

Parental Authority in Flux: A Qualitative Exploration of Manifestations of Power in Parent – Child Relationships

Metka KUHAR

Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
metka.kuhar@fdv.uni-lj.si

Herwig REITER

German Youth Institute, Munich, Germany
reiter@dji.de

The aim of this article is to investigate the workings of parental authority in Slovenian families: how is parental authority asserted and how do adolescents react to parental authority? Based on a qualitative exploration, the study shows that parental authority is accommodated in ways that comply with the general culture of intergenerational negotiations; it is co-constituted as a joint product of family relationships. The ways of authority assertion differ according to the respective domain: it is predominantly indirect in the example of school performance, and more direct and coercive regarding participation in household chores.

Key words: (post-)adolescents – parents' relationship, authority, power

1. Introduction

There is broad agreement in sociological literature about modern family forms that parent – children relationships have changed over the past few decades. Essentially, they moved away from restrictive parental direction, involving obedience of the child, to a pattern of recurrent negotiation between parents and children (e.g. Du Bois-Reymond, Büchner and Krüger, 1993; Du Bois-Reymond, Te Poel and Ravesloot, 1998; Solomon et al., 2002; Biggart et al., 2004; Stauber and Du Bois-Reymond, 2006; Leccardi and Ruspini, 2006). The gradual balancing of power that this development implied established negotiation households that, following Giddens' thesis on democratization of parent – children relationships, can be characterised by "equality, mutual respect, autonomy, and decision-making through

communication” (Giddens, 2000: 97–98). However, most of these authors acknowledge that the dissolution of power through modernization does not affect all families equally.¹

Other authors like Beck (1997) are skeptical about the scope of these diagnoses. He argues, for instance, that in many late-modern families the mutual indifference towards each other’s real lives is actually an easy way of solving the generational conflict whereby aspects of democratization of the family such as “dialogue, virtual exchange of roles, listening to and taking responsibility for one another” (Beck, 1997: 166) are neglected. According to him, parents and children still do not easily enter into dialogic relationships.

Some authors (e.g. Walkerdine and Lucey, 1989; Brannen et al., 1994; Solomon et al., 2002) point out that the parents’ means of control, supervision and sanctioning are not diminishing but are transformed; in general, they become more indirect, covert, or invisible. According to the social domains approach, which is interested in the coordination between parental regulations on the one side and children’s freedoms on the other, the legitimacy of parental authority is domain-specific (e.g. Smetana, 1995; Yau and Smetana, 1996). As adolescents get older parents reduce their (behavioural) control especially regarding the so-called issues of “personal choice” – e.g. the children’s choice of TV or music, their use of the phone, dating and seeing friends, how late to stay out, dress and hairstyles etc. However, parents tend to continue supervising other domains involving “moral” issues (considerations of right and wrong), “conventional” issues (matters of interpersonal social regulation), and “prudential” issues (precautions and safety).

Children typically demand autonomy over personal issues earlier than their parents are ready to grant it; and their claims to greater personal discretion and choice stimulate the transformation of the boundaries of parental authority (Smetana, 1988, 2011). Differences in perceptions about which issues are private and which deserve parental regulation manifest themselves already during early childhood; they intensify during adolescence and then often lead to conflict (Smetana, 2011). Over time, this continuous

¹ Differences persist and are captured, for instance, in classifications like that of Du Bois-Reymond, Te Poel and Ravesloot (1998) distinguishing between the traditional and modernised command family, negotiating family (negotiations with rules and situational negotiations), and ambivalent family, or that of Torrance (1998) differentiating five types of relationships (i.e. traditional, modernised authority, restraint and flexible negotiation; failed communication).

dialectic exchange leads to gradual and subtle shifts in the boundaries of parental authority, ideally via open and reciprocal communication.

The social domain's distinction between personal, moral, conventional, and prudential domains introduces a useful analytic perspective to the investigation. Yet this approach focuses only on how parents and children judge the legitimacy of parental authority; it does not investigate the actual process of negotiating authority or the possible overlap and interaction of these domains.²

Against this background it is the aim of this article to explore the process of implementing and negotiating parental authority in families with adolescent and post-adolescent children in the context of Slovenia. The argument builds upon an investigation of family power management in two domains: school performance and household chores.

Before we come to the choice of the context of Slovenia we want to look at what is actually meant by *parental authority*? In the discourse about “the new cult(ure) of negotiation” the concept of authority is largely missing. Despite the relatively broad use of the notion of authority in recent developmental literature there is a general lack of its theoretical as well as empirical conceptualization. For instance, already Baumrind, who was among the first to introduce the term to developmental studies, defined it in a rather vague way as a kind of expert power of a superior person: an authority is “a person whose expertness befits him to designate to a behavioral alternative for another where the alternatives are perceived by both” (Baumrind, 1966: 887). The social domains approach points to negotiations-based preconditions of being recognized as an authority. Yet the notion of parental authority in this approach is still used rather narrowly: it is a synonym for control over the child's behaviour and/or for the locus of

² Various relationship factors influencing the children's legitimization of parental rules are discussed, for instance, by Cumsille et al. (2009). They distinguish three patterns of beliefs in the legitimacy of parental authority during adolescence. In the first pattern, adolescents tend to grant parents legitimate authority over personal issues, prudential issues, and mixed issues (e.g. spending time with problematic friends). In the second pattern, adolescents tend to deny parents legitimate authority across all issues. In the third pattern, adolescents tend to grant parents authority over prudential issues but deny them authority over personal ones. The determinants of perceived legitimacy of parental authority and the child's obligation to obey (also in case of disagreement) are related to: the level of the adolescents' general agreement with their parents (general internalization of parental standards); the coherence of parental rules in combination with their strict enforcement (i.e. level of parental supportiveness and monitoring); and the presence/absence of the child's problem behaviour (Darling, Cumsille and Martínez, 2007).

rule-setting power on the parental side. In other words, parental authority is understood as “the vehicle” for asserting the parental will (differentiated according to certain domains).

For the purpose of this article, we conceptualize authority as a phenomenon that is relational, dynamic, and constantly produced and reproduced in the process of interaction and communication (Kroflič, 1997; Bingham, 2008). Parental authority is based on power asymmetry in parent-child relations that is legitimized and communicatively validated in a continuous practice of establishing, challenging, negotiating and asserting expectations, demands, rules, sanctions etc. Yet the asymmetrical power relation alone does not establish parental authority. Unlike power, which can be entirely one-sided, parental authority requires an additional aspect of legitimization and mutual recognition through the praxis of communicative validation. Such a fluid notion of authority is not based on any kind of pre-defined status of legitimacy. Neither the parents’ formal status, nor public regulations can automatically ensure the assertion of parental suggestions or the children’s recognition of their parents as leading figures. Parental authority may be formally rooted in public regulations of family relations. Yet it is first of all, as we assume, its reproduction and ratification in everyday practices of family life that establishes its micro-social relevance.

We start from the assumption that the establishment of appropriate forms of authority requires the legitimization of the superior party through a process, in which both parties play an active role: parents by means of arguing educational requirements; and the child by means of either agreeing or by responding with various forms of resistance in order to assert his or her wishes and expectations. Provided this dynamic understanding of authority the main question addressed in this article is then: *how* is parental authority realised, maintained and reproduced in the everyday practice of intra-family relations?

Slovenia is an interesting context for investigating authority-related communication between parents and adolescents. First of all, within the EU, Slovenia has one of the highest shares of young men and women aged 18–34 still living in parental homes (i.e. it comes second after the Slovak Republic according to the Commission of the European Communities, 2009). This situation is due first of all to the worsened conditions of families and young people after the breakdown of socialism through socio-economic transition to a market economy-based society in Slovenia, which

was “relatively smooth” (OECD, 2009: 13).³ Furthermore, the variety of forms of indirect parental control in this country testifies to the more complex character of relationships of power between parents and children. Yet negotiations are common in families and there is a relatively high degree of intimacy and openness in parent-adolescents relationships (Kuhar, 2008, 2010), also in international comparison (Health Behavior in School-aged Children data in Pokrajac, 2006).

Several aspects of the post-socialist transformation contributed to the establishment of strong alliances between parents and children; among these are for instance: the deregulation of the welfare state and the labour market that increased the risk of unemployment, the lack of stable jobs for young people and the uncertainty about the future; changes in the educational system promoting prolonged education; or severe housing shortages due to the privatization of formerly public housing. The long-lasting material and psychological dependency of Slovenian youth on parents are among the consequences of this situation that facilitated protective parenting (Ule and Kuhar, 2002, 2008). This development is accompanied by the fact that many parents maintained their decision-making power even regarding personal issues, such as post-adolescent girls’ choice of haircut (Kuhar, 2008). As Ule (2000) critically points out, the positive function of families as a buffer against the intricacies of life that became more and more risky for young people may have “infantilizing” side effects: the very supportive parent – children relationships may be among the reasons for delaying the transition to adulthood. Similarly to frozen transitions of Slovenian youth (Kuhar and Reiter, 2012), the delay in residential emancipation and also in the formation of partnerships and families has been a widespread trend, especially among young people in the Mediterranean countries in the last few decades (e.g. Iacovou, 1998, 2002; Giuliano, 2002; Billari and Tabetlini, 2008).

This culture of the prolonged relationship of dependence that is characteristic of growing up in Slovenia constitutes the background against which we observe the reproduction of parental authority. The following part presents the research design and methodical approach of the study. On the basis of our findings we then first address more generally the issue of

³ This is connected with its unique Western-style modernization already in the 1970s and 80s when the country approached the Scandinavian level of ensuring social prosperity. What is more, Slovenia was also not directly affected by the Balkan wars in the 1990s.

democratization in the family. Next we look at the assertion of parental authority regarding the children's performance at school as well as the more conflictual issue of household chores. In our concluding discussion we synthesize our findings and suggest, on the basis of this empirical exploration, highlighting certain aspects of the manifestation of parental authority. This may help to prepare an empirically informed framework for a general notion of authority within families.

2. Research design and method

Previous research indicates that the ways in which parental authority is played out depends on the concrete sphere of family life; as discussed above, parental authority is essentially domain-specific (e.g. Douglas and Wind, 1978; Smetana, 2011). Following these findings we assume that, in general, the scope and way of enforcing parental authority as well as specific outcomes differ according to the situation in question. In this article we focus our analysis of the process of negotiating parental authority on the two exemplary domains of schooling and of household chores.

The domain of *schooling* was chosen because it is a field of high priority within families, as well as a relevant platform of parental authority assertion concerning societal definitions of achievement and failure at an early stage of life. Schooling essentially represents the public domain of visible assertion or failure of parental authority. Regardless of social background, nearly all young people in Slovenia continue schooling at the secondary level; and studying at the tertiary level has become a mass experience of youth – in the last decade more than 80% of the 19–25-year old population studies at this level. The second domain of *household chores* refers to the equally relevant private domain of power-negotiations behind “closed doors”. It was chosen first of all because it proved to be a top conflict issue in previous research (Kuhar, 2008). Unlike schooling, it is a domain where the common interests of children and parents are less and the parental bias more obvious; in addition, gender differences are more pronounced here.

From December 2008 to January 2009 semi-structured, problem-centred interviews (Witzel, 2000; Witzel and Reiter, 2012) with a total of 60 members of 20 intact⁴ families (i.e. firstborn children and their mothers and fathers) were conducted. In order to allow for unanticipated issues to emerge

⁴ In the 2002 census 81.8% of families with children in this age group were intact (Statistični urad Republike Slovenije, 2002).

in the course of the interviews, open questions inviting narratives were combined with more concrete questions organised in an interview guide. The interview guide was informed by issues raised in literature. The interviews first explored issues related to communication and relationships between parents and children in general; and they then addressed possibly existing guidelines and rules concerning the domain in question. The latter topic was introduced indirectly with questions about disagreements or contentious topics. Participants were asked how rules, if any, were established, how adolescents accept these rules, and how parents control/monitor and sanction them. Interviews were made until the point of theoretical saturation had been reached and additional interviews stopped producing new insights.

The interviews took place at the respondents' homes and were carried out by the first author or by trained interviewers (i.e. six postgraduate students participating in an advanced seminar on the topic). During the interview, the interviewer and respondent were alone; family members were interviewed immediately following each other. Once interviewed, the respondents were asked not to exchange views. All interviews were recorded and lasted between 35 and 70 minutes. The families were identified through non-probability snowball sampling. The participating young people were firstborn children between 13 and 20 years living at home. The Slovenian culture of prolonged cohabitation unfolds first of all among young adults beyond the age of 20. Yet we restricted ourselves here to the younger age group because we wanted to capture the perspectives of young people with the prospects of necessarily continuing negotiations with parents in the specific Slovenian context.

The average age of the twenty children in the sample is 17.0; that of mothers 42.3; and that of fathers 44.2.⁵ Four of the children are an only child, eleven the elder of two children, four the oldest in families with three children, and one child is the oldest of four children. According to their own information, 12 mothers and 13 fathers have secondary school education, and seven mothers and six fathers have university education (2-year higher university education or 4-year high education or more). One mother and one father have only primary school education. The fact that the sample includes mainly parents with further and higher education reflects the educational landscape of Slovenia. In 2010, 83.3% of the population between 25 and 64 years had completed at least upper secondary education.

⁵ The standard deviations are 2.4, 3.7 and 3.9 respectively.

In former socialist countries this share is traditionally high and well-above the EU27 average of 72.7% (Statistični urad Republike Slovenije, 2011a: 8). The distribution of parental education in our sample suggests that a wide range of social (and indirectly also economic) backgrounds is portrayed. Seven of the interviewed families live in the countryside, nine in urban, and four in suburban areas. According to official statistics, approximately half of the population of two million Slovenians lives in urban areas (Statistični urad Republike Slovenije, 2011b). However, the countryside is also well developed and largely as equally modernized as urban areas; this is why we did not systematically investigate differences between urban and rural areas.

The interviews were fully transcribed and analysed by combining vertical (i.e. case-oriented) and horizontal (i.e. across cases) steps. The purpose of the analysis was the identification of different ways and patterns in which parental authority is reflected. In practical terms, the main emphasis of the analysis was on the reconstruction of meanings and categories through a stepwise process of thematic interpretation, coding and comparison. In an initial process of open coding of selected interviews, categories and themes emerging from the material as well as regarding issues included in the interview guide were organised into a coding scheme. In order to enhance the quality of the coding procedure and introduce an element of intercoder reliability, this process was conducted separately by two independent researchers. The categories were discussed later by both researchers and consolidated into a common coding scheme that was then applied to all interviews.

Due to the qualitative character of the study, its main purpose was that of an exploration of the issue. Generalizations in terms of inference to the population were not intended and would be inappropriate due to the non-representative sample. In addition, the actual process of negotiation is not captured in this way; rather, the paper represents a triangulation of perspectives.

3. Findings

3.1. Democratization in the family? Some general findings

As a whole, the interviews point to a generally well-developed culture of communication between parents and children. They largely confirm Giddens' democratization thesis as well as the shift towards "negotiation

households” (Du Bois-Reymond, Büchner and Krüger, 1993). However, we also find forms of indirect parental control that testify to the more complex and less transparent character of relationships of power between parents and children. In the following discussion of general aspects we distinguish analytically between three topics we identified as relevant in the interview material. They are illustrated in an exemplary way.

Autonomy and the reproduction of trust. The autonomy that children enjoy tends to increase as they get older, along with the child acting and behaving responsibly. The latter is not necessarily interrelated with age; rather: autonomy increases “*with brains*”, as one of the fathers (Father No. 15) points out. The basic trend towards granting children more autonomy is facilitated by the increasing possibilities of communicating whereabouts and activities, for instance through mobile phones. The following statement of a young man is indicative:

Of course I always had enough freedom. Already in 6th grade there was no panic if I came home after midnight. OK, I was here in the village anyway, but still... I called when I would be home and that's it. (Son No. 5, 19 years old)

Modern relationships between parents and children ask for continuous investment from both parties in terms of establishment and continuous affirmation of parental trust through considerate action of the children. This may trigger and reinforce a circular regeneration of trust that turns parent – child interactions into labour-intensive exchanges, where rights are granted by parents on the basis of performance. As pointed out by one parent in the next quotation, the “*dilemma*” of granting rights can be resolved exactly by this recurrent renewal of parental trust in the child.

We trust them more, and because we trust them, they have to confirm it, and if they confirm it, then there is no dilemma that we wouldn't trust them; the authors) anymore. (Father No. 13)

Negotiations and openness. We did not find pre-defined restrictions of self-determination of children; in all cases their leeway remains negotiable. The necessity and urge of parents to argument their demands increases with the children's age. In their description of how decisions are made, the participants in the study often refer to the very idea of “openness” (cf. Solomon et al., 2002), which suggests that parents are not enforcing their power unilaterally. Instead, parents and children share give-and-take relationships and exert influence on each other. For instance, as one of the parents puts it:

Because with us things are open, everyone has a right to say his "things". They (daughters; the authors) also guide our life. (Father No. 9)

The importance of negotiations with children of all ages underlines the lack or absence of explicit and institutionalised rules. While negotiations may often be conflictual and involve more or less emotional responses, they are mostly solved by reaching an agreement in terms of a compromise on both sides. The case below, where a mother comments on her son's behaviour, illustrates that modern parents are no longer able to follow their priorities as a matter of course. Instead, they are involved in a continuous process of negotiating and searching for compromises, both with their children and between themselves, even if their point of view is based on parental concern.

There are always negotiations about when he comes back, how he comes back, until when he can stay out, which bus he will take. When setting these limits, there are always resistances, on both sides. (...) For instance, he says that he has arranged with some friends to go out, and he doesn't even consider that we should have an agreement about when he will come home. And then I exaggerate in setting the limits. And after that, me and my husband, we talk things over without R. knowing. My husband tells me: "You exaggerate, let's make 'a normal' agreement." And after R. comes home, we somehow make an agreement. Usually, our agreement with my husband is still different from what he expects, but in the end we reach a common agreement. (Mother No. 10)

Overall, parents do not seem to demonstrate their authority by setting rules or taking relevant decisions without considering their child's opinion. Our findings rather underline Giddens' thesis (2000) claiming that parents have to substantiate and refresh their authority.

Persistence of monitoring. The previous example also illustrates the coordination between parents at the background of what children may sometimes understand as parental control (see also below). Parental trust is not blind. And forms of monitoring are not entirely ruled out just because trust is established; they should rather be considered as part of the process of reproducing and maintaining trust among parents. However parental monitoring may be received by children in the context of everyday communication and common activities – as an annoyance or a sign of attention and care – and it is often counteracted by children.

For instance, as the following example in the perspective of both child and mother illustrates, a liberal policy of allowing children to go out may be combined with parental enquiries and concern. In cases in which these forms of control are considered intrusive or disturbing and perceived as a transgression of parental authority, children may respond accordingly. And there will not always be agreement over the necessity or legitimating of parental control.

Interviewer: *So are your parents controlling you too much?*

Interviewee: *Yes, well, mum. If, for example, we go out, she is all the time: "What have you been doing, where have you been, how has it been?" And, yeah, I understand, but what if she keeps asking the same questions? Once I just brought her the invoice. "Look, this is what we ate, this is what we drank." So she is interrogating me.* (Son No. 19, 18 years old)

The mother describes the same phenomenon in the following way:

That I would ask him directly, where have they been and what they were doing, this, I think, I would not do. But it is difficult for R. to tell me anything about this. It seems to me that whatever I ask him, he already thinks I'm controlling him, that I'm supervising him, that I keep asking him the same questions. Now he is already bringing invoices to me. To him it seems that I ask too many questions, but to me it seems that I ask him just what should be of normal interest to me. (Mother No. 19)

The example explicates that parental control is not necessarily self-sufficient. The mother defends her interest in what her son does as legitimate and "normal" in the frame of parental care. At first the son's reaction appears as a form of protest; yet despite the irony that may be involved in his diligence in presenting "invoices" he is actually exactly providing "evidence" of his trustworthiness by revealing his whereabouts. Despite the moment of conflict, this example illustrates very well the actual process of how trust is reproduced and the kind of contributions (of attention and of "evidence") both parties have to make in order to keep it going. The productive negotiation of conflict is one way of reproducing democracy in the everyday life of a family and of making it a part of the families' "ways of life" (Beck, 1997: 156).

Findings like these support research like that by Solomon et al. (2002) who claim that a higher degree of self-uncovering, intimacy and openness does not yet imply full democratization of relationships between parents

and children, since both parties are developing various strategies of “manipulation”. Furthermore, research indicates that parental control in terms of tracking and surveillance of children and their activities is not considered good parenting practice; instead, ideally, monitoring should be based on the child’s spontaneous disclosure (e.g. Stattin and Kerr, 2000).

3.2. Parental authority and school performance

The issue of school performance of children is our first test case for the relevance and practical aspects of parental authority. School-related issues are among the main topics of discussion between parents and their children. This is due to many reasons. First of all, in Slovenia (also), educational aspirations of both parents and children and the pressure to perform well in school are very high despite, or because of, its apparently changing status in the framework of various life course policies: the expansion and prolongation of schooling is strongly connected with the tightening of the general labour market and related regulations. In consequence, all over Europe, education systems go through a motivation crisis (Du Bois-Reymond, 2005). Parents and their children try to reduce some of the systemic employment uncertainty by subscribing to the expected, yet unspecific benefits of education.

The numbers of secondary and tertiary students in Slovenia are among the highest in Europe. The rates of secondary school enrolment were already high in the first years following the transition – e.g., 80.5% of the 15–18-year old population enrolled in 1993 (UNICEF, 2007). In the meantime, secondary education is among the standard experiences of growing up and reached 91% in 2008 (OECD, 2009). Participation in higher education increased significantly in the period after transition, for example from 19.3% of the 19–24-year old population enrolled in 1985 to 86.9% in 2009 (UNESCO, 2011).

(Positive) encouragement. Almost without exception, our young respondents confirmed their internalization of rules associated with school through the establishment of habits such as the priority of doing homework and preparing for school before free time activities, or the continued commitment to diligent studies at home. Guidelines related to school performance do not need to be set or expressed explicitly by parents. The basic compromise takes the form of a silent, long-term consensus about the child’s successfulness or diligence. Commitment does not need to be

permanently renewed or expressed in concrete expectations or demands. For instance, most of the parents refrain from explicitly expressing certain wishes concerning their child's grades.

As the following example illustrates, some parents tend to declare that they do not attach too much importance to the grades at school. Instead, there is an implicit common understanding that positive encouragement leads to better results than the pressure or sanctions. The mother of a son with very good grades says:

For me it was always the rule, that I wasn't especially attentive to the grades. I didn't torture them so that they would have to reach I don't know what results. J. was always diligent, a good pupil. I always praised him, but I never put pressure on him. Even if he failed a test, I said: "Just say it, go ahead, nothing is wrong, everyone can fail a test." (Mother No. 11)

Parents with higher aspirations⁶ for their children's performance do not content themselves with non-directive support. In these cases, parents may directly and continuously supervise and influence school work and find ways additionally to motivate the child. The following case illustrates an example of an ambitious mother who reframes and legitimises her intervention and contribution on the basis of *her son's*, not her own, "need". The reason for her distinct sensitivity towards her son's (public) performance is certainly enhanced by the fact that she is the headmistress of the school.

To him it seems that he is (diligent enough at school; authors), but he needs rather a lot of control and stimulation. He still needs that. I think he should be independent enough on his own, that he should know when to push more and when to slacken a bit. But he thinks that he can relax all the time. (Mother No. 4)

Our examples illustrate how parents and children negotiate issues related to school performance in a largely non-conflictual way. Traces of parental authority and conflict related to school performance reveal themselves only to the careful observer; they are part of the subtle mechanisms of parental guidance and support. On the one hand, the way in which information about the child's school performance is obtained is part of the rituals of parenting. The way in which this information is disclosed or withheld,

⁶ Our sample and the Slovenian pupils and parents' sample of the GOETE study (see the next footnote) shows no significant differences between families with parents with low education and those with parents with high education, and between rural and urban families in parental expectations and support regarding school performance.

on the other hand, is part of the children's rituals of compliance with or resistance to parental control, concern, and curiosity. This is addressed in the following.

Subtle forms of parental governance. Some of the young respondents, especially outstanding pupils, underline their self-responsibility as well as the apparent non-interference of parents with their everyday school work. Yet, at the same time, they point to their parents' curiosity in the banalities of going to school. This is illustrated by a respondent who later reported discussing school matters with her parents on a daily basis, and that her parents were well-acquainted with her work.

If we consider going to school a duty, as well as success in school, then they leave me alone, they have never nagged me about school. But here they really have no reason to. ... In most cases they initiate it (a discussion; authors), although, if something special happens, I always tell them. But they also want to know everyday things, such as how school was, whether a lecture was cancelled, completely banal things, which I wouldn't start mentioning myself when I come home. (Daughter No. 8, 16 years old)

This form of indirect control/monitoring presupposes parental trust, which is here based on positive experiences in the past. Due to her good performance at school it is easy for the daughter fully to internalize her parent's attention to school work and success. Self-governance, a term introduced to grasp contemporary forms of blurring external and internal requirements of action (Rose, 1999), could be used to describe her attitude with regard to school and her behaviour that also readily satisfies the expectations and curiosity of her parents.

While traces of classical forms of conditioning and associative learning can be identified in parenting strategies, they do not predominate. Direct sanctions, or threatening them, were not relevant with regard to schooling; and incentives took the form of rewards that were rather loosely linked to the child's performance. In other words, punishment is uncommon; instead, good grades may be "celebrated".

Interviewer: *Are you rewarded for your school successes or punished for failures?*

Interviewee: *No. I think. No, no, no. We've never had that. Maybe we sometimes go for an ice-cream when we are all happy with a good grade. But no, we haven't had rewards for good grades. (Daughter No. 1, 21 years old)*

In combination with positive reinforcement, these indirect forms of parental guidance are generally well received by children. As a whole, our findings correspond to the results of the GOETE study for the sample of Slovenian 15–16-year olds and their parents (e.g. Ule, 2011; Živoder, 2011).⁷ That study indicates that parents and children generally are in agreement about the importance of prolonged schooling in further education and about adequate school performance. Parents play a very supportive and also protective role in children's educational decisions; and many decisions are made jointly. Yet they are both becoming disillusioned by the prospects that education will provide in the future.

3.3. Parental authority and household chores

Our second test case for the relevance and practical functioning of parental authority in contemporary Slovenian families is related to the assertion of household chores. Differently from school performance, the involvement of children into the daily household work as well as the related communication about it is characterized by much more controversy. The academic discourse distinguishes at least four aspects of participating in family and household work (e.g. White and Brinkerhoff, 1981): apart from the obvious effect of helping parents to come to terms with the household workload, children also get the chance actually to learn these tasks; the developmental effect, it is argued, is that it "builds character" and allows children to develop autonomy and responsibility; finally, participating in household work can be an arena for learning and understanding reciprocal (moral) obligations. White and Brinkerhoff (1981) find that the demand for reciprocal obligations prevails in older age groups of children and among more educated parents, while overburdened and single parents emphasize their need for the child's contribution to manage the load of domestic work. This aspect of reciprocal obligations is most relevant in our discussion of parental authority.

There is no information about the extent of participation of young people in household chores in Slovenia. Yet it is important to emphasize that the division of housework continues to be one of the basic sources of the reproduction of gender asymmetries in Slovenian families (Kuhar, 2009). It is still mostly women (of all ages) who do the majority of household work

⁷ The GOETE (Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe) study is a comparative project that analyses young people's educational trajectories in eight European countries (see www.goete.eu).

and provide care for family members. Men's contributions in this respect are perceived as additional help and as "surplus" (Kuhar, 2009).

Gender bias. This general gender bias in household work is reflected in our findings in that it is mostly mothers that comment on it. Fathers are absent already in the discourse. So, it is the mothers who almost always confront children and threaten them with sanctions. The reaction of two of the interviewed fathers to related questions is indicative:

Household chores? Ask my wife. This is her field. (Father No. 17)

My wife spends more time with the children. She works more at home. (Father No. 18)

Not surprisingly, boys are more reluctant to participate in household work than girls; and they need more encouragement, be it in terms of negotiations, rewards, or threats of sanctions. The task of raising the issue remains in the hands of mothers who in general tend to be fully employed in Slovenia. They demand the child's participation in household chores, regardless of gender.

The pervasiveness of chores... Let us start with the exception to the rule. The types of household chores parents suggest are very diverse. Some ask children to participate in relatively easy tasks, while others involve them in various or even all kinds of chores including work around the house or on the farm. Only one respondent states that he does not have to help at home, which is confirmed by his mother. Chores are not an issue because of the common disinterest of all family members in household work and the hiring of a household assistant once a week.

Interviewer: *What about household chores?*

Interviewee: *Be smart! If there are, I do them so rarely that it would be funny to say that I have to do them at all. At home nobody cares about them. Once a week we have a lady coming who cleans, and that's it.* (Son No. 19, 18 years old)

... and the children's reluctance to do them. All other young respondents need an excuse for not participating in household chores. Especially additional school work is put forward as it has priority, also for parents. On the other hand, when school work is reduced as during holidays, some parents do not hesitate to give extra work to their children. More than half of the respondents describe household chores as a controversial issue accompanied by continuous negotiations. For instance, parents may temporarily stop being strict about rules while children may be reluctant to acknowledge their authority.

Even in families where there is no direct and/or continuous controversy about the rules of participating in household chores, children report that they would rather not do it without being constantly reminded by their parents. Altogether, questioning parental authority in this respect seems to be a common phenomenon. Parents, however, play along as the following statement of a mother indicates.

I would say that he is more the type that wouldn't like to work, but after you motivate him, he works. (Mother No. 5).

In practice, as the following case shows, household chores need permanent convincing; and both parties apply a stratified set of strategies and arguments in order to get what they (do not) want. For instance, a mother has to persuade her son continuously of the necessity of household chores with arguments ranging from downplaying the task to threatening him with sanctions. Interestingly, in the perspective of the mother this situation characterises a conflict only when sanctions are involved. The consensual way, however, has priority, at least in the first phase of her son's disapproval.

We negotiate household work. He is never right. He never likes it that he has to take the dishes out of the machine and vacuum the upper floor once a week. I would like that he opened the machine by himself and cleared it but I just cannot reach that. He never does it by himself. I always have to remind him, and there is always nagging, especially with vacuuming. As the last resort, when nothing helps, we just tell him a code and that helps: the password to the computer. And then he does everything. First you try differently, a few times nicely. And sometimes we are in a hurry, nervous too, and then you get more quickly to the last resort. But it does not reach that phase, the phase of conflict, very often. (Mother No. 2).

The son admits his general disapproval of parental rules in this area and points out that he gives in only superficially in order to avoid sanctions. At the same time he mentions that his mother's style of realising demands in itself provokes his disapproval. She seems to combine the implementation of her demands with a kind and deliberative tone, which is contradictory and manipulative for she actually does not allow for any objections. Contrary to the mother, the father articulates his demands more directly in terms of orders. The son resists this approach too; yet he admits that with threatening to block access to his computer his parents were able to identify a very effective alternative sanction.

Yes, about duties my mother asked me if I would (do it), but dad said that she doesn't have to ask me, that this is how it is and will be. Even though I know that... When he said I have to vacuum the whole upper floor and even the lower one, I got completely crazy and started hitting on the table... I really got angry then. Now, I just do it. Yes, I stick to my responsibilities now more or less. And if I don't, they immediately start threatening with taking away the computer. So I have to do it. (Son No. 2, 13 years old).

The fact that, in this example, the son addresses differences between the parenting behaviour of father and mother points to an additional level of analysis, which needs to be considered in the sense of an open question for follow-up research. How (and whether) do parents negotiate or coordinate their behaviour and roles towards the child on what, following Goffman (1990), could be called the “backstage of parenting”? And what do children know about these arrangements?

The “reasons” of household chores. Parents justify their household chore demands by including substantive reasons in their argumentation. Asking for obedience is the exception. Usually, parents point to the importance of sticking to agreed commitments and promises or to the development of working habits. They would often emphasize the importance of a sense of family community, as in this example:

Every member of a family has to contribute to the order. (Mother No. 20)

In general, children do not internalize parental demands concerning household chores without disapproval, controversial negotiations or only superficial acceptance. Young women in rural families and families with more child members are the exception, because there the amount of household work is simply more obvious. For instance:

We have all these rules, but they get to you so much, that you don't take them as rules anymore. For example, that we all do everything. This is no written rule, because we all know that everybody has to work, because there is a lot of work. And if you see something has to be done, it is only fair that you do it, if you have time, before somebody says you have to do it. (Daughter No. 1, 19 years old)

Ways of making it work. Parents use different ways to establish the children's responsibility for household chores. Some parents try to introduce these rules in a playful way, for instance by “sneaking in” some rules, as one mother (No. 14) says. Others combine the transfer of responsibility

with praise or reward for assuming it. In most cases, however, the whole family tries to settle on an agreement to which the children should adhere.

Two quotations illustrate common strategies of how to involve children in household chores, despite their reluctance. The first is one of using positive sanctions (i.e. through rewarding their performance).

Interviewer: *Do you still remember how you had agreed (to doing household chores; the authors)?*

Interviewee: *Yes, they just told me and I agreed. And because of that I received more gifts for three years.* (Son No. 4, 16 years old)

The second example illustrates an extreme case where negotiations are formalised: the mother decides to make a contract in order to overcome her children's resistance to informal agreements.

We agreed upon that by contract. I've signed a contract with each one, and everyone had his duties assigned. (Mother No. 10)

Usually, the child participates in the process of establishing rules concerning household chores. Yet this is not always the case. The following example indicates that there are exceptions where rules are implemented in a non-deliberative way, even if, in the example, the daughter may not really question her parents.

Interviewer: *Have the rules been negotiated, agreed?*

Interviewee: *Oh well, usually they were just defined. We will do this, and already it was clear by itself that we will do it, like mum or dad do this or that. And sometimes you quarrelled about it, and everyone knew you have nothing much to quarrel about, that you have to do it and it becomes clear by itself.* (Daughter No. 1, 19 years old)

In case of disrespect for agreed or defined rules, parents tend to avoid punishment. Instead, they prefer to keep reminding their children of agreements. Sanctions take the form of verbal complaints or of scolding. The following case of a mother illustrates the reasons for parents not applying direct measures, although less conflictual ways may not be very promising.

Probably punishment alone would be enough, so that this (i.e. to vacuum the apartment once a week, authors) would stay in his consciousness. I don't know. Because in the end you come to that, that if you don't punish him in a way that means a lot to him, it never, but really never, stays in his mind. If I would take his computer password, forbid the computer, he would vacuum all day, I'm sure. Unfortunately this is so. But I prefer not to complicate it. (Mother No. 17)

This example indicates the subtle power that the child can have even in the sense of a representative in an imagined dialogue. In a process of

symbolic interaction the child here is like a mirror reflecting anticipated parental action.

4. Discussion

Against the background of an ambiguous trend towards democratization of family relationships in Western societies, our paper asked for the way in which the necessarily asymmetrical distribution of power between parents and children is negotiated in modern Slovenian families. On the basis of our findings, we can tentatively conclude that this power asymmetry is thus gradually reduced and translated into coordinated articulations of parental authority. Our *general findings* suggest that the negotiation of parental authority in Slovenia is indeed embedded within the kind of overall climate of democratization of parent – children relationships that Giddens, Du Bois-Reymond and others have identified. The process of negotiation of rules and roles between parents and children is certainly not one-directional; it is an exchange in the course of which both parties learn a considerable amount about each others' reasons and priorities. The tentative conclusions from our exploration suggest that children have considerable influence on the constitution and manifestation of parental authority in terms of assertion, implementation and legitimation.

In the *domain of schooling*, parental authority is expressed through expectations rather than rules, and combined with an emphasis on the significance of academic success for the children themselves. As these expectations correspond to general societal and social expectations and are in the genuine interest of children they are accepted with little confrontation. In this domain, parental authority is perfectly legitimate and hardly perceived as constituting a relationship of power between children and parents. Consequently, the hidden rules in this field are more or less internalized and many children appear to be conscientious and self-responsible regarding school work. Against the background of this agreement, parental authority seems to lose some its asymmetrical quality. Even repeated enquiries, continuous monitoring or other motivation strategies are generally perceived as legitimate forms of parental governance. They share the positive connotation of parental interest, guidance or encouragement. In this way, parental control is mainly indirect, and subtle forms of monitoring do not disturb everyday family conversations. Parents assert their authority more directly in the form of constant control, reminders, (periodic) quarrels etc. only in

the case that the child is not self-responsible, or does not seem to be; or if the child does not meet the parents' aspirations concerning school success.

In the *domain of household chores*, the assertion and implementation of parental rules as well as the legitimation of parental authority are more difficult: doing household chores is hardly appropriated by children as "their cause". The negotiation of power over whose priorities predominate – the parents' or the child's – is certainly not characterized by equality. Both parties deploy strategies either to implement or evade certain expectations against the will of the other. Smetana (2011) finds that parents and children apply different discourses that may cause conflict with regard to social conventions like household chores: while parents prefer to frame the issue in terms of responsibility, contribution etc., children frame their resistance by referring to their freedom of choice. Although parental authority shows its teeth in this controversial domain of intra-family affairs, our findings indicate that, in a context like Slovenia, parents, mostly mothers hesitate in applying drastic measures in the sense of sanctions in order to break the children's opposition and resistance.

Further research is necessary to find out whether there is indeed a "backstage of parenting" where parents negotiate their roles, whether these roles tend to be gendered, and how the child "participates" in these backstage negotiations as a silent and virtual partner of symbolic interaction. While they may ultimately adopt less subtle strategies to maintain authority, parents are aware that only collective solutions like family agreements or contractual arrangements that quasi democratize parental authority are able to prevent dissatisfaction and recurrent conflict. Children, on the other hand, at least those in the sample, are equally reluctant to escalate the situation in case of disagreement. However, they are highly sensitive to their parents' style of persuasion and to contradictory or manipulative messages.

The outcome of the power play that follows in the domain of household chores leaves no doubt about the lack of equality in parent-child relationships. While children have little manoeuvring space regarding their parents' demands and may respond with reluctance, mothers know how to pull the right strings to implement housework rules. Children appear to comply of their own will. Yet, as the study demonstrates, they develop different forms of compliance ranging from internalized obedience to solely superficial and provisional compliance. Both parents and children apply stratified strategies in order to pursue their interests; and they are famil-

iar with each other's strategic reactions. Especially the issue of household chores that is dominated by the involvement of mothers suggests that comprehensive equality within the family could further benefit from reducing gendered asymmetries in preferences and power also between parents. In any case, further research needs to consider more strongly gender differences in parental attitudes towards certain domains and their impact on the relation between parents.

Finally, we found that *parental authority exists even where it seems invisible*, camouflaged, or concealed. Its mechanisms and manifestations can take very different forms ranging from positive encouragement and subtle forms of manipulation to threatening with and applying sanctions and punishment. The considered ways of dealing with at times controversial priorities within the family cannot obscure the fact that power asymmetries between parents and their children persist. Nevertheless, power relations within the family as well as the specific roles attached are subject to a permanent process of (re)definition and negotiation. It is obvious that the intense relationship work around issues of parental authority involves continual adjustment and agreement. The micro-politics of power within families that include continuous challenges from children keep parental authority fluid. The different findings for the domains of educational performance and household chores suggest that we also need to look beyond the micro-container of the family and include the public and private shares of the battlefields of authority constitution.

As we have been able to show, power asymmetry and its mutual recognition are constitutive of *parental authority* that is produced and reproduced by both parents and children. Our interviews with parents and children indicate that parental authority may well be established, by both parties, in either a dialogic or coercive way. Authority involves the interpretation and reinterpretation of each other's positions in a process of communication that always includes both parties, i.e. parents and children. Parental authority can be characterized, for example, by parents offering reasoned justifications of their demands, by a dialogic way of conflict management, and by a deliberative decision-making process. Importantly, recognizing parental authority in the child's perspective does not automatically mean following it; and challenging authority (e.g. by testing its limits) does not mean denying it. As it involves the exploration of boundaries, the child's defying response to parental authority is, in any case, a form of liberation

and contribution to the development of autonomy and responsibility in the process of growing up. The fact that the subordinate party participates in the practice of parental authority indicates that authority is co-constituted as a joint product of family relationships.

The improvement of intra-family communication and the gradual equalization of children are critical pre-conditions for such a development. In this regard, our research underlines the relevance of authority as well as its contemporary conceptualizations (Pace and Hemmings, 2007; Bingham, 2008; Harjunen, 2009, 2011; Kroflič, 2010). As we were able to show, authority and negotiation do not exclude each other (as in Torrance, 1998); both are equal parts of modern parent-child relationships. Parental authority is not a static or ascribed feature that fathers or mothers “have”. For the purpose of investigating it, we suggest not compartmentalizing it in the context of a linear analysis of input (i.e. parental behaviour) and output (i.e. effects on the child). Instead, parental authority is best studied as a complex process of interactions between parents and children.

Finally, some concluding thoughts about the *Slovenian context*. In view of the prolonged stay of young Slovenians in their families of origin, extended parental authority is part of a sort of double-bind situation for children: they have to comply more with parental demands than many of their western peers would have to. Slovenian youths are required to arrange themselves in a constructive way with parental interests and how they are asserted; in the end, young Slovenes can expect to depend on their parents’ support for a rather long time.

In the sense of a hypothesis for further and comparative research, one tentative conclusion from our Slovenian example could be that authority conflicts between parents and children are reduced where the situation of closeness and dependence is likely to persist due to societal circumstances. The strategies of negotiating authority and autonomy that we observed could be a response to the uncertainty related to the societal transformation that brings parents and children closer together. Strong intergenerational connections and solidarity within and between families in Central and Eastern European countries were supported already by socialist policies, which oriented most rights and privileges towards the family rather than individuals. In the post-socialist context, the family’s importance has further increased due to societal turbulences and uncertainty, and the children’s reliance on the family of origin is strong (Ule and Kuhar, 2003; Kovacheva, 2006; Tomanović and Ignjatović, 2006).

It seems that parents in Slovenia have succeeded in providing conditions that are attractive to their children. Further research has to show whether or to what extent this is the result of persisting cultural patterns and social situations – e.g. the utmost importance of the family for all kinds of support; very high value attached to children; overprotective parenting – or the consequence of contemporary values and lifestyles including the high value of the quality of individualized everyday life.

REFERENCES

- Baumrind, Diane (1966). "Effects of Authoritative Parental Control on Child Behavior", *Child Development*, 37 (4): 887–907. doi:10.2307/1126611
- Beck, Ulrich (1997). "Democratization of the Family", *Childhood*, 4 (2): 151–168. doi:10.1177/0907568297004002002
- Biggart, Andrew, Bendit, Rene, Caruso, David, Hein, Kerstin and Morch, Sven (2004). *Families and Transitions in Europe: EU research on social sciences and humanities. State of the art report*. <http://socsci.ulst.ac.uk/policy/fate/pubs/State%20of%20Art.pdf> (04.08.2010).
- Billari, Francesco C. and Tabellini, Guido (2008). "Italians are late: Does it matter?", in: John B. Shoven (ed.). *Demography and the Economy*. National Bureau of Economic Research, pp. 371–412 (<http://www.nber.org/chapters/c8422/04.11.2011/>).
- Bingham, Charles (2008). *Authority is Relational: Rethinking Educational Empowerment*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Brannen, Julia, Dodd, Katharyn, Oakley, Ann and Storey, Pamela (1994). *Young People, Health and Family Life*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Commission of the European Communities (2009). *Youth – Investing and empowering: EU youth report. Commission staff working document accompanying document to the Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European parliament, the European economic and social committee and the Committee of the regions*. Brussels.
- Cumsille, Patricio, Darling, Nancy, Flaherty, Brian and Martínez, María Loreto (2009). "Heterogeneity and Change in the Patterning of Adolescents' Perceptions of the Legitimacy of Parental Authority: A Latent Transition Model", *Child Development*, 80 (2): 418–432. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.2009.01269.x
- Darling, Nancy, Cumsille, Patricio and Martínez, M. Loreto (2007). "Adolescents' as active agents in the socialization process: Legitimacy of parental authority and obligation to obey as predictors of obedience", *Journal of Adolescence*, 30 (2): 297–311. doi:10.1016/j.adolescence.2006.03.003
- Douglas, Susan P. and Wind, Yoram (1978). "Examining Family Role and Authority Patterns: Two Methodological Issues", *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 40 (1): 35–47. doi:10.2307/350606

- Du Bois-Reymond, Manuela (2005). "Neues Lernen – neues Generationenverhältnis", in: Heinz Hengst and Helga Zeiher (eds). *Kindheit soziologisch*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, pp. 227–244.
- Du Bois-Reymond, Manuela, Büchner, Peter and Krüger, Heinz-Hermann (1993). "Modern family as everyday negotiation: Continuities and discontinuities in parent-child relationships", *Childhood*, 1 (2): 87–99. doi:10.1177/090756829300100204
- Du Bois-Reymond, Manuela, Te Poel, Yolanda and Ravesloot, Janita (1998). *Jongeren en hun keuzes (Young people and their choices)*. Bussum: Coutinho.
- Giddens, Anthony (2000). *Preobrazba intimnosti*. Ljubljana: *Cf.
- Giuliano, Paola (2002). "The Peter Pan paradox: Why Mediterranean youth stay at home, do not marry, do not have children (and may not work)" (Working paper), www.iies.su.se/seminars/giulianopaola_paper1.pdf (10.11.2008).
- Goffman, Erving (1990 [1959]). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. London: Penguin Books.
- Harjunen, Elina (2009). "How do teachers view their own pedagogical authority?", *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 15 (1): 109–129. doi:10.1080/13540600802661345
- Harjunen, Elina (2011). "Students' Consent to a Teacher's Pedagogical Authority", *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 55 (4): 403–424. doi:10.1080/00313831.2011.587325
- Iacovou, Maria (1998). "Young people in Europe: Two models of household formation" (ISER Working Papers), Essex, Institute for Social and Economic Research.
- Iacovou, Maria (2002). "Regional Differences in the Transition to Adulthood", *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 580 (1): 40–69. doi:10.1177/000271620258000103
- Kovacheva, Siyka (2006). "Youth Transitions and Family Support in a Transforming Social Context – Reflections from the New Member States", in: Wolfgang Lutz, Rudolf Richter and Chris Wilson (eds). *The New Generations of Europeans: Demography and Families in the Enlarged European Union*. London and Sterling, VA: Earthscan, pp. 145–176.
- Kroflič, Robi (1997). *Avtoriteta v vzgoji*. Ljubljana: ZPS.
- Kroflič, Robi (2010). "Dialogični model avtoritete kot spopad za vzajemno priznanje (Feministična kritika lacanovskega pogleda na avtoriteto)", *Sodobna pedagogika*, 61 (3): 134–154.
- Kuhar, Metka (2008). "The rights and duties of post-adolescent daughters: Daughters' and parents' accounts", *Sociologija*, 50 (4): 391–416. doi:10.2298/SOC0804391K
- Kuhar, Metka (2009). "Stališča o spolnih vlogah, delitvi dela ter usklajevanju družinskega in poklicnega življenja v Sloveniji: Starostne, spolne in izobrazbene razlike", *Socialna pedagogika*, 13 (4): 311–333.
- Kuhar, Metka (2010). "Adolescents in the postsocialist Slovenia: Between parental authority and autonomy", *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 25 (3): 363–380. doi:10.1007/s10212-010-0023-8

- Kuhar, Metka and Reiter, Herwig (2012). "Frozen transitions to adulthood of young people in Slovenia?", *Sociologija*, 54 (2): 211–226. doi:10.2298/SOC1202211K
- Leccardi, Carmen and Ruspini, Elisabetta (2006). *A New Youth? New People, Generations and Family Life*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- OECD (2009). *OECD reviews of labour market and social policies*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Pace, Judith L. and Hemmings, Annette (2007). "Understanding Authority in Classrooms: A Review of Theory, Ideology, and Research", *Review of Educational Research*, 77 (1): 4–27. doi:10.3102/003465430298489
- Pokrajac, Tatjana (2006). "Družina in odnosi v njej", in: Helena Jeriček, Darja Lavtar and Tatjana Pokrajac (eds). *HBCS Slovenija 2006: Z zdravjem povezano vedenje v šolskem obdobju. Poročilo o raziskavi*. Ljubljana: Inštitut za varovanje zdravja Republike Slovenije, pp. 81–94.
- Rose, Niklas (1999). *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self*. London: Free Associations Books.
- Smetana, Judith G. (1988). "Adolescents' and Parents' Conceptions of Parental Authority", *Child Development*, 59 (2): 321–335. doi:10.2307/1130313
- Smetana, Judith G. (1995). "Parenting Styles and Conceptions of Parental Authority during Adolescence", *Child Development*, 66 (2): 299 – 316. doi:10.2307/1131579
- Smetana, Judith G. (2011). *Adolescents, Families, and Social Development: How Teens Construct Their Worlds*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Solomon, Yvette, Warin, Jo, Lewis, Charlie and Langford, Wendy (2002). "Intimate Talk between Parents and Their Teenage Children: Democratic Openness or Covert Control?", *Sociology*, 36 (4): 965–983. doi:10.1177/003803850203600409
- Statistični urad Republike Slovenije (2002). *Popis 2002*. Ljubljana: Statistični urad Republike Slovenije.
- Statistični urad Republike Slovenije (2011a). *Statistični letopis Republike Slovenije 2011*. Ljubljana: Statistični urad Republike Slovenije.
- Statistični urad Republike Slovenije (2011b). *Statistical portrait of Slovenia in the EU 2011*. Ljubljana.
- Stattin, Håkan and Kerr, Margaret (2000). "Parental Monitoring: A Reinterpretation", *Child Development*, 71 (4): 1072–1085. doi:10.2307/1132345
- Stauber, Barbara and Du Bois-Reymond, Manuela (2006). "Familienbeziehungen im Kontext verlängerter Übergänge. Eine intergenerative Studie aus neun europäischen Ländern", *ZSE – Zeitschrift für Soziologie der Erziehung und Sozialisation*, 26 (2): 206–221.
- Tomanović, Smiljka and Ignjatović, Suzana (2006). "The Transition of Young People in a Transitional Society: The Case of Serbia", *Journal of Youth Studies*, 9 (3): 269–285. doi:10.1080/13676260600805648
- Torrance, Karen (1998). *Contemporary Childhood: Parent-Child Relationships and Child Culture*. Den Haag: CIP-Data Koninklijke Bibliotheek.
- Ule, Mirjana (2000). "Mladi v družbi novih tveganj in negotovosti", in: Mirjana Ule, Tanja Renner, Metka Mencin-Čeplak and Blanka Tivadar (eds). *Socialna ranljivost mladih*. Ljubljana: MŠZŠ/Urad za mladino/Aristej, pp. 15–79.

- Ule, Mirjana (2011). "Exploring educational trajectories of young people in Slovenia", *Teorija in praksa*, 48 (5): 1403–1408.
- Ule, Mirjana and Kuhar, Metka (2002). "Sodobna mladina: Izziv sprememb", in: Vlado Mihelj (ed.). *Mladina 2000*. Ljubljana i Maribor: Urad za mladino and Aristej, pp. 40–78.
- Ule, Mirjana and Kuhar, Metka (2003). *Mladi, družina, starševstvo: Spremembe življenjskih potekov v pozni moderni*. Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede.
- Ule, Mirjana and Kuhar, Metka (2008). "Orientations of young adults in Slovenia toward the family formation", *Young*, 16 (2): 153–183. doi:10.1177/110330880801600203
- UNESCO (2011). *Database*. <http://stats.uis.unesco.org> (14.12.2011).
- UNICEF (2007). *TransMONEE database 2007*. http://www.unicef-irc.org/databases/transmonee/2007/Tables_TransMONEE.xls (24.02.2010).
- Walkerline, Valerie and Lucey, Helen (1989). *Democracy in the Kitchen: Regulating Mothers and Socialising Daughters*. London: Virago.
- White, Lynn K. and Brinkerhoff, David B. (1981). "Children's Work in the Family: Its Significance and Meaning", *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 43 (4): 789–798. doi:10.2307/351336
- Witzel, Andreas (2000). "The Problem-Centered Interview", *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 1 (1), Art. 22 [26 paragraphs], <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0001228>.
- Witzel, Andreas and Reiter, Herwig (2012). *The Problem-centred Interview: Principles and Practice*. London: Sage.
- Yau, Jenny and Smetana, Judith G. (1996). "Adolescent-Parent Conflict among Chinese Adolescents in Hong Kong", *Child Development*, 67 (3): 1262–1275. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.1996.tb01794.x
- Živoder, Andreja (2011). "The relevance of education today: Young people and their educational choices", *Teorija in praksa*, 48 (5): 1427–1445.

Roditeljski autoritet u previranju: kvalitativno istraživanje manifestacija moći u odnosu roditelji – djeca

Metka KUHAR

Fakultet za društvene znanosti, Sveučilište u Ljubljani, Slovenija
metka.kuhar@fdv.uni-lj.si

Herwig REITER

Njemački institut za mlade, München, Njemačka
reiter@dji.de

Svrha je članka proučiti djelovanje roditeljskoga autoriteta u slovenskim obiteljima: kako roditelji ostvaruju svoj autoritet i kako njihova djeca (post)adoles-

centske dobi na njega reagiraju? Kvalitativno istraživanje govori da se roditeljski autoritet prilagođuje općoj kulturi međugeneracijskih pregovaranja: on se uzajamno stvara kao zajednički proizvod obiteljskih odnosa. Načini potvrđivanja autoriteta razlikuju se prema pojedinim područjima: pretežno su posredne naravi na području školskog uspjeha djece, a neposrednijeg su i prisilnijeg karaktera kad je riječ o sudjelovanju u kućnim poslovima.

Ključne riječi: odnos (post)adolescenti – roditelji, autoritet, moć