

Migration in Lithuania: Children Left Behind

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Abstract. Regarding the context of globalization and various life changes in families, including losses that people experience (i.e. migration, divorce, death of a loving ones etc.), the socialization of children who have experienced loss in the family is explored in this research. Some behavioural and emotional differences are revealed as well, showing that grieving children (especially after facing parent's migration, death, or divorce) more often experience negative emotions (sadness and anger), and less the positive ones. The reasons of positive emotions for such children are social ones (teachers', family members' support etc.). However, negative emotions arise often from personal and sometimes – neutral – reasons. Also, such children, who experience more positive emotions, are quite often linked to be self-confident and respectful, and those, who experience negative emotions, are tended to be withdrawn, less self-confident, and sensitive. Besides, the data has shown that grieving children could be characterized as less respectful to the others, peaceful, sensible and self-controlled than others. Thus, grieving children's social-moral behaviour is less stable than those who have not experienced the loss.

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Introduction

Most of the socialization's research is directed towards the individual, as social being's development and his/her participation in society. Thus, the socialization becomes an important factor of an individual's participation in the society, and the expression, according to which, the relations with surrounded environment and its events, and phenomena are revealed. On the other hand, socialization is quite a difficult psychosocial process: in a fast-developing society, it becomes harder for children to socialize adequately.

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Various social changes (sudden growth of technologies and science, mobility, urbanization, individualization etc.) have an influence on the participants and determinants of socialization [2]. According to J. Gibson and P. Blumberg [3], adults are influenced by those changes directly through their experienced anxiety and frustrations. However, children are mostly influenced by those ways that were important to adults also. Consequently, the socialization process is strongly linked with a child's need to identify himself and internalize those values that are appropriate to society.

As C. Thornton [4] conceptualizes, childhood is the time of learning from various experiences. This is a time, especially beginning with the school year, when child develops cognitively, physically, and socially [2]. Thus, every single moment in childhood is useful, even if it would be the loss of a loved one. The period of 7–11 years in the childhood is mainly stressed as the school life comes into child's social field. Particularly, the relation between loss in the family and child socialization is stressed in many psychological works [5]. Experienced loss is a very difficult matter for a child, who tries to internalize his/her family traditions, values and to form his/her identity - *self I*. After the loss, a child loses the object of identification *with whom*. As researches show, not satisfied need of identification can laden the value internalization as well [6]. To put it in other words, boys, who have lost their fathers and girls who have lost their mothers, partly lose self-identification as a man, and as a woman.

The recent researches have shown that children from incomplete families are more linked to the aggressiveness than others from nuclear families [7-8]. On the other hand, children, age 6–7 and even younger, after the loss of one of the parents, experience guilt for the things that have happened [9]. All this may put children at risk to lose *elf-core* and on-

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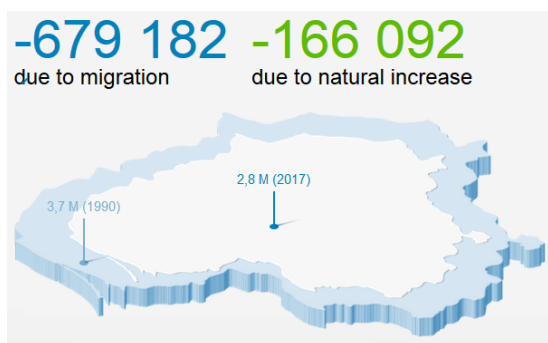


Fig. 1. Population in Lithuania. Adapted according to Ref. [15].

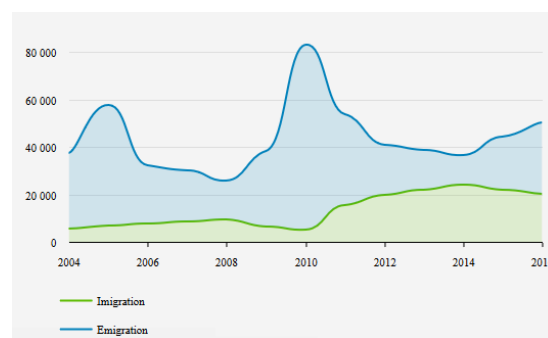


Fig. 2. Migration flows in Lithuania. Adapted according to Ref. [15].

tological safety. Thus, the loss in the family with its negative emotional charge also makes it more difficult for a child’s need of identification, and consequently – value internalization. In fact, the loss makes it rather complicated for such children’s socialization processes. Besides, the experienced loss (parents’ divorce, death, unemployment or migration, grandparents’ death etc.) has more negative influence on children’s emotional, cognitive and behavioral spheres. Speaking about such children’s emotions, much research [8, 10-12] reveals that these children emotionally are much more vulnerable than those, who did not experience the loss.

The research object is the behavioural and emotional differences of children, who have experienced loss in the family and those who haven’t in a case of parent migration.

The aim is to reveal the socialization peculiarities based on behaviour and emotions level of such children.

1. Migration: digitalized view

Population in Lithuania has been declining: from 3 million in the 2011 census to the estimated 2.85 million at the beginning of 2017 [13,14]. Fig. 1 shows decreasing numbers of Lithuanian population within past two decades. It becomes obvious that people migrate because of various reasons but the main remains the economic one.

Migration flows reveal the tendencies of how many immigrants and those who leave the country exist in the period of 2004 and 2016. As we may observe (see Fig. 2), there are

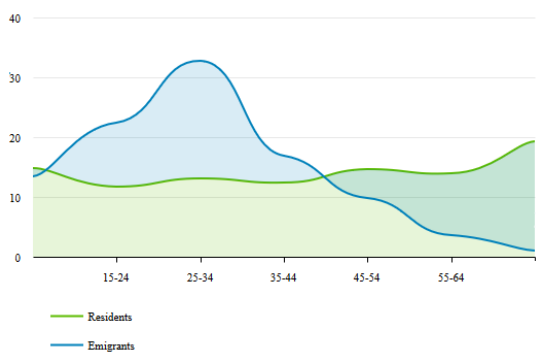


Fig. 3. The balance between immigrants and migrants in Lithuania. Adapted according to Ref. [15].

rather an disbalanced numbers of those coming into the country and those who leave. Such statistical data could serve as great both economic and psychosocial indicators while analyzing the factors of such flows.

The number of foreign nationals residing in Lithuania increased by 0.8% over 2016 to 44 600 at the beginning of 2017 [14]. In Lithuania (period of 2015-2016-2017), the number of emigrants outnumber the number of immigrants [15].

Fig. 3 represents the balance between immigrants and migrants in Lithuania. The percentage shows the main tendencies of migration flows in the country. Referring to the Fig. 2, we may interpret both economic and psychosocial reasons and impact of such migration that have happened and still happens in Lithuania.

Fig. 4 represents the amount of migration. The data presents on how many Lithuanians would choose some countries – as target places – for their future residence. As we may see, most popular target countries remain United Kingdom, Germany, Norway, and Ireland.

2. Socialization process during the childhood

The socialization is rather a difficult psychosocial phenomenon along with values internalization and self-identification mechanisms, and this process is influenced by other social factors that begin in early childhood and last through the lifespan [2,16].

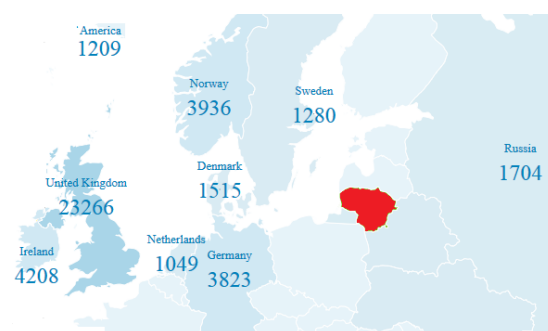


Fig. 4. Amounts of migration. Adapted according to Ref. [15].

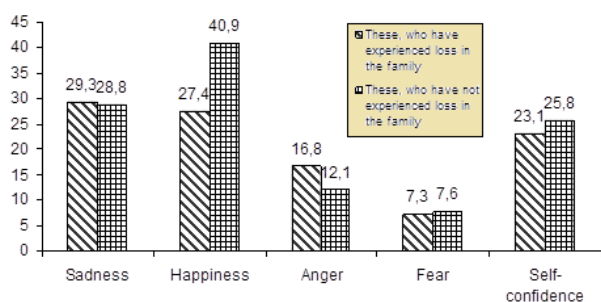


Fig. 5. Grieving and non-grieving children emotions.

Adapted according to Ref. [5].

The socialization in childhood starts as a child's full enrolment into the society, taking all the social roles. Besides, the constant influence of the environment in many ways helps child to understand and internalize socially accepted values and to identify his/her place in the context of various social interactions. Speaking on the factors, that influence children's socialization, we may state that essentially both internal (psychological, cognitive, physiological) and external (social, educational) factors undoubtedly influence children's socialization [16].

However, the external factors (family, school, peers etc.) are more obvious and much more important currently for children as they get increasingly involved in various groups' activities [2, 5]. Although the internal socialization factors are important as well: the rapid development of logical thinking, comprehension, imagination, attention, and memory [17]. All these components play rather important role for child's socialization tendencies and success. Aside there are not only purposeful, but hardly predictable both internal and external socialization factors that children experience.

Family's role is very important as well as family is one of the essential sources of socialization that leads to child's full enrolment into the society and appropriate values' internalization [16, 18]. The success of values' internalization mostly depends on what kinds of relations are established within the family.

On the other hand, these relations quite often are troubled, because of many crises that the family nowadays are exposed to. One of such crises is the rapid spreading of various losses that child experiences. Thus, the loss in the family can be harmful for children's socialization [11, 19]. In the context of globalization there are many kinds of experienced losses within the family, but mostly explored are: changing the living place, losing the parent's rights, family conflicts, parent's divorce and one of the parent's death.

3. On grieving children's behaviour and emotional differences

During the research it was set that grieving children less than the others internalize openness, believing in self and others, sensitiveness, respect ($\chi^2=42.39$, $p<0.002$),

self-control ($\chi^2=87.52$, $p<0.0001$), and activity ($\chi^2=31.67$, $p<0.005$). However, they came up as more solidary. Boys in this case were affected more than girls by the experienced loss in the family [5]. The results have confirmed that grieving boys less than the others internalize the openness ($\chi^2=84.14$, $p<0.0001$), believing in self and others, sensitiveness ($\chi^2=69.18$, $p<0.0001$), respect, self-control ($\chi^2=33.16$, $p<0.03$), solidarity ($\chi^2=29.23$, $p<0.02$), and activity. These values are more obvious within non-grieving children's behaviour [5].

Meanwhile grieving girls' behaviour in many cases differs from that of boys and other classmates. The data shows that grieving girls quite more than the others – non-grieving classmates – practically internalize solidarity, respect, activity, and openness. Although, believe in self and others is less internalized value among those girls' behaviour.

The research data also reveals that grieving primary school children more often than other classmates experience negative emotions (sadness and anger), and less – positive ones (happiness and self-confidence), particularly those, who have experienced parents' divorce or their death. Boys, opposite than girls, are less self-confident (see Fig. 5).

During the research it was obvious that positive emotions for the grieving and non-grieving children arise more often from socially orientated causes than personally ones, and negative due to personal reasons, less neutral and partly to social causes. The difference between those children is that socially oriented causes stimulate self-confidence for the grieving children, and less happiness [5].

Also, data reveals that grieving children hardly recognize other people's emotional expressions, i.e. happiness, self-confidence, and anger. However, they recognize sadness easier than others. Meanwhile, for the non-grieving children it was difficult to recognize sadness but quite easier happiness.

Conclusions

There are many life experiences that can cause feelings of grief in a child: from the death of a relative or a divorce in the family to more everyday experiences such as moving to a new neighbourhood, other country or losing a prized possession. Socialization is quite multidimensional psychosocial phenomenon that is more often described as individual's involvement into the social life and internalizing socio-moral values through the acceptance of social roles. However, the experienced loss in the early years may influence negatively the socialization process, complicates the internalized values based on child's behaviour and emotions.

The research has shown some negative behavioural peculiarities on the level of internalized values and emotions of those primary school children who have experienced the loss in the family. In many cases the identification processes for the grieving children are laden, and they are often linked to

internalize those values that are not acceptable to the society they are living in.

Grieving children more often experience negative emotions (sadness and anger), and less – the positive ones. The reasons of positive emotions for such children are social ones (teacher support etc.). However, negative emotions arise often from personal and sometimes neutral reasons. Besides, grieving children have more difficulty recognizing happiness and self-confidence, experienced by others, but they recognize sadness easier than non-grieving classmates. Chil-

dren, who experience more positive emotions, are quite often linked to be self-confident and respectful, and those, who experience negative emotions, have tendency to be socially withdrawn, less self-confident, and sensitive.

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