

The situation of minor mothers in the perspective of children's rights

The aim of this dissertation is to gain insight into the experience of underage motherhood through the eyes of research participants and to expand pedagogical knowledge about the legal, family, personal and school situation of minor mothers, with particular emphasis on the paradoxes that arise in connection with the rights of the newborn child and the children's rights that the child's mother is entitled to. The paradoxes considered point to systemic but also social negligence related to the need to rank the rights of the minor mother's child and her newborn hierarchically. The group of minor mothers surveyed was purposely selected taking into account the minors' experience with institutions for upbringing and care, as well as corrective, sociotherapeutic or aid institutions. In order to deepen the analysis of the phenomenon of minor motherhood, another two groups of research subjects were selected: women of legal age who had their first child before the age of 18 and a group of specialised professionals engaged in daily work with minor mothers.

A critical perspective was adopted in this dissertation with the aim of drawing attention to social inequalities, stigmatisation and stereotyping of phenomena related to early motherhood, as well as the goal of giving voice to young women experiencing this. The leading research method taken on in the study is an interview, applied in two variants: an in-depth interview and an expert interview. In addition to the main method, i.e. the interview, the dissertation also used the analysis of existing data, with an emphasis on government documents in the form of laws and codes: the Civil Code, the Family and Guardianship Code, Convention on the Rights of the Child, ordinances and other documents regulating the situation of minor mothers in Polish reality. An ethnographic research reconnaissance was carried out earlier which was possible thanks to the fact that the author of the thesis has been acting as a court-appointed curator for family and minors matters for more than seven years, whose work is based on, among others, working with juvenile mothers. Theoretical framework of the paper was adopted on the basis of elements related to stigmatizing influence of social structures, injustice, inequality and occurring paradoxes observed during the research reconnaissance in the field. These issues fit into the theories of power as approached by Max Weber, positioning theories diffused by the Hermans couple and developed by R. Harré and social constructivism represented by Pierre Bourdieu. This dissertation introduces to pedagogy an original study of the phenomenon of

underage motherhood in Poland, whereas the outlining of issues in the context of children's rights constitutes an innovative element of the work. Author attempts to provide recommendations that may contribute to the improvement or change of implemented solutions in the field of social policy, education, care and educational work and social rehabilitation.

The dissertation is composed of five chapters, findings and a conclusion.