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Migration As the Process of Care Exclusion
Draft of the paper

Poland is the 6th country in EU according to the size of the land, she has 38 millions of habitants. From 1989 Poland is the process of transformation from communistic country to liberal democratic model of capitalism. Some says the process is still not completed.

S 1 Context

Political: Shortly after Poland joined European Union in 2004 Polish people are allowed to worked in EC countries legally. Between 2004-2012 approximately over 2,5 million of Poles left country. For some Poles it is permanent migration, for other temporal one.

Demographic: low fertility rate -0,4; 1.32 children born/woman. (optimal is 2,1). Eurostat: 2010-2012: the lower has been observed only in Portugal.

Labor force: 18.22 million (2013 est.). Poland is at the verge of demographic catastrophe.

Social: unemployment rate 14%

Economic: average wage: average wage/month: 2730 PLN (896\$)

Minimal wage/month: 1240 PLN (407\$)

Gini Index: 34.1 (growing) EU: 30.6; Norway: 25,0

S2: Polish migration

Waves of migration: on the graph you can see the scale of migration according to years.

According to Central Statistical Office of Poland 6% of Polish population emigrated and 78% for a period longer than one year. 49% of them are men. Mostly there are young, well educated people from cities

S 3: main directions of migration: GB, Germany and Ireland, then Italy, France and growing population of migrants in Norway.

Research background

- Changes in family structure

Some researches show that family structure, its functions and distribution of family roles, particularly the gender roles (Boyd, 1996; Zubrzycki, 1966) underwent changes in Poland. It is connected with secularization, democratization and the most important: increasing the poverty (10%). It is not true that the gender roles shifts radically, because communist ideology support women as a workers even more than nowadays, but strong cultural gender patterns in Polish survived in communism. Being a Polish woman still means being Polish-mother: her strong position in family as caregiver, homeworkers, as an agent of socialization especially in the area of religion and national identity.

Family bonds are very important: children and family constantly are perceived as the most important values. We also have one of the lowest divorce rate in Europe.

- Significant role of parents/grandparents

Although most of Polish families are nuclear, strong bonds with parents are maintained, especially in the case of families with small child/children. Grandparents are active in caregiving, even if the children attend kindergarden (60% of children between 3-6 go to kindergarden, but only 5% below 3 years old)

- Moral and legal obligations towards parents

The elderly: in most cases it is a woman that is expected to take care of the elderly or disabled members of their families. Unlike in other Western European Countries, where institutionalised help for the elderly is a common place, in Poland the care of elderly people is feminized. It is still considered to be a moral and LEGAL obligation to look after senior members of the family. The nation-wide research on family care givers conducted by Bień (2006) shows, that there is a “social care gap” in Poland’s social policy. Most of all, there is no network that could support family carers. Both carers and the elderly people use health care services that are overburdened and not competent enough to support carers and the elderly. Only 1% of the older people (above 75 years old) get institutional care

- Stigmatization of mother leaving children behind

The research show that women will attempt to satisfy family members' physical and emotional needs by engaging relatives, neighbours or institutions for this purpose (Andall, 1999; Salih, 2001). In many families migrants replace their own share of housework to their (grand) mothers and/or to the eldest children and/or to female neighbours, but also malepartners who stay in Poland. The changes in playing social roles and their reorganization within a family may result in changes in individual's identity, their means of interpreting laws and obligations imposed by social circles Female migration is associated in Poland with highly stigmatizing term "euro orphans". This entails that mothers leaving their families may feel guilty or stigmatized (Erel, 2000) but also their children may feel stigmatized

Euro orphan discourse has been a tool in political plays. It was used to show that the government (right and central wing) do not care of Polish families and the "moral panic" was stirred by left wing parties and their newspapers.

In fact The research of teachers indicates that there is a problem of children left-behind. According to research done in 2010 by Ministry of National Education in schools (70% of all schools) there was 3 384 164 pupils, and there were 10 759 pupils without both parents 0,3% of all children population.

- Weak state support for parents (Moskal, 2012, Krzyżowski & Mucha 2012). Financial and institutional, but also legal: low maternity and child benefits, too short maternity leave (26 weeks) and undeveloped kindergarden infrastructure.

The project which results I want to show try to answer such questions:

Research questions

Is there a deficit of care (over the elderly and children) in a situation of female migration?

In what areas?

How will female migrants will participate in organizing care for their parents when they are unable to live on their own?

The research project is done with cooperation between Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Poland and University of Bergen in Norway. Founded by Polish-Norwegian research program.

The whole project consists of 3 stages

Research methods

Stage 1. Qualitative: A survey on female migrants will be conducted. Snowball sampling method have been employed. The criterion of sample selection will be having elderly parents/grandparents (65+) or underage children left-behind.

Stage 2. Stage 2 will contain partially structured interviews with migrants' parents/grandparents aged 65+ in Poland, migrants' children aged 12+ (junior high school and high school age) (N=50) and interviews with children care givers (N=50). Moreover, the interviews with social workers (20 interview) and school masters (10 interviews) and priests (20 interviews) will be conducted.

Stage 3. In the final stage in-depth interviews (N=50) with female migrants in Norway will be conducted.

Quantitative research: female in Norway

Research in the process: N=162. Why not 400? We have much troubles with completing this stage of research. At the end of my presentation I will try to explain why. First I would like to present the result we have already got.

Sample description:

First coming to Norway:

Most of them afer joining EU

Reasons of leaving Poland: No surprise: mostly they left because of economic reasons but they also want to recreate "full family", 70% of respondents new somebody who move to Norway (usually husband)

How have you been in Norway? 60% of respondents were less than 5 years

Age: half of them between 30-50

Education: Most of them are well-educated

What do they do in Norway? 76 % of females work so it is not true that they go there for social benefits, as it is sometimes presented in newspapers.

26% of them found the job while before leaving Poland and they do it on their own, sometimes with a help of husband, and rather without help of work agency. So: informal social nets are here essential. 67% of respondents had known somebody (usually husband) before they left Poland.

Type of work

Half of women work below their competences, so in their case their status is lower than in Poland.

Occupation and class: they move to lower social class

Marital status

Over a half of women are married, 17 live with partner and 16 are single.

CHILDREN CARE

64% of women have children. Most of them have two children, (av. for Poland is 1,3

Age: different, 3 children are disabled.

VERY IMPORTANT: only 12% of women leave children in Poland.

Most of children are cared by family and (kindergarden, school). It is in the case of Norway, but also in Poland. There is no significant differences between the state of health of the children before leaving Poland by mother/and child and after living.

We asked mother how their children behaved when they learned about leaving. The answers were ambivalent: 14% of children were sad, went into tears, 2,5% 14 % were very happy, the rest did not show any special reactions (some of them were too young).

age of children: half of them need intensive care (below ten)

Who do the children ask for help?

60% of females answered that they are asked to solve problems, only 24 % points father. It means that Polish family is child-mother oriented and it does not matter if it is in Poland or in Norway. The role of mother-caregiver is very strong.

Who helps?

Women answer that they help (63%) but there were more answers indicating that they try to solve problem together (parents, 12%), and less answers that father (13%). Maybe children

ask father, but solution of the problems are solved together. It also support the hypotesis that the in family context the position of woman is strong, but is need to be checked in detail.

PARENTS/GRANDPARENTS

Most of respondents' parents are alive and mainly it is mother or mother in law (explain why women). 12% of the parents are disabled.

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- Problems: with health and financial (30%) (the lowest pension is (about 247 \$, average 800\$)

Conclusion

The most typical Polish immigrants are male and between 25 and 39 years old. Most female Polish immigrants are between 30-50 years old. They usually came to Norway in migration chains, following husbands/partners.

1. Why temporary? a/ Polish migrants that they want to return to Poland when children are about to start school, otherwise the children will be unable to return and adapt to the Polish school system later on. They trust that Polish schools are better than Norwegian schools, particularly when it comes to math. I this context they have more trust to the Polish welfare state that to the Norwegian state.
2. It might also be that the temporality in their migration pattern does not lead to new role-distributions in the family
3. Problem with completing the research give a new light to the problems. The level of mistrust to Polish researchers they meet abroad (while in Norway) can be understood as related to their temporary role as migrant. Migrants leaving Poland to earn a living for their families abroad seem to have a social and political dis-trust to the Polish state. Research shows that respondents were afraid that if local authorities found out that they helped their parents economically, they could risk reduced or withdrawn pensions. Seeing themselves as migrants planning to return and having to deal with Polish authorities in later years to come, they probably saw project participation as something that could bring them trouble later on.

4. As Polish citizens they are probably aware of the euro-orphan debate in Polish public media and also I think they probably are familiar with the moral stigma attached to migrants leaving elderly parents behind. BUT also in gender debates “I do not want to be involved in any gender. Leave me alone, go away satan”.
5. Results shows, that in the case of Polish women in Norway there’s no problem of children left behind, because they are taken with mother, but rather with parents, who are getting older and need different type of support. I could be, that their parent will be the factor pushing the women back to Poland (not only the education of their children), but it is also possible, that they start to bring their parents to Norway, as they have done in the case of children.

It does not mean, that problems of children left behind no not exist in Poland, but it depends on the country of entering. Social welfare states such as Norway **prevent leaving children** behind, and Italy for example does not fit to this model. So the problem is in differences of social support models in European Union.

6. Does it mean that the females do not experience care deficit? Rather not. According to the fieldwork done in the Bergen area for this project some Polish mothers report that they have a subjectively experienced care deficit stemming from the fact that the children’s grandparents were not available as care resources in the daily everyday life. She referred to the polish kind of familism; grandparents are expected to be important participants in the family care.