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Self-authoring characteristics of the Montessori School graduates**

Summary

The modern world requires a new mindset for people to enable them to become self-evaluating human beings. Kegan (1994) termed this complex system of mind the self-authorship. This is the ability to generate belief systems and intrapersonal states internally. The self-authorship analyses are culturally diverse. This paper presents two theories, namely the concept of self-authorship by Baxter Magolda (1998, 2001) and Obuchowski's (2000, 2006) theory of self-authoring personality. The latter remains a framework of the description of central psychosocial attributes for the self-authoring personality of Montessori School graduates. The self-authoring studies of diagnostic character aimed at qualification of the authoring personality standard as well as subjective denotations of authoring attributes of the Montessori School graduates. The study covered 69 former students (56.5% women, 43.5% men) of the state Primary Montessori School in Lublin. The self-authoring personality standard was qualified using The Self-Authoring Personality Questionnaire elaborated by Obuchowski and colleagues (Blachnio & Obuchowski, 2011). The personal denotations conferred on authoring attributes were examined by means of the questionnaire My Experiences based on the adaptation of Self-Confrontation Method by Hermans (1991). The level of self-authoring personality in female and male groups was high and characterised by similar values. In the personal statements the persons being examined described themselves as those who perceive themselves as a source of behaviour and the own aims were object of their projects designed for accomplishment in relation with the other people. As follows from the data, the participants of the study acquired skills indispensable for making individual decisions about themselves and the outer world.

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Introduction

The aim of the paper is to analyse the issue of the person-creating idea of man and its application to confirm the Montessori's education assumptions (1967, 1975, 1992, 2007). The theory of self-authoring person is developed in world psychology. Therefore, in the first part of the paper the above mentioned idea is presented to realise the interpretive perspectives of human development. The fundamental approach for this study is grounded in the optics of Obuchowski's theory. However, the Author provides a broader outlook, referring to the concepts of Kegan (1982, 1992) and Baxter Magolda (2001, 2009, 2014).

The intended effect of the Montessori education is to gain independence and mature personality of self-authoring type. That is why it was Montessori Primary School graduates in the late phase of adolescence that were studied, which is the subject of the second part of the paper. The exploration objective was to find an answer to the diagnostic problems: What is the level of the self-authoring personality of the Montessori Primary School graduates? and What subjective meanings assigned to the self-authoring characteristics do the Montessori school graduates have? The study covered 69 former students (56.5% women, 43.5% men) of the only state Montessori Primary School in Poland, located in Lublin. The self-authoring personality standard was qualified using The Self-Authoring Personality Questionnaire elaborated by Obuchowski and colleagues (Blachnio, 2003; Blachnio & Obuchowski, 2011). Moreover, the personal denotations conferred on the authoring attributes were studied using questionnaire My Experiences based on the adaptation of the Self-Confrontation Method by Hermans (1991). The attained results were discussed in the third part of the paper. Based on the obtained results the members of the group studied can be considered to possess self-authoring characteristics. They assigned original meanings which make the theoretical model of authorship personal.

The concept of self-authorship

According to Kegan (1982, 1994) a contemporary man needs a new mindset to enable him or her to become a self-initiating and self-evaluating human being, ready to develop values, beliefs, convictions, standards of their lives. Thus a man achieves a personal authority (Kegan, 1994). Kegan (1994) called this complex organisation of mind *self-authorship*. He defined it as the capacity of internal generation belief

systems, intrapersonal states and interpersonal loyalties. Self-authorship is a result of a shift from allowing the external authority to influence one's decisions, values, and beliefs toward the internal ownership of one's values and beliefs (Ashlee et. al., 2017–2018).

According to psychologists, exploitation of the mind does not only refer to cognition. It embodies the capacity to build and organise meanings in the process of thinking, feeling, and relating to the self and others. The organising principles used to assign meaning are based on the subject–object relationship (Berger et. al., 2007).

The theory of self-evolution in the adulthood is rooted in studies of Jean Piaget. It is of constructive-developmental character showing how individuals construct meaning-making. According to Kegan, individuals determine meaning in the space between their experiences and reactions to them. “In each meaning-making structure, there are elements individuals are aware of and have control over (what Kegan calls object) and elements that have control over them (what Kegan calls subject)” (Baxter Magolda & King, 2007, p. 495).

Kegan reviewed the development of consciousness understood as the level of mentality including the organisation and interpretation of experiences. He distinguished five levels of the consciousness order from the birth to the adulthood. The first three are consistent with the main stages of development described by Piaget (Luken, 2009). Kegan claims that people can reach the fourth level: the self-authoring mind, and sometimes even the fifth stage of development: the self-transforming mind. However, this is only at the fourth level that people can take up an intellectual approach “apart” from their roles as well as others' expectations and search for own identity. The ability to generalise across abstractions is evident. One can free himself from social influences of parents, friends and other authorities. Moreover one can construct his/her own vision of the world and himself.

The fact that others question the subject's ideas does not necessarily create a feeling of loss of self-esteem. The subject appreciates the positive aspect of the conflict, the criticism and the differences. They feel responsible, for their own state of mind as well. They see themselves (also) ‘through their own eyes’. They are able to define boundaries. The subject will determine his or her own (learning) career based on a personal vision and will take on challenges to develop even further. They are able to switch easily between roles (Luken, 2009, p. 91).

The process of control comes from the inside of a man (Kegan, 1994; Luken, 2009,). According to Kegan (1994), this transition from the third to the fourth level of thinking is the breakthrough in the adulthood. As a result individuals achieve a new identity: self-authorship.

Baxter Magolda (2001, 2008) advanced the Kegan's constructive developmental theory supplementing it with epistemological, intrapersonal, and interpersonal dimensions that conceptualise people's interpretation and analysis of their experiences. Self-authorship is defined as a holistic, meaning-making capacity (Boes et al., 2010), and also an internal ability to construct one's beliefs, identity, and social relations (Baxter Magolda, 2014).

It is characterized by the internal generation and coordination of one's beliefs, values, and internal loyalties, rather than depending on external beliefs, values and interpersonal loyalties (Boes et al., 2010, p. 4).

Self-authorship extends beyond critical thinking or making informed judgments because it is not a skill; it is rather a way of making meaning of the world and one's self (Baxter Magolda, 2009, p. 6).

According to the researchers (Baxter Magolda, 1998, 2001; Kegan, 1994), a developmental path to self-authorship leads from the reliance on external rules and roles to the internal reasoning standards. Baxter Magolda (2004) includes four stages of reaching self-authorship. They are based on the external formulae and crossroads as well as the author's own life development and internal foundations (Baxter Magolda, 2009; Baxter Magolda et al., 2012). In the process of authoring one's personal life, there must be developed three different foundations: a cognitive system as well as intra and interpersonal domains (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2004). The cognitive dimension of self-authorship refers to: "How do I know?" (Baxter Magolda, 2001, p. 15; Synstelien, 2013, p. 46). Self-authorship requires trust in one's ability both to construct knowledge and establish personal values, as well as "to commit to both" (Baxter Magolda, 1998, p. 147). In turn, the crucial question of self-authorship's intrapersonal dimension is: "Who am I?" (Baxter Magolda, 2001, p. 15; Synstelien, 2013, p. 46). The identity aspect includes establishing an "integrated identity characterized by understanding one's own particular history, confidence, capacity for autonomy and connection, and integrity" (Baxter Magolda, 2004, p. 6). The third interpersonal dimension of self-authorship asks: "How do I want to construct relationships with others?" (Baxter Magolda, 2001, p. 15; Synstelien, 2013, p. 46). The goal is to enter into "mature relationships, characterized by respect for both one's own and others' particular identities and cultures and by productive collaboration to integrate multiple perspectives" (Baxter Magolda, 2004, p. 6). All three dimensions change with the increasing individual's self-authorship process.

Kazimierz Obuchowski's theory of the self-authoring personality

In the second half of the 20th century the evolution of self-determination called a revolution of subjects by Obuchowski (2000, 2001, 2006), began (and is still in progress) in the consciousness of a significant number of people. The transformation represents a response to the conditions created by global, fluid reality. People took over normative functions of culture building personal standards of behaviour and developing their creative potential. The creation of culture in oneself consists in organising adequate universal knowledge. Thus personally determined meanings can compensate for the inability of modern civilisation to provide standards of right and wrong. Universal knowledge enables the search for solutions to the fundamental questions: What is man? Who am I as a human being in this world? Independent thinking is necessary for values reconstruction. Additionally, one must possess the ability to act according to the personally planned and future-oriented tasks. A person characterised by a self-authoring personality transforms and interprets the information affecting him or her. As a result plans of life can be developed.

The self-authors develop as subjects depending on their standards. They do not approve of the role to objectify them even in extremely absorbing activities (identified with an established concept of themselves). However, if identification takes place, it is conscious and reflective, out of choice and a subject to control (Blachnio, 2003; Obuchowski, 2000, 2001, 2006).

Characteristics constructing a self-authoring person help to describe unique dimensions of its functioning such as: being a subject and being a person as well as a subjective evaluation standard. Abstract thinking, necessary in creating various flexible models of the world and personal identity, is a core of being a subject. This is a fundamental, permanent and dynamic process of critical interpretation of the outside world. At the same time it establishes attitudes towards it and designs appropriate plans of actions (aiming at a personally created vision of the world and himself). The self-author changes as she or he operationalises his or her complex visions of the world and themselves and gets involved in the tasks resulting from the personal philosophy (not only the wish to transform). The self-empowerment is a necessary condition to deal with oneself in the more and more permissive society and indifferent reality (Blachnio, 2003; Brygola, 2016; Obuchowski, 2006).

The essential characteristics of the self-authoring and the status of a person are: the psychological distance, the on-going development of personality, and a distinct purpose of life. An individual becomes a person as soon as he or she learns how to maintain psychological space and how to develop personality naturally following the chosen goal of life (Blachnio, 2003). The psychological distance defines the cognitive skills of personal control of characteristics that come from both the

external world and being the product of self. Maintaining the distance influences the development of an autonomous attitude and responsibility for oneself and one's choices. For empowerment a person must objectify its internal life, the subjective world of such experiences as pain, fear, joy, etc. It's my pain or anxiety, but it's not me – it's in me/belongs to me (Obuchowski, 2000).

Obuchowski defines the meaning of life as a unique idea of the future state requiring fulfilment. A distinct purpose of life plays a key role in the lifecycle. When the subject develops his own concept, he is not only fitted like a glove to hand. This is the person's self-determination and the changes depend on the argument resources. However, the specific formula in itself is dead (Obuchowski, 2000).

The sense of life comes from mature reflection about the changing and complex reality. It also includes subjective standard of evaluation which is the third descriptive category of the self-author. This category is extremely significant. A subjective standard of evaluation means that the individual manages his or her actions with particular insight into the critical reasoning, aims, and consequences (Blachnio, 2003; Blachnio & Obuchowski, 2011).

The authorial personality type develops across the lifespan. There is no age limit to becoming a self-author. Moreover, a self-authoring personality is not given. For the whole life a person attempts to become a self-authoring being and in some circumstances he/she can succeed. Becoming a self-author represents a continuous process during active adaptation to the environmental conditions. An active adaptation can be described as the satisfactory adjustment to a world generated in a unique vision, as the dynamic tuning of personality to future states, the setting of which becomes a creative act. The creative orientation describes a complex cognitive-motivational conceptualisation of the self-in the future. The side effect of changes are the original personality properties, a new mindset. Thus, education could be considered as the support of the potential development maximising the responsibility for oneself. Moreover, the society plays a critical role in performing these necessary tasks.

Methodological approach

Research problems

The empirical analysis diagnoses the self-authoring personality of the Montessori Primary School graduates as well as the interpretation of school and life experiences of the respondents. There were made the following assumptions. Development is not a goal. This is a process contributing to further achievements. Development moves towards autonomy. The ability to self-construct and self-organi-

se confirms the Obuchowski's theory (2000, 2006). The environment favourable for development, including the school environment, provides opportunities for various tasks including the developmental ones and thus it supports their accomplishment. To develop, man must create numerous ways of thinking and behaviour as well as choose the most mature ones for himself and his surroundings. Montessori education plays an important role in their accomplishment (Bednarczuk, 2014, 2016).

There were formulated two research problems: "What is the level of the self-authoring personality of the Montessori Primary School graduates?" and "What subjective meanings assigned to the self-authoring characteristics do the Montessori school graduates have?". The cross-sectional questionnaire studies were designed.

Measures

The *Self-Authoring Personality Questionnaire* was elaborated by Obuchowski and colleagues (Blachnio, 2003; Blachnio & Obuchowski, 2011). The abridged version of the measure is composed of 67 items making up 14 subscales, and three dimensions of the self-authoring personality. The first dimension that is being a subject is built upon (A) possessing self-knowledge, (B) setting tasks based on the possessed knowledge, (C) choosing a method for tasks, (D) intelligent task performance, (E) intentional autonomy "to," (F) creative interpretation of desires, (G) generating the world personal model, (H) self-designing. Thus being a person is possible by creating (I) psychological distance, (J) path of personality development, (K) meaning in life. The third pillar of self-authoring personality is a consequence of establishing the attitude to oneself (L), to tasks (M), to the world (N). The 15th subscale is a control one. The participants respond in the four-point Likert scale from 'definitely yes' (3) to 'definitely no' (0).

In the study the reliability of the subscales was assessed using the Cronbach's alpha ranged from .54 (for the subscale D – Intelligent Task Performance) to .86 (for the subscale K – Meaning in Life). The reliability of the whole *Self-Authoring Personality Questionnaire* (after excluding the items making up the control subscale) was .96 (Brygola, 2016).

The respondents' specific experiences were studied using the questionnaire *My Experiences* based on the adaptation of *Self-Confrontation Method* elaborated by Hermans (1991). According to Hermans's and Hermans-Jansen's (2000) phenomenological and narrative concept the person is a responsible, reflective subject who can focus on the aspects of himself and situations considered to be important. The conscious, reflective comprehension of an experience is called valuation (Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 2000). It could be defined as a unit of meaning that is associated with the interpretation of a part of personal experience.

The questionnaire *My Experiences* helps the respondent to express in his own words what is important and specific and what is perceived as significant in his life. The adopted author's spreadsheet was used to stimulate the people's exploration of personal experiences and creation of valuations in order to identify self-authoring properties in the studied group. Valuations are created as a response to a set of open-ended, wide-range questions that get the person to involved in a dialogue with himself:

What was (is/will be as you expect) so important in your life that still affects your life today (has a big impact now / will have)? What person(s), experience or circumstances have influenced your life the most and are still evidently affecting you today (are affecting now / will have an impact in the future)? What tasks, goals and functions have played the most significant role in your life so far (nowadays / in the future)? What would you call yourself from the past (today / predict yourself in the future)? What was (is/will be) an attribute of your life and action? (Bednarczuk, 2016, p. 180).

Participants

The study covered 69 former students (56.5% women, 43.5% men) of the state primary school in Lublin where children are taught according to the principles of Montessori pedagogy. This is the only state Montessori Primary School in Poland. The basic conditions for the selection of the research group were the time of studies according to the Montessori principles and the age of former Montessori students. The minimum Montessori education period lasts 6 years. The majority of the respondents completed a whole, nine-year cycle of education at the Montessori kindergarten and school (65.25%). The decision was made that the research covers the 16–21-year-old graduates (43.5% were 18 and 56.5% were underage). The consolidation of identity and personality takes place in late adolescence. This is crucial for the research of self-authoring personality which requires reflection on life experiences. Moreover, the attitudes of young people of this age are less declarative than those of younger ones. Late adolescents are sensitive to existential issues to a great extent.

Procedure

The study applies both quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative research makes it possible to recognise the intensity of a particular phenomenon that is the self-authoring nature. Qualitative research allows to identify the emerging categories of self-authoring functioning of the persons. In the interpretative ap-

proach words are the research data (see Ayiro, 2012; Creswell, 2009; Nowell et al., 2017; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The data obtained in the survey were analysed based on the criteria: familiarising with the whole material, ordering according to the sense of the statements that correspond to the three constitutive dimensions of the authors' personality, comparing data fragments for similarities and differences between the meanings created by the respondents, grouping and labelling the emerging senses.

Results

The general level of the self-authoring personality of the Montessori Primary School graduates

The results were analysed to determine the self-authoring personality level in the studied group. The maximum overall result amounts to 186 points. As for the female group (N=39), the arithmetical mean of the self-authoring personality is $M = 137.41$ with the standard deviation being $SD = 21.28$. Similarly, in the male group (N=30) the arithmetical mean is $M = 136.1$ with the standard deviation $SD = 21.41$. As for the women group both the median (Me) and the modal (Mo) are 140 points proving to be the most frequent result. It should also be mentioned that half of the respondents had better results. However, in the male group the most common were the $Me = 137.5$ and the $Mo = 134$.

The further analysis using the parametric test of Student's *t*-distribution proved that the results of the self-authoring personality measurements in the female and male groups do not differ significantly ($t(62.315) = 0.253$; $p = n.i.$). Gender did not differentiate the respondents in terms of the overall outcome of self-authoring personality.

The obtained results were transformed into the normalised results (temporary norms, Blachnio, 2003). The level of self-authoring personality in both groups is high (sten 7) characterised by similar values. Only 4.3% of the former Montessori classes students obtained poor results. Thus 95.7% respondents are in the highest score range on the POA which categorises them as possessing self-authoring characteristics.

The unique concept of a person. Self-authoring attributes of the Montessori Primary School graduates

To answer the question: "What subjective meanings assigned to the self-authoring characteristics do the Montessori school graduates have?", the respondents'

statements were interpreted. The self-observations of the former Montessori students personalised the theoretical model of authorial disposition (Bednarczuk, 2016).

It was observed that the Montessori graduates qualify themselves in terms of “personal identity” (Rathus, 2004, p. 506), giving names of personality traits, e.g. independent, resilient, open, which is illustrated by the following characteristics: “I am a hard-working, conscientious, patient person who likes people” (18); “I am an open person, I appreciate my value, I also consider myself an empathic individual and sensitive to what is happening around me” (29); “I am faithful and honest” (45); “my features are perseverance, helpfulness and the ability to value things that are important to me” (51).

There were valuations concerning social roles such as those assigned to: daughter, sister, son, and grandson or roles resulting from actively built interpersonal relationships: colleague, friend. Therefore, it seems appropriate to conclude that the emerging concept of a person is not only “a kind of knowledge about himself, but a way of dealing with specific problems” (Obuchowski, 2000, p. 42), which is particularly noticeable in the descriptions: “I am more patient with others than with myself” (5); “I didn’t think I could do it; now I am proud of myself, I study and passed two final exams – in Polish and English”; (17) “I am a strong, resourceful person, every situation I am in I try to find the best solution” (28); “I try to accept criticism and put right what has been criticised; I try not to break down, just first look for a way out” (54); “I am a creative person, I like to learn new things, I know I can learn a lot; it is important to learn and develop, I want to remain a better person and do more for myself and society” (15), “I am dutiful, systematic – I complete what I initiated” (48); “I am characterised by resistance to unacceptable behaviour – the ability to cope in the peer group” (60).

It can be concluded that the surveyed graduates perceive themselves in terms of a person who is not just who he is but exists as an entirety of his abilities (Obuchowski, 1985). This belief is confirmed by the fact that the respondents not only *reflect on themselves but draw conclusions from these analyses*, which from the perspective of the self-authoring man theory *means the ability to respond to their own reality*: “Every year I become a better man, I discover the mistakes I have made and I do not make them anymore, I try to remain a good person; helpful and sensitive to the suffering of others” (4); “I have developed cleverer” (17) “I have become more impervious” (18); “I’ve changed, grown up, I have other priorities than before, I have also altered my character, I have become more independent and outspoken; I have changed my relations with others – I am open to new acquaintances” (21); “I am self-confident, determined, possess ideas which I implement, a definite contrast compared with that a few years ago” (50).

The above statements prove *the ability to distance from oneself*. This can be regarded both a key property of self-authoring man and a fundamental determinant of a person who keeps a psychological distance from his needs or desires and develops controlling the sense of his existence (Blachnio & Obuchowski, 2011; Obuchowski, 2006). Owing to the psychological distance, the people being examined perceive and emphasise the variability of personal features and properties, the constant evolution of attitudes and views with a sense of self-continuity. These changes are developmental as in the respondents' opinions, they allow to reach a higher level of functioning as well enable coping with external and internal reality. The Montessori Primary School graduates specified features and at the same time demonstrated the optimisation of their own abilities related to independence, autonomy and maturity. As a result, they do not give up in the complicated situations or those resulting in strong feelings, they themselves control them. Their identity is maintained due to their constant change.

The ability to design the concept of oneself results from the constant development of the motivational system and rationality in making specific choices. As follows from the graduates' statements, they can determine the real motives of their own actions. In this way the former Montessori School students got prepared for building themselves into free and responsible persons, i.e.,

- relying primarily on themselves: "I'm an individualist – I have the greatest impact on my life, and subsequently on people I meet" (3); "I try to rely on myself, I have my goals, but I still don't know how to achieve them" (35);
- becoming self-commanding: "I am a strong, resourceful person. In every situation, I try to look for the best solution" (28); "I am very independent so no one affects my life, apart from my parents" (59);
- creating themselves: "Rather, I have created a profile of the character of the man whom I would like to be and I strive for it" (64); "I set many goals for myself which I know I can only accomplish through my own work and commitment" (37);
- choosing subjective activities: "It is I who ultimately makes decisions" (33); "I have limited my life activity to a few major fronts but I devote myself to them with no less passion than I used to" (39); "I am independent of others in making decisions" (55);
- directing their behaviour towards others: "I try to be more open in the field of interpersonal relations" (8); "I am open to new acquaintances" (21); "I am surrounded by many good people, I learn a lot from them" (3).

A free and independent person does not have to be an extreme individualist. "When it comes to doing something new or difficult, I am aware that I will manage.

However, this does not mean that I exclude help. When the need arises, I can ask for help" (36). An independent person, with developed self-authoring properties, lives among people and, if necessary, can rely on their help because help means support for the independent development. The mentioned freedom of the person gives rise to a requirement and commitment. The analysis of the statements allows to conclude that the respondents assume responsibility for their ideas and solutions, decisions or more broadly for their own lives: "I try to make responsible and mature decisions" (14); "I am a strong, resourceful person. Every situation I am in I try to find the most effective solution" (28); "I am quite energetic, self-confident and care very much about everything; it seems to me that if you want to have something achieved, you do it yourself" (36); "I am well organised, responsible; I want to have everything under control" (57); "Assertiveness, creativity and taking responsibility for my actions are my important features" (62).

As follows from the above conceptualisations the Montessori Primary School graduates are able to use a hierarchical code that is abstract thinking. This guarantees being capable of setting and achieving life goals. The evaluations show that the Montessori Primary School graduates are able reflect on themselves, their own causality, results of their actions. As a consequence they constitute themselves. Some persons in the group could term directly the properties of their mind as long-term thinking, reliability, self-awareness, goal setting and their consistent pursuance, regularity as well as patience to learn, mathematical thinking and the ability to deduce logically. The basic property of self-authoring functioning dynamism of development is presented in statements: "I'm developing as comprehensively as possible; I'm learning many different things, I set myself goals, I feel that I AM ABLE TO, that I can" (52); "Travelling, volunteering, striving for happiness, not undertaking things against my wishes" (31); "I do what I love and get energy from it" (39); "My crazy head characterises me, I don't like sitting immobile, and I have to be doing something" (65).

The enumerated features are the standard of the person's unique projects implementation. The above statements define their authors in the context of possibilities and abilities, awareness of having a causative potential. Hence, the persons with self-authoring characteristics prove to be aware of their own determination: "I am persistent in fighting for what I want" (16), and resourcefulness: "I am an efficient, self-confident person who likes to lead people and highly values social skills and having a lot of acquaintances" (64). None of the valuations is wishful, of the I would like type. Moreover, the common forms of valuations: I want to be, I strive constantly, I am persistent in striving, I focus on, I am determined, I look for etc. point out to constant search for self-determination, attempts to reach unceasing development.

The self-authors express their own individuality strongly and emphasise personal independence in the following way: “I can manage alone, I am independent” (13); “it is important to be myself finally and care less about the opinions of other people” (27), which according to Obuchowski’s theory can be read as a result of the dominance of the subjective standard of valuation.

The perspective of self-development, a deliberately chosen course for “wanting and doing”, are combined in the respondents’ beliefs with the need *to expend considerable efforts* to achieve self-fulfilment: “the desire to make dreams come true through dedication and hard work” (5); “the constant pursuit of happiness through self-development, running and striving towards financial freedom” (10); “I set myself many goals and challenges that I know I can only achieve through my own work and commitment; I am persistent in pursuing my goals and try to avoid shortcuts” (37); “I am determined and I pursue my goal” (44); “strong will is my essential feature” (56).

Some people in the group emphasised diligence, perseverance and consistency in achieving goals which should lead to the formation of intentional autonomy “to”. The valuations stressing the personal qualities were pointed out: “*ability to make a creative interpretation of desires: I take many actions that bring important benefits*” (19); “*creativity is an important feature*” (62); “I am a person open to others and new possibilities” (56). It follows from the cited opinions that the people being examined strive for something, reach for, tune to what is the result of undertaking creative activities, to what is formulated not under the influence of the past but under the influence of expectations (Obuchowski, 1985). The Montessori Primary School graduates are aware of the importance of their own actions or states that are to take place which is a necessary condition for distant motivation. The above valuations prove also great awareness of their own strengths, personal abilities and the fact of emphasizing the autonomous factor that is the self-chosen activity.

The majority of the Montessori graduates seem to be optimistic and satisfied: “I do not lack self-confidence and positive thinking” (39); “I try to be an open, smiling person” (52); “an attribute of my life is joy” (56). However, they soberly assess their own future: “I still have to obtain qualifications” (6); “graduation, mastering the language, emigration and life stabilisation” (9); “I am trying to achieve good academic results (...); I realise that this is important and I put all my effort into it” (47).

As noted earlier, different types of people coexist in the studied group. Among the analysed valuations some statements showed the dominance of the objective standard as a reference point for the valuations being made: “when I do something, I often wonder what they will think or how it will affect them, it deters me from certain activities because I’m afraid of other people’s reaction, I often take my friends’ failures personally” (35), while the others illustrate the constant human struggle

with the choice between the objective and subjective standards: “the environment pressure and the desire to improve are important now” (54).

Conclusions

According to Baxter Magolda and King (2007) the ability to author one’s thinking, feeling and social relating is inherent in the prosperous operation in the adulthood. However the self-authorship starts in the period of adolescence. Secondary schools affect fostering the early stages of self-authorship development (Meszaros & Lane, 2010). Pizzolato (2003) found out that many college students had self-authoring ways of knowing before college. However, the extent of the the ways of getting to know becomes more advanced during studies. Based on McGowan`s (2016) analysis, self-authorship was mostly developed in the college-aged individuals. On the other hand, the pre-academic self-authorship characteristics were found in the individuals experiencing marginalisation or challenging situations (e.g., racial minorities, homosexuals, and at-risk students) during adolescence. Both adolescents and young adults were the subject of studies by Blachnio (2003). The Montessori Primary School graduates were the object of studies in late adolescence (Bednarczuk, 2016).

The diagnosis of the Montessori Primary School graduates indicated the educational situations experienced by the persons favoured the ability of choosing values and converting them in themselves. Learning conditions supported the self-authoring characteristics development. The school environment promoted self-esteem formation as well as facilitated the development of a positive emotional attitude to the self and the world. Such approaches are significant in the process of the abstract codes activation. The prepared learning environment stimulated graduates to be responsible for themselves. This enabled the satisfaction of the need to be and improve yourself.

The obtained research results cannot be generalised. They represent the image of a particular group of people. They are an expression of an individuality-personality standard of Montessori classes graduates covered by the diagnosis. Nor can it be made to larger populations. In such a case, the presented research results can be regarded as an incipient development model. The addressed issue requires further investigations. However, the accomplishment of the project provided a clear and important premise that can and should be executed. Further studies should include a greater number of the former Montessori class graduates. The use of a control group to compare the self-authorship development will be advisable. Furthermore, research should cover larger samples distributed across cultures.

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