

Abstract

The aim of the presented works, being the subject of the doctoral dissertation, was to develop research tools and explore the parentification process in Polish adolescents. In order to achieve these goals, the doctoral research project was divided into three stages:

1. Literature review:

This stage of the doctoral research project aimed to systematize reports on the parentification process, with particular emphasis on the relationship between parentification experienced during childhood and adolescence and performing developmental tasks in late adolescence/emerging adulthood (Publication 1).

2. Psychometric studies:

Preparing Polish-language parentification research tools was a necessary step due to the lack of Polish questionnaires/adaptations of foreign tests at the time. New questionnaires would enable research on parentification among Polish participants. Thus the psychometric work started in the academic year 2015/2016).

- Study 1 (Publication 2): $N = 641$ (age: $M = 14.96$, $SD = 0.36$; girls: 60.7%, boys: 38.8%, no information on gender provided: .5%; Borchet et al., 2020a)

Based on the results of Study 1, an original *Parentification Questionnaire for Youth* (PQY) was prepared. The questionnaire enables a multidimensional measurement of parentification currently experienced by adolescents (the process of creating the questionnaire and its psychometric properties are described in Publication 2; the PQY was used in the studies presented in Publications 3 and 4).

Additionally, an international questionnaire was adapted - the *Parentification Inventory* (Hooper, 2009), which allows for a retrospective assessment of parentification experienced

during childhood and adolescence (the adaptation was used in Publication 5, the article presenting the adaptation is currently under review).

3. Exploratory studies:

Three cross-sectional studies exploring the phenomenon of parentification experienced by Polish adolescents were conducted.

- Study 2 (Publication 3): $N = 169$ (age: $M = 14.57$; $SD = 1.10$; girls: 62.1%, boys: 37.3%; no information on gender provided: .6%; Lewandowska-Walter et al., 2017)

The aim of Study 2 was to investigate how gender differentiates the intensity of parentification, and the relations between the parentification dimensions and the ways of coping with stress in early adolescents (Publication 3). The study results indicated that boys declared a higher level of instrumental parentification directed at parents and a higher level of satisfaction with the role they performed in their families than girls did. On the other hand, girls declared a higher level of emotional parentification directed at siblings. At the level of statistical tendency, girls also showed a higher level of emotional parentification directed at parents than boys did. Moreover, girls and boys undertook different coping strategies, both in case of parentification focused on parents and on siblings (Lewandowska-Walter et al., 2017).

- Study 3 (Publication 4): $N = 191$ (age: $M = 14.61$; $SD = 1.26$; girls: 55%, boys: 44.5%; no information on gender provided: .5%; Borchet et al., 2021)

The aim of Study 3 was to explore the relations between parentification currently experienced by adolescents (on various dimensions) and their school achievements, taking into consideration the context of their quality of life. The results indicated that the mean school grade at the end of the school year was positively related to the level of instrumental parentification experienced by adolescents, directed both at parents and siblings. Additionally,

this relation was mediated by the adolescent's overall quality of life. The obtained results emphasize how important for the consequences of parentification may be way the adolescent perceives her/his own role in the family system and indicate the important role of protective non-family-related factors that can build the adolescent's quality of life (Borchet et al., 2021).

- Study 4 (Publication 5): $N = 218$ (age: $M = 21.37$; $SD = 2.49$; girls: 86.2%, boys: 13.8%; Borchet et al., 2020b)

The participants of Study 4 were late adolescents/emerging adults. The results indicated a mediating role of sibling relationship in the relation between the retrospective assessment of parentification experienced during childhood and adolescence and the current self-esteem. The obtained results indicate that relationships with siblings may constitute an important factor protecting against experienced parentification's negative consequences (Borchet et al., 2020b).

The results of the doctoral research project were published in a series of five thematically coherent scientific publications. Studies 1-4, presented in Publications 2-5, were cross-sectional, while Publication 1 was a literature review.