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TYPES OF FOSTER CARE WARDS PREPARING FOR INDEPENDENCE*

Introduction: Preparation for independence is one of the primary objectives of foster care. Developing a typology of young people in foster care based on their meaning in life and their personal resources, such as resilience, coping with stress, self-efficacy and self-esteem, can provide valuable guidance on how to effectively support their transition into adulthood.

Research Aim: The aim of the study was to identify the types of foster care wards preparing for independence based on their meaning in life and selected personal resources, including resilience, stress management, self-efficacy and self-esteem.

Research Method: The study employed a diagnostic survey as the data collection method. The research sample consisted of 230 young people aged 16–20 from both institutional and family foster care settings in Poland. Five research instruments were used: the Author's Scale of the Meaning of Life, the Resilience Scale by Ogińska-Bulik and Juczyński, Endlers and Parkers' Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations, the Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale by Schwarzer, Jerusalem and Juczyński, the Self-Esteem Scale by Rosenberg.

Results: Four distinct types of young people preparing for independence from foster care can be identified differing in their meaning in life and selected personal resources.

Conclusion: The quality of foster care wards' transition into adulthood may depend on the type they represent. Considering their specific type can help tailor support strategies to enhance their preparation for independent living.

Keywords: foster care, youth typology, transition to independence

INTRODUCTION

Foster care constitutes a coordinated effort by individuals and institutions aimed at providing temporary care for a child whose parents for some reason are unable to

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fulfil their caregiving and educational responsibilities. The objectives of foster care can be categorized into three overarching goals (Kaczmarek, 2005). The primary objective is to facilitate the reintegration of the child into their biological family whenever possible. In cases where reunification is not feasible, alternative permanency solutions, such as adoption or placement in another family-based setting, are pursued. If neither of these options is viable, the child is provided with care within a foster environment. The second objective involves the fulfilment of the child's comprehensive needs, including social, material, health, educational, cultural, recreational and emotional aspects. The third objective refers to the preparation of the child for an independent and responsible existence by equipping the pupil with essential life skills, resilience and social competencies that enable the child to establish and maintain meaningful relationships and effectively navigate challenges (Ustawa z dnia 9 czerwca 2011 r., art. 33). The overarching aim of foster care is to ensure that individuals reach a level of self-sufficiency, characterized by stability, responsibility and the necessary resources to manage daily life effectively. These ideological assumptions are supported by systemic solutions and legal empowerment.

The process of becoming independent is, by definition, a gradual and structured endeavor intended to secure a stable and developmentally supportive living situation for young individuals. However, numerous studies (Abramowicz & Strzałkowska, 2014) and reports (GUS, 2023; NIK, 2012, 2014) analyses tracking the fate of people leaving institutions or foster families indicate significant legislative gaps imprecise definitions of key elements in the process of becoming independent, insufficient housing support or inadequate financial resources to ensure a successful entry into adulthood (Abramowicz & Strzałkowska, 2014). The purpose of this theoretical and empirical discussion is to highlight the potential benefits of identifying the types of foster care wards to support their transition to independence. This identification serves two key functions: first, it offers cognitive value by enhancing the understanding of different upbringing approaches; second, it has practical implications by informing the development of targeted caregiving and educational strategies tailored to the specific needs and personality traits of youth preparing for independent living.

However, repeated analyses of the life situation of the foster care wards indicate that they have numerous difficulties after leaving foster care and often experience a hopelessness and emptiness, despite the forms of support offered to them (Abramowicz & Strzałkowska, 2014; Chrzanowska, 2017; Teodorczyk, 2015). The search for answers to the question What can be related to the development of meaning in life in a young person? contributed to the distinction of the following resources: resilience, coping with stress, self-efficacy and self-esteem. This constellation of resources is due to the fact that these variables are often explored in foster care. Meaning in life and selected personal resources are crucial not only in the transition to independence, but also in the quality of life of every person.

Resilience is a resource that informs how much an individual is able to adapt to changing life circumstances. The ability to adapt is not limited to social accommodation but expresses the capability to cognitively process an event causing strong sensations and experiences (Block & Kremen, 1996). The resilience of foster care wards is the subject of much research, as being in foster care is treated as an event that leaves a strong mark on one's personality (Birneanu, 2014; Davidson-Arad & Navaro-Bitton, 2015; Drapeau et al., 2007; Nuñez et al., 2022; Schofield & Beek, 2005). Equally common in research among children and adolescents in foster care is the diagnosis of their coping with stress (Birch, 2016; Jackson et al., 2017; Tahkola et al., 2021; Van Holen et al., 2022). A temporal and developmental perspective differentiates resilience from another equally frequently researched personal resource such as coping with stress (Chisolm, 2012; Frimpong-Manso, 2018; Hogin, 2021; Kleszczewska-Albińska & Jaroń, 2020). A person's resilience consists of many components, and coping is one of them. The second differential aspect indicates that the main function of resilience is the constellation of stability (cognitive, physiological), which is the bridge between stress coping and the development of the individual. This means that as resilience increases, a person develops (Leipold & Greve, 2009). The choice of self-efficacy was dictated by the desire to capture in the study another dimension of human personality, which is the level of self-confidence. The analysis of this attribute is not new among foster care researchers (Cepukienė et al., 2018; Morgan & Baron, 2011). This variable indicates the motivational element, which is a catalyst or inhibitor of human activity. The final element of this quartet of personal resources is self-esteem, perhaps one of the most frequently explored personal resources among foster care wards (Farineau et al., 2013; Gil & Bogart, 1982; Mihailec-Adkins & Cooley, 2020; Mohamed et al., 2020; Salahu-Din & Bollman, 1994). It was chosen as a resource concerning attitudes toward the self. Self-esteem is a component of the broader concept of self-image, the essence of which is to regulate the human-environment relationship (Reykowski, 1979).

Previous knowledge is focused on describing the functioning of the foster care ward based on his stay in foster care. One of the main assumptions of the described research, was to focus on a critical period of a person's life, as it falls during adolescence and early adulthood, who is in foster care. The typology of foster care wards rarely appears in the literature (perhaps this is due, not only to the different definition of the concept of *typology* and *type*, but also through the researchers' different understanding of the usefulness of constructed types). Moreover, making typologies itself is common among education researchers (Herczyński & Strawiński, 2014; Idzikowski, 1996; Sosnowska-Bielicz, 2024; Szymczak, 2017), social welfare researchers (Sarżyńska-Mazurek & Wosik-Kawala, 2021) or management science researchers (Baruk & Goliszek, 2018; Przytuła & Strzelec, 2018).

Distinguishing types of wards based on meaning in life and selected personal resources does not provide a reason for stigmatization, since assessing reality

based on normative standards also has the character of a typology. The presented research results are part of the scope of existential pedagogy. Determining the type of wards can provide hints for those involved in their upbringing: which resources may need to be strengthened, what level of meaning in life formed in them.

RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTION

The central research question guiding the empirical investigation is: What types of foster care wards can be distinguished on the basis of their meaning in life and their personal resources? It is anticipated that the groups identified will exhibit differences in terms of variables including resilience, stress-coping mechanisms, self-efficacy, self-esteem or meaning in life. In this context, the term “type” can be defined as a predominant distinguishing feature of a particular variable or a configuration of values derived from multiple variables under consideration. The process of categorizing empirical data through the introduction of types is a widely utilized methodology in research (Saran, 2014). By applying this multidimensional classification approach to the empirical data of respondents from both institutional and family foster care, the study aims to uncover the existence of different types of people in foster care, differentiated by their meaning in life and selected resources.

RESEARCH METHOD AND SAMPLE CHARACTERISTIC

This study employed a diagnostic survey methodology, utilizing five established measures: the Author's Scale of the Meaning of Life, the Resilience Scale (SPP-18) by Ogińska-Bulik and Juczyński (2011), The Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS) by Endler and Parker (as adapted by Strelau et al., 2005), the Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES) by Schwarzer, Jerusalem and Juczyński (1995) and the Self-Esteem Scale (SES) by Rosenberg (1965).

The main theoretical background of the constructed tool was based on Frankl's concept of the meaning of life, which he posits as being shaped by creative existence. According to Frankl (2010), human destiny is shaped by individual actions and spiritual activity, which is in turn governed by objective values. In his analyses, he pointed out that the source of the meaning of human life is the attitude towards the values offered by the world (Frankl, 2010). At the same time, his analysis emphasizes the motivation and temporality of the meaning of life, which influenced the formulation of the questions in the scale rooted in logo theory. The author's Meaning of Life Scale consists of 33 statements. The scoring was as follows: *never* – 1, *rarely* – 2, *sometimes* – 3, *often* – 4, *always* – 5. The scoring was reversed for



10 claims. The higher the score, the greater the meaning of life. The tool contains three subscales: Positive orientation and awareness of life goals, Evaluation of past life choices and decisions made, Acceptance of one's fate.

The theoretical basis for the method constructed by Ogińska-Bulik and Juczyński (2011) to measure adolescent resilience was to define it as an individual human trait particularly relevant to coping with traumatic events as well as everyday stress and in positive adaptation. The Scale, which consists of 18 questions, is dedicated to young people aged 12–19 years and takes approx. 10 minutes to complete. The survey can be taken individually or in groups. The respondents indicate their agreement with each statement by ticking the appropriate number: 0 – *definitely not*, 1 – *rather not*, 2 – *neither yes nor no / hard to say*, 3 – *rather yes*, 4 – *definitely yes*. The level of resilience is assessed using a scoring system, with the assumption that the higher scores, the greater the intensity of the variable.

The original version of the CISS created by Endler and Parker (1990) is based on the interactional theoretical model they proposed. The researchers emphasised that coping with stress should be distinguished from defence mechanisms. The differentiating factor is the awareness of the individual, who intentionally engages in certain actions. The aforementioned model describes the coping mechanisms taken when confronted with stress, which result from the interaction between two elements: the stressful situation and the individual's coping style. The stress coping style is understood as the characteristic behaviour exhibited by a given individual when encountering stress (Szczepaniak et al., 1996). The CISS questionnaire can be taken individually or in groups. The respondent is presented with 48 statements and is required to indicate the frequency of occurrence using a five-point scale: 1 – *never*, 2 – *very rarely*, 3 – *sometimes*, 4 – *often*, 5 – *very often*. Coping styles are assessed across three dimensions, each containing 16 items. A style is understood as a relatively permanent and typical human tendency to respond to stress in a specific way (Strelau et al., 2005).

Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995), the authors of one of the few tools for measuring self-efficacy, build on Bandura's concept by emphasizing that self-efficacy refers to the strength of an individual's belief in their capability to handle potential difficulties and barriers in life. The diagnostic procedure they developed involves the respondent completing a self-administered questionnaire comprising 10 statements. Each statement is answered by selecting one of four options: 1 – *no*, 2 – *rather not*, 3 – *rather yes*, 4 – *yes*. The total score, calculated by summing the responses according to the assigned values, serves as an indicator of the overall feeling of self-efficacy.

The tool for measuring the final variable is based on Rosenberg's (1965) definition of self-esteem, which he describes as a positive or negative attitude towards oneself. This 10-item scale uses a 4-point scale: 1 – *strongly agree*, 2 – *agree*, 3 – *disagree*, 4 – *strongly disagree*. When counting the scores in the 6 questions, the

scoring should be reversed. The total score for the scale ranges from 10 to 40, with raw scores being converted to a sten scale, where 1–2 sten indicates *a very low level of self-esteem*, 3–4 – *a low level*, 5–6 – *an average level*, 7–8 – *a high level*, and 9–10 – *a very high level* (Dzwonkowska et al., 2008).

The empirical research was conducted from December 2022 to April 2023. For this purpose, 80 inquiries were sent via e-mail to district family welfare centres and various types of social welfare centres throughout the country. Foster care wards who were at least 16 years old were encouraged to participate in the survey. In addition, the directors of institutional foster care were contacted directly for consent to research among wards. Participation in the anonymous survey was voluntary, and respondents at any stage of the individual online survey were free to discontinue participation. The research used a purposive sampling, focusing on young people from foster care who are transitioning to independence. A total of 230 respondents from both institutional and family foster care participated in the study. Youth from institutional care comprised 56% of the sample, while those from foster families made up 37%. The respondents were aged between 16 and 20 years, with women representing 66% of the total sample and men 34%. Nearly half of the respondents (49%) were 17 years old at the time of the survey. The majority of respondents (74%) were from urban areas. Educationally, more than a third of respondents (35%) were students from trade schools, with a similar proportion (32%) from secondary and technical schools. Additionally, 9% of the respondents identified as students.

STATISTICAL DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

The use of cluster analysis (using the *k*-means method) made it possible to identify distinct groups of respondents, i.e. types of young people from foster care preparing for independence based on their profiles of meaning in life and personal resources. Prior to conducting cluster analysis, the following statistical procedures were performed: descriptive statistics (to determine the characteristics of the study sample in terms of demographic variables as well as to determine the level of meaning in life and selected personal resources); distribution analysis (the Shapiro–Wilk test, along with skewness and kurtosis analysis, was applied to assess whether the distribution of outcomes met the assumptions of normality); analysis of variance (the ANOVA method was applied to examine whether the differences in the means of the individual variables are statistically significant). The raw scores from individual scales were converted into centile scores for further analysis. Statistical analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics.



RESULTS

In the course of the analyses, four distinct respondent types, each differing from the others to the greatest extent possible. The classifications were determined by considering the mean scores (Table 1) for meaning in life and selected personal resources, as well as the emerging trends within the different clusters. Creating names for the identified types is a challenging and time-consuming procedure. The names do not express the variables included in the descriptions themselves but reflect the theoretical quality of the functioning of a ward presenting a certain type. Emphasis was placed on static meaning in life and relatively dynamic coping. Accordingly, the distinguished types of youth were designated as follows: *task-oriented type functioning well with a high meaning in life* (cluster 1), *emotional type functioning poorly with a low meaning in life* (cluster 2), *seeking type functioning well with an average meaning in life* (cluster 3), *non-seeking type with a reduced meaning in life* (cluster 4).

Table 1.

Results for respondents' meaning in life and selected personal resources in relation to the distinguished clusters

Variables	Clusters								F	<i>p</i>
	1		2		3		4			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Meaning in life	123.8	9.6	96.38	11.49	112.9	9.44	104.75	11.05	86.73	0.000***
Resilience	57.76	6.07	37.80	8.49	53.37	6.48	46.10	11.19	79.86	0.000***
Task-focused style	60.58	6.57	48.92	7.19	59.73	6.28	47.04	10.31	58.43	0.000***
Emotion-focused style	35.09	7.64	55.13	9.63	50.09	8.80	37.41	8.59	104.26	0.000***
Avoidance-focused style	47.26	8.70	49.09	8.41	55.36	8.43	39.38	8.92	26.17	0.000***
Self-efficacy	34.47	3.04	25.24	3.78	32.70	2.93	28.60	4.73	87.49	0.000***
Self-esteem	33.20	3.12	22.77	4.20	26.00	4.03	27.14	2.70	102.5	0.000***

*** $p < 0.001$

Source: Author's own study.

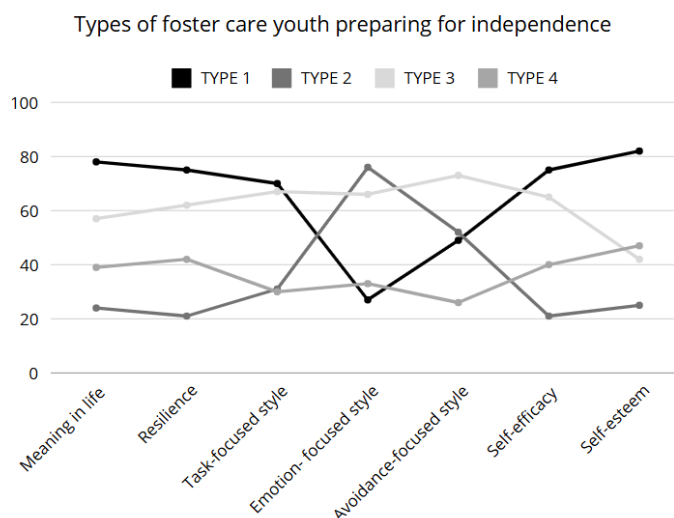
The first cluster comprised 73 respondents, accounting for 32% of the foster care participants. Analysing the data in Table 1, it can be concluded that cluster one, identified as *the task-oriented type functioning well with a high meaning in life*, exhibited the highest mean scores for meaning in life, self-efficacy, self-esteem and resilience. Additionally, adolescents classified in this cluster demonstrated the highest mean scores for a task-focused style and the lowest mean scores for an emotion-focused style. The second cluster included 69 respondents, representing 30% of all foster care respondents. Their group was labelled the *emotional type functioning poorly with a low*

meaning in life. This cluster is characterised by the lowest mean scores of meaning in life, self-efficacy, resilience and self-esteem. Furthermore, in this group of people, the emotion-focused style achieved the highest mean scores. The third cluster consisted of 46 surveyed alumni, i.e. 20% of all respondents in institutional and family foster care. This group was designated the *seeking type functioning well with an average meaning in life*. In this cluster, people are characterised by average results of meaning in life, self-efficacy or resilience all of which were higher than the corresponding scores observed in clusters 2 and 4. The mean scores for all three coping styles remain at a comparable moderate level: task-focused style, emotion-focused style and avoidance-focused style, with the latter being the highest among all clusters. The fourth cluster included 42 respondents from foster care, i.e. 18% of all respondents and was labelled the *non-seeking type with a reduced meaning in life*. While adolescents in this cluster exhibited a reduced meaning in life, their scores were not as low as those observed in cluster 2. In addition, this group was further characterised by reduced mean scores for self-efficacy, resilience and self-esteem. Notably, no dominant coping style was observed in this cluster, as reduced mean scores were observed in all three styles. However, the mean scores of task-focused style and avoidance-focused style in this cluster were the lowest among all four clusters.

A graphical representation of the identified four types of young people from institutional and family foster care standing on the threshold of independence, based on final cluster centres expressed in centiles, is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

Types of foster care youth preparing for independence



Source: Author's own study.

The analysis of variance of the sense of meaning in life and selected personal resources indicates that the clusters differ statistically significantly in all cases ($p < 0.001$).

DISCUSSION

There are many research results in the literature on the relationship between sense of life and resilience, which confirm this relationship (Ostafin & Proulx, 2020), which is observed among various social groups (Arslan & Yildirim, 2021; Lasota & Mróz, 2021; Lee, 2020; Ostrowski, 2015; Pilecka, 1986; Szajnicka, 2014). The presented results of our own research indicate that with the increase of resilience and all its areas moderately increases the area of feeling that is positive orientation and awareness of life goals, which directs the individual's activities towards the future, increases moderately. The results of other studies confirm that a factor that promotes psychological well-being is a positive vision of the realization of goals in the long term (Caprara et al., 2010; Dursun, 2012). Researchers have also confirmed that a preference for a task-focused style promotes a higher sense of meaning in life (Szabala, 2015), as the use of proactive forms of coping with stress promotes the belief that life is meaningful (Bakracheva, 2019). Self-efficacy is a personal characteristic that contributes significantly to the formation of meaning in life (Lightsey et al., 2014). Studies targeting self-efficacy as a dependent variable of meaning in life, also confirm the relationship between these variables (Lewis et al., 2018) and indicate the mediating role of self-efficacy in the occurrence of pro-social behaviour, quality of life or passions and interests (Appelbaum & Hare 1996; Cheng et al., 2020; Nauta, 2004; Strobel et al., 2011). The results obtained are consistent with other research findings the relationship between self-esteem and meaning in life (Morek, 2018; Orth et al., 2012; Schlegel et al., 2011; Wenta & Skrzypińska, 2020).

The first identified type, the *task-oriented type functioning well with a high meaning in life*, is distinguished primarily by the high self-esteem of individuals within this group. These adolescents exhibit positive self-perception, fostering a strong sense of self-worth. This high self-esteem is likely reinforced by other personality traits characteristic of this type, including a high level of self-efficacy, which represents a belief in one's ability to succeed in undertaken actions and a high level of resilience, which enables one to navigate difficult situations and cope with potential failures. Such personality characteristics contribute to a preference for task-based coping strategies, where individuals actively engage in problem-solving and proactive approaches when facing stressors. Furthermore, the *task-oriented type functioning well with a high meaning in life* is characterised by a high meaning in life, which consists of a positive future outlook reconciliation with past experiences and the ability to find coherence in one's surroundings. An

adolescent from foster care who belongs to this category tends to be open-minded, optimistic about the future and realistic in his/her self-assessment. He/she does not idealize himself/herself or his/her environment but rather approach life's challenges with a balanced and pragmatic perspective. From a social standpoint, such an individual may be perceived as self-sufficient, resourceful and independent, with a clear sense of self-worth. However, in certain situations, he/she may also exhibit a demanding attitude, potentially as a result of his/her heightened awareness of his/her needs and expectations. The second identified type, the *emotional type functioning poorly with a low meaning in life*, serves as a counterbalance to the first type. An individual within this group exhibits very low self-esteem, which manifests in negative self-perception, diminished recognition of personal achievements, lack of confidence in one's abilities and a sense of inferiority in comparison to others. The low level of self-esteem may stem from a lack of ability to cope with failures and past traumas, as well as a low self-efficacy, which inhibits proactive efforts to improve their life situation. Furthermore, adolescents of this type demonstrate very low psychological resilience, making them particularly vulnerable to stress and adversity. Their dominant coping strategy is emotion-focused, which often translates into excessive rumination on negative experiences, difficulty accepting life circumstances, and a lack of motivation to actively address challenges. The *emotional type functioning poorly with a low meaning in life* is characterised by a low sense of meaning in life, which results from a failure to reconcile with one's own fate, an inability to recognize the positive aspects of reality and a negative evaluation of previous choices and actions taken in relation to them. As a result, a young person in foster care presenting this type in the community may be perceived as a person with a tendency to react emotionally in a way that is inadequate to the situation. This perception can make it challenging to motivate the individual toward changes, as he or she lacks clearly defined life goals.

The third identified type, the *seeking type functioning well with an average meaning in life*, is characterized by reduced self-esteem, which may stem from an inability to accurately evaluate oneself. A person representing this type tends to have difficulty recognizing the positive elements that contribute to a healthy self-image. Despite this, an individual of this type possesses adequate personal resources, including a high level of self-efficacy and a high level of resilience, though he or she may remain unaware of these strengths. A person who represents *seeking type functioning well with an average meaning in life* has an average meaning in life, which arises from a rather critical evaluation of his or her past choices and decisions, a lack of a clearly defined vision of the future and difficulty in accepting his or her current life situation. Such a person is reminded by his or her immediate environment of his or her successes and the ability of confronting daily challenges. He or she is perceived as a person with potential, who, although lacking in self-belief, is nevertheless resourceful and confronts the difficulties of everyday life.

The fourth identified type, the *non-seeking type with a reduced meaning in life*, is characterized by low self-esteem, consisting of the belief that the actions he or she takes consistently fail to yield positive outcomes. He or she is characterised by an inability to confront life's adversities and lacks a preferred coping style for managing stress. Consequently, he or she experiences a low meaning in life which stems from a lack of life goals and reluctance to reflect on past decisions or engage in self-analysis. An individual in this group may be perceived by others as stagnant or dissatisfied, with no clear life plans and a lack of motivation to change or progress.

The first determinant of types was the level of self-esteem, as this variable is often an important element in other typologies (Breazeale & Lueg, 2011; Wysocka & Ostafińska-Molik, 2016). Self-efficacy or resilience are variables that manifest in everyday life through one's attitude towards difficulties and willingness to take up challenges, while meaning in life serves a component of the world of values and well-being, hence their presence in other typologies (Kurzępa, 2007; Zotova et al., 2016). It was a breakneck task to include in the type names all the variables that were involved in their extraction. Many proposals were rejected because their stylistic structure was questionable. It was decided to emphasize a meaning in life along with a global assessment of the type's quality of functioning. Hence, although each variable was significant in the constitution of the type, they were not included in the name itself. Efforts were made to ensure that the name reflected the image of a particular type as closely as possible.

The author's attempt at typology of foster care wards is an innovative effort, so it is difficult to relate it to direct results of this kind in other researchers. On the other hand, comparing the developed typology to student's or employee's typology seems to be a futile process. The literature of foster care most often is focused on *types of foster care children* according to the specific type of foster care they are in- family or institutional foster care (Gocman et al., 2013; Napiórkowska & Uliasz, 2011; Skalec, 2017) or the reason for placing the child in foster care (Skalec-Ruczyńska, 2023; Szymańczak, 2016).

CONCLUSION

The distinguished typology of young people in foster care who are preparing for independence provides a foundation for potential practical applications. The ability to classify individual adolescents from foster care into specific types may serve as a valuable guideline for refining caregiving approaches and enhancing strategies aimed at preparing them for independent living. Nowadays, numerous existential difficulties are observed among young people. Diagnosis of the level of individual personal resources and the potential possibility of stuffing their development, can

contribute to the formation of a strong meaning in life. As a consequence, this can prevent existential frustration, a sense of emptiness or noogenic depression. In the organization of foster care emphasis should be placed on strengthening the personality through educative situations, activities that develop interests. Also important is fostering the self-reflection processes of wards by means of intensifying forms of psychological and pedagogical support. Taking into account the difficulties faced by wards in the road of becoming independent, it would be appropriate to raise their awareness of the role of the meaning of life for psychological well-being in contact with them. The goal should be point out the possibilities of individual discovery of the meaning of life and the dangers of frustration and existential emptiness. The types indicated have certain potential that should be taken into account in the design of workshop and training prevention programs. The use of foster care wards typology can be a useful tool to support educators, coordinators or foster parents much like the use of the Enneagram (Franc, 2021).

This typology is intended to identify the type of foster care ward in order to individualize support and therapeutic interventions. It is a path for indicating assistance adequate to the needs of the wards with deep respect and consideration of their strengths and weaknesses. An indication of the type can be helpful to professionals working in foster care, but also to the wards themselves as a cause for self-reflection and motivation.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

The selected group is characterised by frequent exploitation, hence resistance to participating in research of a scientific nature is a common phenomenon. Increasing the number of respondents to the survey could enhance the statistical power and enable more generalizations of the findings to the broader population. Moreover, future research should consider incorporating additional psychosocial resources and individual differences that may play a crucial role in adaptive functioning. Variables such as assertiveness and tendency to worry could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the transition to independence among foster youth.

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TYPY WYCHOWANKÓW PIECZY ZASTĘPCZEJ PRZYGOTOWUJĄCYCH SIĘ DO USAMODZIELNIENIA

Wprowadzenie: Przygotowanie do usamodzielnienia jest jednym z głównych celów pieczy zastępczej. Typologia młodzieży z pieczy zastępczej na podstawie ich poczucia sensu życia oraz zasobów osobistych takich jak prężność, radzenie sobie ze stresem, poczucie własnej skuteczności oraz samoocena, może być wskazówką jak należy przygotowywać młodych ludzi do wej-

ścia w dorosłe życie.

Cel badań: Celem badań było ustalenie typów młodzieży z pieczy zastępczej, która przygotowuje się do usamodzielnienia na podstawie posiadanego przez nich poczucia sensu życia oraz wybranych zasobów takich jak prężność, radzenie sobie ze stresem, poczucie własnej skuteczności oraz samoocena.

Metoda badań: Autorka wykorzystała sondaż diagnostyczny jako metodę zbierania danych. Próbę badawczą stanowiło 230 wychowanków instytucjonalnej i rodzinnej pieczy zastępczej z Polski w wieku 16–20 lat. Zastosowano pięć narzędzi badawczych: autorską Skalę Sensu Życia, Skalę Pomiaru Prężności Ogińskiej-Bulik i Juczyńskiego, Kwestionariusz Radzenia Sobie w Sytuacjach Stresowych Endlera i Parkera, Skalę Uogólnionej Własnej Skuteczności Schwarzera, Jerusalema i Juczyńskiego oraz Skalę Samooceny Rosenberga.

Wyniki: Wśród młodych osób, przygotowujących się do usamodzielnienia z pieczy zastępczej, można wyróżnić 4 typy wychowanków, którzy różnią się pomiędzy sobą pod względem poczucia sensu życia i wybranych zasobów osobistych.

Wnioski: Jakość wejścia w dorosłość młodzieży z pieczy zastępczej może zależeć od typu, który reprezentują. Uwzględnienie przynależności wychowanka do określonego typu może determinować proces przygotowania do bycia samodzielnym.

Słowa kluczowe: piecza zastępcza, typy wychowanków, proces usamodzielnienia