

PARENTAL ATTITUDES IN THE RETROSPECTIVE ASSESSMENT OF ADULTS AND THE QUALITY OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP TOWARDS SIBLINGS

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Summary. The aim of the research is to determine the relationships between parental attitudes and the quality of interpersonal relationships towards siblings in adulthood. The participants of the study were 438 adults aged 18 to 53, in early and middle adulthood. Used research tools were: *the Retrospective Assessment of Parental Attitudes Questionnaire* (KPR-Roc) by M. Plopa (2005) and *the Scale of Family Relationships of Adult Siblings* (SSFDR) by K. Wałęcka-Matyja (2015). The results of the statistical analysis partially confirmed the predictions of the research hypothesis. Partially positive (autonomy, acceptance) and negative (excessive demands, inconsistency, caring) relationships were found between parental attitudes and general involvement in interpersonal relationships towards siblings in adulthood, depending on the adopted variants of the analysis.

Key words: parental attitudes, interpersonal relations, siblings, adults

Introduction

Relationships between siblings can be among the longest lasting and strongest interpersonal relationships (Voorpostel, van der Lippe, 2007), and at the same time can be a source of not only support in difficult times, but also the joy of life, well-being, companionship, a sense of solidarity and community (Bedford, 1989) and warmth (Wałęcka-Matyja, 2021). Relationships between siblings are also characterized by a number of unfavorable phenomena and emotions, such as: rivalry, conflict, ambivalence (Connidis, 2007), dominance, elimination, submission, withdrawal, fear, aggression, hostility, dislike, opposite, avoidance, strangeness, dryness, indifference.

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Research by Voorpostel and van der Lippe (2007) shows that siblings exchange more practical and less emotional support than in relations with friends, where emotional support plays a greater role, apart from practical support on a similar level. Some studies show gender differences and indicate that men are more likely to seek practical support from a friend and women from a sibling (Connidis, Campbell, 1995). Others are ambiguous (Campbell, Connidis, Davies, 1999) or show little difference in the exchange of support between siblings and friends (McGlone, 1974). The importance of support exchanged with siblings may be different from that exchanged with friends, but the mechanisms underlying this exchange are similar (Voorpostel, van der Lippe, 2007).

Siblings with close positive relationships resemble friends in some respects (Walker, Allen, Connidis, 2005): they tend to be close in age, spanning the same generation, their relationship is egalitarian and horizontal (without hierarchy) and sociable (Connidis, 2001), spending time together and solving problems – with the important difference that siblings remain a family, bound by biological ties. Family relationships differ from friendships in that they are not arbitrary and are subject to the control of other family members and society to a greater extent. Family relationships are regulated by normative expectations, including mutual responsibility to a greater extent than friendships. In family relationships, reciprocity plays a lesser role than in friendly relationships (Allan, 1989), where it can be the basis of the relationship. In the family, the expectation of reciprocity is not so strong for various reasons (Guzy-Steinke, 2021). Family relationships are often maintained despite the existence of some level of hostility and conflict (Allan, 1996) – unlike friendships, which as dyadic relationships are most often broken or weakened. A friendly relationship requires active support (Wasilewska, 2013) – unlike family relationships, which are natural and primary relationships.

Siblings of sisters will more easily provide each other with emotional support, because women are socialized to the role of caregivers (McGoldrick, 1989), taking care of social relations, including family ones. Women will also expect support to a greater extent, which for them means mainly emotional support, and will offer and show it to a greater extent than men (Adams, Blieszner, 1989), especially to other women (Liebler, Sandefur, 2002) – in connection with different socialization and gender stereotypes (Frąckowiak-Sochańska, 2011; Sterna, Sterna, 2021). Women turn out to be less assertive and more empathic in showing feelings than men (Ryś, 2012), which is related to the attitude towards meeting social expectations and a higher need for social approval (Izdebski, Żbikowska, Kotyśko, 2013) and, as it can be assumed, greater sensitivity (negative experiencing) of social disapproval. Sisters may also compete with each other for male attention, e.g. from the father (McGoldrick, 1989).

On the other hand, all-male siblings turn out to be less emotionally competent because they lack the emotional training provided by the company of sisters. On the other hand, in the upbringing environment of mixed-sex siblings, men display higher emotional intelligence compared to those composed only of

brothers (Piekarska, 2021). A higher level of emotional intelligence is manifested in men socialized together with their sisters, primarily in greater acceptance of their own emotions, the ability to express them through action, greater awareness and greater understanding of them, and higher cognitive control over their own emotions (Piekarska, 2021). In the emotional development of men, contact with women appears to be more important than contact with men, which is explained by the culturally rooted male perception of emotions as something negative, interfering with acting and fulfilling the causative male role, and therefore men express their emotions less frequently (Knopp, 2012; Jastrzębski et al., 2016). Boys show mostly instrumental support (Edwards, Liu, 2002).

Research also indicates that cohabitation with a life partner and the appearance of children (starting a family) reduce the amount of support shown to siblings (and friends) (Cicirelli, Coward, Dwyer, 1992), and that in larger groups of siblings less support for its individual members (Eriksen, Gerstel). The marital (partnership) relationship is the main source of support (Palus, 2010), so the expectation of support from other people and the readiness for reciprocity decreases after its conclusion, the amount of support provided to outsiders also decreases, and the circle of friends is narrowed – a wider group of friends at an earlier stage may also be related to the search for a spouse (life partner).

Studies by Cicierelli, Coward and Dwyer (1992) indicate that the majority of older people (according to the so-called principles of social coexistence) consider their siblings as a caring resource, although only a small percentage receives the actual help of siblings. Hence, it should be assumed that those people who have not asked for support so far cannot be sure whether they will receive it and thus whether the perception of siblings as a care resource in difficult times is justified by the actual readiness and ability to provide help. Those receiving sibling support were more likely to be younger, in the phase of marriage breakdown or never being married, to have fewer surviving children, and to live in small towns or rural areas (Cicierelli, Coward, Dwyer, 1992), supporting the idea of a substitute hierarchy, where sibling assistance is provided only when closer support from a spouse or adult children is lacking. This confirms that the role of sibling support decreases when members of the established family perform developmental tasks well and support each other. The Polish Family and Guardianship Code provides for the possibility of asking siblings for help, but only later, when help from other sources is unavailable.

When analyzing the quality of the siblings' interpersonal relationship, the following factors shaping this relationship were taken into account; warmth, conflict, rivalry and involvement in the interpersonal relationship of siblings (Wałęcka-Matyja, 2021). The high quality of the sibling interpersonal relationship will mean a high level of overall involvement, including emotional, cognitive and behavioral, in the interpersonal relationship with the sibling. It also means a high level of warmth in the dyadic sibling relationship, expressed in a high level of support: emotional, instrumental, informational; readiness to help and closeness, low levels of conflict

and rivalry. The low quality of the sibling interpersonal relationship is equivalent to a low level of overall involvement, including emotional, cognitive and behavioral in the interpersonal relationship with the siblings. It also means low levels of warmth in the dyadic sibling relationship and high levels of conflict and rivalry.

Having siblings, sex of siblings, number of brothers and sisters, and order of birth are some of the properties of an individual, fully independent of himself or herself, which shape his or her personality, sense of identity, the way and ability to build relationships with other people, and even the choice of a spouse and life attitude (Przybył, 2017). Each additional sibling reduces the likelihood of divorce among siblings (Szymańska, 2018).

So what makes sibling relationships qualitatively good? The study assumed (cf. Serzysko-Zdanowska, 2008; Kruś, 2018; Szymańska, 2018) that parents, through their upbringing attitudes, can shape the quality of the sibling's interpersonal relationship (even unconsciously) and determine the occurrence of inclinations to certain social behaviors in the course of the individual's further life. Siblings give us a starting point for formulating our own life narrative, they are a reference point for our individual history (Davies, 2016) – having a significant impact on our personal lives.

Parental attitudes are closely related to the functioning of the family as a whole (Burczyk, 2011; Błażej, 2016; Greszta, Ryś, Trębicka, 2020). In supportive families, which in Polish socioeconomic conditions after 1989 seems to be a phenomenon which is rarer and rarer, siblings sometimes take over parental roles in aspects of certain functions towards other children, especially when parents do not provide the expected amount of information and resources (Connidis, 1992).

Research by Killoren and colleagues (2015) revealed that parents, by showing acceptance towards a child during adolescence, can influence the quality of interpersonal relationships between siblings in early adulthood (measured five years later). Research has shown that perceiving greater parental acceptance of an older child was then associated with perceiving sibling relationships as more positive.

More complex studies were conducted by Jensen and colleagues (2013), who, when analyzing pairs of siblings in dyads, took into account the behavior of parents separately towards each child in the sibling, the quality of the sibling's interpersonal relationship and the presence of depressive symptoms. It occurred that disproportionate support and favoring of selected children, in particular by the mother, was negatively associated with the quality of bonds between siblings. Analogous approaches on the part of the father were associated with a decrease in the level of intimacy and closeness in the sibling relationship, which was not favored by the father. They have not proven that such an attitude of parents is associated with a greater intensification of conflicts in the relationship, which may be related to the fact that siblings in adulthood usually do not live together or undertake separate developmental tasks and rarely come into contact with each other.

Proper parenting attitudes of parents shape a favorable atmosphere within the family (Ryś, 2011), which facilitates the adoption of specific values and following

them in everyday life (Wałęcka-Matyja, 2013; Lewandowska-Walter, 2014; Pawluk-Skrzypek, Witek, 2016). The opposite phenomenon occurs in the case of negative parenting attitudes, which create an unfavorable atmosphere within the family, which in turn makes it difficult to internalize the values transmitted by parents (Cudak, 2011). It was assumed that upbringing attitudes, regardless of the age of the child, will influence his behavior in a direction consistent with the expectations of the parents or contrary to the expectations, because for the child the family remains the basic point of reference (Pokrzywnicka, 2011; Wałęcka-Matyja, 2013).

In families where familism is a superior value in mutual relations, family members care for warm, kind and supportive mutual contacts, declare attachment to the family and they believe that the family is of superior value (Wałęcka-Matyja, Krawczyk 2022). Hence, it can be expected that the involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings may be in families that can be described as more familial than in other families, because appropriate parental attitudes (acceptance and autonomy) are realized in the manifestation of warmth, kindness and support towards the child.

The materialistic attitude, consisting in attaching excessive importance to material goods, the collection and consumption of which becomes an end in itself, is not conducive to the transmission of inter-generational values in the family (Elżanowska, 2012), including attachment to the family. Hence, it can be concluded that siblings oriented in this way will not see value in maintaining mutual relations. Research shows that materialism has a strongly negatively correlation with a sense of happiness, mental well-being, satisfaction with life, but above all with intra- and interpersonal values (Kasser, Koestner, Lokes, 2002). It can be assumed that in families where the cult of material values prevails, siblings will be reluctant or hostile towards each other, and may also perceive each other through the prism of their own material expectations, treating them as rivals in access to material goods and in inheritance from their parents.

The cult of materialism (and the body in opposition to spiritual values) is supported by the media message, which provides us with an idealized image of reality (Gierula, 2017; Wiśniewska, 2014), which young people want to adhere to in order to be "hot, cool and trendy". Materialism is a strong social tendency, especially among people belonging to the Z generation, for whom the world permeated with the spirit of consumerism is the only one they know (generation born since 1995). Biedrzycki (2007) indicates that consumerism has significantly impaired interpersonal relationships. On the other hand, there are also voices indicating that joint shopping is an opportunity to better understand the needs of family members (inter-generational) and spend time together (Mucha, 2018), being able to both unite the family and divide it – depending on the satisfaction of individual family members with the process consumption. Nevertheless, in the long run, it is worth noting that relationships created in this way are also related to financing consumption, without this element they would not arise, so they are not completely disinterested,

and financing consumption is rather not between siblings, but between parents and children, or grandparents and children. Children compete in this situation for what they can get. If there is a disproportion of goods, it is difficult to find mutual sympathy and maintain positive relations.

The results of the above considerations indicate that the type of parenting attitudes displayed by parents – and as significant people at the top of the family hierarchy – may be related to the quality of the siblings' interpersonal relationship in such a way that favorable parental attitudes support the development of better quality relationships with siblings, while when unfavorable attitudes hinder the formation of qualitatively good relations between siblings. Negative interpersonal relationships of siblings may be associated with disturbed (incorrect) attitudes of parents towards the child.

Research question, hypothesis

The research problem concerned the determination of the relationship between the parental attitudes of the respondents' parents in their retrospective assessment (explanatory variable) and the dimensions of sibling relationships (explanatory variable). The aim of the conducted research was to find an answer to the following research question:

1. Is there a relationship between parental attitudes in the retrospective assessment of adults and the quality of interpersonal relationships towards siblings?

On the basis of the research question formulated in this way, hypothesis H.1 was derived, which was then subjected to statistical verification based on the collected research results:

H.1: Appropriate (positive) parental attitudes (acceptance, autonomy) in the retrospective assessment of adults (in total and divided into gender) are associated with a higher quality of interpersonal relationships with siblings. Inappropriate (negative) parental attitudes (rejection, demands, inconsistency, protection) in the retrospective assessment of adults (in total and divided into gender) are associated with a lower quality of interpersonal relationship with siblings.

Research metod

Surveyed persons

The study was conducted on a group of 438 people aged 18 to 53 ($M = 23.1$; $SD = 5.05$): 336 women aged 18 to 52 ($M = 23.6$; $SD = 5.02$) and 102 men aged 18 to 53 ($M = 22.86$; $SD = 5.17$). The respondents were mostly students or employees of two Wrocław universities: the University of Wrocław and the Wrocław University of Economics. They lived in the countryside (23%) or in a city with a population of

up to 20,000 (8%), up to 50,000 (17%), up to 100,000 (4%), up to 500,000 (5%), over 500,000 (40%). Achieved educational level (the highest level of education achieved, excluding academic degrees and titles): lower secondary school (.5%), vocational (.5%), secondary (64%), engineering (1%), bachelor's degree (21%), master's degree (14%). The respondents had: one sibling (84%), two siblings (13%), three or more siblings (3%). They were the youngest (39%), middle (5%) or the oldest (55%) child in the family. Three of the subjects had twin siblings. The research was carried out in two ways: traditionally in the form of paper questionnaires, and partly, due to the pandemic conditions, in electronic form, by sending an e-mail request to participate in the research with a link to the form to verified recipients with addresses in the educational domain. In the case of the traditional form, the research was of a group and individual nature, in the case of the remote form – individual, however, the respondents could stay in contact if they knew each other, and the researchers did not control this. Despite the high level of detail in the instructions, the subjects could also ask questions to the researcher, who remained available and provided general instructions in several situations – due to the level of complexity of the questionnaires and attention to the proper course of the study. Participation in the study was completely voluntary and anonymous.

The basic criterion for selecting the subjects for the research sample was reaching the age of majority – in Polish conditions, the existing legal limit of 18 years was adopted for the end of parental authority and the beginning of the stage of early adulthood (Matuszewska, 1997; Gurba, 2011), in which changes characteristic of late adolescence still occur, aiming at reaching full maturity. It was dictated by the assumption that from that moment interpersonal relations in siblings become, at least theoretically, fully voluntary for the examined person, in the sense that after reaching the age of majority, the examined person is formally capable of becoming independent and is fully freely shaping, through their own decisions, their interpersonal relations towards siblings and parents, including the possibility of breaking them completely – regardless of the expectations of parents, siblings, other people, rules of social coexistence and other negative consequences related to it.

Research tools

The following research tools were used in the research:

- *the Questionnaire of the Retrospective Assessment of Parental Attitudes (KPR-Roc)* by M. Plopa (2005) used to study the retrospective assessment of parental attitudes of mothers and fathers. The tool consists of two separate questionnaires – separately for the assessment of mother's attitudes and father's attitudes, each of them consists of 50 items. Each statement is considered on a five-point Likert scale, within which the cafeteria of possible answers is ordered from the complete agreement of the tested person with a given statement to its complete negation. The tool allows for a retrospective description of each parent's

parenting attitude in terms of acceptance/rejection ("AO"), requirements ("W"), autonomy ("A"), inconsistency ("N") and protecting ("O"). The level of reliability in all five dimensions of parental attitudes is high: for the mother – from .86 to .93, for the father – .84 to .90. Theoretical validity measured by the absolute value of inter-correlation of scales for mother and father does not exceed .55. Criterion validity was verified in terms of marital status, growing up in a family with an alcohol problem, somatic disease, and imprisonment. The method includes the standards of the researchers;

- *the Scale of Family Relationships of Adult Siblings* (SSFDR) by K. Wałęcka-Matyja (2015) designed to study the variable referred to as the "familiar relationship of adult siblings" determined by sub-scales (following the ternary theory of attitudes of Rosenberg and Hovland, 1960): affective involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings ("ZA"), behavioral involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings ("ZB") and cognitive involvement in interpersonal relationship with siblings ("ZK"). The three sub-scales listed above form the general scale "ZO" – general involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings. The tool allows us to determine the attitude of the tested person towards one selected person from among siblings. The scale consists of 20 statements, each of which is considered on a four-point Likert scale, deprived of the possibility of making a neutral choice. Reliability, measured by the internal α -Cronbach's consistency coefficient, for the entire scale ("ZO") is $\alpha = .895$, for the sub-scales ZA and ZB – over .7. Only for the ZK sub-scale the reliability is ($\alpha = .684$). The assessment of the validity of the tool is based on the analysis of theoretical validity and criterion validity. Correlation studies between the general scale and sub-scales of the SSFDR and the sub-scales of the Adult Sibling Relationship Questionnaire (ASRQ) by C.M. Stocker, R.P. Lanthier, W. Furman (1997) show that the dimensions of commitment correlate highly with the Warmth ASRQ dimension (above .79) and weakly and moderately with the ASRQ Conflict and Rivalry dimensions (maximum .38). In this study, for the purposes of statistical calculations, the use of the SSFDR basic scale ("ZO" – general involvement in the sibling interpersonal relationship) was limited. The method does not contain research standards.

Research results

The relationship between parents' attitudes measured in the retrospective assessment of adults and the quality of interpersonal relationships towards siblings (a selected person from among siblings) was presented using the analysis of Pearson's r -correlation coefficients and multiple regression analysis using the backward elimination method.

Table 1 presents the r -Pearson correlation parameters for individual dimensions of parenting attitudes of mothers and fathers in the retrospective assessment

of adults and the overall result for involvement in the sibling interpersonal relationship – calculated for the entire sample of respondents and by gender.

Table 1. Analysis of Pearson’s *r*-correlation of dimensions of parenting attitudes of mothers and fathers in the retrospective assessment of adults and the total score for involvement in the interpersonal relationship towards siblings, in division for the entire sample of respondents, women and men

Scale	General commitment		
	Whole sample	Women	Men
AO(M)	.094	.146	-.125
W(M)	-.114	-.137	-.008
A(M)	.067	.113	-.138
N(M)	-.111	-.150	.072
O(M)	.039	.086	-.166
AO(O)	.093	.156	-.139
W(O)	-.106	-.142	.053
A(O)	.062	.123	-.182
N(O)	-.076	-.114	.108
O(O)	-.034	-.038	.043

Pearson’s *r*-correlation coefficients significant at $p < .05$ are marked in red.

Legend (signs of used parental attitudes): AO(M) – Mother’s Acceptance/Rejection, W(M) – Requirements of the mother, A(M) – Mother’s Autonomy, N(M) – Inconsistency of the mother, O(M) – Mother’s protection, AO(O) – Father’s acceptance/rejection, W(O) – Father’s demands, A(O) – Father’s autonomy, N(O) – Father’s inconsistency, O(O) – Father’s protection.

Source: own study.

The results of the correlation analysis using the Pearson method reflect the existence of weak but statistically significant relationships between the dimensions of parental attitudes and general involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings. The AO(M) mother’s attitude of acceptance/rejection correlates poorly with overall commitment (total sample: .09 and women: .15). The mother’s demanding attitude W(M) weakly negatively correlates with overall commitment (the whole sample: -.11 and women: -.1). Mother’s attitude of autonomy A(M) weakly correlates with the overall commitment in the case of women (.11). Mother’s inconsistency attitude N(M) weakly correlates inversely with overall commitment (total sample: -.11 and women: -.15). The mother’s protective attitude of O(M) does not significantly correlate with overall commitment. Father’s attitude of acceptance/

rejection AO(O) weakly correlates with the overall involvement in the case of women (at the level of .16). The demanding attitude of the father W(O) weakly negatively correlates with the overall commitment (the whole sample: $-.11$ and women: $-.14$). Father's attitude of autonomy A(O) weakly correlates with the overall commitment in the case of women (.12). Father's inconsistency attitude N(O) weakly negatively correlates with overall commitment in the case of women ($-.11$). Father's protective attitude O(O), similarly to mother's protective attitude, does not significantly correlate with overall commitment. No significant relationships were found between parental attitudes and general commitment in the case of men.

It should be remembered that the above conclusions apply to a situation in which individual parental attitudes are considered in isolation from the others. On the other hand, the coexistence of dependencies between the individual perceived parental attitudes suggests the existence of sets of parenting attitudes that, at least to some extent, determine the general involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings.

The first regression analysis was performed on the results of the entire research sample, regardless of gender. Table 2 presents the result of the last stage of the multiple regression procedure using the backward elimination method for the dependent variable of general involvement in the interpersonal relationship towards siblings for all the respondents. In the eighth step, the final form of the model was obtained. Statistically significant predictors of involvement in the sibling relationship turned out to be the following attitudes: father's acceptance/rejection AO(O), standardized coefficient $\beta = .16$, $p < .1$; paternal requirements W(O), $\beta = -.13$, $p < .05$ and paternal autonomy A(O), $\beta = -.23$, $p < .05$. On the basis of the increase in the values defining the attitude of acceptance/rejection on the part of AO(O) father, one can expect a slight increase in the involvement in the sibling's interpersonal relationship. On the other hand, in the case of an increase in father's (excessive) demands W(O), a slight decrease in involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings can be expected, similarly to the increase in the level of father's autonomy A(O). The described model is relatively well suited to the data [$F(3; 346.4) = 2.48$, $p = .06$] and explains 1.7% of the variance of involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings.

In the second regression analysis, the relationships observed in the examined women were verified. Table 3 presents the result of the last stage of the multiple regression procedure using the backward elimination method for the dependent variable of general involvement in the interpersonal relationship towards siblings for women. In the tenth step, the final form of the model was obtained. A statistically significant predictor of involvement in the relationship with the siblings of the surveyed women turned out to be the attitude of father's excessive demands W(O), the value of the standardized coefficient $\beta = -.11$, $p < .05$. In the case of an increase in father's (excessive) demands W(O), one can expect a slight decrease in the involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings among women. The described

model is well suited to the data [$F(1; 559) = 3.97, p < .05$] and explains 1.2% of the variance of involvement in interpersonal relationships with siblings among women.

Table 2. Coefficients of multiple regression analysis using the backward elimination method for the dependent variable of general involvement in the interpersonal relationship of siblings and independent variables being dimensions of parenting attitudes of mothers and fathers in the retrospective assessment of the respondents – the whole sample (last step)

Modeling step	Model	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	<i>t</i>	Relevance	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i> ²
		<i>B</i>	Standard error	<i>Beta</i>				
8	(Stała)	51.557	3.768		13.684	.000	2.483*	.017
	AO(O)	.157	.094	.157	1.674	.095		
	W(O)	-.140	.068	-.128	-2.057	.040		
	A(O)	-.254	.112	-.228	-2.266	.024		

* $p = .06$.

Legend (signs of used parental attitudes): AO(O) – father’s acceptance/rejection, W(O) – father’s excessive demands, A(O) – father’s autonomy.

Source: own study.

Table 3. Coefficients of multiple regression analysis using the backward elimination method for the dependent variable of general involvement in the interpersonal relationship of siblings and independent variables being dimensions of parenting attitudes of mothers and fathers in the retrospective assessment of the surveyed women (last step)

Modeling step	Model	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	<i>t</i>	Relevance	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i> ²
		<i>B</i>	Standard error	<i>Beta</i>				
10	(Stała)	48.101	1.925		24.990	.000	3.973*	.012
	W(O)	-.115	.058	-.108	-1.993	.047		

* $p < .05$.

Legend (signs of used parental attitudes): W(O) – father’s excessive demands.

Source: own study.

In the third regression analysis, the relationships observed in the men studied were checked. Table 4 presents the result of the last stage of the multiple regression procedure using the backward elimination method for the dependent variable of general involvement in the interpersonal relationship towards siblings, calculated for men. In the ninth step, the final form of the model was obtained. Statistically significant predictors of involvement in the relationship with the siblings of the surveyed men turned out to be the attitude of mother's autonomy A(M), the value of the standardized coefficient $\beta = -.18, p < .1$ and mother's protective attitude O(M), the value of the coefficient standardized $\beta = -.18, p < .1$. Based on the increase in the values defining the attitude of mother's autonomy A(M), one can expect a slight decrease in the involvement in the interpersonal relationship of siblings among men, similarly as in the case of mother's protective attitude O(M). The described model is well suited to the data [$F(2; 643.69) = 5.02, p < .01$] and explains 9.2% of the variance of involvement in interpersonal relationships with siblings among men.

Table 4. Multiple regression analysis coefficients using the backward elimination method for the dependent variable of general involvement in the interpersonal relationship of siblings and independent variables being dimensions of parenting attitudes of mothers and fathers in the retrospective assessment of the surveyed men (last step)

Modeling step	Model	Non-standardized coefficients		Standar-	<i>t</i>	Relevance	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i> ²
				dized				
		<i>B</i>	Standard error	<i>Beta</i>				
9	(Stała)	58.827	4.447		13.228	.000		
	A(M)	-.206	.121	-.179	-1.705	.091	5.015*	.092
	O(M)	-.239	.137	-.183	-1.748	.084		

* $p < .01$.

Legend (signs of parental attitudes used): A(M) – mother's autonomy, O(M) – mother's protection.

Source: own study.

The identified correlation indicators turn out to be little, although in most cases statistically significant in relation to the entire sample and the surveyed women. However, for men, the obtained correlations are below the limit of statistical significance. The results of multiple regression using the backward elimination method indicate the presence of significant (or borderline) weak-power relationships.

The obtained results of the conducted procedure of correlation analysis allow to partially confirm the hypothesis H.1 that positive (proper) parental parenting

attitudes (acceptance and autonomy) in the retrospective assessment of adults are associated with a higher quality of interpersonal relationship with siblings, expressed through greater involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings. On the other hand, inappropriate parenting attitudes of parents (excessively demanding, inconsistent, and denying the child the right to autonomy) in the retrospective assessment of adults, in accordance with the predictions expressed in hypothesis H.1, are associated with lower involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings. In the case of an overly protective attitude, the results did not exceed the statistical significance level (for the entire sample and divided into gender).

The obtained results of the conducted regression analysis procedure allow only to a small extent to confirm the initial hypothesis H.1 that positive (correct) parental attitudes in the retrospective assessment of adults favor higher involvement in the interpersonal relationship towards siblings, and negative – hinder the emergence of involvement in the interpersonal relationship of siblings. The obtained results appear to be ambiguous. Hypothesis H.1 was confirmed in the case of the following attitudes: 1. Father's acceptance – for the whole sample, Father's excessive demands – for the whole sample and women, Mother's excessive protection – for men. On the other hand, in the case of the attitude of autonomy, both on the part of the father (for the whole sample) and the mother (for men), the opposite effect was observed, namely higher scores in terms of autonomy are associated with lower involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings,

Summary of research results

Children very carefully observe their parents' behavior towards themselves and towards each other (Aleksiejuk, 2015). They learn through imitation (Borecka-Biernat, 2014), accepting these behaviors as appropriate, initially the best. In the first years of life, parents are a point of reference (authority) for children and a starting point for learning new skills (Marciniak-Paprocka, 2017). The ties between the child and the parents are complete relations as they cover all levels of the child's functioning, including: emotional, social, educational and economic (Zaborowski, 1980). In this way, through the parental attitudes they express, as well as the attitude towards the other parent, they can also shape interpersonal relationships between siblings (Jankowska, 2015). The study checked whether this influence persists into adulthood, determining the level of involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings. The analysis of the data showed that some parenting attitudes of the mother and the father are of minor but significant importance for shaping the involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings in adulthood, in accordance with the direction indicated by the content of hypothesis H.1.

The attitude of acceptance of the mother and the father favors involvement in the relationship with the siblings, because it is characterized by accepting the child for what he or she is (and not for what he or she does, therefore the child is not afraid

to reveal his individuality, what he or she really is, what he or she thinks and feels); allows for free exchange of experiences and feelings; is conducive to establishing open and spontaneous relationships and communicating needs in the relationship (Jastrzębski, Baranowska, 2015) – these features are conducive to building self-esteem and shaping honest and open relationships with others, including siblings. Jankowska (2015), also Jastrzębski and Baranowska (2015) indicate that parents play the most important role in the process of building a child's self-image, because, acting as the main caregivers, they are the first to convey to children a message about acceptance or lack of it, e.g. through the type of attention directed at the child, willingness to spend time with them, etc. Women are more sensitive to the attitude of acceptance or lack of it – both from the mother's and father's side. Men show greater resistance related to this, they do not care about acceptance to the same extent, which is consistent with the results of research by Izdebski et al. (2013).

The parenting attitude of autonomy (positive, from the Greek *autos* – alone, *nomos* – law), manifested both from the mother's and father's side, is conducive to women's involvement in an interpersonal relationship with their siblings. The attitude of autonomy is expressed in the belief that as the child develops, it needs more liberty and freedom (Jastrzębski, Baranowska, 2015) in deciding about himself or herself and their space. The parent shows the child alternative choices, offering help and advice, but not imposing his or her point of view (Chromy, 2019). This attitude is conducive to the formation of an internal locus of control, responsibility for one's own life, thanks to building a family atmosphere based on kindness, as well as respecting the individuality of all family members (Jastrzębski, Baranowska, 2015; cf. Krupa, 2011). As a result, the child does not manifest a defensive attitude, does not have to guard own boundaries, because others do not violate them on their own, creating a sense of security for the child. Autonomy determines the possibility of responsible management of one's own behavior, making choices that take into account one's own and others' needs, as well as building social relations based on the principle of reciprocity (Pilecka, Pilecki, 1996). The attitude of autonomy on the part of mothers is not conducive to entering into interpersonal relationships with siblings in men. Similarly, the attitude of autonomy on the part of the father is not conducive to entering into interpersonal relationships with siblings for the entire sample. However, these results need to be analyzed in another, in-depth study, as they differ from the predictions. Perhaps for reasons other than parental attitudes and the internal family climate, entering into relationships with siblings of people with a high level of autonomy (especially men) is not attractive, does not provide the benefits sought, and they focus their attention on the implementation of subsequent life tasks: entering into closer relationships outside the family system, finding a life partner, pursuing an educational and professional career, which may additionally be associated with moving out of the family home and entering adulthood earlier, which translates into loosening family ties (the majority of the surveyed men lived in a student dormitory). There is a relationship between the amount of time spent

with siblings and the number of close friends a person has regardless of gender (Ramsey, 2022).

The attitude of excessive demands on the part of the mother, but especially the father, is associated with lower involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings in adulthood, both for the entire sample and in relation to the surveyed women. Not taking into account the child's abilities, the parent causes the child to lose self-confidence (Korczyński, 2014). Ruthless enforcement of commands, orders and prohibitions leads to the fact that the child begins to understand that he or she will be accepted only if they fully submit to it (Szwedo, 2021). Such a parent focuses the attention on the meticulous punishment of the child's "mistakes", excessive criticism, without praise, not noticing their positive efforts, which shapes the child's sense of external control (Jastrzębski, Baranowska, 2015). This situation is not conducive to involvement in interpersonal relationships with family members, including siblings, especially among the surveyed women. Girls are more sensitive to criticism, especially from their father, and when it concerns their appearance (Krok, Rychtarczyk, 2010). This type of family environment is conducive to shaping an anxious and avoidant personality, socially withdrawn (Jankowska, 2014). In Polish families, a man still enjoys a higher authority (cf. Braun-Gałkowska, 1972; Śpica, 2014; Ośkiewicz, 2012; Jankowska, 2010), due to the disparity in income, hence the attitude of excessive demands on the part of the father can be felt more deeply, in particular by daughters, for whom the father is the first model of masculinity (Jankowska, 2010).

The attitude of inconsistency leads to lack of uniformity in enforcing requirements and lack of parental responsibility. In the process of upbringing, parents are guided by temporary moods and emotions, disregarding the long-term consequences of ad hoc decisions (Jankowska, 2015). The child is convinced that the behavior is not related to reinforcements, he or she cannot predict what to expect at a given moment, which can be extremely dependent on the parent's well-being (Komorowska-Pudło, 2013). This type of parenting attitude leads to difficulties in assimilating social and moral norms (parents themselves break them, behave chaotically, show that it is possible to break the norms that were previously established and observed by themselves, treating selectively or giving circumstances in which they do not apply). As a result, the child feels lonely, abandoned, hurt, humiliated. The child does not find support and kindness among the relatives. In some children, parents' inconsistency leads to a sense of insecurity, masked by aggression (Plopa, 2007), develops selfishness and self-interest (Przetacznik-Gierowska, Włodarski, 2002). Through lying, submission and humility towards parents, the child tries to avoid unpleasantness on their part (Jankowska, 2015). A person brought up in this way becomes suspicious, cynical, does not recognize authorities, expects to be deceived. This type of instability is characteristic for families with alcohol problems (Juroszek, Zglińska, 2012; Sitarczyk, 2016). It develops emotional distance and withdrawal in the child (Jastrzębski, Baranowska, 2015). As a result, the family climate

is not conducive to open communication of needs, including building interpersonal relationships with siblings (for all respondents and women).

The protective attitude is expressed in treating the child as a person requiring constant care and care. A parent with low emotional maturity, anxiousness, burdens the child with his or her fears, which as a result causes them to feel responsible for the parent and their well-being. Manifestations of autonomy and self-reliance of a child evoke fear in the parent. Similarly to the attitude of excessive demands, it leads to the formation of a sense of external locus of control (Jastrzębski, Baranowska, 2015). Maternal protection is negatively related to interpersonal involvement with siblings in men. The sense of self-efficacy and the motivation of men's achievements are negatively associated with a protective attitude on the part of the mother (Turska, Chudzicka-Czupala, Grabowski, 2017). An overly protective attitude leads to a lack of independence, emotional and social maturity appropriate to age (Sękowski, Gwiadowska-Stańczak, 2017), overconfidence due to the lack of space to bear the consequences of one's choices and experience failures, the child's dependence on an overprotective parent, lack of initiative in action, concessions (Liberska, Matuszewska, 2007; Błasiak, 2009). These features are not conducive to entering into relationships with others, including siblings, because the child remains constantly dependent on the mother, often also in adulthood, and remains emotionally available to her at all times (the phenomenon of "mother's boys" who emotionally replace an absent or rejected husband for their mothers). Culturally, women are given greater rights to worry, experience dilemmas, and excessive emotionality, which is somehow inscribed in the stereotypical image of women, so there is greater social consent for this kind of attitude on the part of mothers, which can be perceived as an expression of burdensomeness, but still caring. In Polish culture, the symbol of the "Polish Mother" is known, and in the Jewish culture there is the term "idische Mame" – a woman who derives the meaning of life from attachment to her children. On the other hand, an overly protective attitude on the part of the father may be perceived as a sign of domination, control or passive aggression, leading to signs of aggression on the part of the child (cf. Liberska, Matuszewska, 2007).

The obtained results occur to be ambiguous for the subgroup of men. Further research is needed to answer the question of how big the gender differences are in this regard and whether cultural factors are really important in this case, i.e. socially rooted expectations and ambition to meet them in some way, which would be a test in masculine role, which young men so lack confirmation? Or does the gender of the parent with whom the man identifies or builds his identity in opposition to it play a role?

In men, despite the lack of statistical significance, opposite relationships were systematically observed in comparison to women and the whole group of respondents, which may indicate their compensatory role in relation to functional deficiencies of the family system and siblings' expectations regarding taking up a supporting role in a situation where parents for some reason, do not do it, and thus

they become more involved in the interpersonal relationship with their siblings. In Polish (and not only) culture, a man's opinion is perceived as more significant and firm, so perhaps it is easier for sons to oppose their parents than for daughters. Sons are treated as potential "spare" breadwinners of the family, so they often have more rights and freedom than daughters.

In the case of men, the attitude of autonomy on the part of the mother and the overprotective attitude on the part of the mother turn out to be the best predictors of a low level of involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings, which is not in line with the predictions of hypothesis H.1 for autonomy. Do men compensate for the lack of autonomy in their relationship with their mother by being more involved in their relationship with their siblings (especially their sisters – Piekarska, 2021) and look for solutions to emotional problems related to the need to protect themselves from an interfering, difficult, or even aggressive parent? Or maybe it is the siblings of the respondents who seek support in men in the family, other than the father, and this is conducive to greater general involvement in the interpersonal relationship with the siblings and a kind of moral imperative on the part of the brother to cope with this task, being a response to the adaptation difficulties of the siblings of the respondents related to, with an attitude denying the child the right to autonomy? In order to resolve these issues, studies taking into account the sex of siblings on a larger research sample are necessary.

Both of these parenting attitudes (mother's autonomy and mother's over-protection) coexist, which indicates that men do not perceive over-protection by the mother negatively, but perhaps as a kind of expression of tenderness and care. There was no relationship between paternal autonomy and paternal over-protection for men.

According to Zajonc's confluent model of intellectual development (Zajonc, Sulloway, 2007), it is important for the child's social development that it remains in the position of authority for the younger child, at least for some time, whom he or she can take care of and lead. In the light of this concept, supporting siblings, especially younger ones, stimulates the intellectual development of an individual, and therefore provides hidden development benefits, despite the fact that it requires multi-faceted involvement in the world of the other person's experiences. This theory may partly explain why, despite unfavorable parental attitudes, involvement in the interpersonal relationship with siblings persists – because the relationship with siblings is rewarding in itself – regardless of whether the parents through their influence foster this involvement.

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POSTAWY RODZICIELSKIE
W RETROSPEKCYJNEJ OCENIE OSÓB DOROSŁYCH
A JAKOŚĆ RELACJI INTERPERSONALNEJ WOBEC RODZEŃSTWA

Streszczenie. Cel pracy badawczej stanowi określenie związków pomiędzy postawami rodzicielskimi a jakością relacji interpersonalnej wobec rodzeństwa w dorosłości. Uczestnikami badań było 438 dorosłych osób w wieku od 18. do 53. roku życia, znajdujących się w okresie życiowym wczesnej oraz średniej dorosłości. Zastosowano narzędzia badawcze: *Kwestionariusz Retrospektywnej Oceny Postaw Rodziców* (KPR-Roc) M. Plopy (2005) oraz *Skalę Stosunków Familiarnych Dorosłego Rodzeństwa* (SSFDR) K. Wałęckiej-Maty (2015). Wyniki analizy statystycznej częściowo potwierdziły przewidywania hipotezy badawczej. Stwierdzono częściowo pozytywne (autonomia, akceptacja) i negatywne (nadmierne wymagania, niekonsekwencja, opiekuńczość) związki między postawami rodziców a ogólnym zaangażowaniem w relacje interpersonalne wobec rodzeństwa w wieku dorosłym, w zależności od przyjętych wariantów analizy.

Słowa kluczowe: postawy rodzicielskie, relacje interpersonalne, rodzeństwo, osoby dorosłe

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