Journal of Gender and Power

Vol. 9, No. 1, 2018

Wersja pierwotna czasopisma: drukowana

Opracowanie komputerowe okładki: K. & S. Szurpit

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Contents

Editor's Preface

Even in social constructivism masculinity and femininity can be confronted in two ways. The first is based on binary opposition between man and women. Here the various constructions of feminine and masculine identities are analysed but still in opposition. In the second approach in this paradigm it is not possible to make a clear distinction between what belongs to femininity and what belongs to masculinity. The different versions of both gender identities are overlapped and sometimes they are so fragmented that is difficult to see any difference between them. So we can ask the question: are there any core gender identity features? Would it be possible to make an essential differentiation between man and woman? If we say "no" we can give up all together the concept of femininity and masculinity, and replace them by the concept of human being but there is any political correctness consequence of such approach. When there is no man and no women but only human beings can we discuss gender inequality problem or even gender role unfairness? On the other hand when we take into account the smallest essential pieces of difference between man and women we can be accused of making an epistemological as well as social and cultural invasion on the various identities. So there is a basic paradox of the discussion about gender construction and there is no way to escape from it. In the past the analyses or diagnoses of man's and woman's position in the society have been connected more with macro problems focused on the political rights, equality and emancipation. Today when the early feminist demands have been materialized the discussion on gender relates to more specific problems like the difference in earning between man and women or the influence of maternity on the woman's career. Also quite new dimensions of gender and sexuality analyses are constructed, for example devoted to the disabled people or Queen Bee Syndrome problem as well as transgendered identities. I hope that this issue of gender and power will let us deepen the understanding of some of new and old issues.

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ARTICLES

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The sexual/gender differentiation—are the boundaries of gender struggle?

ABSTRACT. The author is discussing issues concerning gender differentiation in the sphere of economy, social roles and its cultural and biological roots. The anti-essentialist gender discourse is shown as emanation of two old ideas: the Marxist paradigm and gnostic concepts. Author indicate that the triumph of freedom in the culture of late modernity is not only the victory of culture over nature, but also, paradoxically for this culture, a simultaneous threat.

KEYWORDS: gender study, social roles, the conflict theory of the society

The gender differentiation and the social roles[1]

Today, the natural sexual differentiation of the human nature is becoming less and less important for the economic sphere. However, sexual/gender distinctions on the labour market are still noticeable, and they will be present as long as nursery school teachers and miners stay hermetic professional groups. One of the most outstanding anthropologists of the 20th century, Margaret Mead, noted that

> in every known society, mankind has elaborated the biological division of labour into forms often very remotely related to the original biological differences that provided the original clues. (...) But we always find the patterning. We know of no culture that has said, articulately, that there is no difference between men and women except in the way they contribute to the creation of the next generation; (...) We find no culture in which it has been thought that all identified traits—stupidity and brilliance, beauty and ugliness, friendliness and hostility, initiative and responsiveness, courage and patience and industry—are merely human traits (Mead, 1958, p. 16–17).

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[1] I have already written about in: M. Bernasiewicz, M. Noszczyk-Bernasiewicz, *Family Life and Crime. Contemporary Research and Essays*. Katowice 2017, p. 26–36.

However, perhaps we are witnessing the first stage of formation of the society, which, in the name of egalitarianism, is trying to annihilate sexual differentiation. An aversion to differentiation, which is globally fostered by the popularity of gender studies, is so strong that the very speaking of differences seems to be discrimination today. Hence, some countries have decided that it would be better not to enter into their citizens' documents information on their mothers and fathers, but only to number the parents. On the level of legal restrictions and social ostracism towards any attempts at determining separate social roles for women and men, an unprecedented civilization process is taking place, which process consists in combating any sexual privileges in the two major spheres of our life, i.e. on the labour market and in the sphere of family life.

The policy of gender equality, although rightful in terms of levelling of remuneration for the same jobs or promoting of the awareness of interchangeability and equality as regards the selection of professional roles and those performed in a household, turns out to be a kind of a dangerous distortion when it is used to negate any differences between masculine and feminine attributes. Even the popular observance of children playing shows that boys demonstrate an uncontrollable tendency to arrange battles and skirmishes (they produce a number of sounds, manipulating miniature toy soldiers positioned on the floor of their rooms), and girls, irrespectively of whether they use the same toy soldiers or other toys, arrange various communication situations, which reveal their greater tendency to engage in peaceful dialogue and more sophisticated games. As early as several dozen years ago, Mead was right to notice that "in our current Western theorizing, it has been too often ignored that envy of the male role can come as much from an undervaluation of the role of wife and mother as from an overvaluation of public aspects of achievement that have been reserved for men." (Mead, 1958, p. 77). We still notice the social tendency to demonstrate unjustified envy of men's roles and depreciation and masculinisation of women's roles, which was described by Mead. In practice, the levelling of sexual differences and the policy of equality means combating feminine elements and promoting men's roles. When taking notice of how many legislative initiatives are undertaken in Europe, for example, in the field of election parity and how much neglect and passiveness accompanies the showing of appreciation for the roles of wives and mothers (and this happens in the days of a drop in the birth rate!), one may come to a con-

clusion that the findings of Margaret Mead are still up-to-date. Simultaneously, we observe the lack of political courage to introduce solutions which would recognise and appreciate the domestic role of women, which women, in fact, go into irrespectively of whether the supporters of equality like it or not. After all, the majority of women still affirm a life-style based on motherhood and housework. Such women would definitely enthusiastically accept courageous legislative proposals that nobody introduces in Europe. The proposals in question refer to the ideas related to remunerating women for work undertaken in the privacy of their homes for the benefit of their families, which are taken up from time to time. A clear articulation of such an idea can be found in the Apostolic Exhortation of John Paul II, who noted that:

> There is no doubt that the equal dignity and responsibility of men and women fully justifies women's access to public functions. On the other hand the true advancement of women requires that clear recognition be given to the value of their maternal and family role, by comparison with all other public roles and all other professions (John Paul II, 1981, paragraph 23).

The present-day freedom (confusion) as regards women's and men's social roles in the western culture is the result of liberation from biology. Today, the slogan which is the most politically correct is the one than biology is not important. What matters is the personal and freely taken decision. More and more circles, and not only the leftist ones, are promoting the view that people "have the right to be who they want". This is, of course, connected with the process of individualisation of human biography, which has been taking place for at least 300 years now (Bernasiewicz, 2010, p. 203–209). The western countries have undergone a long-term process of social evolution. The primitive societies, which have already gone into the pass, but also those which have survived are still, above all, of a collective nature. In these societies, the sexual identity is acquired from the earliest years of people's life. The shape of this identity is determined by individual's anatomy. In primitive societies, roles performed by women and men are a simple derivative of their biological sex. Having a penis makes you predestined for active roles, and not having a penis means that a girl will certainly become a mother. Based on her research on seven Pacific peoples, Mead notices that

> To the small naked children, running lightly in the sun beneath the palm-trees, the little girl's sex membership is as clear as her brother's (…). Her

femininity is concealed deep within her, nothing she can touch and see, depend upon or flaunt. (...) The small boy struts, sometimes with emphasis on his penis, more often carrying hatchet, knife, stick, pole, in upward positions as he marches, parries, performs. His behaviour, however symbolic, is to the extent that it is male a concentrated phallic exaggeration, while his sister's is more diffuse and involves the whole body (Mead, 1958, p. 72).

In the western civilization, more than by nature we are influenced by culture, and, to be more precise, by specific social and economic tendencies observed both in America and in Europe. The progress in the field of technology and human rights, changes on the labour market, revolution of women's awareness and individualisation of the course of human life provoke changes in family and marital life, such as decline of patriarchy, decrease in the number of children in a family, looking after children rather than bringing them up, increasing role of the recreational function of the family and the declining procreative function of the family. The family changes when interacting with the outside world (*external forces*), but a lot of changes, as noted by Sheila McIsaak Cooper, are of an internal nature, *caused by the development of its individual members* (1999, p. 13). Manuel Castells states that at the turn of the century, the patriarchal family, the milestone of patriarchalism, is being questioned by interrelated processes of women's work and women's awareness transformation. The mass inclusion of women into the world of paid work has increased their bargaining power in relation to men as breadwinners. In addition, it has imposed an unbearable burden on women's life in the form of four-shift work (paid work, housekeeping, bringing up children, night shift for husbands). Contraception, followed by in-vitro fertilisation and the prospect of using genetic manipulation enable women and the society to control the time and the frequency of childbearing to a greater and greater extent (Castells, 2004, chapter 4).

The growth of financial independence and the level of education among women have diminished the stability of the institution of marriage. For centuries, financially dependent women with low aspirations in life resulting from their level of education, which was lower than the men's, lived at the mercy of their male carers. Nowadays, making a decision on ending a relationship by a woman does not mean as unpleasant economic consequences for her as it used to be in the past. Barbara M. Kaja refers to research according to which one of the factors of the risk of divorce is precisely the growth of financial independence of women (2013, p. 128). The growth of financial independence and the level of

education, which has opened up new non-domestic vistas for women, has put to the test of survival not only the institution of marriage.

The increase of the level of women's education also diminishes women's pro-family attitude. It can be even stated that the desire of motherhood is inversely proportional to the level of women's education (Badinter, 2013, p. 171). It turns out that the satisfaction derived from work and education (including its continuous supplementation) fully compensates women for the lack of a family and, at least, justifies the unwillingness to start it. It is even reported that if the tendency of excellently educated and high-earning women to resign from motherhood continues, we are going to live in a society in which being a mother will be a privilege of women representing low social status, as well as the most ideologically engaged conservative women (Badinter, 2013, p. 173). In order to be honest, it should be noted that a large number of women undertake professional activity not for personal satisfaction, but because they are forced to earn their living. Therefore, they do not treat their careers as liberation from the yoke of patriarchal oppression, but as a material necessity. Too many men in the western culture earn too little to support their families on their own. Stanisław Kawula straightforwardly states that women who are mothers have been relegated to the role of employees, due to which families have been robbed of a value which is very precious for the young generation, i.e. time devoted to family and children (Kawula, 2006, p. 64). In this situation, men have had to take over the housework, which is traditionally reserved for women, thanks to which many of them have discovered in themselves the features of a sensitive caregiver for their children. Over time, being a father has simply become a way of life (a conscious choice related to organisation of one's own everyday life focused on care of children), and its has been even legitimated in the form of the so-called paternity leave. This phenomenon has been deemed by Margaret Mead as a total novelty in the history of civilization, as "fathers" care of very small children is something that has not been promoted by any civilization among educated men burdened with responsibility for their families (Mead, 2013, p. 26).

Gender resources or gender struggle?

The present-day popularity of gender studies is the reflection of two currents of thought, which have been strongly present in the history of Europe. Apart from the whole cultural context of the emergence of the

anti-essentialist gender discourse—sexual revolution in the 1950s and 1960s, professionalisation and egalitarisation of women—it is worth directing our reflection on where the thinking of the supporters of the anti-essentialist concept has its roots, which we are often not aware of. This concept can be surmised to have its sources in the Marxist thought and gnostic concepts. The history and circulation of human thought, its intermingling and evolution are a fascinating issue, which is sometimes surprising for those who again and again discover new versions and emanations of old ideas in new forms.

Thinking in the categories of the oppressive ones and oppressed ones, and oppression and revolution necessary for restoring equality in economic relations has evolved, as a result of which old conflicts have been joined by new ones. Analogously to the classical Marxist stand-point, the social injustice was and is still surmised to have its beginnings in unequal access to means of production, and contemporary gender studies are, in fact, an opposition to new oppression, i.e. injustice in ac-cess to certain family privileges and asymmetry of social roles. The con-flict of social classes has been replaced with gender conflict. The conflict is not about means of production but personal autonomy. The class con-flict has made room for gender struggle. The natural differentiation be-tween men and women has become an urgent social issue, the resolution of which is demanded by various political and civic circles. The promot-ed term *gender* and the proving of the cultural nature of sex has begun to supersede the *sex* category. The negation of the traditionally perceived duality of human nature is being observed more and more often. Thus, a new anthropology has emerged. *Gender studies* have caused that, in-stead of two sexes and the privileged role of family life as the basic dimension of human life, there are at least five genders (masculine, fem-inine, homosexual, lesbian and transgender) and the diversity of part-nerships (consensual relationships) is affirmed. The Marxist paradigm, i.e. the conflict theory of the society, appeared originally as inequality in the field of economy (Karl Marx), followed by inequality in the field of educational system (Pierre Bourdieu), and the contemporary version of the emancipation metanarration is the family inequality discourse (Elisabeth Badinter).

The version of the Marxist paradigm described appears to be a new field, in which the probability of success is significantly higher than in the field of the class social structure, which has proved to be unrecon-structed. After all, the economic inequality is still increasing, both in the

northern and southern hemisphere of our globe. In 2014, the number of millionaires was double the number of millionaires recorded during the economic crisis in 2008. In the meantime, the gender conflict has been diminishing, as women have gained equality of rights in the majority of spheres of life, and the achievement of full rights by sexual minorities seems to be a matter of time. The triumph of equality of rights is proved by hard facts, as noted by Anthony Giddens and Philip W. Sutton, and it consists, among others, in the fact that the previously restrictive societies grant greater sexual freedom to men and women. There is also a general tendency to extend the children's rights and growing acceptance for same-sex relationships (Giddens & Sutton, 2014, chapter 6). This optimism is not shared by those for whom this means a simultaneous crisis of the traditional family, which has been sanctioned over centuries; moreover, this means even greater popularisation of divorce and the growing number of emotionally neglected children, who are brought up in continuously reconstructed and fluid relationships. The progressive conservative circles' point is not to deny anybody the option of living in a same-sex relationship and, all the more, to question anyone's freedom and dignity, but the lack of consent to state (legal) equality of such relationships, as recognition of the right to freedom, affirmation of democracy and pluralism does not mean, in the opinion of moderate conservatives, the simultaneous equality of privileges for all forms of sexual life. In western societies, which are experiencing a drop in the birth rate, homosexual relationships are less advantageous than heterosexual ones, as they do not lead to biological reproduction. Therefore, these societies have no interest in granting to them the same status as in the case of heterosexual relationships. All the more, they have no interest in promoting them. The more so as it is highly probable that an increase in commonness and popularity of such relationships may have a limiting influence on the number of heterosexual relationships. Equality of privileges and promotion of same-sex relationships may trigger a change in the proportion of the number of homosexual and heterosexual relationships. As a consequence, the further decline of fertility in the western civilization may be expected. A rapid decline of fertility, resulting from the reluctance to have children demonstrated by the citizens of the West, i.e. individualism and hyper-consumption, work-life conflicts, getting married at an increasingly later age etc., may be intensified by another factor, but this time not of a volitional but biological nature. This biological factor, intensifying the demographic crisis, shall be the obvi-

ous inability of the growing number of homosexual couples to give birth to their offspring. As a result of feedback and the process of modelling taking place, the growing number of children brought up in same-sex relationships shall result in the growing number of consecutive generations of people representing homosexual preferences, and, thereby, incapacble of biological reproduction. Children brought up in same-sex families will experience greater difficulties in finding a pattern of love different from the one implemented in their homes. These concerns are best and most universally expressed by the Catholic church discourse, in which the civilization of wrongly affirmed freedom (unrestrained pleasure, including sexual one, and practical materialism) is contrasted with the civilization of love and "responsible parenthood":

> responsible fatherhood and motherhood directly concern the moment in which a man and a woman, uniting themselves "in one flesh", can become parents. (…) Utilitarianism is a civilization of production and of use, a civilization of "things" and not of "persons", a civilization in which persons are used in the same way as things are used. In the context of a civilization of use, woman can become an object for man, children a hindrance to parents, the family an institution obstructing the freedom of its members. (…) The contemporary family, like families in every age, is searching for "fairest love". A love which is not "fairest", but reduced only to the satisfaction of concupiscence (cf. 1 Jn 2:16), or to a man's and a woman's mutual "use" of each other, makes persons slaves to their weaknesses. (…) The civilization of love evokes joy: joy, among other things, for the fact that a man has come into the world (cf. Jn 16:21), and consequently because spouses have become parents (Gratissimam Sane. Letter to Families from Pope John Paul II).

The civilization of utilitarianism leads not only to frequent reconstruction of sexual relationships and a decline in fertility, but it also destroys the social environment. This notion was used by Pope Francis, who noted that:

> This revolution of customs and morals has often waved "the flag of freedom", but it has, in reality, brought spiritual and material devastation to countless human beings, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. It is ever more evident that the decline of the culture of marriage is associated with increased poverty and a host of other social ills that disproportionately affect women, children and the elderly. It is always they who suffer the most in this crisis. The crisis of the family has produced a human ecological crisis, for social environments, like natural environments, need protection. (…)

> It is therefore essential that we foster a new human ecology and make it move forward. (...) Children have a right to grow up in a family with a father and a mother capable of creating a suitable environment for the child's growth and emotional development (Pope Francis: 2014).

Today, the procreative function of sexual relationships, as an element of the civilization of opening to new life, is questioned also due to a certain atmosphere of nihilism, for which the world given to us, embroiled in the tragedy of war, poverty and natural disasters, is not a good place to live. From the viewpoint of nihilism, elimination of procreation from the sphere of sexuality is simply a favour done to unborn generations. In gnostic currents of thought, the material and the external world experienced by us empirically are something bad, which limits our freedom, which, in turn, results from our spiritual nature. Our body is also bad, as it is a prison for our soul. Consequently, sexual differentiation is diminishing in importance. Distinction of sexes is contrary to the spiritual nature of human beings. According to gnostic thinkers living in the 2nd century everything that is different than the spirit needs to be absorbed back by it; the masculine-femine polarity itself shall be abolished. The feminine shall become the masculine. Nothing could be more contradictory to the subtlety of the bonds connecting souls than physical procreation (Brown, 2008, chapter 5).

In the contemporary discourse of equality of homo- and heterosexual relationships, and obliteration of differences between the masculine and the feminine, as well as in the promotion of contraception, one can notice the contemporary affirmation of the spiritual sphere and romantic love, which ignores sex division and biopsychical consequences of a sexual act. It is a discourse and outlook for which the spiritual closeness and privileged value of freedom lifts any bodily limitations and ethical dilemmas. In the contemporary discourse of gender studies one will find the above-mentioned analogies to the gnostic way of thinking. The body is of no importance, and the material is a burden which interferes with the unhampered expression of the human spirit. Only the gnostic disapproval of sexual activity has not gained appropriate recognition today, as the pansexualisation of the reality and affirmation of sexual freedom, which are common these days, clash with the gnostic depreciation of the sexual sphere of human life. However, any forms of infertile sex, preferred by the gnostic thinkers, and strongly condemned in the Judeo-Christian culture as contrary to the Creator's will, are fully justified and

confirmed in the contemporary discourse of liberation. The practices of contraception, abortion or homosexualism or voluntary childlessness of contemporary couples, which are common in the West, to a great extent converge with the continuously living idea of the threatening and constraining material. It is worth emphasizing one more time that it is only the pleasure derived from sex, which is so hedonistically promoted and validated today, that makes us distinguish gender studies from the gnostic way of thinking.

The triumph of freedom in the culture of late modernity is undoubtedly an intrinsic value. However, we should not forget about some vigilance, as an increase of freedom is not only the victory of culture over nature, but also, paradoxically for this culture, a simultaneous threat. In the opinion of the first Polish sociologist, Florian Znaniecki, freedom was one of the most valuable achievements of the civilization. At the same time, he perceived freedom as the origin for manifestation of the power of nature:

> We have worked for centuries to liberate people from the bonds of former external discipline, which we inherited from the civilization of the past, as we rightly understood that people need to be free to be really creative, and that the highest forms of life need to be freely selected and supported. (…) But free creativity requires self-discipline, which is not weaker but stronger than the one which may be imposed by the natural conditions or social and political, economic and religious institutions. By way of giving to the human spirit this freedom, which is needed by it for its development, we have also loosened the bonds of the human beast, but we were not able to create the means of controlling it quickly enough, which should have replaced the former violence (Znaniecki, 2013, p. 78–79).

The consequences of the liberation of nature from the influence of culture (religious, ethical and moral norms) are particularly harmful for family life. In many cases, the free sexual expression, ignoring of traditionally approved forms of family life and full democratisation of alternative forms of family life prove to be the triumph of whimsicality and lust (the nature) over the mind and responsibility (the culture). The contemporary image of family in the times of its crisis proves that modern people, rejecting religion and tradition, have not developed any substitute mechanism of "self-discipline", to which Znaniecki referred, and which would protect them against themselves. Modern people have not developed "new measures of controlling" the nature or the

"human beast" as Znaniecki called the impulsive and emotional part of human personality, which was described by Emil Durkheim in the following way:

> When perceived as itself, separately from any authority regulating it from inside, our concupiscence is a bottomless abyss that nothing can fill. (…) A desire that cannot be satisified is a continuous torture. (…) Only the society, whether directly and in its entirety, or whether through one of its organs, is able to play this regulating role, as it is the only moral authority superior to an individual and individuals recognise this superiority. Only the society is endowed with the necessary esteem to make law and specify the limits that should not be exceeded (Cited in Szacki, 1964, p. 180–183).

From the viewpoint of the anthropology referred to, the contemporary progressive discourses making all (any) choices in the field of starting a family and sexual activity equal seem to be excessively optimistic, as the increasing freedom turns out to be an even stronger surrender of human beings to the power of nature.

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Supporting boys and girls
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ABSTRACT. This paper will address students who have the diagnosis of Down syndrome. It will encompass the overall understanding of what a child with Down syndrome experiences in and outside of the classroom, as well as some of the physical characteristics that can manifest as a result of a genetic mutation resulting in the diagnosis of Down syndrome.

KEYWORDS: Down syndrome, genetic mutation, school, education

Introduction

This paper will address students who have the diagnosis of Down syndrome. It will encompass the overall understanding of what a child with Down syndrome experiences in and outside of the classroom, as well as some of the physical characteristics that can manifest as a result of a genetic mutation resulting in the diagnosis of Down syndrome. According to the United States National Library of Medicine, in current times, community members now refer to Down syndrome as an intellectual disability (*Down syndrome—Genetics Home Reference,* n.d. para. 1) even though in the past people with the condition used to be referred to as mentally retarded or mentally handicapped. Down syndrome is a chromosomal condition which means that it occurs on a genetic level and is a result of a genetic mutation (*Down syndrome—Genetics Home Reference,* n.d. para. 1). The parents of an individual with Down syndrome do not typically have Down syndrome and it occurs by random chance. Down syndrome is a very common genetic disorder and it occurs in about 1 per 1000 babies born each year (*Clinical practice*, p. 169). There

is currently no cure for Down syndrome, but education and proper care can improve a student's quality of life (*Down Syndrome: Other FAQ's.*).

Down syndrome (DS) occurs when an individual has an extra full or a partial copy of chromosome number twenty-one in all of the body's cells (*Down Syndrome—Topic Overview*, n.d. para. 2). In other words, DS occurs when the cells have three copies of chromosome 21, which is why DS is known as Trisomy 21. Typically, the nucleus of each cell within the human body contains twenty-three pairs of chromosomes, for a total of forty-six chromosomes (*Down Syndrome—Topic Overview*, n.d. para. 2). With the added copy of chromosome number twenty-one, the additional genetic material alters the course of development and causes the characteristics of DS to be expressed (*Down Syndrome—Topic Overview*, n.d. para. 3).

There are three variations/degrees of Down syndrome: Trisomy 21, known as nondisjunction, translocation and mosaicism (*What is Down Syndrome*, n.d. para. 7). Trisomy 21 is caused by an error in cell division prior to or directly at conception (*What is Down Syndrome*, n.d. para. 8). A pair of the 21st chromosome in either the sperm or the egg fails to separate, which results in an extra copy being replicated in every cell of the body (*What is Down Syndrome*, n.d. para. 8). This type of Down Syndrome accounts for ninety five percent of the cases (*What is Down Syndrome*, n.d. para. 9). The second variation, known as Translocation, only accounts for four percent of the cases of Down syndrome (*What is Down Syndrome*, n.d. para. 13). This occurs when an additional full or partial copy of chromosome twenty-one attaches to chromosome fourteen. The remaining one percent of cases (Mosaicism) occurs when there is a mixture of cells, some containing the usual forty-six chromosomes and some of them containing forty-seven chromosomes. Most of the individuals with this expression of DS usually show fewer characteristics of it.

The characteristics of Down syndrome include low muscle tone, un upward slant of the eyes, a small stature or a single deep crease across the center of the palm and an overall IQ ranging from 30–60 (Normal Range 90–110), (*Down Syndrome—Topic Overview*, n.d. para. 3 & 4). People with DS can also have a variety of birth defects. Roughly half of children born with DS are born with a heart defect, while digestive abnormalities such as blockage of the intestines can also occur (*What is Down Syndrome*, n.d. para 10–13). Most individuals with DS have an increased risk of several medical conditions which include gastroesophageal reflux, which is known as a backflow of acidic stomach contents into the esophagus, as well as celiac disease, which is an intolerance of

a wheat protein called gluten (*Down Syndrome—Genetics Home Referen-ce*, n.d. para 3). About fifteen percent of people with DS have an underac-tive thyroid gland known as hypothyroidism (*Down Syndrome—Genetics Home Reference*, n.d. para 4).

Students with Down syndrome often have many learning challenges that extends to many areas of development and the students typically fall behind the normal rate of progression compared to their typical pe-ers. Due to these challenges, teachers can implement some creative accommodations to help children with DS to still be successful while at school. Often boys and girls with DS develop at a slower rate of motor development which limit student's with DS opportunities to explore and learn about the world around them at an early age. According to the Cork Special Education Department, the best way to address this concern is to have teachers "use many manipulatives and tactile demonstrations that allow students with Down syndrome to interact with their peers" (*Special Education Support Services*, 2017). Without these interventions, it could affect their overall cognitive ability and contribute to an inability to speak at a young age, which could lead to poor oral motor control later in life (*Special Education Support Services*, 2017). Boys and girls with DS have also have specific delays in learning to use spoken language relative to their nonverbal understanding (*Special Education Support Services*, 2017). Often students with DS struggle in learning sentence structures and grammar and developing clear speech pronunciation. Small group instruc-tion and by implementing Think, Pair, Share sessions into a classroom can help students develop an understanding of spoken language because both strategies encourage students to work together with their peers and problem solve. Both strategies can contribute to students to have a better understanding of what they are reading and can help develop an overall deeper comprehension of the material by encouraging opportu-nities to students to speak to one another while in the classroom.

Boys and girls with DS also struggle mastering basic number skills and often fall two grade levels behind their peers (*Special Education Support Services*, 2017). Using Direct Instruction and using clear and concise language is the most effective way to develop fundamental math skills necessary for students to advance later in their academic journey. Overall, many of the educational struggles with boys and girls with Down syndrome stem from the main concern they often have limited short term memory which limits a student's ability to process and learn spoken language and remember concepts already taught. This is addres-

sed by the teacher establishing routines and by consistently repeating and re-teaching instruction to boys and girls with Down syndrome so they have the best chance of remembering what they learned so they can build upon prior knowledge. An effective strategy would be to have an introduction activity each class period that requires students to recall what they did the previous class period.

The way that Down syndrome affects learning in the community and a workplace is a complex issue because a person's unique experience is closely tied to the way that community members themselves respond to a person having a "disability" and by how prepared the person with DS took the time to create a well-developed transition plan and by what steps they have taken to be as independent as possible post high school. According to the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS), a "well-developed transition plan includes vocational skills, postsecondary options and future employment (*National Down Syndrome Society*, 2017). Vocational skills would include how to get to a from work, how to work cooperatively with others, how to follow directions, how to use public transportation, shop for groceries etc." (*National Down Syndrome Society*, 2017). Postsecondary options and future employment would be determined by a case by case basis based on the child's unique gifts and talents.

In regards to future housing, there are four main options for boys and girls with DS. They include a student choosing to remain living at home with their parents, a student choosing to live in a dorm, a student choosing to live in a supported environment and receive the necessary services or a student can live in a group home environment. (*National Down Syndrome Society*, 2017). These options should be discussed with the students and their parents at individual meetings and should not be a surprise when a student completes secondary school.

Regarding future employment, there are three main types of employment for boys and girls with DS according to the National Down Syndrome Society which include competitive employment, supported employment or a sheltered employment (*National Down Syndrome Society*, 2017). A competitive employment is essentially the open job market in which the student with DS would be working independently and receiving no supports/accommodations. A more common environment is a sheltered job in which an individual with DS receives support services while on site or a job coach is available to teach the boy or girl until the individual can complete the job on his/her own. (*National Down Syndrome Society*, 2017). The final option is known as a sheltered envi-

ronment in which boys and girls can work in a self-contained area with other individuals with disabilities without the integration of non-disabled workers (*National Down Syndrome Society*, 2017). Similar to student living, these options should be discussed with the students and their parents at individual meetings.

Three strategies for supporting interactions between students with Down syndrome and their typical peers would be the educational placements of full inclusion or mainstreaming classes, while also mainstreaming sports/extracurricular activities outside the classroom. According to Dr. Vandergriff from Knox University, the main difference between full inclusion and mainstreaming classes is that full inclusion "would eliminate all pull out and self-contained classes and students with disabilities would be fully integrated into the General Education curriculum." (Vandergriff, 2008). This essentially means that students with Down syndrome would be taught fully alongside their general education peers without the need of separation. Mainstreaming classes is essentially the idea that "students with special needs would be mixed between special education self-contained classrooms and a regular classroom through the school day". Both of these options allow students to communicate with their typical peers and allow them a chance to learn alongside their typical peers. The typical peers would be able to learn more about the child with DS, rather than judging them based on their physical characteristics of Down syndrome. Mainstreamed sports/extracurricular activities would also allow students with DS to bond with their typical peers beyond the confines of an educational space and to develop healthy social connections.

Three resources or strategies for sharing information about boys and girls with Down syndrome with their typical peers would be introducing typical boys and girls to the Best Buddies International Program, providing books on Down syndrome to typical students, and incorporating educational videos from people with Down syndrome who can share their own life experiences within the classroom curriculum.

According to their own website, The Best Buddies Program "is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one to one friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities." (*Best Buddies*, 2017) The Best Buddies program allows "typical peers" the best opportunity to fully engage socially with students with disabilities while allowing each

student to learn about each other in a safe and appropriate space. When a teacher can incorporate videos or provide books for typical peers to learn more about Down syndrome, it engages general education students to become more curious about students with DS. Essentially, the recognition that students with disabilities are present at school and are incorporated into the curriculum could lead to typical students to have less criticism to students with disabilities because they will be armed with knowledge about the condition rather than be afraid of students with disabilities.

Four resources for sharing information about individuals with Down syndrome with parents or other professionals would be the following: (1) reviewing the IDEA (Individual Disabilities Education Act) and their Parental Rights through the website (http://www.parentcenterhub.org/categories/), (2) introducing parents to the National Down Syndrome Society website (http://www.ndss.org), (3) introducing parents to the Down Syndrome Research and Treatment Foundation (http://www.dsrf.org) and (4) *Down Syndrome Parenting 101: Must Have Advice for Making Your Life Easier*. Understanding the IDEA and parental rights will allow them to truly understand what services parents are entitled under the law and how to find the best resources for their children. According to the website, The National Down Syndrome Society is "the leading human rights organization for all individuals with Down syndrome" (*National Down Syndrome Society*, 2017). The website provides webinars to parents about how to best prepare for having a baby born with Down syndrome and provides a variety of local and national resources that parents can access free of charge. The Down Syndrome Research and Treatment Foundation provides the most updated research that is being conducted about treating Down syndrome while the book "Down Syndrome Parenting 101: Must Have Advice for Making Your Life Easier" provides an all-encompassing Step by Step guide about how to be the best resource and parent for a child with Down syndrome.

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Self-identification in the context of original concept of feminine type of personality in contemporary photography #widurskiwoman

ABSTRACT. For a long time, recalling the broadest spectrum of art, including literature, painting, sculpture and all works created in the field of artistic creation, there was a connection that defined (in the context of cultural capital) human existence on the social, physical and spiritual level. Nowadays, feminist circles draw attention to the influence and significance of the way of portraying women and men in post-modernity, fighting against stereotypical patterns of gender roles. The concept of #widurskiwoman photography is a representation of women subject to expressive emancipation, aware of their sensuality, illustrating at the same time the perfection of the human body, where the essential features and values presented in them are hidden under the daily ritual of applying the often-undefined mask.

KEYWORDS: self-identification, personality, contemporary photography, beauty

Introduction

Man, in nature, as a thinking being, needs to continually improve the knowledge on topics that are close to his interests and the ones that concern him directly or have a significant effect on him. The extensive field, which has not yet been wholly discovered and classified, is still one of the most significant areas of knowledge about the existence of the human species. Just as many have stated that everything about human nature has already been said, still in the history of scientific discoveries and even in our thoughts, some details need to be added, if only to be

confirmed in the reasons given[1]. The nature of today's society leans towards media re-evaluation that affects us strongly enough to permanently influence the process of receiving, experiencing and interpreting our reality. Mass media has become the dominant source of shaping the individual imagination of a broad audience, and this means practically the entire society (Goban, 2005, p. 28). We can confidently say that the message generated by the media is a catalyst for our social mood and individual awareness of ourselves. Contemporary photography ceased to be considered an objective medium. It has become a subjective spectacle of chiaroscuro, with the private agenda of the creators. Not everyone who dared to take on this challenging subject is aware of the consequences that bombard the recipients of their work. Because in art, as in construction industry, materials are by no means neutral, transparent or indifferent elements (Macherey, 2014, p. 54).

Self-identification

The process of self-identification by each of us is becoming a sanctity. We associate emancipated autonomy with the highest possible virtue. The issue of self-discovery and the development of self-exploration is a topic quite popular over the recent years in the social environment. It is undoubtedly connected to awareness of self-esteem, i.e. with the progress, we make when determining our identity.

Despite the substantive complexity, the subject concerns each of us and undoubtedly every person experiences the phenomenon of self-discovery to a greater or lesser extent. We make such classifications in many areas of our lives, and in the man's image context, woman's image mainly, we can talk about personification. Already at this stage, we feel a certain sense of sublimity, the uniqueness of discussed topic, which we cannot describe in simple words, and we define it with various borrowings, for example from the world of nature.

To understand specific values, we must make a recognition, prepare substantively and cognitively, as in writing a school essay. To thoroughly understand the essence of the thoughts invoked, we should find out

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[1] An example would be the discovery of a new organ in the human body at the beginning of 2018. Interstitum, has been given a name by a team of researchers at the NYU School of Medicine of the University of Pennsylvania and Mount Sinai Beth Israel Medical Centre.

about the prevailing laws around us and adopt the certain social standards that project our way we are looking at the world.

According to Immanuel Kant, this phenomenon means a reality that exists independently of our consciousness. It is a transcendent element that goes beyond the normalised boundaries of our intellect. Aspects such as sense and aesthetics allow us to define our own needs and desires (translated by Chmielowski, 2017). Nowadays, it is difficult to relate and look for relationships between the years in which the spiritual significance was one of the most important aspects of life. Technical progress and the development of media techniques create addictions. The accumulation of information causes their reduction of substantive values, and the image-related absorbency forms us. In building our awareness and position in the group, we often follow the moods and opinions from our interlocutors who have a significant impact on our identification process. Already in the early years of adolescence, we encounter intensified symptoms of incidental views about ourselves, which to a greater or lesser extent create our self-confidence against our peers.

Social mirrors theory

Social mirror theory (SMT) is a how I imagine myself in the way other people think about me. It seems to be the most invasive process of capturing our ideas about ourselves and the environment in which we exist. Man, as an "objectified social entity" (Znaniecki, 1991, p. 133), interprets and takes in all behaviours and opinions appearing in interpersonal relations. Schema of this type of attitude can be assessed as highly self-destructive. But only when we experience the consequences of this concept privately, can we induce the drastic nature of today's patterns of arranging moods and attitudes towards portraying the image of women and men in the media.

This influence, combined with a mirror as an item, functioning over the centuries as a celestial object, justifies creating the described image of a woman in the original creation of photography. The mirror as an allegory of cognition is a complementary element in the presented vision.

Mirrors can be intermediaries between us and something supernatural or partners for intimate conversation. The very motive of mirroring reflects the dual form of reality and functions as an invisible boundary between what is real and enigmatic. The recipient who looks at the ex-

hibited photograph often searches for hidden dependencies between the author's intentions and his moods or beliefs.

This process fits perfectly into the ritual of looking in the mirror, conversations with yourself, attempts to interfere with your inner self and the self-identification. The experience gained by one of the authors[2] in the fashion world and the area of consumer goods has created a vision of an everyday act of putting the mask on, which in the routine of life becomes a way of illusory self-acceptance and functioning in various areas of our existence. The conviction that strives to generate extreme emotions and present them in the right concept for a proprietary #widurskiwoman concept becomes a kind of personal philosophy. It speaks of experiencing all emotionality and conscious concentration of tensions to obtain the most vivid reproduction of the presented situations. It is safe to say that this type of cruelty towards the experiences of one's self, brings the author to a better reaching the viewer's consciousness, but not necessarily more correct.

An attempt to define "beautiful"

Referring to issues of corporality, the pursuit of the current canons of beauty and self-acceptance, we ask the recipient the question about the sense of his obsessive search for the perfection. Women's presence for centuries has been and is an inseparable part of such topics as love, lust, sexuality, motherhood. This femininity could also symbolise extreme emotions, rising to the rank of *femme fatale*.

What is beauty, what can be considered beautiful? In the line of reasoning, we can refer to already created laws. We will find something beautiful if it fits perfectly into the framework of conventional beliefs. What fulfils stringent visual or substantive values, affects the behaviour or perception of a human being in a significant way or causes a change in thinking, and even generates behaviour. Something that we consider beautiful can also correspond to the subjective criteria of our taste or lack thereof. But the most accurate definition that significantly influenced the perception of modern aesthetics was created by Immanuel Kant, invoking the concept of *sensus communis*—a particular community of human preferences (Gadamer, 2004).

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[2] Paweł Widurski.

The image of today's expressivist culture, characterised by extraordinary, unreal role models, especially in the fashion world allows the creation of a concept of wearing a mask.

In present-day mass culture offers the man a horizon of possibilities and influences it in a significant way allowing for the definition of his needs along with hidden desires. At the same time, it tightens him in the chaos of his fantasies and willingness, acting destructively on his self-esteem.

The works from the borderline of abstract arts, postmodernism, are the most visible bones of contention in this day's considerations on the identification of beauty. In the sphere of human image creation, the leading topic is the way of presenting the ideal image of a woman.

The personalities who decide what the viewer will watch on television, on the walls of buildings in the form of advertisements and storefronts, are so-called creators. It is with their help that the media "war" is underway. They try to create a divine image of a woman, free from vices, with perfect proportions, a hybrid portrait made by computers. In fact, the unavoidable daily presence of advertisements in our lives already in the seventies became a starting point for many sociologists in Western Europe and the United States to question about the meaning of stereotypical images of women and gender relations disseminated by the media (Bator, 1998, p. 7).

Undoubtedly, this is a deliberate marketing action leading to reaching a much more significant number of consumers, diverse and divided by professed views, reasons, and guided by their definitions of aesthetic values. The process of over-sensitive emancipation of a media woman reflects on the mood of the targeted social groups. The feminist critique of culture led to slow reorientation and fatigue with an image of a woman disfigured by computer software filters. Social media are current carriers of idealised visions of some better living standards, paradoxically, having less and less its real features.

We can see that almost every attempt to create a woman's image is accompanied by "added value" (Elgoza, 1973), which no longer refers only to physical characteristics, but to a certain style of living and reacting to life. It allows the viewer to be convinced of the creation proposed by the author, through whom we become owners of not only the audiovisual value but also a certain way of moving among lifestyle like ours, which is the highest, most desirable form of experiencing. And although the appearance of the product in the described scheme becomes a contentious issue in the categorisation of beauty, the process that has been

developed to achieve the goal of reaching people's consciousness deserves to be called "beautifully" created disinformation. The effect of these activities is the correlation woman—a product.

Aggressive fashion

Fashion world repeatedly uses these tendencies, where clothing becomes a desirable product to the extent that it is given supernatural, transcendent and soothing qualities. Who, if not the model, best advertises the outcome, while being brought down to its level. But also in this area, significant changes took place over the last years, focusing on the way of illustrating the woman and the correctness of her image.

The 1980s abounded in the classic style of portraying, focusing on the idealised elements of a classic, elegant woman. The alternative and the desire to break with the existing canons of beauty were only germinating to prepare recipients for a new era in the next decade (Rouille, 2007, pp. 189–192).

Futuristic tendencies were anticipated, the image was minimised, the models on the catwalks were characterised by straight, profoundly sublime hair. Physical values of the body, hip line, bust and neck area were emphasised, the extremely exposed waist evoked the modernist costumes of the fashion house Thierry Mugler, where the woman gained the status of the muse. It contributed to the stereotypical appearance of a woman who should accept the most desired body dimensions, i.e. "90 by 60 by 90", causing a wave of controversy and extreme opinions.

However, fashion photography has continuously used the physicality of women and accentuated their beauty in the form of glorified products, which they suggested more than they described. The vision of the catwalk for the mentioned women—objects, became the subject of reflection regarding self-identification for the authors.

Inherently, the form of the catwalk is of the assessing nature. It has been adapted to the viewers' best profile to observe. Everything that happens on this long stage has grown to the rank of a conscientiously created show and has the values of an idealised image of reality that is socially recognised as beautiful. The form of the show becomes more and more exalted, engages more attention, human strength and funds, transforming into spectacles, with women as the central element. Thus, a real concept of beauty—a woman, becoming synonymous with the highest aesthetic value—is outlined. Praised by designers, watched by

hundreds of viewers, gathering the glances of millions of men and neighbouring women. This liberated image has created a convention of the essence of beauty in a tangible form that remains in the consciousness of society to this day.

In opposition to the general process of adoration of the described image, anti-aesthetic conventions began to take shape, breaking the standards accepted so far. Clothes, in the context of advertising, have ceased to be the focus of attention. The famous female image began to be pushed by pictures of emaciated bodies, apathy, suffering and traits on the opposite side of the charming definition of beauty. The trash culture starts (Rouille, 2007, pp. 189–192).

Its tendencies are valued by creators seeking their inspiration in contemporary art, but also by clients marked by rock, techno or rap music. In contrast to shipping catalogues, the magazine trends are trying at all costs to arouse desire, recognition, identification with a group or community (Rouille, 2007, p. 191). The ideal cult of luxury, inaccessible to all masses, gives way to more existential values. The most important advantage of an alternative convention is respect for qualities such as experience, focusing on the individual and moving away from rigid forms of image creation.

Aesthetic thriller

Paweł Widurski, personally experiencing the subject of work in the fashion industry, allowed himself to create a sample of a performative event, which in a significant way referred to the vision of catwalk for models. The event was designed in the form of an aesthetic *thriller*, at the same time breaking with the conventional aesthetics of beauty, bombarding the recipient with profound impressions affecting his perception.

The witness of the event becomes an inseparable part of the exhibition. The author used mirrors and industrial cameras strengthening the impression of observation to make the installation working together with the viewers. Industrial cameras, which are in constant activity, have intensified the act of registering "image here and now", creating the idea of superior force around observers. People inside two rows of extras become visible objects, being a kind of heroes of the moment.

In this case, we are dealing with a complete reversal of the situation accompanying this type of cultural events. In the planned exhibition, the recipient (viewer) becomes a "rated object". The action aims to evoke in

the recipients the force used by the real extras, leading to the experience of rawness and psychological stress.

This type of experience on '*living tissue*' allows us to conclude the attitude of man towards today's media culture surrounding us with all possible sides. The moment of looking down to the ground by the characters of the event becomes the effect of the exerted pressure. We can assume that it is an act of surrender, an attempt to get used to a prevailing situation in which we do not necessarily feel good or at ease. It is a natural, human reflex, often uncontrolled, appearing in times of losing one's self-confidence.

The time of passing through a row of staring extras lengthens, and we wonder what thought is currently being formed in the minds of observers about us, we experience the personified process of the previously mentioned *social mirror*.

After the show, we will change places with models for which the catwalk is part of the workplace. Their job makes it impossible to accept the attitude of surrender. Heads are always directed towards a proud march, eyes focused at one point, dazzled by dozens of cameras and recipients' eyes. The pressure is much higher, and any error results in a faux pas.

Foto: Paweł Widurski[3]. *Performative event project*

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[3] Reprinted exclusively with the author's consent.

Photographic self-document
#widurskiwoman

By delving into the fashion industry, you can quickly see how a contemporary image of a woman affects consumer awareness. The #widurskiwoman concept, its origins, was taken from the background of fashion photography, which in its assumption had a precise and sophisticated way to show the aesthetics of products.

Referring to changes in the expressiveness of reality preservation, with the mentioned *trash* idea, it re-evaluates photographic works. Focusing on the hidden values, experiences and emotions of the photographed objects, we take out everything that in the previous image registration was carefully hidden under the aesthetically created attributes of beauty.

Human experiences, thoughts, reactions, distortions or defects become an integrally visible part of the personality as well as the image of the characters depicted. The simultaneous combination of anti-aesthetic features with subjectively created style, bearing the hallmarks of universally recognised beauty, complements the #widurskiwoman concept. Its product is a photographic self-document in which conversation, experiencing and staging extreme behaviours results in the creation of a story about something specific (a photographic essay), brushing against the truth. Unlike a reporter or documentalist, for whom the presentation of a reality that is best reproduced becomes a criterion of correctness, the

Picture: Pawel Widurski[4]. *Moral possession act*

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[4] Reprinted exclusively with the author's consent.

created photographs of the author's concept expressively emphasise the hidden features of the individual in a clash with the surrounding reality.

One of the motives was the act of *Moral possession*, eminently depicted by Andrzej Żuławski in the film *Possession* (1981). Photographs were created in the convention of an aesthetic thriller that surprises with its rawness. The leitmotif was internal insanity, and all emotions were topped with extreme exhaustion and apathy.

The evoked vision shows the self-destruction of man and the image of ourselves on the way to own paranoia. Cooperation with the everyday world becomes a study of monotonous vegetation, abounding in the disturbances of necessary life activities.

The end

#widurskiwoman as a form of a hashtag, it functions as help in re-grouping information and visual materials about women's image analysis. I consider this to be a kind of paradox that a man is not able to continue to get to know himself in depth, spending so much time with himself and others. Time, which should be the most considerable help and guidance in matters of our self-discovery.

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Sensory processing disorders in women or why a lady cannot be a lady

ABSTRACT. Why my daughter does not like it when I am braiding her hair? Why does she not want to put on a dress again, in which she looks so beautiful? Instead of acting like a little lady, she runs, bumps into people, falls, ruining her tights and a new skirt? Why is my daughter not like my friend's daughter? Mothers of girls who have problems with sensory processing often ask the above questions. They would like their daughters to have the resemblance of little ladies. This article will discuss the issues in sensory processing disorders in girls and women that affect the way they function, and the way other people perceive them. In this article, "lady" will be understood as a woman who is refined, polite, and well-spoken.

KEYWORDS: sensory prosessing disorders, women, education, integration

Introduction

In 1955, Dr A. Ayean Ayres wrote her first article in which she described sensory processing disorders in children. In 1998, Carol Kranowitz wrote a book 'The Out-of-Sync Child' which became an accessible and comprehensible textbook for parents whose children had problems with sensory processing. Parents felt relieved that the problems with the functioning of their children are physical, not parental. They blamed themselves for educational mistakes resulting in inadequate reactions of their children. When sensory problems were finally defined as disorders, parents wondered how it was possible for so long that nobody noticed that it was a result of processing of sensory stimuli? (Kranowitz, 2012, p. 9).

Sensory integration is a process where we collect and organise information coming from the sensory organs, to be adequately used and properly interact with the body and the environment. It refers to the relationship between behaviour and the course of nervous processes in the central nervous system. In the process of sensory integration, the brain must select, strengthen or inhibit, compare and combine infor-

mation from the senses. We cannot observe it directly in the brain, and we can only infer their existence by external symptoms (Przyrowski, 2015, p. 7–8).

The functioning of cortical centres in the brain depends on the proper operation of subcortical structures in which the main sensory processes occur, which indicates the integrity of the nervous system (Przyrowski, 2014, p. 15). Research shows that one in twenty children reveals symptoms of sensory disorders, and one in six this problem is serious enough to prevent proper functioning (Grandin, 2016, p. 100). It implies that at least one child in a classroom may have that disorder.

Not everyone who suffers from sensory disorders responds to the stimulus in the same way and is affected by stimuli to the same extent. However, sensory problems can be debilitating and do not allow proper functioning in a normal environment. The life of these people is the constant pain and inability to deal with the unpredictable reality that surrounds them. Sensory problems in any form are always real, common and require special attention. They should not be ignored. Someone who has never felt sensory overload, most likely will not be able to understand its severity, which imprints on human life. Sensory processing disorders are still disregarded by specialists (Grandin & Panek, 2014, p. 107).

Sensory Processing Disorder

Jean Ayres points out that SPD (Sensory Processing Disorder) is inefficient neurological processing. Compares the brain to a big city, and nerve impulses to traffic. Good sensory processing allows easy flow of the stimulus to a specific place. Dysfunction causes a "traffic jam" in the brain in which certain sensory information is stuck. A child with sensory dysfunction often develops in a very uneven way. Some parts of the nervous system operate adequately, while others are disturbed. Children have problems with motor planning, less frequent with intelligence. A. Jean Ayres emphasises that SPD is a problem in functioning, no lack of any function because a child has as many neurons as his peers, but the problem appears in the connections between them (Ayres, 2016, p. 61–62).

A neuron is the basic unit of the nervous system, thanks to the synapse, nerve impulses can move between individual cells (Eliot, 2010, p. 39). As long as there is an excess of synapses, the brain is very flexible

and can develop in many ways. When supernumerary synapses disappear, these possibilities are exhausted, and the brain has to deal with existing connections. The decisive influence on all important connections in the brain have the child's experiences, and in the so-called critical periods, the fastest development of basic sensory skills occurs (Eliot, 2010, p. 58–59).

Lack of proper development of sensory abilities results in disturbances of sensory processing in five external senses: sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell and in two internal: proprioceptive and vestibular (Ayres, 2016, p. 51).

Carol Stock Kranowitz defines it as difficulty in receiving, organising and using sensory information by the brain which leads to a problem in creating effective interaction with the environment. Sensory stimulation provokes difficulties in making movements, focusing attention, showing emotions, creating relationships and adapting to new situations and in social contacts. (Kranowitz, 2012, p. 45).

In the further part of the article, I will describe the abnormalities in the modulation of individual sensory systems looking for the answer to the question why a lady cannot be a lady? In my article, I will focus on sensory modulation disorders.

Sensory processing disorders in women
why a lady cannot be a lady—own analysis

Sensory modulation disorder is the lack of the ability to control and organise stimuli through the central nervous system, which results in an incorrect reaction to stimuli (Kranowitz, 2015, p. 31).

In this article, I will first discuss problems in the functioning of the sense of touch, proprioceptive system, vestibular system, sense of sight and hearing. I will analyse examples of behaviours of people with this dysfunction described by Kranowitz and I will refer them to the everyday lives of girls and women.

The central nervous system receives a variety of information from our environment and inside of our body through tactile sensations coming from the sensory system. The skin has many types of tactile receptors that give the impression of temperature, embrace, touch. The beginning of nervous processes is their stimulation (Przyrowski, 2014, p. 32).

One of the dysfunctions of the sense of touch is tactile defensiveness, otherwise known as tactile hypersensitivity. I will consider the effects of tactile defensiveness on the example of tactile hypersensitive girls, whose reaction to hugging or kissing on the cheek is momentarily stiffness. Their parents believe that daughters do not like them, and as a result, they rarely play with them, which causes weaker contact between them. Such a defensive reaction is not only about parents but also to other close relatives, which disturbs the development of friendships and the quality of social relations. Girls are so afraid of unexpected tactile stimuli that they withdraw from playing with their peers. They cannot participate in various activities because they constantly monitor the surroundings to avoid unexpected stimuli (Przyrowski, 2015, p. 13).

The brain of a child with sensory hypersensitivity cannot effectively inhibit the sensations; he draws attention to all stimuli, even those that are useless. Children react to new experiences with vigilance, and this vigilance never disappears. The response to unexpected stimuli is the fight-run reaction, or simply withdrawal.

Healthy teeth are indicative of a beautiful smile, but girls with hypersensitivity in the oral zone will avoid brushing teeth, and every visit to the dentist will be a terrible duty for them and their parents. At the slightest touch girl can react with a scream, and even possibility of a slight touch will make her irritated or frightened. Oral hypersensitivity prevents them from being real ladies. Girls can also get squeamish if it comes to eating. They may prefer only specific food textures. They do not like food with lumps and avoid sticky foods like sticky rice.

Women where possible visit hairdresser. They are capable of washing and styling their hair every day. Girls who show tactile hypersensitivity are not able to tolerate that someone touches their hair and avoid such visits. They react by shouting or escaping. How big must be the disappointment of their mothers who want to brush their daughter's hair and style them to school.

Girls may show an excessive reaction to physical pain. Dysfunction of sensory modulation makes some girls not being able to play whit other children after a delicate cut or bump; the return to play is very difficult. Their brain is not able to focus attention on something other than this tiny scratch (Kranowitz, 2012, p. 100). Individuals may also show an excessive reaction to physical, painful experiences. Also, they can consider this tiny scratch all day long, and be perceived as hypochondriacs by their relatives.

For girls with sensory hypersensitivity art classes at school can be insurmountable. They cannot stand when their hands are dirty from paint or other dirty substance. They are too pedantic, and with the smallest dirt on their hands, run to wash them. They often look for socially acceptable excuses for their behaviour, e.g. my mother does not want me to get dirty. Because of tactile hypersensitivity they cannot fully participate in activities with their peers.

New clothes may not give them joy because they are too stiff, rough or the collar is too tight. Their brain may not be able to habituate. Therefore they refuse to wear them. Labels become their biggest enemies and must be cut out. To properly thermally regulate the body, you should dress adequately for the season so that your body does not become overly cold or overheated. The tactile hypersensitivity, however, can cause inadequate dressing. Stitches in socks can irritate them and therefore refuse to wear them, and sandals may want to wear on both warm and cold days. They also refuse to wear a hat and a scarf to avoid the impression of rubbing against the skin. In summer, instead of wearing T-shirts and skirts, they may prefer pants with long sleeves and sweatshirts. Also, a light wind that blows hair on the body of hypersensitive girls can cause them frustration and nervousness, which is because their brain cannot ignore the tactile stimulus (Kranowitz, 2012, p. 101).

Tactile defensiveness can also manifest itself in harshness towards animals. The girls will not be carrying little Yorkshire Terrier on their hands, nor they will sit with their kitten on their knees because the vision of touching the animal can give them the shivers. On the other hand, in sensory modulation disorders, there is also tactile hyposensitivity, which is in the antagonistic relation to tactile hypersensitivity.

Girls can be slovenly and be unaware that they have a dirty face. They do not notice crumbs around a mouth or running nose. Hypotactile girls do not feel touch unless it is very intense. They will also not notice that their clothes or hair are in disarray or whether their socks are wet. The temperature will not determine how to dress because they may not notice that they are sweating or trembling with cold. On a hot day, they may wear a favourite jacket. Due to the lack of proper sensation of physical pain, girls can easily get hurt by neglecting a broken collarbone or finger. After the fall, these girls will always get up and say that nothing has happened to them despite several scratches or torn tights.

When playing, girls can hurt other children without understanding that they cause pain because they require intense tactile stimulation to

feel something. They also do not feel that someone is just pushing or poking them to move. As a result of not noticing the sensory stimuli their taste is often affected which can lead to food poisoning. They may prefer dishes very heavily seasoned, or simply do not taste that something is too sour, too spicy or even spoiled. The last type of tactile modulation disorder is sensory craving. People affected want tactile stimuli, and they are constantly looking for them.

Girls wanting tactile stimulation to want to touch everything and everyone in sight. They rub their hands, their arms on objects with different textures. It happens that they bite their skin for self-stimulation. In contact with others, they can disturb them by bumping into or approaching too close, there is no concept of personal sphere of other people for them, and they may not respect their privacy. It is difficult for them to understand that others do not require so much tactile stimulation. Therefore they consider their needs as obvious.

Any messy play in the mud, clay, glue or the paint is their greatest fun—the more they are dirty, the happier. Through this way of behaving, girls easily destroy their clothes, therefore are perceived as sloppy. The search for stimuli affects their way of eating. During meals, they can even throw themselves at food and stuff their mouths. They try all the dishes; they easily eat inedible things, such as plastic decorations. Also, they prefer very cold or very hot dishes, extremely sweet or bitter. They use their mouth to study the item, even after exceeding the age of 2, because the lips provide more intense tactile sensations than the hands.

Girls constantly wrap their hair around their finger and feel the constant need to walk barefoot, even on surfaces whose texture causes pain, for example, hot sand, gravel. By lacking the ability to express their desires, girls are referred to as naughty or ill-mannered because it is difficult for those around them to understand that the problem can be biological, not pedagogical.

Another sensory system is the proprioceptive system. Proprioception refers to sensory information that is caused by the contraction and stretching of muscles, joints and tendons. Proprioceptive system is as big as the tactile sensory system. Proprioceptive information flows through the spinal cord, into the brain stem and cerebellum, and some of them reach the somatosensory cortex and cerebellum. Thanks to this information, the brain can guide our movements, especially when they are outside our visual control, and shape the correct posture (Przyrowski, 2014, p. 27).

A girl who with proprioceptive hypersensitivity can avoid movement and avoid stretching and contracting muscles. It will be difficult for her to take care of a nice figure since moving will be a big challenge for her. Also, she can be very clumsy and do not feel her body at all. Due to the lack of "inner eyes", it will be difficult for her to perform even simple activities without sight control. Because of the hypersensitivity of the proprioceptive system, girls may have a problem with some food textures, which require coordinated chewing, and the oral area muscles do not receive the necessary sensory information.

Hyposensitivity of the proprioceptive system affects low muscle tone. It makes difficult to maintain a correct posture. Girls avoid movement and lack their inner drive to play. Their characteristic behaviour is the tendency to stabilise, e.g. when writing, the elbow pressed against the ribs or when standing, squeeze the knees firmly to compensate for low muscle tone. Girls who do not feel their own body cannot use adequate strength, which can damage toys or spill drinks. The reason is the difficulty in calculating what strength should be used to raise a cup of juice or play with a doll. Also, girls may not feel full, as a result of which they can absorb enormous amounts of food. Their body does not inform them that they are already full, which can easily lead to obesity.

The last type of proprioceptive sensory disorder are girls with proprioceptive experiences cravings. Girls with this type of disorder can be very irritating to the environment due to the need for stimulation, they fall in on other people intentionally or bounce off them. They seem to behave aggressively; they may bite, kick and beat others. They can also apply strong self-stimulation to themselves by hitting their heads against the wall, biting nails, crack their knuckles. They can stamp their feet while walking or kick their heels on a chair or the floor when sitting. They feel good in very tight clothes and with tightly fastened belts. They keep chewing inedible items such as string, collar, pencil or crayon. To stimulate proprioceptively the mandible, they may consume foods that are very difficult to chew.

It is challenging to be a lady with a dysfunction of the proprioceptive system. It is difficult to take care of the correct figure and posture, and find friends who understand the irresistible urge to stimulate with proprioceptive stimuli constantly. A very important sensory system is the vestibular system; a sense of head movement in space, sense of balance. Vestibular receptors are in the inner ear and provide information to the brain of any change in the position of the head and move-

ment. Vestibular stimuli are integrated into the vestibular cords and the cerebellum. All stimuli obtained from other sensory systems apply to information flowing from the vestibular system (Ayres 2016, p. 53–54).

Dysfunctions in such an important sensory system very much disturb everyday life. One of them is hypersensitivity with intolerance to movement. Girls do not like to be on the playground, and every rotary movement makes them nauseous. Dysfunction prevents them from playing together with their peers. They move uncertainly and very carefully. Frequent motion sickness deprives them of the joy of travel. Girls tend to be very dependent and demand constant support from a trusted adult. They feel bad in elevators or on escalators. By avoiding movement, they lose the ability to keep up with others, and also, they can feel excessively fatigued.

The result of hypersensitivity in the vestibular system may be gravitational uncertainty. An inseparable element of such girls' life is fear of falling, even if there is no danger. Also, gravitational uncertainty causes fear of lifting feet off the ground, even a curb can be a big challenge for them, and when climbing stairs, they stick to the railing to feel more stable. Girls try to manipulate the surroundings to protect themselves; they require a lot of support from adults. Gravitational uncertainty causes them emotional and social problems; they always feel insecure when surrounded by other people. Also, they can have low self-esteem, through the lack of the ability to do even simple tasks. The girls sit down with legs in the shape of the 'W' to increase stability.

An opposite sensory disorder to hypersensitivity is hyposensitivity of the vestibular system, very common in children with the autism spectrum. Girls with this disorder in infancy did not have an integrated parachute response, so during the fall, they do not extend their hands forward for cushioning. The reason is the lack of sensation of movement through their hyposensitive vestibular system and as a result numerous bruises all over the body. Girls do not have an inner urge to move, but once they start spinning on the carousel, they can do it for a long time without feeling uncomfortable.

The situation is different with girls who are looking for sensory experiences with the hyposensitive vestibular system. It is hard for them to sit in one place, e.g. in a classroom, now and then they get up to sharpen a pencil. These girls are very energetic, they rock back and forth, bounce and take risky actions to provide themselves with vestibular sensations. In an amusement park, they choose horrific rides to other

children, and they do not get dizzy due to the long-lasting rotary movement. Unfortunately, the time of focusing on a given task can be very short, they quickly get bored and do not finish the what they started. They are often careless due to poor motor coordination.

The dysfunction of the vestibular system may affect bilateral coordination, i.e. using both sides of the body efficiently. Only a well-adjusted vestibular system allows efficient use of both sides of the body. Girls may have a problem in using both feet or hands at the same time. When drawing, they translate the pencil from one hand to another avoiding crossing the middle line of the body.

Also, praxis, or motor planning involving the ability to organise, develop and implement sequences of unknown movements, is disturbed by the inability to develop a correct body schema. The correct body schema arises as a result of the integration of vestibular, proprioceptive and tactile sensations and is necessary for the development of a motor plan (Kranowitz, 2012, p. 119).

It is difficult to be a real lady when the vestibular system is in charge of activities that depend on the intensity of stimuli in the environment. The sense of sight may work improperly, and it does not have to result from myopia or far-sightedness. Vision begins in the eye, where the light passing through the cornea concentrates in the lens and then falls on the retina. From the retina, the journey begins with neurons to the brain, and the light information translates into electrical impulses. The brain interprets and analyses received stimuli (Eliot, 2010, p. 271).

Another sensory modulation disorder is sight hypersensitivity or hypervision. Girls may inadequately respond to light stimuli and often cover their eyes. Avoid objects that approach them quickly and unexpectedly, such as balls. To provide the smallest number of light stimuli, they wear sunglasses, even indoors. Their eyes can be red from constantly rubbing and squinting.

Antagonistic dysfunction for hypersensitivity is visual hyposensitivity that avoids visual contact. Normally during the conversation, people try to look the speaker in the eye and observe his gestures, to best read his intentions. Girls with this dysfunction cannot rely on this kind of communication. They do not see any contrasts, edges, or delicate facial expressions. Girls may not notice the movement, and as a result, bump into other people and objects. They do not see the swings swinging or spinning carousel. As the outcome of the late reaction to obstacles in their path, they can get very bruised. The obstacle course is too much

of a challenge for them, and the lessons of physical education are a nightmare. When they do not see movement, they cannot as actively participate as their peers, which may cause them low self-esteem.

The last category of modulation disorders is the sensory craving visual hypersensitivity. The girls insist that they can provide themselves with intense light stimuli, through close and long sitting at the television or monitor. Every flickering and intense light attracts them. Their life is a constant search for visual sensations. In the case of visual dysfunctions, headaches may occur that prevent proper functioning. The image may seem blurred, and girls may complain about double vision. Dysfunctions can cause problems with reading because the letters seem to jump in front of their eyes, girls may get lost in the text, read the same words or lines several times, or simply skip them.

Visual dysfunctions make the world seem dangerous, and girls lose their sense of security. Thus, emotional stability may be lost as a result of the lack of ability to integrate visual stimuli in their brain.

The last sense that prevents a lady from being a lady is the sense of hearing. The auditory system works closely with the vestibular system in the processing of sounds and movement. The hearing is the basic ability to receive sounds.

Girls with hypersensitivity in an auditory system can plug their ears, and sudden sounds can even paralyse them. Their brain is not able to stop all sounds from the environment, so they cannot focus on one sentence. Metal sounds can scare them, such as cutlery or jewellery. Therefore, they avoid wearing jewellery that is valued by women as an inseparable piece of clothing. Also, while certain sounds are ignored by other people, i.e. the sound of a vacuum cleaner or bells, they can cause anxiety in girls with hyper hearing. Girls are always alert and sensitive to sudden sounds. Dysfunction translates into many spheres of life, if a girl is afraid of bursting balloons, refuses to participate in birthday parties or festivities where the balloon can break. She will also refuse to participate in the concert of her favourite band if the sounds are too intense. A defensive reaction to numerous sounds may be screaming or singing to drown them out.

The opposite of hypersensitivity is auditory hyposensitivity which causes girls to be unaware of sounds. The sensory seeker with hyposensitivity likes crowded places, listens to very loud music and strives for sound stimulation. Noise is her force, and she creates it with joy by clapping, shouting or stamping. Girls who are looking for listening

sensations are usually very loud, and in the classroom can be disturbed by tapping on the bench or whistling. Disorders in the sense of hearing affect the auditory memory, girls may misinterpret requests and questions, or fulfil only one request because they do not remember the other. Also, they may have difficulty memorising their readings or stories. The tone of their voice can be either too loud or too low.

Conclusion

Sensory processing disorders complicate the life of women who would like to be perceived by the public as true ladies. Correct functioning in society is impossible through the prism of SPD. Sensory dysfunctions can be a very unpleasant experience that evokes a sense of low value in women. Incorrect integration of stimuli can occur in each of the senses, and often dysfunction includes not one, but several of them, whose functioning is closely related. Women realise that something is wrong, that their quality of life is far from the quality of life of other women. Our responsibility as a society is to understand how serious sensory processing disorder can be and how complicated is living with it. We must be vigilant because inadequate behaviour does not have to be a result of bad education.

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The Queen Bee Syndrome.
The paradox of women discrimination
on the labour market

ABSTRACT. Nowadays, women are present in all spheres of life and legislation gives them the same rights as men. We can therefore speak about the emancipation of women for whom new areas of social life have become available, especially the area of education and the labour market. However, despite the fact that gender equality is officially enforced in Western countries, we can still notice certain forms of discrimination against women, in particular related to their functioning in the labour market. The unequal access of women to managerial positions is just one of the many examples. Paradoxically, this access is sometimes hampered by women holding high positions who are not willing to help their younger colleagues in achieving professional promotion. The aim of this article is to present and explain the occurrence of this negative phenomenon, which will be referred to as the Queen Bee Syndrome.

KEYWORDS: women, the Queen Bee Syndrome, labour market, career, discrimination, professional promotion.

In modern literature on the reconstruction of social roles of women and men, there are, generally speaking, two tendencies. Some authors believe that in Western societies a full emancipation of women took place. This is related both to changes in legislation that ensure equal rights and thus access to education and the labour market, as well as fundamental changes in the field of social awareness whose essence is a completely different perception of women, compared to the one in the 19th century (Gromkowska-Melosik, 2013). One often speaks of the identity of a new woman who, thanks to a different socialization, in no way limits her life aspirations to family and motherhood. As Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik (2011, p. 11) points out, "the analysis of the reality of the beginning of the 21st century can lead to the optimistic conclusion that in Western societies women are experiencing more and more equality and less inequality."

One of the ideas that provides a context for explaining the causes of women's emancipation is the concept of meritocracy, which rejects the approach of biological essentialism that talks about the impact of biological differences such as sex or race on educational and social achievements. Meritocracy, in its assumptions, thus omits the meaning of sex (as well as origin, religion and race) as a criterion defining the individual's possibilities in terms of socio-professional success (Gromkowska-Melosik, 2008, p. 79). Using the words of Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik (2008, p. 79), it should be emphasized that even if it happens differently, in fact there are various sociological and psychological mechanisms of excluding women from success (for example, gender stereotypes at school), promoting equality as a foundation of social life played a key role in the social and educational situation of women. Meritocracy, therefore, created a foundation for the emancipation of women in new areas, and the potential equality of women became an element of everyday life (Gromkowska-Melosik, 2008, p. 79). Nowadays, women are getting higher education and are becoming doctors, lawyers or university professors. They also perform many functions in politics, sometimes occupying the highest positions—prime ministers, presidents or judges of the supreme court (Gromkowska-Melosik, 2002, p. 239).

The second trend that can be observed in literature refers to the typical belief of many authors in the field of gender studies, that many forms of discrimination against women are still present. In the context I am interested in, it manifests itself in the disproportions regarding the remuneration of men and women for the same work (Lips, 2013, p. 166–167), and in the unequal access of women to managerial positions (Gatrell & Cooper, 2007, p. 64). It would be incorrect to state that in contemporary society, there is full and real equality of women in relation to men, especially considering the general situation of women in the labor market. In the majority of European countries women struggle with unemployment more often than men, which also affects the fact that the female employment rate is much lower than the male one (Eurostat, 2014, p. 101). They work on the basis of part-time and temporary contracts more often than men. Women constitute a social group, which is also addressed by another negative phenomenon characterized by low-level employment regarding the hierarchy at work, with few prospects of career advancement, called "sticky floor" (OECD, 2016, p. 3–9). This is the term for discriminatory practices towards women in the labour market. Randy Albelda and Chris Tilly (1997, p. 45) define the term "sticky floor" as "discriminatory hiring patterns that keep them con-

centrated at the bottom of the job scale". Stijn Baert, Ann-Sophie De Pauw and Nick Deschacht (2016, p. 714) also claim that "sticky floors can be described as the pattern in which women are, compared to men, less likely to start to climb the job ladder".

Another issue related to women's professional work, showing the ongoing gender discrimination at work is the so-called "glass ceiling". This term is most often used to describe the phenomenon in which men dominate at the higher levels of management. The word "ceiling" indicates that women face a limit to how high they can climb the organizational ladder, while the word "glass" refers to the relative transparency and subtlety of this barrier, which is not necessarily noticeable to observers. This glass ceiling, then, does not concern formal barriers in achieving professional success, such as insufficient level of education or lack of adequate professional experience (Barreto, Ryan & Schmitt, 2009, p. 5). It is a conceptual framework for a series of invisible obstacles on the way to women's promotion, which are based mainly on gender-based roles (Farady-Brash, 2009, p. 73–76). In this case, prejudices against women are mainly related to their motherhood. Women are being treated as "high-risk employees" because, due to family and household duties, they may neglect their work and be non-disposable and uninvolved employees (Polkowska, 2007, p. 237–238). Therefore, they are often not being seen as suitable candidates for managerial positions. The social beliefs referring to women's predispositions and possibilities to be successful at work resulting from fulfilling the difficult task of being a mother also result in the fact that sometimes women themselves do not believe in their own strength and the ability to "build" a career (Polkowska, 2007, p. 238). This may lead to a situation in which they won't try to fight for higher positions. It should also be mentioned that there is a problem of perceiving women through the prism of their "female character traits", which leads to women being discriminated when applying for managerial positions. It is widely believed that "delicate" and vulnerable women lack leadership skills (Marciniak, 2004, p. 12). All this contributes to the concept of the glass ceiling and as Manuela Barreto, Michelle K. Ryan and Michael T. Schmitt (2009, p. 5) stress "although the notion is metaphorical, for those women who encounter it, it is an all-too-real impenetrable barrier."

Definitely, one of the biggest obstacles for women trying to "climb" the ladder leading to the top of the professional hierarchy are the limitations related to the existence of an extremely strong male solidarity,

which is, for instance, expressed in the fact that men usually prefer male candidates applying for the job, if the competitor is a woman with the same qualifications (Polkowska, 2007, p. 237). Another phenomenon that, according to a lot of authors, contributes to the discrimination of women in the labor market is the so-called Queen Bee Syndrome. In the following part of my article I would like to take a closer look at it.

The Queen Bee Syndrome concerns a situation in which women who succeed in male-dominated work settings aim to prevent other women from developing and promoting (Faniko, Ellemers & Derks, 2016, p. 903). The term was first introduced in 1973 by G. Staines, C. Tavris and T.E. Jayaratne. Their research on the attitudes of women towards the liberation of women indicated that some of them were against any changes in traditional gender roles, which was an exemplification of the Queen Bee Syndrome (Staines et al., 1973, cited in Mavin, 2008, p. 79). The term "queen bee" refers to women in high positions who have achieved their professional goals in organizations dominated by men by distancing themselves from other women and at the same time expressing behaviors that lead to their gender stereotyping. The Queen Bee Syndrome is considered to be a phenomenon that leads to gender discrimination in the workplace and is an inseparable attribute of successful women (Derks et al., 2011, p. 519). On the other hand, Sharon Mavin (2008, p. 75) highlights that "The 'Queen Bee' is commonly constructed as a bitch who stings other women if her power is threatened and, as a concept, the Queen Bee blames individual women for not supporting other women".

Evidence for the existence of the Queen Bee Syndrome comes from studies showing women criticizing the professional involvement, leadership skills and assertiveness of their female colleagues (Derks et al., 2011, p. 520). An example can be research conducted among women who work in the area of science by Naomi Ellemers et al. (2004), whose results showed that female professors distance themselves from the attributes of their gender and define their traits in male categories. In addition, these tests proved that:

> stereotyping of women rather than differential work commitment emerges as a plausible reason that women have more difficulty than men to be successful in an academic career and—because of their own precarious position—women are more likely than men to engage in gender stereotyping in this context (Ellemers et al., 2004, p. 333).

Robbie M. Sutton, Tracey J. Elder and Karen M. Douglas (2006) point out that by that the stereotypical views expressed by women in the workplace are particularly harmful to the reputation of other women, because their criticism is perceived as more convincing and credible than the opinion of men (as cited in Derks et al., 2011, p. 520–521). In fact, the unequal treatment of women due to gender provides a strong foundation for legitimizing the disadvantages of women in the workplace. A successful woman becoming a queen bee during the development of her career may hinder the promotion of women who are their subordinates (Derks et al., 2011, p. 521).

The occurrence of the Queen Bee Syndrome has also been pointed out by Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik (2011), especially in her qualitative research conducted in two groups of women—academics and managers. One of the contexts of her research indicated "the emergence of a fairly clear image of women who seek to mutually exclude rivals within their own sex" (Gromkowska-Melosik, 2011, p. 331). In statements of both academics and managers, there is a clear message that discriminatory practices take place within a group of women. One of the respondents states that:

> It is very often the case that women compete more with each other than with men. This is more noticeable because women know women, they also know women's weaknesses and are able to use these against them (Gromkowska-Melosik, 2011, p. 332).

In addition, the interviewed people clearly depreciate their own sex by assigning negative attributes to women, such as having a difficult nature, being emotionally instable or having a tendency to not being able to stay focused due to excessive meticulousness. In the same time, men are being described as rational and steadfast. Explanations of both groups are therefore based on arguments in accordance with the already mentioned theory of biological essentialism (Gromkowska-Melosik, 2011, p. 331–337), which assumes that a particular gender is connected to certain character traits and psychological dispositions (Szymczak, 2016, p. 22). The statement of one of the female managers clearly indicates that the reason for the discrimination of women by women is a whole range of negative "female" features:

> No man can be as vile, cruel and mean as a woman to a woman—also at work (…). I think that one of the reasons may be simple jealousy, envy, a sense of competition, that a woman threatens me more than a man (Gromkowska-Melosik, 2011, p. 331-332).

However, it should be clearly emphasized that the above statements of the surveyed women confirm only the colloquial definition and explanation of the causes of the Queen Bee Syndrome, which, according to the opinion of the society, result from the "difficult" female personality. Sophia Zhao and Maw-Der Foo notice that in stereotypical perception:

> queen bee bullies subordinates and obstructs other women's career advancement. They are seen as selfish, insensitive, and power hungry. If a senior woman leader has a reputation as a queen bee, women in less senior positions often are advised to avoid working with her (Zhao & Foo, 2016, p. 1).

On the other hand, studies by Belle Derks, Naomi Ellemers, Colette van Laar and Kim de Groot have proven that the causes of the Queen Bee Syndrome among women in high positions should not be searched for in their character traits, but in the ongoing discrimination of women in the workplace due to their sex. The researchers mentioned above point out that „the Queen Bee phenomenon is an important consequence of workplace experiences, namely the gender discrimination women experience during their career" and that in their opinion, the queen bee behavior is "a response to social identity threat" (Derks et al., 2011, p. 521).

Naomi Ellemers was the first to say that the Queen Bee Syndrome is a response to a social identity threat. However, although Ellemers and her colleagues suggested that the queen bee behavior may be such a response, they did not directly investigate whether women who exhibited behaviors consistent with the Queen Bee Syndrome had a low degree of identification with their own gender Derks et al., 2011, p. 521–522). But the analyses of Belle Derks, Naomi Ellemers, Colette van Laar and Kim de Groot indicate that the likelihood of such a behavior is greater in women who are poorly identified with the female gender in the workplace, and who are at the same time striving to achieve professional success (Derks et al., 2011, p. 521). It should be emphasized once again that the results of this research have shown that the Queen Bee Syndrome occurs in a work environment in which women are exposed to gender discrimination and stereotypical negative perception. Discrimination due to sex can motivate some women, especially those who highly identify themselves as female, to take action to eliminate discriminatory practices in the workplace. On the other hand, some women, especially those who do not show strong identification with their own gender, slip into the role of the queen bee and strive to increase their

individual chances of achieving professional success (Derks, Laar & Ellemers, 2016, p. 460). As Agnieszka Melosik-Gromkowska (2016, p. 63) notes, these queen bees can then resort to relational aggression, which is perceived as typical of the female sex. This type of aggression consists, among other things, in excluding some people from the group or creating a network of rumors around the victim, which results in its rejection by the rest of the group (Talbott et al., 2002, cited in Gromkowska-Melosik, 2016, p. 63).

B. Derks, C. Laar and N. Ellemers (2016, p. 457) conclude that a "derogatory 'queen bee' label is given to women who pursue individual success in male-dominated work settings (organizations in which men hold most executive positions) by adjusting to the masculine culture and by distancing themselves from other women". These women let go of particular personality traits which are traditionally recognized as feminine, and do not identify with the group of women. In the following part, I will mainly use the excellent texts of Derk and her co-authors, who convincingly explained the Queen Bee Syndrome, its causes and manifestations.

Research on the queen bee phenomenon indicated the existence of three main patterns of behavior of these queen bee women:
– „becoming more like men,
– emphasizing how they different from other women,
– endorsing and legitimizing the current gender hierarchy" (Derks, 2017, p. 1297–1298).

The first pattern results from the stereotypical perception of the personality traits of a leader or manager (i.e. agentic traits) and characteristics that are typical for the female gender (i.e. communal traits). A leader's qualities are identified with a typically male personality, which is why women who want to get a managerial position try to fit into organizations in which men dominate by showing off especially their male features. In this case, women strive for masculine self-presentation, which is supposed to increase their chances of becoming a leader (Derks, Laar & Ellemers, 2016, p. 457). Belle Derks, Laar and Ellemers (2016, p. 457) point out that "rather than adding the desired 'feminine perspective' to leadership, women may assimilate to masculine definitions of leadership as they move up the organizational ladder".

Another behavior that is typical for the queen bee is emphasizing how different she is from other women. In order to not being treated like the rest of the women, older women may, for example, present their

personality as completely different from the one of their younger colleagues by emphasizing that they are more ambitious, much more agentic and willing to sacrifice for their career (Derks, 2017, p. 1298). However, at this point it should be noted that older women do not distance themselves from all women, but they do so in relation to a group of women who have not achieved such success in the professional field as they themselves do (Derks, Laar & Ellemers, 2016, p. 457).

The last and perhaps most harmful way in which women can improve their personal capacity to succeed in organizations dominated by men is endorsing and legitimizing the current gender inequality. The queen bees may strive to maintain the status quo by, for example, criticizing younger women, as well as strongly supporting the stereotypical perception of women as less ambitious and less engaged in work than men, emphasizing at the same time that they themselves are different from this group of women (Derks, 2017, p. 1298). In addition, the queen bees in male-dominated organizations may support the principles expressed by proponents of meritocracy and deny the ongoing discrimination in the workplace due to gender—believing that since they have managed to be successful, the lack of this success in the case of other women is the result of them missing appropriate competence or personality traits. Finally, the queen bees, unlike older men, are less in favor of a policy wanting to take affirmative actions, striving to equalize opportunities for younger women's development and a career advancement, and are less likely to be mentors for their female subordinates (Derks, 2017, p. 1298).

It is also worth mentioning that the Queen Bee Syndrome is not just a behavior suitable for women. It also occurs among members of other negatively stereotyped groups when they are subject to group devaluation in the workplace. B. Derks, C. Laar and N. Ellemers (2016, p. 457) explain that "self-group distancing can be a strategic activity in which individuals deliberately dissociate themselves from the negative aspects of their group's stereotype". Similarly as in the case of women showing behaviors that are typical for the Queen Bee Syndrome, the distance to their own group takes place especially in the case of members of stigmatized groups in which their identity as a person belonging to the discriminated group suffers. Therefore, those of them who do not identify themselves with their own group, try to "get closer" to the group with a higher status, in which they see a certain chance for achieving individual benefits (Derks, Laar & Ellemers, 2016, p. 457).

The Queen Bee Syndrome leads to particular consequences, both for women who in this context can be seen as these queen bees, and for their subordinates, but also for the social position of women as a group. The woman acting like a queen bee may succeed in organizations dominated by men, but she definitely will not be supported in being an effective leader from the younger women who are her subordinates (Derks, 2017, p. 1299).

For younger women, the queen bee phenomenon is extremely harmful, as it negatively affects their abilities and professional development. Queen bees that maintain the gender stereotypes about their subordinates can have a significant impact on the careers of other women. Their stereotypical assessments are less often perceived as sexist, and thus appear to be more reliable than men's stereotypical opinions of women, which leads to the creation of a "bad (and often false) image" of younger women in the workplace. The behavior of queen bees can also destroy the self-confidence of younger women, and thus negatively affect their chances of success (Derks, Laar & Ellemers 2016, p. 457).

Finally, the Queen Bee Syndrome leads to the maintenance of discrimination in the workplace due to sex. The denials of the queen bees regarding the existing inequalities between women and men in organizations lead to their legitimization (Derks, 2017, p. 1299).

To sum it up, I would like to emphasize that I do not intend to absolutize the Queen Bee Syndrome as a phenomenon explaining the relationships between women in the workplace or explain the mechanisms of women's success/promotion at work. This phenomenon is just one of the many ones that are part of the "map" concerning the professional situation of women. The trajectory of the development of women's situation at work is defined by many variables among which the important role is played, on the one hand by the education and real competences of women, their personality traits and aspirations, and on the other hand the already mentioned phenomena such as glass ceiling, sticky floor, sexism or other manifestations of excluding women by institutional structures or men from professional success (Titkow, 2007). In addition, it has to be noted that while analyzing the situation of women at work, we should take into account other contexts related to culture and identity in which one can distinguish, for example, typical contemporary constructs of the body and sexuality (Melosik, 2010; Bordo, 1993; Kilbourne, 1994). The Queen Bee Syndrome which has been looked closer at in this article is only a small and perhaps even not very significant part of the just mentioned map.

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Cosplay in the perspective of rape culture. Context, origins and conditions

ABSTRACT. Many people do not have the knowledge on what cosplay is, even less about its positive correlation with the rape culture we live in. It's hard to disagree that the modern world is heavily influenced by the pop culture, current reality is based upon it, and so it cannot be omitted in such important things as education. Cosplay, as a generally new trend is heavily rooted in it and as such it's connected to the battle for equality, emancipation, sexism and many movements which are part of video games. Patriarchal influences and rooted patterns found in our cultural circle have impact on the appearance of costumes, which we wear; supply and demand with the addition of consumerism and hedonism dictate the look of created characters and cosplays characters which are most popular. Situations which demands attention are ones, where we breach someone's personal space, where molestation of rape occurs. Aspects which help here will be proper upbringing and education, which apart of implementing basic culture and its patterns will also sensitize towards the problems of sexual abuse. The issue here does not lie in the character models, scarce costumes or the unfair fight for equality, its indoctrination or inappropriate approach, but teaching respect and enjoying the phenomena which is cosplay.

KEYWORDS: Cosplay, rape culture, current generation, pop culture

Introduction—briefing of the issue

In current times many occurrences and elements of the culture remain subject to change, they are dynamic and incorrect. In postmodernity, with which we are exposed to and live in daily, there are often situations which are absurd, connected not only to mass culture as is, but also with the pressure on gender equality; over sensitivity, which is expressed by people agreeing with this kind of approach, it has its dualities—it impacts the decrease of rape culture, but at the same time, it help it's development. This is well perceivable in the topic of cosplay, as it is strongly rooted in popular culture. On the one side, one's body is one's own property, on the other hand it's quite to the contrary—it be-

came a currency, which one can use to gain what he or she wants or needs. Raising to the status of sacrum and profanum it complicates matters to the point, where it allows people to freely use their own image, on the other hand it became the forbidden fruit, which tempts ever so more. Young women, who are usually more often impacted by this problem become victims of molestation or rape due to beliefs and stereotypes connected to this forms of sexual violence. Where does this leave cosplay?

For the needs of my master thesis I created a complex definition of cosplay, based upon it I will analyze this phenomena in the context of rape culture, which surrounds us. So, cosplay is an activity, which involves

> (…) mostly incorporating a chosen character from popular culture, often mimicking mentioned characters behavior and character, identifying with it. The foundation here is the costume and makeup, which make us look like the character and creates an illusion where others can interact with it. Often, it is also a statement of ones membership to a particular group or fandom (Wrona, 2017, p. 14).

In regard with the connection of the topic to rape culture an important aspect, which plays an essential role, is creating a likeness of popular culture heroes and thus—giving other people an opportunity to meet the characters they adore/respect/love. Sometimes, these feelings can morph into mania or desire and in case of people in their adolescent age, it's only natural for them to point their feelings and needs to objects, with which they have close contact. In current times, more and more adolescents have access to technology, so also to video games or platforms offering TV series on which they focus their interests and begin to fantasize about meeting particular characters. These fantasies are not only purely platonic, they can be ones of erotic nature, so meeting our object of interest can sometimes lead to preposterous situations of touching, molestation and, in extreme situations—rape. Of course it's not widespread or unavoidable. It's a rare occurrence, however usually not spoken about. For many reasons it became a taboo.

Unfortunately adults are also subject to this situation proving not to be free of this type of inappropriate behavior. However, let's begin with introducing the particular factors, which impact this state of cosplay in the rape culture.

Rape culture and its genesis

It is not true that the only impacting factor for the culture of rape is mass media and it's wide spread. By same effect, the shift in the "ownership rights", self-determination was not the only, clear factor, which impacted the treating of the body as a currency or commodity allowing barter transactions or, like in this case, exposing it to others and dressing up in costumes. For centuries woman was in a way a property of man, which means he was allowed to manage her, her body or even life, because of that this culture is based on rape as a modern model of current sexuality and heterosexual relationships. From here originated the conviction, that a married woman is a property of her husband and by that she cannot be raped in such a relationship. Single women or virgins were perceived differently, as more valuable then the ones with a husband, which can be seen in the fact, that a raped, not married woman (implied—virgin), was supposed to enter marriage to avoid punishment (Herman, 1989, p. 45–46).

Such an approach toward women created a situation where they were implemented to typical responsibilities and tasks. A woman should be a wife and a mother, so her sexuality was controlled by others. Of paradox were situations, where a woman would come out from her fathers keep straight into one of her husband, who controlled her sexuality—during her whole life she was not free; she made her vows as a virgin and remained faithful to her husband and often, in case of his death, if she remained without children, she would bear ones for her father's relative. It was all rooted in strong dependence, where the fairer sex is controlled by the other. The status of man or religion is based on that, we often see patriarchate showing up not only in monogamy, but also filling work positions and social hierarchy with men. Inequality remains, which leads to subordination and false interpretation of rape. Because the body of a woman is not one of hers, it can be freely managed (Anderson, 2004, p. 33). I did however mention the current situation, in which women gain more and more access to their sexuality and self-determination, this can be seen in many aspects of life, such as choosing their own partner, career, access to education and finally the choice whether if they want to have children. It's a big step forward, as not so long ago, these possibilities were just not there, which impacted amongst other things the emancipation movement. The release from the male control and the possibility of freely using their own body, on their own terms,

led to a situation, where the costumes now are bold and show a lot of the body. Where once women had the duty to cover every part of their bodies (which remains a part of some cultures to this day), today the situation is pretty much the opposite—only intimate parts and breasts are covered. The costumes from the seventies and eighties of the 20'th century, were very open, showing sometimes through see-through tulle pubic mound or nipples.

It has led to a situation, where on the one hand emancipation and respect is called upon, but on the other hand we're not immune from straying into temptations. There is a constant conviction, where a raped or molested woman has brought these actions upon herself. In this, men are supported and not judged and by thus reinsured about their infallibility. It is of course not a scenario which plays out in the majority of cases, however it's possible, repeated and a subject of taboo in particular circles. So we have to ask ourselves a question here: where does the norm and respect lie and where can we admit, that the line has been crossed? In current times, more and more voices agree, that in case of sexuality between partners things that both partners agree upon are appropriate between them, situations where compulsion or violence does not occur. But what happens in case, where touching happens between not people in a relationship but strangers? Cosplayers deal with this kind of situations by the tens and hundreds. There are some people, which just want to meet their idol, others want to admire beautifully created costumes and there are these, who actually want to touch the cosplayers. In this kind of cases, the most comfortable and human approach to the issue, is stating that it's not appreciated. Cosplayers do however make often a big mistake here: they do not make this statement in the time of its occurrence, rather much later, even months after the fact. Such behavior does not disqualify the problem which is molestation or does not diminish it, it can be though understood from the perspective of people who dress up. After three days of an event the amount of people can be overwhelming due to simple, human exhaustion.

One more element demands attention, one which we usually don't even consider. The genesis of the rape culture is rooted deeper then we usually think, it does not come from the evolution of mass culture. It's present in many cultural circles, both the ones, we consider developed and those, which we consider ones from Third World Countries. However mass culture has shaped us for a long time now and has an impact on how we perceive many things, such as gender equality, transsexualism

or relationships. On one hand it strongly sensitizes and warns us but on the other, it creates a false view of the world, one which we are not resistant to. Current generations are born to a world, where their exposure to technology is considerable, very early they develop the necessary skills to operate a gaming console, a laptop or a TV. Of course, being fit is also a big thing, the ability to use one's own body and a hedonistic, rich way of life. In this reality, the human body easily becomes a commodity which can generate income or by barter be traded for other, better products. Under the facade of greatness, stereotypes and information are being smuggled which we register on a subconscious level. These are not subliminal information, such as ones used for example in cartoons and animations. These are the smallest elements used in advertisements, between colleges and at home. Behind romantic love, sadomasochistic, heterosexual relations are hidden (Herman, 1989, p. 45). Books treating on the subject are witnessing a real renaissance, which explains the great popularity of *Fifty shades of Grey* or a series about a millionaire *Gideon Cross*. In our cultural circle, even though there is a possibility for women to work and for their self-determination, we still live amongst familiar patterns. We cannot rape a wife but in spite of law and awareness and a woman coming back late night alone under the influence of alcohol is considered a harlot and thus can be used. On one hand it creates double standards, which are difficult to overcome, on the other it helps us point attention to these kinds of problems. Thus parities and pressure for gender equality came into being.

With such encoding of information, stereotypes and duplication of an family pattern a situation is born, where it's hard to distinguish rape from a "normal", heterosexual relation. Still, by marriage, even if not in the sanctity of church, woman is transferred from under her fathers keep to her husbands. Working or not, it makes no difference—she will most likely become a wife or a mother, regardless of her own will of self-realization. The culture of rape is more ingrained then we ever thought, because it's usually a subject, which is not brought up. More often than not, it's treated as a non-changeable truth, which we lead our lives by. What sense does it make in regards to cosplay though? Usually the heroes and heroines are an unachievable role model in terms of their looks and behavior, this promotes hedonism, independence and self-realization. While the last two elements are very positive, the first ones are more of a controversy subject. For young people and adults alike, games and mass culture became a separate world and with time, the only reali-

ty they know, such a model of life and apparition ideals can lead to complexes or intra- and interpersonal issues. How to create proper bonds or a lasting relationship, when it becomes apparent that it demands compromises and sacrifices? Where hedonism and doing what one does want fall into place? An additional problem lies with the unrealistic expectations towards the external looks of a partner and pornography. If it encourages us to "live life" and use one's body, why not touch? Add to it usually quite scarce costumes in which young girls walk around and we have a dangerous mixture—molestations and rape, because they brought it upon themselves by the way they dress. But is it so? The majority of costumes takes inspiration from video games, they show young, confident girls, women always ready for intercourse; or so they appear, especially in connection with pornographic animations in which they appear, ones which are easily found on the Internet.

Our cultural circle is rich with sexualization of children, minors and adults as well. Through overexposure of the naked body we start to misjudge the lines or move them, we have a false understanding of what is allowed or we follow a worthless rule where "everything, which is not forbidden, is allowed". How is one supposed to not get lost in such intricate relations and not cross the intimate space of another human?

Occurrence of sexism in pop culture

Directly connected to the rape culture is sexism, which occurs in almost every aspect of mass culture. It's not however as one sided, as one might think; it touches both genders but often sexism towards man is belittled (mainly due to emancipation of women). Usually it is shown in a concept that men rule over women, which can be perceived, amongst other places, in the lack of equal treatment of the fairer gender or access to employment of public institutions and sexual abuse (Boles & Hoeveler, 2004, p. 291.) How is it now? Mentioned parities and emphasis on employing women, which was supposed to counter the issue, often creates a situation where men's rights are violated and their treated with reluctance. What is important, is that not only women are victims of inequality from stereotypes and indoctrination of patterns. Often we see male and female models with perfect smiles, tan and unscathed bodies, which can successfully lead to complexes and create a false view of a future/good partner.

Video game characters are becoming in these days archetypes and models which we should follow in order for our lives to become exciting and meaningful. The problem begins, when we consider these characters as too real, a source of help to cope with reality or model our lives too much on them. Usually these characters are not weak nor ugly. Their charismatic, perfect in every way, relentless, they are what we can like and identify with. This is done on purpose, as people seek models, idols, someone who's in a similar/analogical life situation and deal with it. Additionally, these creations of designers, originators and programmers are made to be attractive, they are brought to life too feed the consumers and ignite their fantasies. Thin women with large breasts, piercing gazes and sweet lips will often sell better, then a plain counterpart. Of course much depends on the consumers taste and these are vastly different, dependent on the country they live in, cultural circles or even the memories and events they went through. Supply and demand dictate the rules of characters appearance, thus they are often created based on the qualities we lack in reality; or these, that our partner lacks, which can lead to distorted views and lack of common sense.

Where is sexism in all of this though? Many people seek it in the objectified treatment of the other gender in, amongst others, video games. There are occurrences where games allow to fulfill a variety of fantasies, not only sexual ones. Scarcely clothed women or muscular men are often a fundament for discussion. Many topics are brought forward, such as treatment of fictional models as submissive, something to dominate, to use freely. Often, the consequence of such thinking where reality and the virtual world mix in cosplay is molestation and rape. Cosplayers dress up in a costumes which resemble a character do not automatically agree to invade their personal space, even if the character they play would. One should never assume such a thing and try to invade one's personal space; perceiving a character taken straight out of a virtual world can lead to occurrence of false perception and an automatic objectification. It's not necessarily a situation which happens only to people rooted in the virtual world. Every single one of us can view a person hidden under a costume in such a way. Respect and proper treatment of fellow human beings as people and not objects is not helped by the elements of mass culture which are angled towards hedonism and shows how we should life live to its fullest and not worry about the impact it has on others. Of course it does have its pros and cons which I mentioned before, it brings attention towards dangers and respect towards women.

More and more attention is brought to the question on how women are perceived in video games, TV series and books. They are created to be the main heroes, they can overcome the issues they face and in no way are inferior to men. There are though voices of protest, which speak of a too great objectification of a woman's body, which came a long way from a decoration to independence. The situation is somewhat bizarre though, as despite efforts it becomes apparent, that many groups cannot be satisfied and the objectification of man and their sexualization is omitted all together. If we talk about *Bayonetta* the issue lies with the heroin being too sexy and unrealistic—a woman cannot have such proportions or move in such a manner. However no one addresses the fact, that *Geralt of Rivia* (*The Witcher* series), *Kratos* (*God of war* series) or *Dante* (*Devil May Cry* series) also look unrealistic when compared to people, we meet every day at work, school, college or in the city. It leads to a situation where we identify with them, but at the same time, in our minds comparisons are being made in which we come out poorly: we do not have stomach muscles like the Witcher, beautiful hair like *Ciri* or we're not as charismatic as the characters from *League of legends*. It all leads us to decisions influenced by our dreams, fantasy and perception of. Taking the likeness of pop culture charters, which are designed to be widely admired, we free ourselves and allow to become someone else, but at the same time, we can, unknowingly become victims of the rape culture. The paradox here, is that we help build it. That, which gave us freedom also gave us restrictions. The current culture, which is mass and popular is also a culture of rape which roots and even develops sexism further. This time it's not one directional and geared only towards women but it also touches men, they both become an object of interest by comparison, patterns, stereotypes and hedonism.

Gamergate, the controversy

To combat that outcome a movement called *gamergate* came into being. In its concept, it was meant as a mean to overlook reporter ethics in video game press, but it also touched the wide concept of gamers "identity" (Romano, 2014). Despite over 5 years, since #Gamergate's origin in the Internet, it still manages to remain as relevant as it is controversial. But what are we talking about here? The topic revolves heavily around

the general concept of inequality in relation to gender. It touches gaming as such, development and creation of video games and perception of women in games. Usually the target of video games were men, who played games with a high difficulty curve, but at the same time ones, which gave great satisfaction upon their completion. It was a reality, which was hard, one which women had no access to. With the popularization of Internet and development of devices more women begun gaming and more of them were brought into the secrets of coding, scripting and design used in video games. It brought substantial issues generated from a few reasons:

- Game development field begun to be perceived as strongly unequal in regard to accepting women into work and their general participation in it; similar to other branches, the issues of parities came was present;
- There is an issue in regard to women publishing their own games—if their creations are met with criticism often the authors of such, if male are being accused of;
- Lastly, there is the issue of female character models—enhanced, female body parts and scarce costumes create a situation, where some of the games are judged as ones geared towards male fantasies, exemplifying patriarchal approach in the present world and general sexism.

Gamergate was supposed to bring focus to the issue of inequality and try to combat the wrong perception of women in gaming. However that, which was suppose too defend and warn became a double edged blade and a salt in the eye. The general concept was good but it brought many misunderstandings and an inability of solving a problem, which it created by itself.

What is the relation to rape culture here though? Many centuries of tradition which impacted many cultural circles, in which women are subjected to man and the world is perceived as patriarchal has its influence on over sensitivity in the topic of genders. It's not a question of woman and men being equal, but in such environments as, there is an occurrence of a particular disproportion shown by the need to accent being different/better/one of a kind. Parities are on one hand an effect of that but it also creates easier access to some commodities, it has its roots in such a culture. More and more often we see female characters which are not over-sexualized but not all games chose this trajectory.

Many characters from, for example, *MOBA* type games[1] remain quite stereotypical, but they make up for it with their character, spoken sentences, behavior or mannerism (for example in *League of legends* or *Overwatch*).

The issue does not begin with designing such characters or even choosing as who we want to dress up as. Both games and cosplay are occurrences which exhibit both good and bad sides, ones which we can become addicted to, misinterpret them for reality or develop pathological reactions and fantasies, which can lead to paraphilia. It's not necessarily though automatic and we do not have to consider it a necessary evil. In this case, the problems lie with lack of control of ones urges, seeking unfairness and attaching false ideologies to something, which in reality doesn't mean anything. Thus *Gamergate* brings the danger of bending the facts. It's understandable that women do not desire to be objectified and perceived solely by their body, sexual relations, taking care of the household and bearing children, however attaching parities and sexism to where it does not belong is a wrong way to address the subject. *Gamergate* is important here in the context that it's originated directly from the feministic movement and is an effort to combat inequalities and rape culture, however this connection might not be that obvious. Instead of helping or trying to make people understand the issues it mainly is a catalyst for the problem, it festers the wounds— many followers and people who oppose this ideology have surfaced and they postulate not necessarily ideas, but demands on how the video game world should look like. What does that lead to? More and more games being created in such a way, that they try to avoid hurting anyone's feelings. Thankfully, many of them remain ambitious and not detrimental to established series.

How does that impact cosplay? Often we come across people opposed to showing to much of the body and as an effect, costumes are made, which deter from the apparition of original characters; it's due to the fact, that not everyone has the means necessary to create complicated costumes and the end effect is subpar. This rarely has an effect on cosplayers as general, which do their job well and allow people to meet their favorite characters. As mentioned, much depends on putting down clear lines but also the awareness of people, who meet them.

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[1] MOBA (Multiplayer Online Battle Arena)—a variation of a Real Time Strategy game, which is angled towards multiplayer battles on the Internet; its emphasis is on dynamic battles with exclusion of elements like base building.

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Arms proliferation and the crisis of cult supremacy and insecurity in Ogoniland Nigeria

ABSTRACT. This study examined the nexus between arms proliferation and the crisis of cult supremacy and insecurity in Ogoniland of Rivers State. It adopted the Anomie Theory as propounded by Emile Durkheim and Strain Theory of Crime by Robert Merton. The central thrust of these theories is that attention is focused on the relationship between a person's socio economic condition and the possibility that the person would commit either crime or delinquency. The study argues that the vulnerable economically misbalance youth population took advantage of the porous nature of the waterways and engaged in arms struggle in the area. This is due to the lack of functional institutional framework to regulate the trade in illicit arms especially in the Niger Delta region, which is responsible for the influx of small arms and light weapon into the hands of non-state actors. This has generated persistent crises and insecurity among communities and the different cult groups over territorial supremacy in Ogoniland. The study also reveals that the political actors in the area equally mastermind cult related crisis for the purpose of political dominance. The study posits that only structured and sustainable policies and empowerment programmes can help to reduce cult crisis and insecurity in Ogoniland of Rivers state. The study recommends that government should initiate a functional strategy of controlling the trade in small arms and light weapons. Equally security at the borders and along the waterways in Ogoniland should be strengthened to check in inflow of arms.

KEYWORDS: arms proliferation, insecurity, crisis of cult supremacy, militancy and national security.

Introduction

The issue of arms proliferation and the crisis of Cult supremacy and security in Nigeria especially in the Niger Delta region have posed serious concern and threat to national security and socio-economic and

political development of the area. In recent time Rivers state has experienced different types of conflict ranging from communal/political crises to crises of cultism/militancy worsened by the free movement of small arms and light weapons across the coastal borders. This development has equally degenerated to the suburbs of the State, to the extent that different parts of the State have been bedeviled by different types of arm conflict. In recent times, the use of arms has fueled crisis and insecurity in Omoku, Ahoada, Ogbakiri, Rumuekpe, and Ogoniland. This development has aggravated the security challenges in Rivers State which has affected socio-economic and political activities. The proliferation of arms has been one of the biggest security challenges confronting the State which is capable of throwing the state into anarchy and increase crime and violence. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the hands of non-state actors is a global trend in the new economic order of trade liberalization inherent in the tenets of globalization. It is in line with this that Poroma, Odike & Nkpah (2012) argues that the contradiction that generates conflict in the Niger Delta could be traceable to some fundamental tenets of globalization. Poroma, Odike & Nkpah (2012) maintained that the new economic order of globalization had liberalized trade and international boundaries of countries resulting in the free flow of goods and labour across nations. This new global phenomenon is driven by multinationals based on the tenets of surplus accumulation. This has led to robust economic engagements by both local and international business actors resulting to influx of different consignments including small arms and light weapons. The consequence therefore, is the easy accessibility of arms among the vulnerable youth population. The resultant effect is the emergence of cult crisis, communal violence, criminality and insecurity.

In the recent past, Rivers State has become embroiled in the quagmire of violence and cult related crisis for territorial supremacy. The emergence of the crisis of cult supremacy and political thuggery increased the flow and use of small arms and light weapons in hands of non-state actors. Many groups were formed and arms were used to perpetrate violence and crime as a result of neglect, poor policy implementation, poverty, corruption, political rivalry and unemployment. This encourages criminal gangs, political thugs, militia groups to engage in war of supremacy, kidnapping, homicide, robbery. The militants confront government forces, sabotage oil installations and take foreign

oil workers hostage (Poroma & Kidi, 2016). However, there is a new dimension in the crises in Rivers state and other suburbs including Ogoniland. The current spate of crisis now is the crises of supremacy and territorial control among different cult groups. As a State in the comity of nations, the adoption of the new socio-economic structural changes without necessary structural formation has weakened almost all spheres of the nation's economic nerves. The multiplier effect on border control, oil theft and arms acquisition is enormous. (Poroma, Odike & Nkpah, 2012). Pearson (1994) argues that the intertwine economic and political interests of powerful States derived from the sale of arms has created an international security dilemma. The global nature of the trade in arms has made the business more sophisticated resulting to complex security challenges in developing economies like Nigeria and Ogoniland in particular. In contemporary Ogoni society, the legitimate and illegitimate use of small arms and light weapons is a common phenomenon.

This is in tandem with the report on Small Arms Survey, that at least 1,134 companies in 98 countries worldwide are involved in some aspects of the production of small arms and ammunition; the largest exporters of small arms by volume are European Union and United States.

The migration of these sophisticated weapons in the hands of the non State actors has posed serious security challenges in the area. According to Joab-Peterside, (2016) Rivers State witnessed a bloody political battle between two frontline political parties in the state, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressive Congress (APC) over supremacy and control of the state. The crisis was bloody due to the use of sophisticated weapons, which have freely circulated in the hands of non-state actors as a result of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the region.

Consequently, the Ogoni axis of Rivers State has being crippled of socio-economic activities due to the crisis of cult supremacy and communal conflict. This could be attributed to the seeming porous security nature of the area. These crises have persisted for over the decades and the State seems not to have come up with any meaningful measure of securing a sustainable permanent solution. This development informed the need for this study with a view of critically analyzing the fundamental elements responsible for these incessant crises.

Theoretical framework

The Anomie theory as propounded by Emile Durkheim and Strain Theory of Crime by Robert Merton focused on the relationship between a person's socio economic condition and the possibility that the person would commit either crime or delinquency. Emile Durkheim introduced the concept of Anomie in his book *The Division of Labour in Society* (1893). He believed that the specialized division of labour and the rapid expansion of the industrialized society contained threats to social solidarity. He posits that the general procedural rules in the society, the rules of how people ought to behave have broken down. This state of normlessness easily leads to deviant behavior (Haralambos & Holborn, 2004). Thus, Anomie refers to the breakdown of social norms and a condition where those norms no longer control the activities of the members of the society without clear cut rules to guide them, individuals cannot find their place in the society and have difficulty adjusting to the changing conditions of life. This leads to frustration, dissatisfaction, conflict and deviant behaviours. Crime is committed in search for a stable environment. Crime to Durkheim is committed out of anger and vengeance. Robert Merton's theory of anomie is a good example of strain theory. Adopting Emile Duckheim's concept of anomie—a situation of normlessness or lawlessness and social malaise that occurs when society experiences a breakdown in the laws, social rules, and values that regulate human behavior, The anomie theory presupposes that the society insidiously tell people that they need to gain material wealth to achieve a certain type of respectable status and if they are poor or in an unfortunate socio economic position, with enough hard work they can achieve their dream. Unfortunately strain theory explains that not everyone can be lucky enough even with hard work to fulfill their dream. And so, due to not fulfilling their dream and having blocked opportunities, people will find alternatives to try to obtain their dream. This would make the unfortunate individuals develop a sort of strain; this strain in turn would make the individual engage in criminal activities.

According to the social strain theory, social values actually produce deviance in two ways; first an actor can reject social values and become deviant, and secondly an actor can accept social values but use deviant means to realize them. The theories show that the emergence of violence, crime and other deviant behaviour is greatly caused by social structural factors such as poverty, urban decay, slum settlement, pressure

from the society, relative deprivation, unemployment, overcrowding. Given the fact that this deviant attitude crime is multi caused, its impact or consequences are severe on national security. Tard was one of the earliest writers to establish a relationship between crime and environment. He believes that people learn crime through imitation or contact with criminals in their environment. He holds that unhealthy exposure to certain environments would induce criminality. While agreeing with Tard, Dahrendof (1976) who argues that poverty as a social condition plays a vital role in crime. The poor are led to crime because of their relative deprivation and acute sense of want. As a result, the social environment of the poor and jobless in Nigeria often leads them to arms struggle. This condition may lead to the proliferation of arms and deviant behaviours like arms struggle and insecurity in the society. The thrust of this theory is adequate enough to explicate the issue of arms proliferation and security which had resulted to the breakdown of societal norms and values system. Therefore, this theoretical framework is relevant to the study.

Arms proliferation and the challenge of national security

The terms, arms proliferation or spread of arms are interchangeably used to mean moving of arms, from one point to another, generally referring to moving them across international borders. According to Pearson, arms transfer is defined here as the shipment of arms or related goods and services by sales, loans or gift, from country to another. Such shipments may be by one government to another, by a government to specific individuals or forces (e.g. rebels) abroad or by manufacturers to either a foreign government or forces. Pearson (1994) categorizes the arms proliferation or global arms market into three major lines:
1. Licit arms market
2. Semi illicit or grey market
3. Illicit or black market

The licit market is the one where government or arms manufacturers ship arms to governments that are not under embargoes. While the semi illicit or grey arms market is where the government of a particular state, through an agency illegally make arms transfer to either state or forces that may be under embargos. This is part of the illicit market, but it is called the semi illicit because it always has the backing of state. It is also

called the grey market. Pearson (1994) further stated that, the black market is where the transfer is been carried out by manufacturers or dealers to states, rebels or individuals, breaching known arms regulations. The 2006 United Nation Programme of Action on Small Arm and Light Weapons conference revealed the strong opposition to the adoption of a global principle on small arms trade, ultimately for the sale of large profit that accrue from it. The Nigerian Peace Education Center identified Cuba, India, Iran, and Pakistan among the nations that spoke against an NGO proposal for governments to agree to a set of global principles on small arms trade. But many nations refused to disclose the extent of their small arms trade, and are unwilling to discuss restrictions on ammunition and national gun ownership, selling weapons to non-state actors and tracing weapons back to their original sellers. This is not a surprising result, when the global trade in small arms is worth about $4 billion a year, and at least one quarter of that is illicit (2006 United Nation Programme of Action on Small Arm and Light Weapons conference).

Many scholars attest to the fact that most nations see arms development as a means to showcase their technological superiority over others, and as a source of capital investment opportunity which has made anti-small arms proliferation efforts difficult to bring about a globally accepted and binding way of monitoring their transfer. The emphasis has been on sell-restraint, either unilaterally or through some form of multilateral agreement and the aim has been to govern the input of arms to particular states, region or to world society as a whole. The article pointed out that, the supplier-led method of arms transfer control which is based on self-restraint has not yielded much result. Because one of the major features of the traditional model is the fact that most often, there is the absence of sanction, even where sanctions exist there is the persistent failure to implement them simply because of the lack of political will. Kaith (1998) in similar view stated that the tools and assumptions of traditional arms control and disarmament focused on nuclear and major conventional arms and tailored to the needs and circumstances of cold war protagonists in North America, Russia, and Europe had little relevance in dealing with the spread of small arms and the peculiar set of internal conflict in which they are used to devastating effect. These scholars represent modern pro-third world views with emphasis on bringing about new control measures on the issue of arms proliferation, casing on small arms which poses more threat to West African States

and her developing regions of the world. Pearson in explaining the security dilemma said that there is the new trend in the arms business known as "retrofitting", whereby certain States will only buy parts of a particular weapon, use such components that can be assembled with an existing one, particularly such machines are used for dual purposes, which can easily conceal the original design of the weapon.

However, some States in the sub-region exchange natural resources for small arms, the disturbing unwholesome barter for small arm in Africa for natural resources has provided lucrative opportunities for arms dealers and merchants of war". The issue of economic and political interests of nations tends to overshadow international regulations, regime security is perceived to be higher than national security in most African States, which directly conflicts with anti-arms proliferation agreements.

There is an existing interest difference between the developed and most of the developing nations, which has probably made it difficult for the anti-arms proliferation efforts to succeed. Pearson's (1994) view on the global arms proliferation problem, centered mainly on nuclear and conventional weapons. This clearly represents the Western area of interest, which in many African states constitute less threat considering the number of people that are killed in the continents internal conflicts where SALW's are the most used. According to Kaith (1998), the instrument of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament emerged as an attempt to cope with the threat posed by nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Although these issues were not the exclusive preserve of the super powers as witnessed by the constitution of the Nuclear non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and other multilateral instruments. The process in arms control was driven by super powers concern with maintaining stability and reducing the risk, that conflicts would escalate to a global level, since the conflicts in which small arms and light weapons were used posed few such risk, they could safely be ignored.

The divided views and interests among nations on the issue of small arms and light weapons proliferation is pined around what states consider as "threat to national and international security". Kaith (1998), states that in the cold war era for example, the goal of arms control was to reduce the risk of war, to reduce its destructiveness if war break out, and to redirect the resources devoted to armaments, to other ends. The divide among states on whether there should be internationally binding regulations on SALW's or not, is based on what categories of weapons,

each state consider a shaving the capacity to constitute threat to national and international security. While to the African states, particularly the West African states, SALW's are the ones that pose threat to their internal and sub-regional security, because most of the security problems are internal. According to Elizabeth Clegg, Owen Greene and Geraldine O'Callaghan (1998) in 1998, 56 countries sponsored resolution calling for legally binding international instruments to combat illicit weapons trafficking to be developed in the form of a fire arms protocol. The above statement attest to Kaith's view, that the arms manufacturing nations, are seen as having different opinion or stand point on the issue of establishing internationally binding regulations, While the developing nations are the ones clamoring for internationally binding regulations.

The impact of arms proliferation on the Niger Delta security

Over the years, States in the Niger Delta have experienced security challenges arising from the proliferation of arms in the region. The situation has steep to a dangerous moment where militants and cult crisis has seriously impacted negatively on socio-economic and political activities thereby preventing development and peaceful living being threatened. The security of foreign citizens working in both oil multinationals and others sections in the region has become difficult to be guaranteed by the Nigerian state due to the ongoing arms violence in the region. Arising originally from the agitation of the people to have control of the natural resources in the area been controlled by the Federal Government, today arms struggle persist between rival cult groups, communities and criminals. According to Adeogun (2004), the Niger Delta crisis has arisen out of the refusal of the multinational oil companies to rechannel some of their profits to improve the lot of the communities as well as to rebuild the environment that suffers the direct consequences of the operations. The resultant effect is the restiveness among the youths, who are either jobless or under employed and are so ready to agitate on nearly daily basis for money from the oil companies. The Niger Delta crisis according to Adeogun, (2004) is caused by the economic deprivation suffered by the majority people in the area over the years, since oil exploration started in the area.

He said the people felt been neglected, because what the area has so far received, from the Federal Government is not commensurate to what

has been taken from their environment. Which have suffered degradation because of the activities of the oil multinationals. Falati was quoted by Shedrack (2004) that in the cases where a conflict has degenerated to the point of crisis, it is common that those involved will even find it difficult to remember what led to the initial disagreement. The present state of the Niger Delta crisis attests clearly to Falati's explanation of the characteristics of degenerating situation. In the Niger Delta where both foreigners working in construction companies who are directly involved in the physical development of the area, are not spared by the hostage takers, bringing to a halt many developmental projects in the region clearly point out the crisis state of the resource control agitation.

Many scholars associated violent crisis to frustration and aggression. Doughety et al, citing from the work of John Dollard a modification of Dollard-Doob's frustration aggression theory, stated that, the aggressive behavior is inhabitable, where acts of aggression is rewarded by punishment or other undesirable consequences. Explaining further on frustration aggression, they maintained that, the threat of punishment interferes with the act of aggression which gives rise to further frustration which intensifies the pressure, either direct aggression against the interference agent or for other indirect forms of aggression. Such situation could lead to displacement of aggression, which the individual may direct hostility towards someone or something not responsible for the original frustration. Using Scott and Frederics on study on animal behaviour to explain the Dollard-Doob theory, Dorbin et al., as contained in James Dougherty and Robert Pfaltzgraff work (1981) explained that there are other causes of aggression besides frustration, including dominance strivings, the sight of a stranger animal of the same species, resulted at the intrusion of stranger disputes over the possession of object, pain and the interference with comfort. The State as a strategic region due to the magnetic force of the resources in the area, attracting different people from all over the world because of the enormous natural resources has being facing unprecedented rate of crisis and this has impacted negatively on the security of the area. The monopolistic endowment of scarce natural resources in any particular environment usually attract to it people from other tribes and cultures. And where such strange elements dominate the control of such scarce resources, it is bound to cause crisis. John Dollard's explanation is based, on economic discrimination, which is probably one of the world most offensive forms of discrimination that causes crisis. Discrimination leads to fru-

stration, which leads to political agitation, which is because in the third world, political power determines the economic well-being of the people. Discrimination often creates in every human society the existence of violent crisis. Falati, in Shadrack (2004) painted a clear picture of the crisis arising from economic domination and stated that the particular ways societies are structured and organized, the social problems like political and economic exclusion, injustice, inequality etc., are sources of conflict.

In similar vein, Gurr (1993) through the minorities at risk study made it clear that most crisis turned conflicts are caused by discrimination created through economic inequality among the different ethnic groups in countries where crisis exist. Gurr (1993) maintained that the strongest demands are greater rights within societies not a desire to exit from the state. Discrimination motivates demands for greater political and economic rights. The existence of cross identity, this is where, in the same society, some particular groups can be identified as economically poor and politically weakened and the others economically better and politically Niger stronger, in such scenario, violent crisis can easily occur which could lead to insecurity. It is obvious that the western democracies have evolved from segregational politics to that of assimilation, while there is the strong existence of repressive policies of Governments in heterogeneous African states, which encourages crisis. Gurr (1993) stated further that most communal conflicts begin with acts of protest that escalate into violent conflicts. In authoritarian third world regimes, the escalation usually happens very quickly in parts because of the official response are more likely to be repressive than reformist. Gurr's approach on the occurrence of violent conflict is hinged on the economic angles which are also in line with John Dollard's view on conflict. Because it is mainly economic inequality that, primarily leads to protests which may be suppressed by the authorities but gradually the situation may degenerate into a crisis state. That most violent crisis in the world where the existing gap that tend to create classes in the society continue for a little while, when there is psychological attachment made in the positions involve in the crisis, the faster or quicker the situation will degenerate into a violent one. The transfer of the traditional rights of ownership of the lands from the natural owners to the Federal Government and the subsequent occurrence of environmental abuses suffered by the people of the Niger Delta and the isolation of their traditional economy as farmers and fishermen as they were, has created severe unemployment

and frustration coupled with the reversal of the ownership of the natural resources in the area.

According to Ojo (1999) as the economic crisis deepens and the underdogs demand equity and social justice, the linkage of the crisis in the perception and reality, to increasing long-term resource scarcity engenders more trenchant resistance by the relatively, advantage groups. Ojo's explanation is evidently observed in the militarization of the Niger Delta by the Federal Government. And the reaction and manner in which the twenty five percent increase in the federal allocation to the area, in line with the derivation principle, in the sharing formula of the nation's revenue, as agitated for by the Niger Delta delegates to the 2006 constitutional review conference. And how the issue tore apart the conference leading to the total boycott of the conference by the delegates from the area shows clearly the economically induced nature of the crisis. The agitation of the Niger Delta people is said to be directed at addressing the economic deprivation suffered by the people of the region. Ojo, pointed out that, most of the African violent crisis are intra-state in nature and are mainly over economy. In every struggle all over the world, particularly those that are ethnic based conflicts are over resources and values. When those agitating for better deal have gotten or realized the pains of deprivation and have defined their interests, automatically their positions will galvanize and produce the strength and focus on the position, with power to execute and protect such interest, the goal of their pursuit immediately create the divide line against the interest of the others.

In the view of Mac-Ogonor (2002) those decades of socio-political neglect had also produced militant youths. These youths are different; they are educated in mathematics, chemistry, economics, law, political science, medicine and the arts. With precision they can calculate revenue the ruling elites and their MNC's alias are deriving from their states, and communities. And they are making their demands viciously felt by attacking the industrial installations of the multinationals. The observable degeneration of the resource control struggle moved through different stages to this crisis level and was pursued by different groups, adopting different approaches, at any particular given time. The security quagmire on the Niger Delta is directly fratricidal in nature, manifesting in series of armed violence that has developed over time. Rising to an irreconcilable difference, between the Federal Government position and that of the people of the Niger Delta, being characterized by communal conflicts, pipeline vandalization, direct attack on oil platforms, killing of

soldiers and policemen posted to sites of oil multinationals operational areas, hostage taking, and state violence on the part of the federal government in the area, directly affected the cycle of violence experienced in the area as explained by Mac-Ogonor. Quite often, groups in the area demand reparation and compensation for increasing environmental damage caused by the different activities of oil multinationals. And the occasional demand of the stoppage of further exploration activities, which the people considered as the major source of environmental damage over the years. Worst still is the economic exclusion of the majority of the people from the benefits of the oil economy and the continuous degradation of the physical environment on which lives depend, tend to deepen the crisis situation. According to Agbu as cited by Hassan (2005) the 1969 Petroleum Act, which vested the ownership of lands and all known oil deposits, in the Nigerian state, has also been a major source of the conflict. This act vests the power to grant Oil Exploration Licenses (OEL'ᔆ) and Oil Mining Licenses (OML'ᔆ) in the office of the Minister of Petroleum Resources, a Federal Representative by claiming ownership of "all oil" under the ground and having the power to expropriate all such land. Agbu's explanation in Hassan (2005) above fits into the picture on the crisis just like other scholars. Oil as an economic product is placed in the hands or control of the federal government. Having the reserved powers to take over all lands that are endowed with natural resources points out clearly that, the sole ownership of land by the Federal Government to expropriate oil is among the major cause of the crisis experienced in the Niger Delia region. Agbu concluded that, the crisis is centered on the taking over of the rights to control the resources produce in the area, that the crisis is purely an economic struggle.

Arms proliferation and the security challenge in Ogoniland

The persistent hostility in Ogoni predates the emergence of political violence in the State's democratic culture in 1999. From medieval period local community inhabitants engaged in one form of communal crises or the other. These crises were mainly caused by land dispute or water boundaries for fishing. However, the instrument of war then was bow and arrow, matchet and sticks which were supplied by the women at the war front. These crises were predicated on the scarce available farm lands and fishing area. Such disputes were sometime settled by the

community chiefs through the traditional conflict resolution mechanism. Thus, the frequency of conflict was minimal, which encouraged local trade and intermarriage.

According to Naagbanton (2016) before the current crisis of armed groups and proliferation of dangerous Small Arms and Light Weapon (SALW), there were seemingly low levels of misuse of weapons by non-state actors, and in post-Colonial Nigeria. The emergence of arm conflict in Ogoni was an aftermath of the Ogoni/Andoni crisis in 1993. This was the cradle of the infiltration of small arms and light weapons into the area. Consequently, the activities of the political actors towards the 1999 elections resulted to the general conscientization on the use of arms by the different segment of the society. According to Naagbanton (2016) the emergence of cult groups and crises was as a result of the roles played by the political actors in Gokana. He argues that the Gberesaakoo Boys cult group was allegedly founded around late 2003 by Chief Fred Barivule Kpakol, the then Chairman of the Gokana Local Government Council in Ogoni, while the Seresibra another petty cult group allegedly founded by Magnus Abe, the then Commissioner of Information to Governor Odili's government. The groups were heavily armed with dangerous AK47s, G3s and have history of murders and violence in the Gokana area. These two cult groups emerged from the Gokana central for the purpose of political dominance. Along the Bodo axis was the emergence of Dewell and Degbam as a result of political struggle over dominance. According to McFini (2006) Deewell was initiated in Bodo by Kenneth Kobani, while Pidomson, Jr, was in charge of Deebam. During the Paramount Rulers and stakeholders meeting in Giokoo, the traditional headquarters of the Gokana kingdom, the Paramount Ruler of Nweol town, His Royal Majesty Mene Sunday Kotex, blamed politicians for the persistent crisis in the area. He maintained that the only alternative way of checking cultism is to tackle politicians in the area first. Chief Kotex was of the view that all politicians in the area should be summoned to a meeting where they would be properly addressed and warned against supporting and sponsoring cult related activities in the area (The Tide online publication Oct. 10 2014).

Consequently, some communities in Ogoni have engaged in series of conflict especially in the 21st century. These communal crises have occurred in Gokana, Khana and Tai Local Government Areas of Ogoniland. However, Gokana had witnessed mostly communal crises but of recent cult crises erupted.

Table 1. Chronology of crises in Ogoni

S/N	Year	Community
1.	1920s	Bodo/Mogho (Gokana) crisis started.
2.	1950s till date	Barako/Nweol (Gokana) crisis started and occur yearly during every farming season.
3.	1971 till date	Deeyor /Deken (Gokana) crisis started and occur yearly during every farming season.
4.	1979	Bomu/ Lewe (Gokana) crisis started.
5. 6.	1988 2001	Bomu/Lewe(Gokana) hostility resumed. Kpite (Tai) political crisis occurred.
7. 8.	2004 2005 Sept	Kaani 1 and Kaani 2 crisis started. Bodo (Gokana) Deebam/Deewell cults clash started.
9.	2006 July	Bomu/Lewe (Gokana) communal crisis started.
10. 11. 12.	2006 Sept 2007 2007	Bomu/Lewe communal hostility resumed. Kaani 1 and Kaani 2 (Khana) resumed communal hostility. Kpite /Botem (Tai) communal crisis.
13.	2007	Bodo/Mogho (Gokana) communal crisis resumed.
14.	2010	B-Dere/K-Dere (Gokana) communal crisis started.
15.	2012	B-Dere/K-Dere (Gokana) communal hostility resumed.
16.	2015 March	Bera(Gokana) cult hostility.
17.	2015 April	Bomu (Gokana) cult hostility.
18.	2015 April	Biara (Gokana) cult hostility.
19.	2015 April	Bera (Gokana) cult hostility continued.
20.	2015 April	Kpor (Gokana) cult hostility.
21.	2016 February	Yeghe (Gokana) cult crisis.
22.	2016 February	Bomu (Gokana) cult crisis.
23.	2016 Sept	Bodo (Gokana) cult hostility.
24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29.	2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017	Bomu/Lewe (Gokana) cult crisis. Baen (Khana) cult crisis. Okwali (Khana) cult crisis. Sogho (Khana) cult crisis. Boue (Khana) cult crisis. Lore (Khana) cult crisis.
30.	2017 March	Kaani 1and Kaani 2 (Khana) hostility continued.

Source: Compiled by the Authors

Bodo/Mogho communal crisis could be dated back to the 1920s. There was a resurgent in 2007 which witnessed colossal destruction of lives and properties and a fragrant display of arms. According to Ada-Dumpe (2017) the crisis was very devastating as small arms and

light weapons including dynamites were recklessly used. The crisis was instigated as a result of arms accumulated by the communities. In the same vein, the perennial crisis between the people of B-Dere and K-Dere communities equally is an emerging development in recent time. Hostilities erupted between the two neighbouring communities in 2010 and 2012. This led to the destruction and burning of houses and loss of lives. The communities' residents took refuge in neigbouring communities for safety. According to Nomkia (2017) such magnitude of destruction during the crisis was unprecedented and uncalled for as the two communities evolved from the same ancestral lineage.

The Bomu and Lewe crisis started in 1979 over the establishment and location of a secondary school in Bomu. In 1988 there was a resurgence of hostilities over land dispute between families of the same ancestral migrant from the two communities. In similar vein, resumption of hostility started again early 2017 between the two communities due to cult rivalry occasioned by illegal refining activities in the area (Naasikpo, 2017). Also the Deeyor and Deken communal crisis has remained a recalling event in the history of Ogoniland. Since the emergence of the crisis in 1971, there is no year especially during farming season that they do not engaged in hostility till date. They have engaged in litigation up to the Appeal Court, but such verdict could not resolve the issue. Over the period both communities have suffered colossal casualties in terms of lives and property.

Kpite Political Crisis: The crises in Ogoniland over the years have taken different forms. The Kpite Tai Crisis of June, 9 2001 had remained indelible and most devastating in the political history of the Tai people. The political configuration of the area has always been divided along two groups. The emergence of democracy in 1999 equally structurally followed the same pattern. In the then PDP in Tai existed two dominant groups: Hon. John Suanu Nna led "Restoration Team" loyal to Dr. Peter Odili and Chief Monday Ngbor "Agenda 99" a political platform of Chief Sergent Awuse. Both Dr. Peter Odili and Chief Sergent Awuse were governorship aspirants in Rivers State during the 1999 political era. After the elections Dr. Peter Odili emerged as the Governor of the State. This development led to the realignment within the political structure of PDP in the State for the purpose of relevance and dominance. The first local government elections by the Odili administration produced Hon. Barry Mpigi as Chairman Tai Local government from the Chief Monday Ngbor group. This generated and deepened the political division be-

tween Hon John Suanu Nna and Chief Monday Ngbor groups. The emergence of Ogoni United Front (OUF) in 2001 headed by Sir Mike Oku (then General Manager of Radio Rivers 2 FM) and Co-ordinated by Poroma, Celestine Lekia at the Tai LGA level was a new political group in Ogoniland prior to the 2003 electioneering under the auspices of Governor Odili for the purpose of mobilization within the four Ogoni Local government areas. This was seen as a threat by some Ogoni political actors who were at the corridor of State power. Similarly, Chief Monday Ngbor and his group were not comfortable and restrategized to ensure the collapse of the young and emerging political group. Cumulatively, the two groups clashed in Kpite on the 9th June 2001 during a proposed courtesy visit of the OUF to the Gbenemene of Tai King Gininwa. The arrival of members of OUF at the home of Hon. John Suanu Nna before take-off to the palace of the Gbenemene of Tai triggered the crisis. The loyalists of Chief Monday Ngbor invaded the compound of Hon. John Suanu Nna. This resulted to sporadic and spontaneous shooting, burning and destruction of houses of Hon John Suanu Nna and Chief Poroma and other members of Hon. John Suanu Nna's group. The victims took refuge in neighbouring communities and were barred from returning to the community for about two years that the crisis lasted. This crisis eventually led to the early collapse of the Ogoni United front (OUF).

Yeghe community in Gokana in recent time has not engaged in any inter community crisis but has experienced military invasion due to the activities of militancy. The seeming peace experienced was due to the influence of an Ex-militant leader Solomon Ndigbara (Osama bin ladin) who hails from the community. The ex-militant leader seems to weed a lot of influence in his community and Ogoni in general and is always woo by politicians within and outside Ogoni during elections in the area. The activities of the militant group of Osama bin Ladin later posed serious security threat within Ogoni territory and Rivers State at large due to the persistent killings and arms struggle in Ogoni allegedly traced to the group after the 2015 general elections and subsequent re-run elections in the area. In February 2016, the military engaged the militant group in an operation in Yeghe after it was alleged that the militant group was responsible for some killings in Yeghe and Ogoni in general. This led to the declaration of the Ex-militant leader wanted by the Police and the Army. Several lives were lost and Senator Magnus Abe's constituency office at Bori was burnt down. The Ogoni communities have experienced communal crisis and cult supremacy violence in recent time. In 2017,

Ogoniland experienced series of cult supremacy crisis. This crisis of supremacy is mainly to secure territorial dominance. The two major rival cult groups; Deebam and Dewell have engaged in battle of supremacy in different part of Ogoniland resulting to brutal killings and the beheading of members of rival cult group. This has affected economic and social activities of the people in the area. However they seem to enjoy the support of the political class due to their relevance during elections in the area.

The cult or militant groups in Ogoni refused to embrace the Rivers State amnesty programme and did not surrender any meaning arms during the committee's first visit to the area. It was in March 2017 that over 3000 cultists surrendered and denounced cultism due to the intervention of Rev. Fr. Abel the parish priest of St. Patrick Catholic Church Bodo. (https://www.today.ng/tag/gokana) The Hostility in Ogoniland has posed serious threat to socio-economic activities in the area which made the State government to extend the amnesty period to cultists and militants in Ogoni area in March 2017.

According to Chinda (2016), thousands of ammunition and explosives were recovered within 60 days of intense and sometimes dangerous work of disarming and enlisting thousands of cultists. Kenneth Chinda who is the chairman of the Rivers State Amnesty committee and the Special Adviser to the Governor on Amnesty noted that cult groups were found in all the local government in Rivers State. He maintained that some communities have weapons with which they prosecute communal wars and that community vigilante groups were also cult groups. He also revealed that the major reasons behind these cult groups include communal wars, chieftaincy tussle, economic hardship and sheer criminality. The battle for supremacy among these cult groups led to many killings in the near past and these cult groups were heavily armed attested to by the number of arms recovered from them". (https://www.bellanaija.com)

However, Chinda (2016) failed to attribute political influence and sponsorship to the acquisition of arms and the rise of cult crises in Rivers state. Therefore the question is: if the political actors are exonerated from the rising cases of arms acquisition and cult crises in the State then who are responsible for the armed political thugs who are involved in electoral violence during every election in Rivers State. Also, why has the state actors paid delve ear to cases of electoral violence as observed during the 2015 elections and subsequent re-run elections in River State.

According to Abuh (2015), the gubernatorial election in Rivers State was also trailed by violence with six persons killed. These acts were perpetrated by various armed militant or cult groups loyal to the political actors (Joab-Petersisde, 2016).

The proliferation of arms in the domain of non-state actors in the state has led to persistent arm conflict even in the rural settlements. Consequently, Ogoniland has become a hotbed of crises in recent time. These crises range from communal conflict to cult rivalry and militancy. Also, the magnitude of the destruction and sophistication of arm experienced during any crisis in the area has being alarming. The crisis in the area has manifested in three major dimensions vis-a-vis: cultism, communal conflict and militancy. Although, the State has not being able to resolve these prolonged arm conflict in the area, So the challenge is, how do these arms infiltrate into the area in spite of the presence of the security agencies. This is an indication of the porous nature of our borders and water ways which encourage free movement of small arms and light weapons. The incessant conflicts and communal wars in the region have provided the perfect milieu, in which illicit trade in small arms in exchange for the natural resources of the State has continue to thrive. In spite of the national and sub-regional collaborations to stop the proliferation of small arms and light weapons precise solution have not been proffered. For instance in Nigeria, apart from being a party to the ECOWAS moratorium on SALW, member Gulf of Guinea Energy Security Strategy (GGESS), there also exist the National Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons (NCSALW), an institution charged with the responsibility of controlling the trade in small arm and light weapons yet it is without much achievement. Rivers State and Ogoni in particular has experienced so much fratricidal conflicts over time. It is most likely, that such guns recycle into new conflicts and contribute in the escalation, leaving a trail of death and destruction behind. This has made most scholars relate violent crisis in Rivers State to the availability of small arms which has circulated to the nooks and crannies of the State. Therefore, it is futile becoming a party to international and regional treaty on the control of arms proliferation without strengthening national capacity of the instruments against proliferation of illicit arms particularly Small Arms and light weapons in the nation. On several occasions, unsuspecting members of the public traveling on the rivers and creeks in the area have become victims of attack and robbed by sea pirates, armed with sophisticated small arms and light weapons. This has generally

made traveling on the rivers very unsafe with a significant impact on the economy of the area. The arms available to non-state actors in many locations in Ogoniland have created security challenges to socio-economic and political development in the areas.

Conclusion

The strategy of the Nigerian State over the period towards regulating the inflow of arms has not yielded the desire result. However, this pe-rennial quagmire had affected the socio-economic and political deve-lopment of our society. The failure of the various policies and institutio-nal framework geared towards addressing insecurity in Ogoniland seems not to make any reasonable impact due to the continuous inflow of small arms and light weapons into the region perpetrated by the poli-tical gladiators over territorial dominance. The study therefore conclu-des that there is a correlation between arms proliferation and the porous nature of the nation's borders. Similarly, the failure of anti-proliferation framework by the international organization is equally sabotaged by the developed economies whose economic and political interest is dependent on the licit and illicit trade. That as long as the flow of arms persist and unchecked, the region will continue to experience violence and insecurity.

It is therefore, imperative for the Nigerian States to strengthen the capacity of the security agencies in preventing arms proliferation and also ensuring that the National Committee on small arms and light wea-pons operate independently and formally creating the body through act of parliament. The State should initiate a functional strategy of control-ling the trade in small arms and light weapons and the problem of unemployment and underdevelopment of the area should be addressed. Equally security at the borders and around Ogoniland should be strengthened to check the inflow of arms and incessant communal and cult crisis.

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Women empowerment and domestic violence in selected Nigerian video films

ABSTRACT. The concept of women empowerment in the society is as vital as the empowerment of their male counterparts. Studies have shown that when people are empowered, they become strong, independent and less vulnerable or susceptible to anybody or group of persons. This study in the film medium is extremely crucial, since it will help in redirecting the minds of the society against domestic violence against the women. This is because it aids the development of the society positively. This study applies textual analysis as a methodological tool to examine how the feminine gender is represented in the popular Nigerian film industry called Nollywood. Among the video-films analyzed are: Michael Jaja's *Thanks for Coming* and *Gallant Babes*. The study applied the purposive sampling technique to arrive at these video-films and observes that the female folks are empowered; there will be less domestic violence, since empowerment brings about freedom, realization, and power to resist and confront enemies. It discovers that domestic violence can be physical, economic, psychological, emotional, etc., thereby having serious negative consequences on the women. Some of the representations on women here revolve around some demeaning attitudes towards the women folks, subjecting them to perpetual ridicule; such as being domestic servants, mischievous prostitutes or others that at best paint a negative picture of the Nigerian woman in the society. Except women are empowered, they will continually experience domestic violence, regular abuses, etc. This research did not deny that instances abound where women are also invested with super-human virtues as in some woman-warrior films, the concern here however to advocate for women empowerment in Nollywood which lead to the eradication of domestic violence. Hence, it argues, that rather than continue to perpetuate old fashioned inhumanity on the women, filmmakers and producers should flow with the tide of presenting women in better light that express their resourcefulness to the society.

KEYWORDS: film, empowerment, violence, domestic violence

Introduction

The media has played many pivotal roles in addressing diverse social issues, including those issues that affect the female folks. These issues can be constructed from different angles, such as being ideological or

conventional, yet, they touch their affairs completely. Such can be affirmative of what obtains in the society, or demeaning as to give impression of alternative or weak viewpoints regarding these issues. These issues have placed a greater percentage of the society at a busy angle, without rest and always pointing them out to reconstruct the society, especially the feminists who are believed to so often engage in the fight for women's rights at all fronts including the media. The main thrust of this research is to approach female empowerment and as such, address the elements of domestic violence against women in Nollywood from a critical perspective using the frameworks of the feminist theory. This is so desired because of now well-established link between film and feminism. Nollywood as the most popular entertainment industry in Africa can no longer be brushed aside as inconsequential. It is actually the most popular form of entertainment that helps not only to shape people's consciousness about realities in the society but also frames the identity of citizens as direct products of the society. Hence if some distortions emerging from the staple of the societies are not critically addressed, it will amount to perpetuating such evils that might persuade audiences to accept falsehoods in place of truths. This is the reason why studies like this seek to unmask the suppressed negative effects of women in the Nigerian film industry while seeking to chart a pathway, after the feminist school of thought, to facilitate a more acceptable perspective of reality in the Nigerian cultural landscape.

In fact, what is the fate of the women in a country where its president proudly and unequivocally states that the women belong to "the kitchen, the living room and the other room" alone? The family is often equated with the sanctuary, a place where individuals seek love, complete provision, safety, security, and shelter. However, this false idea is slowly fading on daily basis. Evidence shows that it is also a place that breeds some of the most drastic forms of violence perpetrated against women, considering that they have long been termed as weaker vessels. Domestic violence and abuse against the women have drawn wider coverage and have continued to be a global epidemic that tortures, maims, and even in most cases kills-physically, psychologically, sexually, and economically the women. It is one of the most pervasive of human rights violence, denying women equality, security, dignity, self-worth, and the right to enjoy fundamental freedom. Although violence against women is ubiquitous, cutting across boundaries of culture, class, education, income, ethnicity, and age, domestic violence is the

most prevalent, yet relatively hidden and ignored form of violence against women.

Violence in the domestic sphere is usually perpetrated by males who are, or who have been in positions of trust, intimacy, power—husbands, boyfriends, fathers, father-in-law, step fathers, brothers, uncles, sons, or other relatives. The term 'domestic violence' as used here includes, violence against women by an intimate partner, including a cohabiting partner, and by other family members, whether this violence occurs within or beyond the confines of the home (Mehrkhan). Violence against women is often a cycle of abuse that manifests itself in many forms throughout their lives. Even at a very beginning of her life, a girl may be the target of sex, selective abortion, or female infanticide, especially in cultures where son preferences are prevalent. During childhood, violence against girls may include; enforced malnutrition, lack of access to medical care and attention, lack of access to education, incest, female genital mutilation, early marriages and forced prostitution, or bounded labor. Some go on to suffer throughout their adult lives and old age-battered, bruised and even murdered at the hands of an intimate partner, as well as being inherited by her in-laws. (W.H.O.). Domestic violence can take any of the following forms, physical aggression or assault (hitting, kicking, biting, shoving, restraining, slapping, throwing objects, (battery) or threats thereof; sexual abuse, controlling of domineering, intimidation, stalking passive/covert abuse (e.g. Neglect) and economic deprivation. It can also mean endangerment, criminal coercion, kidnapping, unlawful imprisonment, trespassing and harassment.

Most women who leave home as a result of incessant assault often return. This is because, apart from the stress and suffering arising from the violence itself, many women had also experienced stress and problems in seeking help. Majority who turned to relatives and friends for support and temporary accommodation have been turned down due to the fact that these relations and friends do not want to be involved in the couple's domestic problem, even though it is slowly killing the woman. (Borkowski, Murch & Walker, 1983). Many women who are battered loath the battering but find it difficult to leave a terrifying situation. Shame is an important fact according to Owen (1975), the battered wife feels ashamed to let other people know about her situation as she might be regarded as a woman who cannot manage her home properly. One young woman who married at the age of seventeen against her parent's desire did not tell them of her abuse because "she made her bed and had

to lie on it" (Owen, 1975). This goes to show that some women feel that they are somehow responsible for or deserves the beating and maltreatment they get for one reason or the other. Others even feel that there is something wrong with them.

Due to the patriarchy system that pervades the society, women are seldom guaranteed a place in their family of orientation. Even though most societies proscribe violence against women, the reality is that violations against women's rights are often sanctioned under the garb of cultural practices and norms, although misinterpretation of religious tenets abound. When the violation of women's right takes place within the home, as is often the case, the abuse is effectively condoned by the tacit silence and the passivity displayed by the state and law enforcing machinery. Violence or at least the fear of violence has become a part of every woman's life. Each woman knows someone who has been a victim of violence or in herself been involved in one. Domestic violence against women deprive them of their right to participate in societal life as a whole and holds them prisoners under the "special" conditions set by the immediate social setting such as family, kinship, social norms and values shared by the majority. The major impact domestic violence has on women is therefore hindering their full inclusion and participation in societal life.

Literature abounds on the seriousness of this hydra-headed enigma. Even at that, debate regarding the magnitude of the problem is clouded by the fact that domestic violence is a crime that is under-reported and under-recorded. When women file a report or seek treatment, they may have to contend with police or health care officials who have not been trained to respond adequately or to keep consistent records. On the other hand, shame, fear of reprisal, lack of information about legal rights, lack of confidence in, or fear of the legal system and the legal costs involved reluctant to report incidence of violence. Most of the cases reported are mainly done informally, to relatives and friends who do not have formal documentation of the incidence. Therefore, this work is put together to elaborate on this issue of domestic violence against women, highlighting the causes of domestic violence and abuse against women, its effect, and to proffer a possible solution in curbing the menace.

Empowerment on the other hand, is a word that has been often used to communicate different thoughts and so widely that its definition has almost become distorted and imprecise. Almost all the activist groups often times use the word to bring together diverse issues, while acade-

mic circles frequently cite the word in scholarly articles. It has been generally agreed that empowerment is mostly considered as a viable means of boosting and amplifying the efficacy and successes of an organization, as well as to perk up the quality of work life for employees. In a related development, Mathis and Jackson in 1991 are of the view that there are three kinds of individual performance criteria that organizations need to cultivate in order to flourish, these criteria are: productivity, innovation and loyalty. The aforementioned can only derive their successes through an effectual enforcement of the empowerment principles. Bernstein on the other hand, in the year 1992 volunteers that companies in which employee empowerment has actually been put into force frequently found that such an approach improves keys aspects like morale, productivity and quality. An increase in understanding and commitment however to business objectives throughout the organization was equally noticed. Moreover the empowerment of employees in service organizations has been shown to produce positive outcomes in the form of increased job satisfaction, self-efficacy, better customer service, more rapid decision making, and personal development.

In the scholastic discourses, the word empowerment visited the scene with regards to civil rights. In the same vein, Conyers upholds that the earliest write ups arising from it, first emerged in 1975 with this title "Toward Black Political Empowerment—Can the System Be Transformed." (p. 2). This title however ignited numerous articles discussing empowering the black community, but it also sparked up the use of the word in other circles. 1978 saw the social work community utilized the word in an article which surfaced as "From Service to Advocacy to Empowerment." (p. 3). O'Connell submits that other groups from political bodies to health organizations, family, work place, etc, latched on to the word citing it in articles such as "Grassroots Empowerment and Government Response" in Social Policy (p. 4) and "Counseling for Health Empowerment." (p. 5).

The term however took off with literature discussing empowerment of marginalized people, such as women and the poor, and especially in respect to community development. In 1983, Moglen volunteered that the Women's Studies International Forum discussed empowerment of women in "Power and Empowerment." (p. 6). From then until now, the literature has increasingly been focused on these issues. In 2010, Wallis observed that articles were published entitled "Power and empowerment: Fostering effective collaboration in meeting the needs of orphans

and vulnerable children" and "Women empowerment through the SHG approach", that demonstrate just a few ways how empowerment is being discussed in the academic community. Staples supplies that empowerment is a process, where power can be developed, facilitated or secured with the purpose of enabling challenged individuals or groups to: increase their resources, improve their self-esteem, buildup the ability to act on their own psychological, socio-cultural, political and economic situation (p. 3). For a social worker, empowerment as a method will increase focus on the individual, its self-worth, and ability to act.

On the other hand, the mystique of the family as a private, peaceful cradle of safety and emotional support has influenced the lack of attention given to the violence that does occur, especially to women. And in many societies, paddling a wife for misbehaviour by the husband has become the norm. Violence against women in such societies is thus, condoned and has become institutionalized by it. Battering is viewed as a private family affair, and beating one's wife is considered to be a marital prerogative. A battered woman finds it difficult to take action against her husband. She often finds herself in a financial blind. Living with a violent husband is thus seen as better than trying to make it alone. As a result of abuse, the victims may experience physical disabilities, chronic health problems, mental illness, limited finances, and poor ability to create healthy relationships, post-traumatic stress disorder, and even death.

In recent years, concern for the battered women has mushroomed so that legislation and services have grown to deal with the issue. An international consensus has also been developed but progress has been slow because attitudes are deeply entrenched and, to some extent, because effective strategies to address violence against women are still being defined. There is little or no awareness on the part of the female folks, that women have a right to state protection even within the confines of their family home. Law enforcement and judicial system condone or do not recognize domestic violence as a crime; instead it is tagged "family matter" which should be settled in the home. The bane of this study therefore is—that the appalling toll on this issue will not be eased until families, government, institutions, civic society and organizations address the issue directly. It was Hirsch (1981), who volunteered that "victims of violence are; but perhaps continuing to publicly acclaim our indignation will help to ameliorate the injustice perpetrated against one half of the human race—women".

Indeed, looking at the society from the fast growing Nollywood industry attests to the fact that the issue of women empowerment in filmmaking projects is huge task with implicating actions around cultural semiotics, identity construction and image aesthetics. Generally speaking, the Nigeria film industry since its emergence in 1992 has been a tool for propaganda, a religious channel for the spreading the gospel, a medium for promoting mass culture and above all a tool for heralding individual and collective ideas on some important issues of the society. But even at this, it is arguable to say most films produced in Nollywood are rather antifeminist, relegating the woman to the background through subject matters, characterization, costuming and display of other performance elements.

The feminist theory and its ideological mindset will be applied in this cross-examination. This is because it is one theory that is strategically known to fight the cause of women in scholarship and praxis. Hence, the history of the feminist schools of thought will be presented to review its position on female characterization. Suffice to say therefore that one of the aims of feminism in its numerous approaches is "to combat patriarchal foundations… and to state the importance of all women's voices being brought to the forefront." (Trier-Bieniek, 2005, p. xxiii). This is the kind of challenge this study brings to Nollywood by looking at its women's domestication. In order to pursue the thrust of this research, it is appropriate to address the problem it confronts as well as marshal out the key research questions that guide its analysis of the selected films, namely *Thanks for Coming* and *Gallant Babes*, from the stable of Nollywood.

The relationship between film and society is that while films build upon cultural indices to fashion its storylines, most people also learn from film to form opinions on some socio-political realities in the society. This is not an effort to valorize the media effects theory of film but to state that given the nature of film appreciation in Nigeria, some people tend to believe that film at most instances has some educational values. It can teach and guide impression on realities. Thus, what this means therefore is that films can be misleading as well be educative, depending on its ideology and thematic message. In the context of this research, one is of the view that the messages about women in Nollywood can be misleading in the kind of treatment of certain issues about female empowerment does not take the centre stage. Thus, the argument here is that when erroneous viewpoints are allowed to flourish, the viewers'

consciousness is made to perceive and judge women on the indices of what they see which is a huge problem that ought to be addressed through both scholarship and practice; hence, a research like this is been undertaken.

History and nature of domestic violence

Domestic violence also known as domestic abuse, spousal abuse, intimate partner violence, battery or family violence is a pattern of behavior which involves violence or other abuse by one person in a domestic context against another such as n marriage or cohabitation. Intimate partner violence is violence by a spouse or partner in an intimate relationship against the other. Domestic violence can take place in heterosexual or same-sex relationships. Domestic violence can take a number of forms including physical, emotional, verbal, economic and sexual abuse, which can range from subtle, coercive forms to marital rape and to violent physical abuse that result in disfigurement or death.

Globally, a wife or female partner is more commonly the victim of domestic violence, though the victim can also be the male partner, or both partners may engage in abusive or violent behavior, or the victim may act in self-defense or retaliation. Whereas women in developed world who experience domestic violence are openly encouraged to report it to the authorities, it has been argued that domestic violence against men is most often unreported because of social stigma regarding their perceived lack of machismo and other denigrations of their masculinity.

Domestic violence often occurs because the abuser believes that abuse is justified and acceptable and may produce intergenerational cycle of abuse that condones violence. Awareness, perception, definition and documentation of domestic violence differ widely from country to country. There may be a cycle of abuse during which tension rise and an act of violence is committed, followed by a period of reconciliation and calm. Victims of domestic violence may be trapped in domestic violent situations through isolation, power and control, insufficient financial resources, and poor ability to create healthy relations. Victims may experience post-traumatic stress disorder, children who live in a household of violence show deregulated aggression from an early age and stage that may later contribute to continuing the legacy of abuse when

they reach adulthood. Fear, shame or desire to protect the children can also be one of the causes of domestic violence. As a result of abuse, victims may experience physical disabilities, chronic health problems, mental illness, limited finances, and poor ability to create healthy relationships.

The term intimate partner violence (IPV is often used synonymously with domestic violence or abuse, but it usually refers to abuse occurring within a couple relationship (marriage, cohabitation, though they do not have to live together for it to be considered domestic abuse. The world Health Organization defined intimate partner violence as: "any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to those in the relationship". To these forms of abuse, W.H.O adds controlling behaviours as a form of abuse.

Traditionally, domestic violence (DV) was mostly associated with physical activity i.e. violence. For instance, according to the *Merriam-Webster dictionary* definition, domestic violence is: "the infecting of physical injury by one family or household member on another". Traditionally, domestic violence (DV) was mostly associated with physical activity i.e. violence. For example, according to the *Merriam-Webster dictionary* definition, domestic violence is "The infecting of physical injury by one family or house hold member on another", also a repeated/ habitual pattern of such behavior, domestic violence is now more broadly defined often but not always including all acts of physical, sexual psychological or economic violence that maybe committed by a person who is a family member or a person who has been an intimate partner or spouse, irrespective of whether they live together.

In 1993, the United Nations declaration on the elimination of violence against women identified domestic violence as one of the three contexts in which violence against women occurs, describing it as:

> Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other conditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation (p. 9).

Abuse can take the following forms. Physical abuse involves contact intended to cause pain, injury, or other physical suffering or body harm. It includes hitting, slapping, punching and choking etc. but in sexual abuse,

percentages of women who say they have been subjected to sexual assault or attempted sexual assault by an intimate partner has greatly increased. Sexual abuse by WHO is defined as "any sexual act, attempting to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim". It also includes obligatory inspections for virginity and female genital mutilation. The WHO includes the customary forms of sexual violence, such as forced marriage or cohabitation and wife inheritance within its definition of sexual violence as well as forced pregnancy.

Abuse can be verbal, economic, etc. Verbal abuse is a form of emotionally abusive behavior involving the use of the language, which can involve threat, name calling, blaming, ridicule, disrespect and criticism. This is a form of abuse when one partner (intimate) has control over the other partner's access to economic resource. Economic abuse involves preventing a spouse from resource acquisition, limiting the amount of resource to be used by the victim, or by exploiting economic resource of the victim.

The motive behind preventing a spouse from acquiring resources is to diminish victim's capacity to support him/her; thus, forcing him or her to depend on the perpetrators financially, which include preventing the victim from obtaining education finding employment, maintaining or advancing their careers, and acquiring assets.

Physical effects of domestic violence on children

Children who are victims of domestic violence suffer the following: Malnutrition, infection, bruises, head injuries, broken bones, and starvation. Mothers on the other, abuse can affect them in form of chronic miscarriage, arthritis, pelvic pain, internal bleeding, head injuries etc. Sometimes, children who witness their mothers been abused, most often become aggressive, nervous, withdraw from people, feel suppressed, have emotional insecurity, may have mental health disorder, etc., considering the psychological effect domestic abuse on their parents. Domestic violence especially against the women has multiple negative consequences, such as, excessive stress, fear, anxiety, depression, even suicidal tendencies on the woman, long term anxiety and panic, post-traumatic stress disorder (e.g. flash backs, intrusive images, exaggerated

stifle response, night mares, avoidance of triggers that are associated with the abuse).

The basic intent of this research is to examine why society hardly empowers the female folks completely, especially from the positive angles in Nollywood films. Exploring how women are subjugated in Nollywood by means of textual analysis of some selected video-films after review of literatures dealing on film and feminism. It will review how these ideologies are influenced by the political, traditional, social conditions of the Nigerian society and how the feminist theory is implicated in them.

As a qualitative research, this study depends a lot on questions to guide its critical analysis. This is the reason why whatever is explored here is anchored on a set of questions to the subject matter of female empowerment in the Nollywood film industry. Among the questions that guide this study therefore are the following:

1. How does Nollywood handle female empowerment and domestic violence?
2. How does socio-cultural context influence these in Nollywood and for what reasons?

From a few researches encountered in the course of this study, a lot appear to have been said on the thematic thrust, technical qualities of the Nigeria film industry with less attention or no deliberate attention paid on positively empowering the female folks, in order to escape from domestic violence. The need to address the feminist course through a critical review of female empowerment makes this study important. The study is also very significant especially in this post-modern era where gender studies have occupied center stage in scholarly discourse. The study is also necessary for the African women as women have become more prominent in the political, educational and economical spheres of the society.

This study of female empowerment and domestic violence in Nigerian Film industry is very broad and complex as there are thousands of films with female characters going through it. However, this work concentrates on a few of these issues in Nollywood using the following as cases in point: *Thanks for Coming and Gallant Babes*. It will explore this from a feminist ideological point of view in order to underscore the place of women in Nollywood representations presently.

Feminism means different things to different people. This is the reason why there are many histories and movements of feminism. The

underlying differences between Western feminist tendencies and that of Africa is also been saliently delineated in many literatures of the world. Yet, in all of these, there is an agreement that the subject matter of discourse is women's equal rights with their men counterparts as can be testified in the works of feminist film theorists such as: *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* (Mulvey, 1975), *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Mulvey, 1989), *The Subject of Semiotics* (Kaja, 1983), *The Acoustic Mirror* (De Lauretis, 1988), *Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film and Fiction* (De Lauretis, 1987), *Media Matrix: Sexing the New Reality* (Creed, 2003), *The Desire to Desire: The Woman's Film of the 1940s* (Doane, 1987), *Black Looks: Race, Representation* (Hooks, 1992), *Feminism and Film* (Kaplan, 2000), *Feminist Theory and Pop Culture*, (Trier-Bieniek, 2015), etc. This is why feminism is variedly discussed not only in play texts but in film studies where the narrative representations of women are subjected to critical examination to underscore the role and rights allotted to women. Trier-Bienieck defines feminism as "a movement focused on the political and economic quality of the sexes" (2015, p. xiv). Significantly the term feminism is a coinage of the word 'finisme' in 1837 by an utopian socialist, Charles, who argued for "the extension of woman's rights in all social processes as early as the 1808s" (1). It is a movement that dates from the enlightenment era down to the present age. One of its primary texts first is Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) which paved way for the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, convened by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and others that called for full legal equality of rights with men, including full educational opportunity and equal compensation.

Historically speaking, feminism faced particularly stiff resistance in the United Kingdom and the United States, where women gained the right to vote in 1918 and 1920, respectively. By mid-century a second wave of feminism emerged to address the limited nature of women's participation in the workplace and prevailing notions that tended to confine women to the home. Thus, there are several misconceptions on the meaning and application of feminism across the world. Some have seen it as a channel of feminine disobedience to social norms and culture. Some women have seen it as a medium to promote mediocrity and promotion of social vices such as lesbianism and men battering. Lending her voice to the misconception of the meaning of the movement is Ogudipe-Leslie (2009) who itemizes the misconception and application of the term feminism. According to her,

> Feminism is not a cry for any one kind of sexual orientation (…) is not the reversal of roles (…). Is not penis envy or gender envy: wanting to be a man as they like to say to us (…) is not necessarily oppositional to men (…) not dividing the genders (…) it is not patriotism of western women rhetoric (…) it is not opposed to African culture and heritage (…) it is not a choice between extreme patriarchy on the one hand or hateful separatism from men on the other (Ogundipe-Leslie, 2009, p. 545–547).

What this means is that for Ogundipe-Leslie, feminism is "an ideology of women: any social philosophy about women" (p. 547). This definition appears broad and may mislead or reduce attention of scholars in identifying with the movement. Lamenting on the origin of female suppression, feminist criticism attribute it to both the biblical and Theological doctrine. According to Charles (1998, p. 25),

> Theologians, Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine declared that women are really imperfect men. These imperfect men and spiritually weak creatures, they maintained possess a sensual nature that lures men away from spiritual truth, thereby preventing men to achieving their spiritual potential.

This position has not only encouraged society to see the woman as an inferior personality but a curse to humanity and spiritual growth. Leading scholars have also not help matters as their critical comments on society have painted the woman to be a property to be used and can never be useful on its own. Writers have painted the man to be a superior and a model for the woman. One of such writers is Aristotle whose creative writings on the woman give a wrong picture that reduces the virtue of women. Charles also informs that: "Aristotle, one of the leading philosophers and teachers asserted that the male is by nature the superior, and the female inferior; and the one rules and the other is ruled…" Similarly, Jane Tompkins in *Me and My Shadows* laments thus:

> What enrages me is the way women are used as extension of men, mirrors of men, devices for showing men off, devices for helping men get what they want. They are never there on their own, or rarely. The world of western contains no woman. Sometimes I think the world contains no woman (cited in Charles, 1998, p. 178).

To be free from this inferior and docile state as painted by men and accepted by most women, Bressler advise that; Women must define themselves and assert their voice in the arena of politics, society, education and the arts. By personally committing themselves to fostering such

change, feminist hope to create a society where the male and female voice are equally valued. He clearly posits that:

> They must also reject the notion that marriage is a woman ultimate goal, one that can assure her of financial security. And they must reject that women are mindless weepy, passive, helpless creatures who must wait for a man to come and make their life meaningful (Bressler, 1998, p. 180).

Feminism is an ideology or theory, backed up by social movement that women should be equal politically, economically, and socially. Sometimes, this definition is also referred to as "core feminism" or "core feminist theory". Though this theory does not subscribe to differences or similarities between men and women, nor does it refer to excluding men or only furthering women's causes. A feminist however, is one who believes that men and women should be equal politically, socially and economically. Feminism means different things to different people depending on race, culture and historical experience. In Nigeria for example, many people understand feminism to simply mean women's struggle to gain equality with men, or to obtain access to positions of power. Feminism is more than that. It is first and foremost a collective term for systems of belief and theories that pay special attention to women's right and women's position in culture and society. On personal level, it is a state of mind, a way of thinking, and an alternative perspective for which to understand the world. It means a woman becoming aware of a distortion in her social status as a woman. Seeking to correct this distortion, the woman moves in a new direction in search of autonomy, self-assertion and empowerment. (Okoh, p. 7) According to Barbara Berg:

> It is freedom (for a woman) to decide her own destiny: freedom from sex determined role; freedom from society's oppressive restrictions; freedom to express her thoughts fully and to convert them freely into action. Feminism demands the acceptance of woman's right to individual conscience and judgment. It postulates that women's essential worth stems from their common humanity and does not depend on the relationships of her life (p. 24).

However, African feminists do recognize the fact that Africa has produced great women, women that have done great things for their communities. But they emphasize that those women with recognized laudable achievements are just too few compared to the huge population of women in, for example, Nigeria. So, those women achievers may have been

the few exceptional women referred to by Toril Moi in *Sexual/ Textual Politics* when she states:

> Throughout history a few exceptional women have indeed managed to re-sist the full pressure of patriarchal ideology, becoming conscious of their own oppression and voicing their opposition to male power (p. 26).

Moreover, the fact that these few women succeeded in distinguishing themselves does not preclude the fact that gender discrimination existed and still exists in Africa, including Nigeria. For example in Nigeria, wo-men seemed to have had more rights and power in traditional Yoruba society than they had in Igbo society. Moreover, women in Yoruba land can inherit land and properties from their families but this is contrary to what is obtainable in most other parts of the country. In Hausa/Fulani culture, men's ideal of a woman has been and continues to be as it was in ancient Greeks and Roman societies. The woman is expected to be doci-le, faithful, and subservient wife, whereas the man is rarely faithful. An-derson & Zinsser explain that in the spirit of revolution and bringing all these to an end, De Gouges summoned all women to overturn unjust traditions.

> Woman, wake up, the tocsin of reason is being heard throughout the whole universe, discover your rights. The powerful empire of nature is no longer surrounded by prejudice, fanaticism, superstition, and lies. The flame of truth has dispersed all the folly and usurpation (p. 351).

Given different understanding of feminism, many interpretations have been adduced regarding the social mindset of feminism as a philo-sophy, movement, theory and above all as an ideology. Some of these positions are what this section discusses in order to pave way for under-standing the concept globally and later on, in the context of Africa where the notion of 'womanism' is highly underscored.

Liberal feminism is characterized by an individualistic emphasis on equality. For this group society itself does not need a major renovation, but rather laws need to be changed and opportunities have to be opened up to allow women to become equals in society. To a liberal feminist, evidence of progress is seen largely by the numbers of women in posi-tions previously occupied by men, especially powerful positions.

Socialist feminism also known as Marxist feminism is different from liberal feminism in that it emphasizes that true equality will *not* be achieved without major overhauls within society—particularly econo-

mic overhauls. Socialist feminists argue that there are fundamental inequalities built in to a capitalist society because power and capital are distributed unevenly. Thus, it's not enough for women to individually work to rise to powerful positions in society; rather, power needs to be redistributed throughout society. Liberal feminists focus on individual empowerment, while socialist feminists focus on collective change and empowerment.

Radical feminism is similar to socialist feminism in that it emphasizes the need for dramatic social change in order to achieve genuine equality for women (and sometimes these two philosophies are grouped together). Radical feminists believe that society is extremely patriarchal, and until patriarchy is transformed on all levels, the system will remain unjust. A minority of radical feminists are *separatist feminists*, who believe that men and women need to maintain separate institutions and relationships.

Third Wave feminism is popular among younger women, many of whom are children of feminists from the 1970s (who are referred to as Second Wave Feminists). Similar to liberal feminism, Third Wave feminism is very individualistic. Although, it does not reject political activism, Third Wave feminism is focused more on personal empowerment as a starting place for social change. Third Wave feminism celebrates the construction of individual identities in a complex, postmodern world, and invites women to define themselves as they wish from the smorgasbord of possibilities.

Eco-feminism draws from and links together both the women's movement and the environmental movement. Eco-feminism draws parallels between the domination and exploitation of both women and nature. However, Nigerian feminist critics have in one way or the other identified with each of the feminist movement consciously and unconsciously. Among these critics especially in Africa includes, Ama Ata Aidoo, Nawal El Saadawi, Flora Nwapa, Lauretta Ngcobo, Buchi Emecheta, Carole Boyce Davies, Obioma Nnaemeka, Uzo Esonwanne, Zulu Sofolá, Tess Onueme, Irene Salami, Julie Okoh, Barclays Ayakoroma, and Tracy Utoh amongst others.

If feminism is understood as the fight for the rights and self-affirmation of women, then the practice itself preceded the nomenclature in Nigeria (Chukwuma, 1998, p. 150). Though "all over Africa, women often are seen but not heard" (Tasie, 2013, p. 279), Chukwuma believes that the "Nigerian women in this century have variously fought for their

rights in a show of power and resilience". As Shaka and Uchendu would argue, feminism has millennial roots going back to the mythical figures like Liliath, to the legendary fighting Amazons of Greece and down to ancient *Dahomey*, and to the classical plays like Aristophanes'*Lysistrata* (Shaka & Uchendu, 2012, p. 1). In other words, it is not a new thing in Africa and cannot be said to have started only Western authors said it began. Barry, (as cited in Shaka & Uchendu) observes that the Women's Movement of the 1960s was not the beginning of feminism, though the feminist critical theory of today might be a product of the 1960s women's movement that swept through Europe and America before finally getting to Africa. And that what this simply implies is that the struggle for gender equality is a long standing struggle which women are not prepaid to give up.

The African woman's quest for identity takes a centre stage in the creative vision of many contemporary Africa writers, both male and female (Iboroma, 2012, p. 173). In Nigeria, feminism started as an activism with a political orientation when in 1927, the colonialists established taxation in southern Nigeria. Chukwuma (1998) informs that the men so taxed accepted it in the light of the supremacist tendencies already manifested by the colonialists to which they had no resistance. But even with male taxation, the women shared part of the economic burden especially during the periods of scarcity. Nina Mba (1992, p. 78) in Chukwuma (p. 150) remarks that "many women were having to pay for their sons and male relations". The burden was big enough; however, with the news of women taxation in 1929, the women reacted in an unprecedented solidarity and sisterhood across linguistic boundaries. Of course, the reaction was spontaneous and women from Aba, Abak and Opobo moved in protest against the White Administration on two counts; women taxation and abolition of warrant chiefs. Fifty-five women paid the ultimate price for this, but the women got their demands (Chukwuma, p. 150). Twenty years later in 1949, the Abeokuta Women's Union led by Chief (Mrs.) Ransome-Kuti (1900–1978) successfully carried out a three-year campaign for the abolition of the female flat rate tax, the removal of Ademola as Alake, the abolition of the S.N.A. (Sole Native Authority) system and the representation and participation of women in the reformed system of administration (Mba, 1992, p. 141).

Nnaemeka (1993, p. 7) argues that unlike in the West, where men are seen by feminists as enemies and call for the separation of the sexes, African feminism is family-centred, does not see men only as the enemy

but society and some unaware women. Men are accommodated in African feminism but not as overbearing lords and slave masters. Its strength is on sisterhood, and its objective is empowering women and complementarily of sexes. And that African feminist resists the exclusion of men from women issues. According to Nnaemeka,

> African feminists also resist universalization of western notion of sexual harassment because ours is a culture that permits human contact and touch. Therefore, what constitutes sexual harassment in an office in Washington DC, may not be regarded as such in a farm in an African village (Shaka, 2014, p. 44).

Unfortunately, after the first and second generations of these African crusaders, with all the international and national buffers, Nigerian women are rallying rather slowly. Some feminist writers even distance themselves from the movement. As Chukwuma puts it:

> Still on attitude, so much is public critical onslaught on feminism that feminist writers deny any identification with feminism. Flora Nwapa, Buchi Emecheta and their Ghanaian counterpart, Ama Ata Aidoo, say they are not feminists. Nwapa preferred the term "womanist" as her reference (Chukwuma, 1998, p. 158).

Nnolim (1998) submits that "women are not their own best friends". According to him the creation of unhappy women in Nigeria literature has not been a sin committed by male authors alone. Women authors equally are guilty of the same offence as they equally depict women in bad light. As Nnolim discloses "if Elechi Amadi shackles Ihuoma (*The Concubine*) with the myth of the sea king who prevents her from achieving conjugal felicity, Flora Nwapa equally yokes Efuru with the myth of Uhamiri which denies her the joys of motherhood" (Nnolim, 1998, p. 167). Indeed, women subjugation is a crime committed by both sexes in our society.

According to Giannetti, feminist critic, Annette Kuhn has pointed out that within the movies themselves, women were usually socially constructed as "the other" or "the outsider" in a male-dominated world. Women did not get to tell their own stories because the images were controlled by men. Their main function is to support their men to live befitting of a humble wife. He observes that,

> They believe mainly in marriage as one of the highways to self-realization and self-fulfillment. Even though most of them view the institution of mar-

riage as a prison house, they are so child-hungry that they submit to all kinds of inconvenient arrangements with men in order to have children as another avenue to self-fulfillment and the "love-trap" keeps enmeshing African women, with their eyes wide open, into all kinds of relationship with those the feminists among them call their enemy—men (Nnolim, 1998, p. 165).

Nnolim concludes that African women are the architects of their own misfortune.

An analysis the films *Thanks for coming* and *Gallant babes*

Ene and Frieda are best friends who have fallen out. Frieda seduces Ene's boyfriend who is a government official. This causes an even huger rift in the friendship, with two teams of friends poised against each other, which causes all and out war with each team trying to get the better of the other.

The story is anchored on the subject of greed, power tussle and jealousy, the storyline reveals the lives of young women who will do anything to be rich and counted among the big girls in the society. They engaged in prostitution and pimping to achieve their dream of becoming rich and famous. These friends become rivals to each other after Ene meets Mario, the personal assistant to the governor. Mario gives Ene contracts to import girls for government functions and weekend hangouts. Freda becomes jealous, seduces and lures Mario to bed. This amorous relationship between Freda and Mario creates a shift of loyalty of Mario from s Ene, his Fiancé to Freda. It is in this change of loyalty that the conflict is ignited as both friends employ blackmail, physical combat, quarrel, witchcraft and other diabolic means to maintain supremacy against the other. Mario diverts the runs of the girls to Freda who brags and intimidates the rest of the girls with Ene. Some of the girls in Ene's group desert her (Ene) after the runs contract is removed from Ene to Fred. The daydream climaxes as Freda connection to the government through Mario brought loads of money and prestige to her and her girls. The story is resolves as Ene unable to bear the intimidation and embarrassment resolves to confront Freda through a spiritual means by patronizing a priestess who empowers her to attract men from all works of life.

Gallant babes on the other hand, narrates the end of the different characters in their quest for selfish desires. It begins with Freda and

Ruth in the home of the Priestess to acquire diabolic power to attract men and defeat Freda who is already topping the famous chart. This hunger for power and supremacy drives Ruth mad as men from all classes confront her in the streets. Similarly, Ene wins the favour of different costumers who end up infecting her with cefelies that drives her to death. The action also reveals the end of Mario who loses the favour of the governor and is relieved of his appointment as Freda blackmail the Governor who lost out of his reelection bid. Freda abandons Mario to his fate in search of other men. The families of Jude and Benson reunite as they examine their decision and amend their ways. Mario fines solace in Nickie who consoles him and gives him hope of success despite all that has happened. It is on this note that the film ends.

Thanks for coming centres on the relationship and sex commercial activities between Mario and Freda. The film reveals the life style of young girls in desperate need for money, wealth and affluence. This is as a result women lacking proper empowerment; if the women are properly empowered, their engagement in these illicit activities may either be drastically reduced or completely wiped out.

This study has examined the social implications of female empowerment by looking at these films and other literatures with similar objectives. Later in the movie, it seems that the wife Florence is needed because she has connections to further Pandora's father's political ambition; however at the same time she claims to others that she is only with him to further her political ambitions. How can the women most often be made to appear as always dependant by men when in reality, they have all it takes to remain on top? With the empowerment of the women, they will appear better and high esteemed.

When the women are duly empowered, they become less pimps, greedy, cunning, and a prostitutes. Their flirtatious and careless illicit money making lifestyles by all means will be forgotten when the women are empowered and domestic violence curbed. The regular means of the some females using their bodies to earn a living irrespective of the consequences will be curtailed drastically as a result of empowerment. In the film, the chief protocol officer "Mario" and pimp to the Governor made so much money because of the ladies inabilities in engaging in lawfully productive venture. He arranges prostitutes for the governor and is very generous with money to his girlfriend.

In literatures too, the issue of domestic violence and female empowerment are seen all over. The patriarchal structure of traditional socie-

ty enables men to dominate women. Through the patriarchal system, Nigerian women are socialized in to a culture of female subordination. This is a structure of gender inequality/discrimination and its persistence in the face of national and international initiatives on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (Kalu, 12) A Nigerian woman is born into a culture of male supremacy in which there is a general preference for a "male child" while girls leave home at the time of marriage to become their husband's property.

Utoh-Ezeajuh's *Out of the Mask* has a story that revolves around a young undergraduate Chisolum who is the tragic heroine of the play because she dies fighting for the liberation of the girls in the village. The women in this play are subjected to every form of inhumane treatment without the custom frowning at the act. For instance, when the boys at the village square molested Uju, the village beauty and threaten to terrorize her with masquerade if she refuses to comply with their sexual demands, Uju threatens to report them to the Igwe's cabinet but the boys laugh her to scorn reminding her that, in as much as she is a woman, the matter holds no water. However, the boys live up to their threat but the girls also wore masquerade and flogged the boys in retaliation. When the girls were discovered, the community was thrown into anarchy as they pronounced the action of the girls as abominable. This is how patriarchal institutions in Africa have tried to subjugate and oppress women, making them a mere tool in the hands of men. When the boys wearing masquerade terrorized the girls, the society saw nothing wrong in it but when the girls wore the same masquerade to free themselves from patriarchal oppression, the society rose in anger. Chisolum however, stood for the girls even though she was not caught. She accepted the blame and punishment stating that she was the one who designed the masquerade for the girls even though she was not caught. She was very bold and stood firm for what she believed in. in another instance, when one of the cabinet members of the Igwe, Unamba slapped one of the women, Mrs. Udeh who was sent to solicit for the girl's release, Chisolum attacked him and said: Chisolum: "(Rushes at Unamba and kicks him) How dare you lay your filthy hands on a woman? Barbaric creature!" (p. 127). However, in the encounter that ensued, Chisolum slumped and died but her death marked an end to the use of masquerade to molest girls in the community as the Igwe and his cabinet announced the suspension of masquerade performance in the community. This shows that women can always stick together and stand up for

themselves, and take action in order to provide a better future for both themselves and their family.

Julie Okoh, on the other hand presents the same subject of subjugation in *Our Wives Forever,* at the death of Victoria's husband, Thomas the brother in-law lays claim on Victoria as his inheritance from his late brother, Hector. Many attempts by Victoria to refute the inordinate advances of Thomas towards her led to a lot of chaos as Thomas threatens to deal with her decisively and bars her from receiving male visitors. Victoria is subjected to ill kinds of barbaric maltreatment all in a bid to exonerate herself from being her husband's killer; she was made to shave her hair, not take her bath for several months and was asked to drink the water used in washing Hector's body. And then when Victoria asks Thomas what gave him the right to control her, he replied "as long as you continue to answer Imodu, you are our wife" and when she says she will change her name, he asks her if she will return her bride price which has added interest given the number of years she has stayed married to Hector. He also reminds her that "according to our custom, when a widow decides to remarry, she forfeits every entitlement to her late husband's property" (p. 36–37) this shows that in our society, a woman's marriage is like taking away all her rights and what makes her a woman and giving it to her husband and his people. Thomas relegates Victoria to a mere property and also backs his actions with the traditional custom and norms. However, it takes the goodly intervention of Felix Tanka, a friend of the family to put Thomas in his rightful place with accusations and counter accusations. Felix Tanka stood his ground to call a spade a spade and finally won the heart of Victoria.

The question from these cases treated above clearly demands an answer. Why shouldn't girls wear masquerade, why should it be the woman that will shave and drink the water of a dead person when the husband dies, why do men not perform the same act when they lose their wives? Why punish girls for being raped and pregnant and spare the men who put them in that condition? Why shouldn't women climb palm trees? Why is it an abomination for women to do some of the exact thing men do? Why why? why? Is tradition and custom the only answer to these questions? Who made these traditions if not men themselves? Only when these question and other questions bothering on women violence are answered can thee society be a better place. But until then, women just have to learn how to survive and fight to be significant.

Causes of domestic violence

The causes of domestic violence include, but are not limited to the following:
a) Misunderstanding
b) Disagreement
c) Impatient
d) Pride
e) Joblessness
f) Inferiority complex
g) Discontentment
h) Frustration and disappointment
i) Insecurity
j) Jealousy
k) External interference
l) Lack of self-control
m) Fear of the unknown
n) Idleness and gossip

Recommendations

The recommendations in this study are that there is the need for feminist scholars to utilize the film medium to preach and promote the feminist course the more, especially as many filmmakers are still rooted in the old patriarchal culture of seeing women as subservient. In this regard, they must stand as watchdog to the film maker in prescribing rules for female characterization and proper positioning in the video films. It is for this reason that female film makers must rise up to counter such misrepresentation. Nollywood film producers and director must attempt to project positive image of the woman and uphold the family virtue through appropriate and condemn all sorts of domestic violence against the women folks. More women should be encouraged be financial independent, as this can help reduce economic dependency on anything for survival, certain roles should rejected. They should be increase availability and accessibility of information, knowledge, and resources for to the women victims. The law enforcement agencies should improve their ability and intervention techniques timely and in an effective manner. The society at large should reduced long-term physical,

psychological, and emotional trauma against the women. There should be increase of awareness and knowledge of the issue within communities that affect the women folks. Self-esteem, confidence should increase and there should be greater ability to cope with and recover from violence.

Conclusion

Filmmakers should now represent the image of the woman in the positive light, even though majority are still in the trend of the negative representation which has been so since the emergence of the Nigerian video film industry in 1992. It is not out of place to see the male characters possess the authoritative gaze while the woman has a history of being portrayed as a sacrificial lamb, the toiler and object to be gazed at. Based on this, it is arguable to say that these stories and characterizations as represented or portrayed in the films under study are still anchored on the patriarchal culture of Africa without putting into consideration the new realities of events presently. The confusion this creates is that while the costumes tend to reflect modernity and change in cultural mindset, the portrayals of females as directed by filmmakers are done after the confinement of women to the periphery by some socio-cultural or patriarchal standpoints where women are only appreciated based on the beauty of their bodies and not on the worth of their persons. This made David (2013) for instance, to remark by watching the films that,

> It was almost as if they didn't know what to put in the movie and thought what the hell! Let's just throw in some potbellied dudes and some naked girls shaking their asses, that'll entertain most. Erm no! Not for 10–15 minutes straight. If we wanted to see this bullshit we would just go to a club and not watch a movie (p. 4).

David's position above is an expression of the audience resentment on the portrayal of the woman's image. The question of women brutalizing women and women lacking the consciousness to redirect these portrayals is more of a concern to the researcher.

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FILMOGRAPHY

Title of film: *Thanks for coming*
Story: Uche Nancy
Screenplay: Michael Jaja
Producer: Uche Nancy
Editor: Ejike Eze
Director: Michael Jaja
Company: Onye-Eze Production Ltd
Year of production: 2011
Duration: 1.13ms

Starring: Mercy Johnson, Yul Edochie, Ibol Ene Angelica, Eve Esin
Executive producer: Uche Nancy
Title of Film: *Gallant babes*
Story: Uche Nancy
Screenplay: Michael Jaja
Producer: Uche Nancy
Editor: Ejike Eze
Director: Michael Jaja
Company: Onye-Eze Production Ltd
Year of production: 2011
Duration: 1.13ms
Starring: Mercy Johnson, Yul Edochie, Ibol Ene Angelica, Eve Esin
Executive producer: Uche Nancy

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Supporting students
with Autism Spectrum Disorder

ABSTRACT. When educating boys and girls with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), it is vital that teachers know how to best support their students within the classroom as well as how to support their families with community activities. Knowing the definition, etiology, and causes of ASD as well as specific strategies will strengthen educational programming around the world.

KEYWORDS: education, Autism Spectrum Disorders, support, boys, girls

Introduction

There are many aspects that go into understanding how to educate boys and girls with a specific disability. This manuscript will focus on how to educate children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Being aware of the disability definition, etiology, and characteristics is crucial in having a full understanding of what a child with ASD goes through each day. When one is diagnosed with ASD, there are several effects on their learning within the classroom, community, and workplace. Educators can use a number of instructional strategies and curricular/environmental modifications to better support students with ASD. There are strategies that can be used to support interactions between students with ASD and their typical peers. In addition, it is valuable for educators to have resources and strategies to share information with typical peers, parents, and other professionals.

Disability definition, etiology and characteristics

ASD refers to a range of conditions that include challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech, and nonverbal communication (Autism Speaks, 2017). There is not just one type of autism, but rather a wide range of variations in both challenges and strengths. ASD is a developmental disability, and individuals with autism have no physical attributes that identify their disability. Some of the behaviors associated with autism include delayed learning of language; difficulty making eye contact or holding a conversation; difficulty with executive functioning, which relates to reasoning and planning; narrow, intense interests; poor motor skills' and sensory sensitivities (Autism Society of America, 2016). Depending on where the individual with autism fits along the spectrum, they may show many of these characteristics or they may show just a few.

Currently, there is not a single cause for ASD. Although researchers do not know the exact cause of ASD, there are several theories being investigated. Due to the recent awareness of the disability around the world, researchers are investigating whether ASD is linked to heredity, genetics, and/or other medical problems. In many families, there appears to be a pattern of autism or related disabilities, further supporting the theory that the disorder has a genetic basis (Autism Society of America, 2015). On the other hand, some researchers are exploring the possibility that problems during pregnancy, environmental factors, or exposure to chemicals have any relation to ASD developing. A specific "trigger" or "cause" for ASD has not been fully identified at this time.

Early identification of ASD has been proven to make a significant difference in the cognition and social skills of boys and girls diagnosed with ASD. Many studies have shown that early diagnosis and intervention lead to a significant amount of growth in developmental milestones for children with autism. Some of the signs of ASD in early childhood include the following: lack of or delay in spoken language, repetitive language, motor mannerisms (i.e. hand-flapping and specific word repetition), little or no eye contact, lack of interest in peer relationships, lack of spontaneous or imaginative play, and persistent fixation on particular parts of objects (i.e. spinning the wheels of a toy car, instead of using them to push the toy car across the floor) (Autism Society of America, 2016).

Effects on learning within the classroom, community and workplace

Children with ASD develop at a different rate then their typically developing peers. Boys and girls with ASD struggle with attention, interaction, and communication which has an effect on their learning within the classroom, community, and workplace. Individuals with ASD do not tune in to people and their surroundings, like their typically developing peers do. For example, a child with ASD may not respond to their name right away, wave good-bye to parents when arriving at school, or smile at a peer without being told to. Having joint attention (i.e. using eye contact, gestures to communicate, and share experiences) is important in developing needed communication and language skills. Difficulty with joint attention can also make it hard for children with ASD to learn skills like taking turns, interpreting facial expressions or keeping to the topic of a conversation (Raising Children Network, 2017). These skills are all valuable in being able to learn within the classroom, community, and workplace.

ASD also affects a child's understanding of interaction with others. Children with ASD may find it hard to see things from other people's perspectives (Raising Children Network, 2017). They may have trouble understanding how others feel or what others desire. Predicting others' behavior and understanding what is affected by their own behavior is another struggle for boys and girls with ASD. Understanding other people's perspectives and knowing how to appropriately interact with others are critical social skills. Children with ASD require assistance in learning to relate to others and the development of social skills to support their interactions within school, home, and community (Autism Connect, 2017).

Communication is an area of concern for boys and girls with ASD, and can have a major effect on their ability to learn and interact within school, the community, and their workplace. Many individuals with ASD struggle in their development of a functional verbal communication system, and may never gain these skills if they are non-verbal. Children and adults with autism can have communication difficulties including the following: learning to understand non-literal language, social-conversation skills or pragmatics, formal versus informal speech, maintaining focus on others' topics, and appropriately communicating their own wants and needs (Autism Connect, 2017).

With all of this in mind, children and adults with autism have many strengths and have been proven to show immense growth in the skills needed to be successful in the classroom, community, and workplace. Specific behavioral, curricular, and environmental strategies can be used to help enhance their attention, interaction, and communication throughout all settings. Through early intervention, instructional strategies, and modifications, boys and girls with autism can learn how to be successful in their everyday lives.

Instructional strategies and curricular environmental modifications

There are several instructional strategies and curricular/environmental modifications that can be put into place to effectively support students with ASD. Educating students with autism is usually an intensive undertaking, involving a team of professionals and many hours each week of different instruction and therapies to address a student's behavioral, developmental, social and/or academic needs (Autism Speaks, 2012). Some of the strategies or modifications that can be used to help support students with autism in their learning include the following: Positive Behavior Support (PBS), Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS) and sensory tools.

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) involves many evidence-based practices to both increase the quality of life for a child with autism and to decrease problem behaviors that limit them in learning new skills and actively participating across all settings. Many children with autism struggle with challenging behaviors. A positive behavioral support approach emphasizes the use of a collaborative problem-solving process to develop individualized interventions that stresses prevention of problem behaviors through the provision of effective educational programming (McDonnell, Hardman & McDonnell, 2003). Educators for students with autism may use token economy systems, built in sensory breaks, positive reinforcements, child-directed activities, students' interests, social stories, peer modeling, visual scheduling, PECS, replacement skills, choice making, and more to incorporate positive behavior supports within their classroom. The rationale behind using PBS is that it involves identifying a challenging behavior, teaching appropriate alternative responses, consistently rewarding positive behaviors, decreasing the rewards for chal-

lenging behaviors, and avoiding elements that trigger challenging be-
haviors to help children more appropriately communicate their wants
and needs and help them to continue to be successful in the classroom.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a systematic and data-driven
approach that is used to improve socially useful and appropriate be-
haviors by reducing behaviors that may harm or interfere with a child's
learning. Through assessment and evaluation of behavior, educators can
use the antecedent and the consequence of that behavior to understand
its function and determine replacement behaviors that may provide the
same purpose. "Many programs use the principles of ABA as a primary
teaching method, or as a way of promoting positive and adaptive be-
havior (Autism Speaks, 2012). By focusing on positive reinforcement
and rewarding students for appropriate behavior, ABA techniques can
be used to shape more socially appropriate behaviors in individuals with
autism or in individuals that have autism-like behaviors. Some teaching
methods of ABA include the following: Discrete Trial Teaching (DTT),
Naturalistic Teaching, Pivotal Response Therapy (PRT), Token Econo-
mies, and Contingent Observation.

Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS) allow children
with little or no verbal communication to express their wants and needs
through the use of pictures. By providing students with PECS within the
classroom, they will be able to appropriately communicate how they
feel, what they would like to work for, and what they would like to play
with. When implementing the PECS system, educators teach boys and
girls with to exchange a picture for an object. Eventually, the individual
learns to distinguish between pictures and symbols and use these to
form sentences (Autism Speaks, 2012). PECS are also a great tool in pro-
viding visual schedules and supports for students with ASD. Though
PECS is based off of visual tools, positive reinforcement for verbal com-
munication is encouraged greatly. The rationale behind PECS is that it
provides students with challenging behaviors a way to communicate
more effectively and appropriately across all settings.

Boys and girls (especially) with ASD may have sensory systems that
are either over- or under-reactive to stimulation. Such sensory problems
may be the underlying reason for such behaviors as rocking, spinning,
and hand-flapping (Hatch-Rasmussen, 2017). With this type of sensory
issue, it is crucial that educators provide sensory tools within the clas-
sroom environment. Sensory tools like body-socks, weighted blankets,
trampolines, rocking chairs, large bouncy balls, swings, sit and spins,

play tents, and crash pads, can be used to help calm children with autism and other disabilities. The rationale is that by changing how sensations are processed by the brain, we help children with autism make better sense of the information they receive and use it to better participate in everyday tasks (Autism Speaks, 2013). When students with ASD are over- or under-stimulated, educators can use sensory tools to help the child better focus within the classroom environment.

Strategies for supporting interactions with typical peers

When working with students with ASD, it is vital to integrate strategies for supporting interactions with typical peers. Learning how to interact and communicate with typical peers is essential in students with ASD understanding others' perspectives and continuing to maintain positive relationships throughout life. The following strategies can help in supporting interactions between students with ASD and their typical peers: social stories, peer buddies, and modeling.

Social stories are short stories that are written and presented to students with ASD that describe a specific social situation, skill, experience, or concept that is relevant and appropriate in teaching a social behavior. The objective of this intervention strategy is to enhance a child's understanding of social situations and teach an appropriate behavioral response that can be practiced (Wilkinson, 2011). Social stories are designed to help a child learn how to manage their own behavior during specific social situations (i.e. how to play nicely on the playground, what to do when there is a substitute, how to walk nicely in the hallway). These stories assist students with ASD in figuring out the who, what, when, where, and why aspects of a social situation in order to allow for frequent practice in a new expected social behavior.

Using peer buddies, also sometimes known as "peer tutors," is an effective strategy in exposing students with ASD to interactions with their typical peers. This strategy aids in developing important social skills and a number of promising studies have found that using typical peer models can increase the social and communication skills of children with ASD (Locke, Fuller, & Kasari, 2012). Children with ASD show significant progress in targeted social objectives like initiating interactions, responding appropriately to peers and adults, maintaining eye-contact, reading non-verbal cues, and understanding others' perspectives through

the use of peer buddies. In addition, there are benefits for the typical peer as well. In the past, there have been concerns that assigning peer buddies may limit the typical peer, but research has actually shown that typical peers can be socially connected to children with ASD, as well as other classmates, and maintain a strong and positive role within the classroom (Locke, Fuller & Kasari, 2012).

As an educator, one has the responsibility to model appropriate social behaviors for their students with ASD. Modeling appropriate behavior has a major effect on how students with ASD will interact with their typical peers. When modeling, teachers should not only show students with ASD a specific skill, but they should also describe each step (i.e. "Look I have nice hands when talking to my friends"). This provides students with both a visual and verbal example of what they will be expected to do in social situations (University of Louisville, 2017). Consistently modeling expected social skills can be done all throughout the school day, and children with ASD will pick up on appropriate social interactions through imitation.

Resources and strategies for sharing information with typical peers

Knowing how to share information about students with ASD with typical peers can be extremely difficult. Having resources and strategies available can help in successfully teaching typical peers about boys and girls with ASD. At times, it may be necessary to seek advice from resources and implement strategies to help typical students better understand their peers with autism. The Kids Helping Kids Manual, Autism Speaks School Community Tool Kit, Teacher Tube Video- Autism Awareness for Typical Peers/Classmates, and the use of group-oriented contingency can guide an educator in sharing information with typical peers.

The *Kids helping kids manual* by Pierce & Schreibman is a useful resource in teaching typical children to enhance the play and social skills of their friends with ASD and other disabilities. This resource helps educators teach typical peers about how to play and interact with children with ASD through the use of simple instructions, child's choice, modeling social interactions, and using encouraging language. Also, it identifies some of the decisions that need to be considered in ensuring the success of peer interactions. This includes determining the child's readiness, selecting peer trainers, choosing a location for training, selecting appro-

priate toys, and deciding treatment frequency and duration (Pierce & Schreibman, 2007). Overall, this is a great resource in giving educators a guide for sharing information and teaching typical peers how to interact with their friends with ASD.

Another resource that will give educators pointers on how to share information with typical peers is the *Autism Speaks School Community Tool Kit*. The purpose of this kit is to provide helpful information about students with ASD as well as to provide tools and strategies to achieve positive interactions and increase learning for all members of the school community (Autism Speaks, 2012). The tool kit gives educators valuable information for sharing with general education and administrative staff as well as classmates who interact with students with ASD. Preparing a positive school community is crucial, and this resource provides support in helping typical students to get to know their peers with ASD as a person first.

A very helpful strategy for sharing information with typical peers is introducing concepts through videos. The Teacher Tube video called *Autism awareness for typical peers/classmate*, can be a fun and interactive way to help typical students understand their peers with autism. In this video, children watch a cartoon child with ASD share how they really feel inside and their desire to make friends. It introduces typical students to the fact that, though students with ASD have different types of challenges, they are still a person first.

A strategy that can be used to share information with an entire classroom of typical children is group-oriented contingency. Unlike a buddy or tutor system, this strategy involves training an entire classroom of children on some social skill behaviors and techniques in hopes of promoting supportive behaviors among all of the students in a classroom with one or more children with ASD (Merrill, 2008). This strategy is helpful in teaching typical peers about children with ASD by encouraging social growth through providing expectations, simple examples, and positive reinforcement.

Resources and strategies for sharing information with parents and other professionals

Educators for students with ASD are frequently required to share helpful information with parents of children with ASD and other professionals that work with these students. There are resources and stra-

tegies available to help parents and other professionals gain support and understanding. The following resources and strategies are available for educators to share information with parents and other professionals: Autism Speaks—Support Groups, National Autism Center website, Video on *Early signs of autism, and the article, bridging the gap: teacher-parent partnerships for students with autism spectrum disorder.*

Often times, parents struggle greatly from feeling alone or unsupported in their journey on raising a child with ASD. The Autism Speaks website provides a link to support groups for parents to communicate with one another both online and in parent-support meetings. On the Autism Speaks website, parents can search for support groups within their area. Teachers for students with ASD can share this amazing resource with parents. By communicating with others going through the same struggles, parents can build connections and get the support they need from individuals that truly understand their perspective.

The National Autism Center website provides resources for families, educators, and other practitioners. As a teacher for children with autism, this website can be recommended to others

in order to provide reliable information on how to educate and raise students with ASD. Families can find comfort in dealing with new challenges through the National Autism Center website. Educators can learn new strategies in how to teach and share information about their students with autism, and practitioners can find support through the site making information and resources readily available. The National Autism Center website also has links to services, a donation center, a bookstore, and a list of the national standards on educating students with ASD.

It can also be helpful to share information with parents and other professionals through videos. *Early signs of autism* on parents.com is a video that shares what signs of ASD to look for in young children. The video shows examples through watching children with and without ASD interact with adults and their typical peers. This video features three children who show early signs of ASD playing with toys as well as interacting and communicating with others. It compares the footage on each of these children to that of typical children in the same situations (Kennedy Krieger Institute, 2013). This resource can be very supportive in teaching parents and other professionals how to look for signs of early ASD.

The article, *Bridging the gap: teacher-parent partnerships for students with autism spectrum disorder*, discusses strategies in ways to build

a healthy and successful partnership with parents of children with ASD. The article shares a story from a teacher's perspective and talks about ways in which they can prepare themselves for the demands of meeting the needs of both their students and the children's families. Strategies are given to increase parent-teacher communication and parent involvement. This resource provides educators with a strong basis on which to build better teacher-parent partnerships, which ultimately will improve the education of their students with ASD.

Conclusion

It is critical that teachers take the time to understand the aspects that go into educating boys and girls with a specific disability. Children with ASD are unique in their learning process. It is important to be aware of the disability definition, etiology, and characteristics, along with how ASD affects learning in the classroom, community, and workplace. Using strategies to support interactions with typical peers is also key in successfully including children with ASD in the general education classroom. Having resources and strategies available to share information with typical peers, parents, and other professionals is crucial in providing a positive environment across all setting for students with ASD.

RESOURCES

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BOOK
AND JOURNAL
REVIEWS

Joanna Mizielińska. *Different or regular? Families of choice in Poland.* **Warsaw 2017: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN S.A. Pp. 416.**

Reviewed publication focuses on a question which is highly researched these days—contemporary understanding of the family term. It is obvious that mentioned construct yields to socio-cultural changes by widening its limits. The paper I present touches on a problem of functioning of families of choice in Poland. As it is in the title it asks if these families are different or the same as heteronormative ones.

Undertaking such a delicate social problem requires extraordinary interpersonal and scientific competences. The author of the book has both—Joanna Mizielińska is an experienced researcher who should not be introduced among those interested in the topic. She is an associate professor in the Institute of Psychology of Polish Academy of Sciences and was a manager of a project called *Families of choice in Poland* (2013–2016)—presented paper is one of many effects of that project and also not the first gender-connected work written by the scientist.

The publication consists of an introduction, seven chapters, a conclusion, a dictionary of notions' definitions, a surnames' index and a wide bibliography. Each chapter is built gradually, titled main ideas are also divided into smaller sections which ease the reader perception of the content.

At the very beginning of the work it is stressed that the paper's approach is inspired by New Family Studies. Such solution let the author consider collected data multidimensionally as mentioned approach enables heterogeneous methodological and theoretical applications.

First chapter contains a review of the most important changes of the family term and theories on which the researcher was basing while interpreting the empirical material. Joanna Mizielińska underlines that those notions were not preconceived—they appeared during the whole process (e.g. theory of displaying families, family closet, transparent closet, kin work). It is worth to stress that information in that chapter is concise but not laconic; such display is helping for those not proficient in the subject.

The methodology was described in the second chapter. This section is very important not only because it explains methods of collecting and analyzing data, but also because it can be an inspiration for other researchers due to its wide range of applied approaches. For example, besides rather common methods

(biographic interview, narrative interview, in-depth interview, participant observation) less conventional ones were used: photo-elicitation interview, Irene Levin's family map, significant places cartography.

What is more, Joanna Mizielińska also stresses that at first she wanted to rely on grounded theory while analytic process, but as her work proceeded she decided that existing literature and theories are important in understanding researched questions.

Five following chapters relate to findings. Each of them ends with a summary where the author presents the most significant conclusions.

'Course of life' is the title of section number three. Data that is shown there focuses on important moments in experience of being a homosexual family and it also places a history of a specific couple in the context of its members' individual lives. Content responded to the course of life was organised into two subchapters—formative phase and stabilization phase. Within which the trajectories of respondents' relationships were described; applied order provides clear image of researched aspect.

Section four is called 'Family definitions'. Analysis and interpretation enclosed there base mainly on Irene Levin's family maps. The author shows multitude of definitions of family term that occur in families of choice. She also describes mechanisms of managing this notion on the way to find affiliation and exclusion criteria of its members.

The following chapter —'Everyday life organization'—concerns two questions: a division of household chores and financial issues. It is underlined that in a scientific literature these practises are not recognised to a great extent. In the study, Joanna Mizielińska notices some patterns connected to them; members of homosexual families function in accordance with three models that she widely describes, those are: traditional model, partnership model and gender model.

Relationships with families of origin are shown in section number six. The scientist focuses on strategies of coping with nonheteronormativity which are used by interlocutors' family members. The act, or more often acts, of coming out start the process of changes in relationships of homosexuals and their families of origin. From rejection to acclaim—the whole course is depicted. Furthermore, it is portrayed how interlocutors and their relatives solve such questions as e.g. the way of naming homosexual partners or supporting each other mentally or materially.

Last chapter describes parenthood of the study group. It is stressed that researched homosexuals formed families that could be assign to three groups: their parenthood can be determined as 'unsuccessful mutual project' (homosexual partners and their children from previous relationships cannot function as a family because of a lack of rapport), they create a quasi-mutual parenthood (reconstructed families of choice) or they decide to form a new family with each other e.g. by insemination. Mentioned types of parenthood are presented i.a.

with: characteristics of families, education practises, openness strategies, visions of families, parenthood identities and children's perspective.

The conclusion starts with an attempt of specifying if the families of choice in their members' opinions differ from heterosexual ones. Reflections that are contained in this part of the work create a characteristic framing device with the question that was asked in the title of the publication.

Joanna Mizielińska's paper makes a valuable position for those interested in the subject of functioning of homosexuals. Apart from publication's significant data and its interpretation it is also a work that offers a wide gender literature review of Polish and foreign researchers. Ordering elements in a very similar way in each chapter provides the receivers with the comfort of reading the book and with an ease of connecting facts and searching for interesting information. What is more, the content is abound in quotation—such solution portrays the readers the whole process of analysing and interpreting empirical data. It also gives an opportunity to 'feel' the real emotions of interlocutors thanks to what their life situation can be understood deeper. Presented book should be taken into consideration while designing anti-discrimination actions because of its information richness related to socio-cultural situation of homosexuals.

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Katarzyna Segiet, Kamila Słupska (eds.). *A book in human life—in search of lost(ing) value.* **Poznań 2017: Adam Mickiewicz University Press. Pp. 360.**

The contemporary, fragmented reality in which we live is subject to a permanent change. This state of affairs implies the need to construct many issues on a current basis so that they meet modern requirements. In such a world, it is essential that some elements (having their long tradition) do not lose their value, constituting a certain aspect of our lives. Such a value is a contact with the book. Pedagogues play a role in shaping a proper relationship between the individual and the text. In this context, Zbyszko Melosik (2014) presents pedagogical proposals that are a constructive response to the ambiguity of this world, and thus, within them, there is "a pedagogy of respect for (reading and collecting) books and libraries". The recommended proposal is a peculiar acknowledgment to the place of the book in society. Virtualization of ways of gaining knowledge and information caused that the book is in the social defense. The present book, titled *Książka w życiu człowieka—w poszukiwaniu (u)traconej wartości* [*A book in human life—in search of lost(ing) value*] is a collection of

twenty-four articles apply to social and environmental ways of reading. The issues of the book allow, and sometimes even command, a broad and multi-threaded approach to this issue.

Reading-related topics, therefore, have a long tradition in Polish social pedagogy, the concept of which is profoundly humanistic and personalistic, because in its center there is a man and concern for awakening his creative individual and social activity. This multi-authorial monograph is intended to remind them, emphasize the importance and reflection on the current perception of the essence of communing with literature. The book's issues in the publication also focus on certain narrower areas that can be noticed, such as: childhood, family, library, bibliotherapy, the prospect of multiculturalism and social inequalities. Therefore, it is a significant dose of inspiration in the field of various social science and practice.

The monograph starts with a preface written by Jerzy Modrzewski and an introduction attached by Katarzyna Segiet and Kamila Słupska. The book has been divided into three parts, which have their own references to the problem of the book. This can be deduced just after their very titles, because the first part, which begins the considerations, is entitled: "Książka jako źródło…—w poszukiwaniu czytelniczych odniesień, w gąszczu czytelniczych kontekstów" [The book as a source …—in search of reading references, in a maze of reading contexts]. This part of the book is at the same time the most extensive part, for it consists of as many as ten articles.

The first article beginning this part of the book is an article written by Katarzyna Segiet entitled "Pedagogika społeczna i refleksja nad książką jako ważnym elementem rozwoju ludzkiego i kulturalnego w zderzeniu z aktualną rzeczywistością" [Social pedagogy and reflection on the book as an important element of human and cultural development in the face of current reality]. The author presents the book's problems concerning the most important assumptions and concepts in social pedagogy. Referring to the contemporary changes Katarzyna Segiet points to the need to return to the humanistic and personalistic ideas of social pedagogy also adopted in relation to the role of the book and what role it can play in the life and education of man. The author of the next article (in the first part of the book) is Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska. This work refers to education "from" and "through" the book as a carrier of pro-development and pro-activity in a contemporary and globalizing society. The author emphasizes that educational activities oriented at the development of the orientations mentioned above should bear in mind that it is they who direct the behavior of the individual. Therefore, the literary work should be embedded in the ravages of the times in which we live. Issues regarding the role of the book were also taken in the next article. The author, Bożena Matyjas, addressed the matter of cultural activity of the child, its participation in culture, also through the reading of books. These contents

were embedded in the views and work of Janusz Korczak. Detailed analysis of the views of this outstanding teacher is the source of many practical applications on the basis of educational solutions. Next author, Mirosław Sobecki based on historical analysis outlined the excellence of intercultural education and the importance of literature in the shaping of cultural identity. The fifth article is a peculiar introduction to the works referring to the matter of reading. An author Wioleta Danielewicz by diagnosing the state of readership in Poland, it shows its frighteningly low level. A certain unconventional value of this article is the autobiographical themes contained in it. Kinga Kuszak in next article from an analytical perspective, she shows how to play with children through specific language treatments. It is the children's literature which is the basis of the individual's relationship with the book. The following work was written by Hanna Krauze-Sikorska refers to reflections on the possibility of providing children with literature through specific content—certain topics considered embarrassing, controversial or unpleasant, from the taboo sphere. It is a problem of crossing certain limits and perhaps the need to tame some issues. The last articles in this section refer to reading issues. Eva Zamojska refers to reading children based on conversations with children. Beata A. Orłowska, on the other hand, points to the role of the book in the behavior and transmission of the identity of the Lemkos. Małgorzata Kabat describes the roles of a teacher and a student in the modern (reading) world.

The second part of the monograph has been titled by its editors "Społeczna, wychowawcza i poznawcza rola książki—odczytywanie jej znaczeń" [Social, educational and cognitive role of the book—reading its meanings]. It consists of seven articles. The first article is an introduction to the second part of the book and its written by Kamila Słupska. What is worth emphasizing is that this article fulfills its role completely. The author tries to answer who is the contemporary reader and how his meetings with the book look like. An additional advantage is the presentation of research results on the state of readership from various sources. Katarzyna Zimoch, the author of the second article in this part, reviews Polish proverbs by finding the book's functions in them. Another article written by Barbara Góra underlines the importance of letters in terms of value transfer. As it turns out the pedagogical and literary qualities of letters are similar to the qualities of books. Konrad Nowak-Kluczyński in his work, he refers to the latest children's literature, finding patterns of the modern family. Next author, Paulina Forma discusses the issues of shaping the children's reading interests by analyzing in this respect the role and influence of a large family in particular. The author shows the conditioning of this process on the example of conducted research. In the article written by Anna Hajdasz the author presents the forms of work with children that she realizes in The Raczyński Library and emphasizes the important role of the librarian. The issue of libraries is also addressed in the

article by Alicja Sobańska. This author presents the contemporary "condition" of libraries in Poland, showing, on the one hand, their transformation from the other, mentioning the need for specific actions to preserve and further develop the contact between children and youth with the book.

The last part of the monograph has been titled "Książka jako inspiracja—obcowanie z tekstem jako wartość" [A book as inspiration—communing with text as a value], and it consists of seven articles. The first article written by Astrid Tokaj points to the book as a source of support in acquiring and expanding knowledge about old age. Next author, Ewa Włodarczyk in her article, she shows the book as an element of help in confronting the addiction of women to alcohol. The third article in this part of monograph raises the issue of the value and importance of reading and bibliotherapy in the process of resocialization and socialization of women, mothers serving the penalty of deprivation of liberty. The author Agata Matysiak-Błaszczyk it also outlines the situation that currently exists in Polish prisons. In next article, the author Ewa Kasperek-Golimowska points to the book as a source of health knowledge. The article also distinguishes the health and therapeutic values of books and reading for health education. In her work, Małgorzata Swędrowska shows a way of experiencing literary reading texts by children in early school age. It is in fact also a new way of communicating that fits into the model of reading education. The last two articles closing this part, and thus the whole book, refers, in turn, to bibliotherapy in work with a socially maladjusted child, whose author is Tomasz Herman and contemporary Japanese manga, whose author is Joanna Sikorska.

In conclusion, it can be said that all the articles contained in the monograph fall within its subject. The book has a clear and consistent structure, what makes this collection a welcome contribution to the field of social sciences. This book constitutes a valuable context for the analysis of social and environmental determinants of human life in perspective of social pedagogy. The multi-authorial monograph shows the importance of considerations over the issues of reading. It is worth mentioning that this work is a good inspiration for the right pedagogical practices and further research in this field.

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Emilia Szymczak, *The dynamics of women's access to technical studies.*
Social theory and practice. **Poznan 2016: Adam Mickiewicz University**
Press. Pp. 395.

The processes of women's emancipation range from personal life to public
sphere, including education and professions where women gradually enter
areas which used to be reserved exclusively for men. Of course, it is difficult to
find full equality there, particularly in the job market, however women's access
to studies is nowadays nearly unlimited. Today they begin to outnumber men
even in typically men studies such as law or medicine while in the past women
studied mainly pedagogy, art or philology. It seems that the last reserve of men
domination is polytechnic but even there things are basically changing.

Nowadays women are observed to show an increasing interest in scientific
and technical studies also called STEM (*science, technology, engineering and
mathematics*)*.* The data presented in the report "Women in polytechnic studies
2007–2017" definitely show that the number of women in technical studies has
a tendency to increase. In the last decade the percentage of female students
grew from 31% to 37% and is still growing. In 2017 the total number of women
in technical studies in Poland was 104.039 (Raport, 2917, p. 3). Undoubtedly,
this phenomenon is connected to the economical and socially-cultural changes
happening in the last years as well as to the changes in a modern woman's iden-
tity and her growing educational and professional aspirations.

The book by Emilia Szymczak *The dynamics of women's access to technical
studies. Social theory and practice* is an exceptionally interesting theoretical and
empirical study in the field of the sociology of education, where the subject of
women's access to technical studies is discussed in the context of women's posi-
tion and social status which has changed in the last decades. She rightly points
out that polytechnic studies are "the example of vanishing the differences exist-
ing in the society and at the same time, by the gradual breaking traditional pat-
terns, roles and beliefs, they are the lab of social change" (p. 11) [the problems of
realising the women's emancipation in the area of education are analysed in
a broader context by Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik in the book *Education and
social (in)equality of women. The study of the dynamics of access* (Krakow, 2011)].

The work consists of two parts. The first one—theoretical—contains five
chapters that include the analysis of theoretical concepts explaining the ways of
perceiving femininity and masculinity. Social and professional roles played by
the two groups are the main background here. In this part the author also de-
scribes the dynamics of women's access to education at universities and colleges
taking into account especially polytechnic education. The other part is empirical
and contains the analysis of the research conducted by the author. The partici-
pants were a group of female students of polytechnic studies and a group of
male engineers working in jobs traditionally recognised as men occupations.

Chapter one in a very convincing way demonstrates two theories concerning the perception of femininity and masculinity—biological essencionalism and social constructivism. Emilia Szymczak shows the process of socialising and preparing individuals for traditionally perceived feminine and masculine roles, which result in creating social inequality between sexes. She describes stereotypes that function in society and determine the divisions between male and female categories also in educational and occupational context. This chapter is a very good start to the analyses conducted in the next parts of the book.

In chapter two there are sociological interpretations of women's access to the job market. The analysis of the concept contains the structurally-functional approach with the theory of Talcott Parsons as well as the approach of Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis concerning the economic reproduction and finally the theory of cultural reproduction by Pierre Bourdieu. Her essentially advanced contemplation the author conducted from the perspective of women's access to studies and job areas considered as traditionally masculine.

Chapter three shows both the historical view and the modern look at the trends in the access of women to polytechnic studies. Emilia Szymczak starts her analysis with the description of higher education of women in the past. Later she presents the history of polytechnic schools in Poland and in the world. The author shows the stages of the development of such schools as Lvov Polytechnic University, Warsaw Polytechnic University, Gdansk Polytechnic University, Wroclaw Polytechnic University and Krakow Polytechnic University. Moreover, she presents statistics describing the number of women in particular studies at selected universities in the first year of their studying. The next part of this chapter concerns the current participation of women at polytechnic studies and the trends for the future in this area. It also relates to how women's choices in education and careers are perceived in the context of their development and functioning in a traditionally masculine job environment. The evaluation of this chapter is definitely positive.

In chapter four Emilia Szymczak in a remarkable way presents the social construction of an engineer's job, paying special attention to current changes in engineering. She highlights that the changes are connected to technological improvements which allowed optimization and affected the contemporary picture and nature of work in this field. As she rightly notices "engineering—as a professional field—becomes another optional occupation that does not have to—in assumption—be performed by people characterised by great physical strength, which traditionally is assigned to men (p. 11). This part also raises the issue of women's sense of identity in an engineer profession and their functioning in this field. This identity is shaped by a number of various factors: social, cultural, political and economic. The end of the chapter presents the problem of masculinisation of women working as engineers. The author asks the question whether undertaking masculine studies at technical schools is the cause of

women's masculinisation and to what extent they are forced to resign from their femininity in order to better adapt in the engineers environment?

Chapter five presents social campaigns encouraging women to conduct their education at technical schools. The author highlights that the schools are "the example and a specific exemplification of actions aiming at counteracting the phenomena of inequality at job market" (p. 192). The next part of this chapter is devoted to analysing online advertisements of selected schools in Poland and abroad, causing modern women to turn their attention to studies thought to be typically masculine. The author basing on advertising campaigns tries to list types women dealing with engineering naming four of them: a specialist, a partner, a perfectionist and an enthusiast. The considerations in chapter five are very interesting and deserves appreciation.

In chapter six the author discusses the methodology of her own study that was conducted with the use of in depth, semi-structured interviews. Emilia Szymczak used open-ended questions which allowed her to fully learn the opinions of women studying at polytechnic schools in Poland and men working as engineers. The starting point for the research was formulating two research problems:

How do women that study at polytechnic schools perceive their education and the perspectives on realising their plans?

How do men working as engineers perceive the potential of women in this occupation and their capabilities and restrictions resulting from the position of an engineer?

The following part of this chapter analyses and presents the results of the survey in relation to clearly defined areas of study. In the case of the first question the problem concerned educational and occupational choices of women and their access to typically men studies, the adaptation of female students to the polytechnic environment also in the context of women's masculinisation, the perception of potential personal, educational and occupational success of female engineers. In the second question the survey areas covered different roles of men and women at work, to how women function in engineering also in the context of their success and the comparison of the job of an engineer to the role of a mother and wife. In this way the author gained in-depth knowledge of how female students and male engineers see the issues and controversies of polytechnic education of women. This led to many interesting comparisons and conclusions.

Both conducting the research and presenting its results deserves very high evaluation because of the logical argumentation of the author who referred to scientific theories presented in the theoretical part of the work. It is additionally valuable for the dichotomy of the survey in which Emilia Szymczak shows two perspectives of social groups different according to sex, age and experience. The groups are connected to the same area of education which is science and they have or intend to have the job of an engineer.

To conclude, the reviewed work is an excellent treatise on a very important issue in the field of the sociology of education. Emilia Szymczak showed and discussed changes in women's position and social status. The author used vivid literature on this subject that was an excellent base for conducting her research. It is worth emphasizing that the empirical part of the book is very interesting and the analysis of the research results is valuable and complex. It must be clearly highlighted that the reviewed book has a great technical value, very good narration and an excellent writing style. Without any doubts the work by Emilia Szymczak deserves the highest mark.

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