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EXPERIENCING HYBRID CHILDHOOD IN THE AGE OF "INTENSIVE PARENTING" – RESEARCH RESULTS*

Introduction: The increasing share of media in children's lives determines the content of children's experiences and contributes to the emergence of new images of childhood. Today, it is taking place in the limitless digital space while freedom in the physical space is being restricted. The resonance of the changes is evident in many areas of children's lives and affects how they function.

Research Aim: This study aims to explore the manifestations of children's experiences of childhood in a fluid physical-digital world. The category of "experiencing" denotes both the modes in which children function in the intertwining offline and online spaces as well as the emotions involved.

Method: Research material was collected through focus group interviews with nineteen children aged 8–10. Data was subsequently analyzed using thematic analysis.

Results: Following the analysis, it was possible to draw a map of themes and codes of meaning. "Hybrid childhood" proved to be the primary theme, with several sub-themes relating to children's experience of contemporary childhood. The secondary theme of "intensive parenting" emerged alongside, reflecting children's emotions prompted by the dissent to being imposed a vision of childhood by adults.

Conclusions: Children naturally enter into the existing reality and move freely between the traditional and online playgrounds, although they are definitely aware of the differences between them. Nonetheless, experiencing hybrid childhood in the age of intensive parenting involves children's dissent to their parents imposing unreasonable limitations and restrictions on engaging online, with which they themselves do not comply. Thus, the children articulate the need for autonomy and participation in deciding about themselves. They challenge the arguments based on the commonplace belief that, because of their age, adults are entitled to more rights than children.

Keywords: hybrid childhood, intensive parenting, media, children's agency, contemporary children's playgrounds, thematic analysis

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary reflection concerned with childhood displays interesting facets. Researchers from various disciplines attempt to reconstruct images of childhood and analyze categories that emerge as a result of changes in the world today. The latter include phenomena that affect the functioning and lives of children, e.g. war, emigration, refugeeism, violence against children, child prostitution, child trafficking, etc. (Davidson, 2005; Watters, 2007; Lisowska and Łojko, 2022). However, it needs to be noted that an increasing number of studies also examine categories relating to children's agency or their participation and active involvement in social life (Lansdown, 2001; Percy-Smith and Thomas, 2010; Hayward, 2020; Kowalik-Olubińska, 2021). Childhood researchers also engage in a dialogue about children's entanglement in the common world they inherit, inhabit and share with others in the 21st century, a world shaped by, e.g. the legacy of anthropogenic environmental destruction, global inequality, mobility and migration (Taylor, 2013; Pacini-Ketchabaw et al., 2015; Taylor and Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2019).

Exploring children's perspectives on their relationship with state-of-the-art technologies appears particularly relevant. For present-day children, the digital space is also an inherited world in which they are born and grow up and in which they are likely to function throughout their future lives. Therefore, one can hardly disagree with the proposition that it is the media that largely determines the content of children's experiences today and contributes to the marked difference which distinguishes the images of modern childhood from their pre-digital equivalents. The most salient difference is the so-called "spatial mobility" of children, which used to manifest itself in free outdoor play but has now been restricted to the premises of one's home or the confined spaces of activities organized for children by adults (Holt et al., 2015; Wooley and Griffin, 2015; Rixon et al., 2019). In casual conversations, it is common to hear claims that modern childhood is passive due to the fact that it largely occurs in front of screens and monitors. Such negative assessments are often made by adults who nostalgically reminisce about their own outdoor childhood experiences. Paradoxically, the representatives of the same adult generation have, to some degree, contributed to limiting children's unrestrained play, locking them up in rooms filled with gaming devices and gadgets. The motivations which lie at the core of the phenomenon include concern for children's safety, efforts to reduce the risks a child may be exposed to outside their homes and control every area in a child's life (Rixon et al., 2019). According to researchers, the evident shift in adult attitudes consists in a transition towards "intensive parenting", as adults are held accountable by society for every aspect of a child's life, which in the long term may result in restrictions on children's freedom and liberty (Faircloth, 2014).

It would seem that modern children compensate for the lack of free play in traditional outdoor locations through play online. It is there that they spend much

of their time (Smahel et al., 2020) creating their digital world (Iwanicka, 2020) and generating their child culture (Dziekońska, 2020). For instance, the mobile app TikTok has enjoyed much popularity recently, enabling children to satisfy their need to be with peers, to do something together and to share their e-creations with others (Dziekońska, 2023). Children also display considerable interest in multi-player online games, which, according to some researchers, can help them master new skills, develop social interaction and even enhance players' agential and communal sense of efficacy and self-esteem (Shoshani and Krauskopf, 2021). Adults are often surprised and not infrequently concerned to learn that children aptly navigate digital spaces, spending their childhoods there. The picture of contemporary childhood is often at odds with the visions of childhood that adults entertain based on their own memories and experiences. It may, therefore, be worthwhile to undertake a scientific inquiry to examine how childhood is changing and how contemporary children experience it.

RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTION

The aim of this study was to explore the manifestations of children's experience of childhood in a fluid physical-digital world. On the one hand, the category of "experiencing" was adopted to determine how children function in the intertwining offline and online spaces. On the other, this study sought to highlight the emotional response in children resulting from presence in both traditional and online playgrounds. Thus, the scope of research centered around two questions: How do children spend their childhood in the collective offline and online spaces? What emotions are prompted in children as a result of being in the physical and digital world? In planning and conducting the research, the identity assumptions formulated within contemporary childhood studies were adhered to. With regard to the main premises of the paradigm, it may be noted that childhood constitutes a "social construct" shaped by socio-cultural influences, while the child is perceived as an influential social actor who is both subject to social processes and influences the functioning of society through their attitudes (James and Prout 1997; Qvortrup et al., 2009).

RESEARCH METHOD AND SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Data was collected by means of focus group interviews with children aged 8–10, conducted in late 2022 and early 2023 at three primary schools (a rural school, a school in a small town, and a school in a province capital). The schools were selected deliberately, in a non-random manner. The interviews took place at the

institutions known to the author beforehand, whose principals declared an interest in that particular research. Similarly, the selection of interviewees consisted of inviting persons within the predefined age range who were willing to share experiences relating to the issue in question. Ultimately, a total of four focus groups were formed (three groups of four and one group of seven persons), with twelve girls and seven boys. The interviews were captured on a voice recorder, and their content was transcribed.

The choice of data collection method stemmed from the desire to create an unconstrained space for research participants to interact, thus eliciting more "spontaneous, expressive and emotional views than in individual [...] interviews" (Kvale, 2011, p. 126). Krzyżanowski observes that "a peculiar and unique constitutive trait of focus group research is the actual 'nature' of such groups" (2011). It was, therefore, crucial that the children may freely share their experiences and reflections on a topic which had aroused their keen interest over the past several years. After all, it appears that we still know too little about how children understand their involvement in the digital space, which has become inextricably fused with the physical space. Compiling statistical data on the time spent online and the sites visited by children will not suffice if a comprehensive picture of contemporary childhood is to be obtained. It would be worthwhile to set such information against in-depth analyses of the meanings children attach to their being in the physical-digital world.

Secondly, it is considered vital that, during the interview, the children should not equate the person of the researcher with the teacher, who might somehow judge their statements or expect specific answers. By and large, children are not used to having their voices taken seriously in discussions on important topics (Gawlicz and Röhrborn, 2014). According to Zwiernik (2015), "in a genuine attempt to find out about children's perspectives, it is necessary to dispense with unjustified protectionism towards their statements and, showing them respect and patience, listen attentively to what they have to say" (p. 94). Thus, the author made sure that during the interviews the role of the researcher was reduced to that of a "discreet animator" (Kubinowski, 2011, p. 214) or a moderator who maintains communicative dynamics and above all listens to the interviewees (Krzyżanowski, 2011, p. 258).

STATISTICAL DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

Data collection using the focus group method followed an interview design that included several "pre-set" conversation themes relating to the experience of childhood in the physical-digital world. However, during the interviews, other themes surfaced quite distinctly, having been brought up by the interviewees themselves, as children spoke of their parents, who were reportedly fairly negative about their digital activities. When analyzing the data, the primary ("pre-set") and secondary (elic-
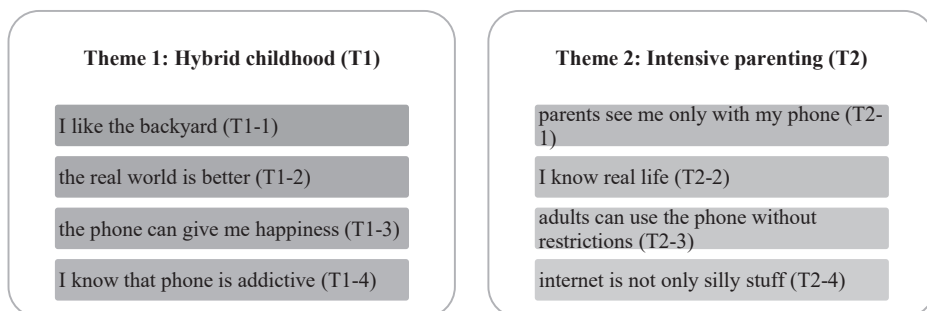
ited) themes (after Krzyżanowski, 2011, p. 267) were juxtaposed and interpreted, relying on thematic analysis according to Braun and Clarke (2022). The latter method enables continuous immersion in the data, starting with transcription through familiarizing oneself with the data set, encoding the data, preliminary theme generation, and thematic development to defining and naming themes. At each stage, the researcher engages in a "reflective dialogue" with the data, as it were. The method thus provides an opportunity to discover processes and make interpretations, as well as promotes the self-development of the researcher (Braun and Clark, 2006).

RESULTS

Thematic analysis of the research material yielded a number of codes of meaning (sub-themes), which derived from the problem questions asked during the interviews. They were combined into one common theme, designated as "hybrid childhood". However, when talking to the children about their being in the fluid physical-digital world and the associated emotional response, a strong need to express dissent to having a vision of childhood imposed by adults was noted. Children openly admitted that adults constantly negate how they experience their childhood and control children's participation in the digital world. The theme was raised by the children, on which I elaborated by following up with further questions addressed to the children. The material collected in this fashion proved to contain several codes of meaning that were subsumed under the second broader theme of "intensive parenting". The name of the category draws on the phenomenon described in the theoretical section of the study, i.e. the observed cultural change associated with increasing parental control. A detailed map of the codes of meaning and themes is provided in Figure 1.

Figure 1.
Map of themes and codes of meaning determined through thematic analysis

Theme 1: Hybrid childhood (T1)	Theme 2: Intensive parenting (T2)
I like the backyard (T1-1)	parents see me only with my phone (T2-1)
the real world is better (T1-2)	I know real life (T2-2)
the phone can give me happiness (T1-3)	adults can use the phone without restrictions (T2-3)
I know that phone is addictive (T1-4)	internet is not only silly stuff (T2-4)

Source: Author's own study.

T1: Hybrid childhood

With regard to leisure activities, it was characteristic of the children's statements that they responded enthusiastically to questions about the traditional playground (T1-1). When the latter was referred to, the children unanimously admitted that they knew very well what playgrounds were and that they enjoyed spending time there: "Of course, we know such playgrounds. I go out with my friends to such a patch to play football" (D13). Other girls talked about their outdoor activities: "I go out with my younger brother to... I have that little square on my estate, or I go out with my friends out on the snow, if there's snow. I go rollerblading, I go scootering" (D15); "When we go to my grandmother's, I leave my phone there, and I walk in the woods there and play in the snow" (D10). The children also stressed that comparisons between traditional and online playgrounds were unjustified. They believed that they are thoroughly different leisure spaces: "You can't compare it with the kind of playground we play at because we're sitting like that, we watch while someone's playing, for example" (D18). It appears that the main difference children perceive between outdoor and online activities is the spatial mobility characteristic of the offline world.

Although the children spoke very animatedly about how they spend their time outdoors, they did at times express a kind of longing for more activity in the physical space involving their parents, for example:

> When I was about four years old, my dad and I used to go. It was a very interesting holiday, and I didn't use the phone at all at the time. We didn't watch TV, and it felt very cool. We'd go into town or just play, and it was such a good time. I'd develop a lot more then and discovered lots of things (D10)

In a hybrid childhood, children highly value the "real world" (T1-2). When discussing their functioning in the collective physical-digital world, they unanimously felt that the former was more important to them. This is because the physical world is distinguished by its materiality and the possibility of being experienced using all senses. The children cited numerous examples: "For example, when there's a zoo, you can see the zoo on the internet, but you cannot touch the animals, for example" (D9). Another example:

> The feelings on the internet are not so great. For example, when I go online or something, it's not so cool as when I get something in person, and then I have stronger emotions, and I'm happier than seeing it on the internet and just looking at it (D2)

The children emphasized the realness of the physical world as opposed to the "ideal" and "pasted" online world: "In the real world, you have your family. Then you live... the air... everything is live, normal. And when you're online all the time, it's just eyes already... you have to wear glasses, and your head is splitting"

(D12). Online relationships are also different according to the children: "If there are friends online, you won't have them in real life, if you're just online all the time, nobody will like you because sometimes it won't be possible to spend time with you" (D9).

Although children do value "real life", there was also evident excitement and positive emotions displayed when they talked about their being online (T1-3). The children offered numerous examples of online activities that help them pursue their passions and interests: dancing, drawing, gardening, learning languages, cooking, creating books or gymnastics routines. They listed a number of apps that enable them to do this, including TikTok, Snapchat, Duolingo, Wattpad, Instagram, and YouTube Shorts. It was quite evident during the conversations that they enjoy and are able to combine their functioning in the physical and digital space, e.g. they watch acrobatic routines on TikTok and, inspired by those, invent their own; they find interesting recipes on Instagram and use them subsequently to prepare a meal for the family, read books written online by other users and then write their own texts and share them.

One may have the impression that being online fills the children's daily life, while technology intertwines with drawing, running in the yard or playing football: "When I'm drawing, I don't use the internet, and it seems to me: I might go back and watch something, something interesting, like" (D2). The phone is undoubtedly also a means to deal with boredom. When children do not have an idea for a leisure activity, they can go online and do something interesting: watch videos shared by others, play games, or write to someone. On the other hand, when internet access is limited for some reason, it is sometimes difficult for them to find an alternative: "My phone is dead, so we sort of think: Well, what to do? Because we don't have crayons or markers to draw with or we don't feel like it, then there's not much to do" (D14).

Fascination with the digital world may also involve problematic emotions and undesirable behaviors, such as dependence on technology and internet access. Children are aware of such issues (T1-4). Indeed, during a conversation concerning hybrid childhood, one of the themes which emerged was related to the excessive use of media at the expense of spending time with peers outdoors. One of the girls expressed exactly such concerns: "I'm simply afraid because now there's this invented disease; I think it's called telephonophobia, meaning that children or adults use these phones too much until it's just such an addiction" (D12). Another interviewee spoke very knowledgeably about her experience of excessive phone use:

D15: There are loads of apps to prevent a child from becoming addicted. I've got one, for example. And when I was maybe a little bit addicted before and then I started being more naughty, neglecting my duties, my parents got on it. First, I had an hour, and then I had 45 minutes because I was gradually getting more naughty.
B: And did you feel this too, or did your parents tell you so?

D15: I didn't feel at all that much. I thought to myself, I'll improve later, but it didn't happen. Well, finally it went down to 15 minutes and in my opinion, that's enough time now. For example, my friend has an hour or so on normal days, and sometimes she has 3 hours at the weekend. And, for example, we go somewhere for five days, to some city, and we're able to use it 30 minutes a day – to talk to parents, for our own affairs – and she says it's a nightmare for me, that this is insane, that this is not enough. In my opinion, that's enough.

Interesting observations shared by the children concerned early media initiation. According to the children, the phone should not come into the lives of children too soon:

I know lots of situations like that. For example, my aunt has a little girl who's about five years old. It's like… this auntie gives her the phone so that she calms down because only the internet calms her down. For me, it's not really ok, because, for example, when I was her age, I was playing with some toys. I didn't even know what a phone was. It kind of scares me a bit that the first thing such young children see when they come into the world is a mobile phone and the internet (D9).

T2: Intensive parenting

The second theme generated during data analysis concerned children's emotions triggered by adult attitudes towards their being in the physical and digital world. The theme originated with the children who, in the course of the interviews, expressed their dissent to what they considered to be unfair opinions of adults about their mode of experiencing childhood. The children often shared that they are upset, unable to understand why parents are so focused on their children spending time online, but failed to notice the moments when they are engaged in other activities (T2-1). For instance, the children would say: "Adults don't notice that when we go out; it's like they kind of don't see it. And when we're on our phones, well, because we've already been outside, for example, they sort of see nothing else" (D16). The children would often offer detailed accounts of situations at home which, in their opinion, demonstrated the unfairness of parents' judgment of children's leisure activities:

Often, when we finish our homework early, we go outside after doing it. And if someone's coming home, for example, a mum or a sister, we come back quickly so that we can be at home and open for them when they come. I had a situation when I was sitting at home because I was back from the yard; I'd been sitting for five minutes, and my mum came home. I was sitting in my room with the door open, and my mum said I was on the phone for four hours. And that was not true, and adults are often wrong (D18).

According to the children, parents do not cite any specific arguments to substantiate why children cannot spend time online. They display annoyance at the

sight of a child with a phone, which the children find incomprehensible: "I think that's how the adults do it: if they say it's like this, then it's like this, end of discussion. You've been sitting for four hours, end of story, even if they don't know that you didn't, that you were outside" (D4). Excessive parental control, whereby children's freedom is constantly restricted, also applies to timed shutdowns set on their devices. One girl noted that she feels angry when an app-controlled phone switches off during online activity: "My friend Milena has Family Link, and I, for example, sleep over at her place, and sometimes we get pissed off and say: Well, why when we're watching some cool film, it just has to switch off!" (D7).

When discussing how childhood has changed over the years, the author referred to the widely held belief among adults that children today forget what real playgrounds and "real" life are like (T2-2). The children strongly opposed such a notion, saying: "When a child is playing, no one really pays attention, but when they're on the phone even a few minutes or even seconds, they already remember and say that children do not know real life" (D13). Children unanimously stated that they are not overly attached to the internet and know various leisure activities, contrary to the views expressed by adults: "Most adults are wrong. I think I spend most of my time outside, after all. Ok, I spend some time online, but we know something like the yard where children play" (D19).

Children's reflections on their parents' use of the internet also proved an interesting thread during the interview (T2-3). It appears that children's opinions about how adults function in the digital space further exacerbate the sense of injustice in children. Children find it difficult to accept that parents require them to limit their online activities while not adhering to such rules themselves. In the course of the conversation, the children supplemented their statements: "My mum says that I'm on the phone too long, although she uses it twice as long as me" (D19). "For example, to talk to my sister, to some mum from the class (D13) or on Facebook" (D16). The children also questioned their parents' arguments who seek to justify their right to use media:

> In my family, my mum uses the phone for so long. She goes there on Facebook and then, when my brother and I ask her: Mum, why are you on the phone for so long? Because we spend much less time on it. And mum says: Because I'm already an adult! I've passed university, and I can! This is so... annoying (D2).

Children openly name their emotional response when parents unfairly judge how they spend their free time: "Parents don't think about what they say before saying something because they don't even know how much time they spend on their phones. Because of them saying that the child may feel sad and may just feel upset about it" (D11).

To counter parents' allegations, the children repeatedly attempted to prove that the internet "is not just about silly stuff" (T2-4): "In my family, my parents always

say it's nothing but silly stuff on TikTok. Don't watch it. We'll take your phone right away if you watch that. And it's not so silly at all" (D18). The children offered numerous examples of using devices and online resources for what they thought was an interesting way to spend their time:

> For example, there are recipes. I often see recipes like this on TikTok... For example, this... [the girl shows a picture of a bread recipe on her phone] and I really want to make it, only I don't have the time. I'll have to either at some weekend or just during this break. I very often cook something from TikTok (D15).

The following statement was made in the context of using media for educational purposes:

> We can do different, cool things there. Because, for example, I want to learn English more and, for example, when I watch a film, I don't switch it on, like they're speaking English only in Polish, but I have subtitles in English. So right now I'm getting good grades in English, and my mum says: And somehow you've learned it yourself! There is no internet here at all! (D8).

During the interviews, the children repeatedly sought to demonstrate that the media can be advantageously used. The children also observed that they try to encourage their parents to install various apps that the former use so that adults may see how their time online is spent.

DISCUSSION

The themes which came to the fore in the analysis, namely "hybrid childhood" and "intensive parenting", as well as the respectively assigned codes of meaning, constitute a subjective inquiry which aimed to explore the manifestations of how children experience their childhood in a fluid physical and digital world. However, this can hardly be confined only to a map of themes. Clearly, it would be crucial to engage in a more profound analysis and search for thematic connections, "which will allow researchers to locate the diverse contexts and areas where specific issues gain prominence and where different experiences are gathered" (Krzyżanowski, 2011, p. 272). When analyzing the themes and the codes of meaning (sub-themes), certain correlations were noted, which are presented in Table 1.

The main correlation observed in the study concerns the experience of "hybrid childhood" in the age of "intensive parenting" (T1 → T2). It is indicative of the children's dissent to having their autonomy in experiencing childhood restricted by adults and the discomfort of excessive control over children's activities, exercised primarily in digital spaces. Within the main relationship, several connections

were also noted between the codes of meaning. The question which provoked the children to discuss the emotions prompted by the parental approach towards functioning in the physical-digital world was concerned with how children spend time in traditional playgrounds and whether they were familiar with such playgrounds. The children stressed that they genuinely enjoy spending time outdoors and simultaneously initiated the theme that their parents only see them with their phones in their hands (T1-1 → T2-1). In doing so, they expressed their dissatisfaction and shared a sense of injustice towards such parental attitudes. They underlined that parents are "oversensitive" to media use by their children. This provoked further discussion about a kind of hypocrisy on the part of the parents, who are against their children functioning on the internet while being active online themselves without any limitations (T2-1 → T2-3). Consequently, children do not accept the argument that age and higher education suffice to justify using the media without respecting the rules. When describing play on the traditional playgrounds, the children also objected to their parents' views regarding their ignorance of "real life" (T1-1 → T2-2).

Table 1.
Correlations between themes and sub-themes

Initiating theme/sub-theme	Relationship	Elicited theme/sub-theme
T1	→	T2
T1-1	→	T2-1
T2-1	→	T2-3
T1-1	→	T2-2
T1-3	→	T2-4

Source: Author's own study.

A different correlation emerged in the case of sub-theme T1-3. The children emphasized that online activity was important in their daily lives and that it was a source of considerable positive emotional experience. They listed a wide range of activities undertaken online, which included watching videos, messaging, developing one's interests and self-education. In this regard, the children described such activities from a position of advocacy, seeking to demonstrate to adults that "the internet is not just silly stuff" (T1-3 → T2-4).

CONCLUSIONS

From a broader perspective, this report contributes to the discussion on the nature of contemporary childhood set in the digital media age. It dovetails with other

studies in this area, which demonstrate a close relationship between children and media as well as discuss its implications (Dziekońska, 2020; Iwanicka, 2020; Nowicka, 2020; Smahel et al., 2020; McCrindle and Fell, 2021; Siwicki, 2021). However, taken more narrowly, this study examines the manifestations of experiencing childhood in the physical-digital world. Based on the conducted analyses, it may be argued that children naturally enter the existing reality and navigate freely between traditional and online playgrounds, although they definitely note that they are different. They alternate between playing football on the pitch or having fun with their siblings on the playground and making videos on TikTok, watching YouTube shorts, playing games or searching for information online. In their opinion, all of those activities are equally important and, as such, make up their hybrid childhood, which differs from the childhood of the parents who grew up in the pre-digital era.

These findings warrant the conjecture that the parents of the interviewed children – guided by their own memories of that period, enthusiastically recalling uninhibited outdoor play – attempt to impose their own ways of experiencing childhood on the children. This may explain the negative response when children arrange their playtime online, where they create places to be together and do things together outside of parental control. This is because childhood needs freedom and space for unconstrained play filled with childish language and artefacts. Such requirements were met at a time when children's freedom was not restricted to gated playgrounds or monitored sports areas, while parental control did not consist of using sophisticated apps tracking the current whereabouts of one's child. This is the reason why the interviewed children feel discomfort, helplessness and pressure. Furthermore, experiencing hybrid childhood in the age of intensive parenting also involves their opposition to unreasonable limits and restrictions. Children articulate their need for autonomy and dispute the arguments based on the widespread belief that, by virtue of their age, adults are entitled to more rights than children. It is likely that children's participation in self-determination, partnership in relationships and adults' openness to the hybrid childhood of young people today would suffice to enable the latter to become influential participants in a shared world as well as courageously confront the challenges of adulthood in the future.

It would appear that, given the parental attitudes, the potential consequences of hybrid childhood call for further investigations. For instance, research might focus on the parents themselves in order to find out about their approach to the issue. An analysis of the implications of the phenomenon may prove valuable and helpful in developing theories relating to contemporary parenting models.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

This study of nineteen children was conducted through focus group interviews with utmost care given to the ethical dimension. The stages of the research procedure, which included obtaining approvals and waiting for decisions, were demanding and time-consuming. Consequently, the number of research participants was limited. Parents' concerns regarding the participation of their children in the interviews were another contributing factor. A considerable number of parents did not consent to their children's participation in the study, even though each parent received a detailed description along with a written request for consent, which would enable their children to be interviewed. It is likely that an extended research group would have made it possible to validate the themes that emerged and to generalize the findings. Nevertheless, this article is considered to be a report from research which contributes to the discussion on the nature of contemporary childhood and offers an incentive for further explorations to obtain more information about the children themselves.

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O PRZEŻYWANIU HYBRYDOWEGO DZIECIŃSTWA W DOBIE „INTENSYWNEGO RODZICIELSTWA" – WYNIKI BADAŃ

Wprowadzenie: Postępujący udział mediów w życiu dzieci determinuje treść dziecięcych doświadczeń i przyczynia się do tworzenia nowych obrazów dzieciństwa. Dziś realizuje się ono w nieograniczonej przestrzeni cyfrowej przy jednoczesnym ograniczeniu swobody w przestrzeni fizycznej. Rezonans zmian jest widoczny w wielu obszarach życia dzieci i oddziałuje na sposób ich funkcjonowania.

Cel badań: Celem badań było ukazanie przejawów przeżywania przez dzieci ich dzieciństwa w płynnym świecie fizyczno-cyfrowym. Kategoria „przeżywania" odnosiła się zarówno do sposobów funkcjonowania dzieci w przenikających się przestrzeniach *offline* i *online* oraz związanych z tym emocji.

Metoda badań: Metodą gromadzenia materiału badawczego uczyniono zogniskowane wywiady grupowe, w których wzięło udział dziewiętnaścioro dzieci w wieku 8–10 lat. Metodą analizy danych była analiza tematyczna.

Wyniki: W drodze analizy wyłoniono mapę tematów i kodów znaczeniowych. Tematem prymarnym okazało się „hybrydowe dzieciństwo", do którego zostały włączone podtematy związane z przeżywaniem przez dzieci współczesnego dzieciństwa. Obok pojawił się temat sekundarny „intensywne rodzicielstwo", który odnosił się do dziecięcych emocji budzonych niezgodą dzieci na narzucanie im przez dorosłych wizji własnego dzieciństwa.

Wnioski: Dzieci naturalnie wkraczają w zastaną rzeczywistość i swobodnie przemieszczają się między podwórkami tradycyjnymi i sieciowymi, choć zdecydowanie dostrzegają różnice między nimi. Przeżywanie hybrydowego dzieciństwa w dobie intensywnego rodzicielstwa wiąże się jednak z niezgodą dzieci na narzucanie im przez rodziców nieuzasadnionych limitów i ograniczeń związanych z byciem w sieci, do których oni sami się nie stosują. Dzieci wyrażają tym samym potrzebę autonomii i partycypacji w decydowaniu o sobie. Kontestują argumenty oparte na potocznym przekonaniu, że z racji wieku dorosłym przysługuje więcej praw niż dzieciom.

Słowa kluczowe: hybrydowe dzieciństwo, intensywne rodzicielstwo, media, sprawczość dzieci, współczesne podwórka dziecięce, analiza tematyczna