyze social exclusion, various indicators describing its dimensions are developed and employed. These indicators form the basis of research allowing the identification of the scale, areas, and causes of social exclusion and related risks. The findings of such research enable informed social and political decisions aimed at mitigating the consequences of social exclusion. A recent example of such an effort is found in the Europe 2020 Strategy, which introduced the composite social indicator "People at-risk-of-poverty and social exclusion" (AROPE).

It's important to note that children raised in families affected by alcoholism often experience a persistent sense of lower self-worth and diminished self-respect. This manifests in self-criticism, downplaying achievements, and engaging in self-destructive actions. Many of these children struggle

with issues related to their sense of identity, which can make them targets for bullying from their peers. These children are particularly sensitive to any form of attack due to living in chronic stress, which can weaken their immune systems and lead to somatic illnesses (O'Connor, 2005).

The misuse of alcohol by parents also has various other psychological consequences for children. Often, peers induce feelings of guilt in children from alcoholic families. This stems from the fact that these children blame themselves for their parents' alcoholism and believe that if they were different their parents wouldn't drink. This kind of thinking is erroneous but challenging to overcome.

Children raised in families where at least one parent abuses alcohol are frequently neglected as there is a lack of expectations and enforcement of proper behaviours. They might face strict limitations on expressing themselves, their emotions and their needs. Growing up in an atmosphere of strong non-acceptance and almost complete lack of security they develop feelings of inferiority and a lack of belief in their own capabilities. This negative self-perception doesn't only affect their functioning within the family environment but also impacts their academic success and their role as students. Consequently, these children may be perceived negatively by their peers, exhibit weaker academic performance, and present disciplinary challenges. As a result, their peers often express reluctance toward children from dysfunctional families (O'Connor, 2005).

Moreover, children from dysfunctional families are at risk of exposure to other substances besides alcohol, such as drugs or mind-altering substances. They are frequently exposed to alcohol consumption during gatherings at home. Thus, the entire school environment should be vigilant about potential addiction risks. In this context, schools should develop strategies in line with their statutes for educational, preventive and intervention measures targeting children and youth. Peer support is also essential.

An interesting observation is that young people recognize the widespread phenomenon of bullying. The primary consequence of bullying is a decrease in the victim's self-esteem and the onset of depression and in some cases even suicide. Unfortunately, many researchers note that insufficient action is taken to counteract bullying. This indicates that children and youth are aware of the danger but might not know how to respond to it or might choose not to act on this knowledge. However, it is crucial to emphasize that bullying is not constructive criticism. Its purpose is to evoke negative emotions in the victim. This behaviour is not a natural human trait. Bullies are often peers who are unhappy and have their own problems which they are incapable of dealing with. They channel their anger, jealousy, or frustration towards others by insulting them. This is not an attempt to justify bullies but rather an alternative perspective on the phenomenon. Such behaviour is nearly inherent to adolescence which is why bullying is unfortunately common in youth environments (Włodarczyk, 2014). It is imperative to continuously emphasize that adults are responsible for nurturing children and shaping their values. Moreover, this responsibility encompasses both real and online worlds. Parents from non-dysfunctional families should educate their children and make them aware of the negative consequences of bullying. Young people must be made aware of the potential harm it can cause.

In addition, the social isolation of children growing up in families of alcoholics can expose them to cyberbullying, as they spend a lot of time in the virtual world, communicating with strangers, often fraudsters and criminals. Therefore, it is important for teachers to develop media literacy in adolescents and their parents, and provide them with appropriate psychological and pedagogical support (Budnyk, Konovalchuk, et al., 2022). This will help them cope with difficulties and avoid getting into difficult situations of cyberbullying or fraud.

"(...) social competence of the child is characterized, on the one hand by developed self-awareness, individual personality, self-esteem, positive self-attitude, and on the other – openness to society, willingness to communicate, ability to establish constructive interaction, activity, joint activities, including in the media environment. (...) In today's world it is impossible to avoid the influence of the media, so it is necessary to establish cooperation between teachers and parents in forming the foundations of the media culture of the child in order to actively socialize. After all, the child's psyche is particularly sensual, capable of suggesting under the influence of the media, so there is

often a sense of fear, danger after watching the scenes with violence, war, even cases of cyberbullying in the network environment" (Budnyk, Konovalchuk, et al., 2022).

7. CONCLUSION

Research on literature containing information about the social exclusion and cyberbullying of children growing up in families struggling with alcohol-related issues yielded the following conclusions:

1. Many children raised in families affected by alcoholism experience significant harm;
2. These children are unable to change their situation. Their traumatic experiences and suffering extend beyond their family environment. Some of them experience academic failures and difficulties in peer relationships resulting in exclusion, harassment, and bullying.
3. The consequences of various traumas experienced during childhood can have a lasting impact on their lives;
4. Some of these children are predisposed to repeating the fate of their parents and becoming addicted to alcohol;
5. External assistance that targets both the family and the child is crucial and could prevent further destruction in their lives.

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У статті наголошено, що сім'я становить основне середовище життя. Якщо це є дисфункціональна сім'я, всі її проблеми можуть негативно впливати на розвиток та виховання дітей. На жаль, ключовою дисфункцією у випадку Польщі є алкоголізм. Тому у дослідженні наголошено, що ситуація дитини, яка зростає в алкогольній родині, залежить від багатьох факторів, пов'язаних з функціонуванням родинного середовища. Залежність одного або обох батьків, ступінь деградації життя сім'ї та наявність зовнішньої підтримки мають особливе значення тут. Все це може призвести до виникнення соціального відчуження та ненависті до дітей, які зростають у сім'ях з алкогольною проблематикою, з боку їхніх однолітків. Доведено необхідність допомоги дітям, котрі зростають у проблемних родин, адже для них характерна є не лише соціальна ізоляція, а також булінг чи кібербулінг. Вказано, що травматичний досвід і страждання таких вихованців часто-густо виходять за межі сімейного оточення, де вони зазнають академічних невдач, труднощів у взаєминах з однолітками і т.п. У статті зауважено, що наслідки різних травм в освітньому чи родинному середовищі, пережитих у дитинстві, можуть мати тривалий вплив на їхнє життя; деякі з цих неповнолітніх можуть також стати залежними від алкоголю, наслідуючи батьків. Тому педагогам, соціальним працівникам важливо розробити відповідні стратегії для ефективного психолого-педагогічного супроводу таких сімей, зокрема у вихованні дітей.

Ключові слова: соціальне відчуження, ненависть, діти, алкоголізм, алкогольна сім'я, середовище ровесників, соціальна компетентність.