

Kamila Zdanowicz-Kucharczyk¹

Elbląg University of Humanities and Economy, Poland

Izabela Seredocha

Elbląg University of Humanities and Economy, Poland

Street Children's Rights in Poland

ABSTRACT: The main objective of this paper is to present Polish street children's situation in connection to their rights. It is based on a PhD project that ran from 2009 to 2012. The phenomenon of street children is increasing worldwide, necessitating new ways of working with and supporting these children. Increasingly, not only material help but also emotional support for children's choices being put forward. Therefore it is very important to spread knowledge about street children's life. Research results described in this paper could help educators work with street children. Their life is presented within the legal framework concerning the rights of children. This kind of look clarifies not only street children's situation, but also possible ways to help them.

The empirical material is based on a documentary method, which includes participant observation, group discussion and photo-reports which give to street children the possibility to document their lives. It brings researchers and educators close to children and help to meet their choices and lives.

KEYWORDS: Street children, children's rights, research with children, documentary method, Poland.

Contact:	Kamila Zdanowicz-Kucharczyk kamzdan@wp.pl
	Izabela Seredocha iseredocha@euh-e.edu.pl

Jak cytować:	Zdanowicz-Kucharczyk, K., Seredocha, I. (2016). Street Children's Rights in Poland. <i>Forum Oświatowe</i> , 28(2), 281–298. Pobrano z: http://forumoswiatowe.pl/index.php/czasopismo/article/view/406
--------------	---

How to cite:	Zdanowicz-Kucharczyk, K., & Seredocha, I. (2016). Street Children's Rights in Poland. <i>Forum Oświatowe</i> , 28(2), 281–298. Retrieved from http://forumoswiatowe.pl/index.php/czasopismo/article/view/406
--------------	---

INTRODUCTION

Street children across the world face difficult situations. We- adults give them care, social assistance, help and support. We aim to respond to their physical needs. However, despite all attempts to help, they escape to the street. This article discusses the type of help and support street children articulate that they need: freedom to express their own views about their lives. Knowledge of their way of living helps us, social workers, parents, educators² and researchers, better understand these children's world, respect their choices and give them the support that they expect.

In this article, we base the discussion on the research we conducted with street children in Poland in 2009. At the beginning of the project, we fully believed that we knew what they needed and could change their reality. Those opinions all changed during contact with these children. Their presence in our lives influenced us, developed our understanding of children's life, and relocated us to their world, which adults do not always accept.

We have tried to confront "our new view" of a street child (which we learned from children) with the view presented in the pedagogical literature. Very often, our reading of the literature led us to a perspective of a street child who was in need of adults' protection. Street children in Poland are very often presented as underprivileged, abandoned, miserable, immature people who do not know what is best for them (Olszewska-Baka, 2000; Bielecka, 2005; Kurzeja, 2008, and others). A similar view was spread in international literature that discussed the situations of Asian, South American and African children (Mickelson & Roslyn, 2000; Stephenson, 2001; Hurtubise, Roy, & Bellot, 2003; *Altanis & Goddard, 2003, and others*). Only recently have researchers such as Omre and Seipel (2007), Butler (2009), Zdanowicz- Kucharczyk (2012), and Aptekar and Stoecklin (2014) begun putting forward a different perspective on street children. This new perspective emphasizes the active role they take in constructing their lives; it demonstrates that they are confident and exhibit a sense of responsibility for their choices. These children are not only victims or objects of pity, but also social actors trying to surmount their difficulties by creating a world that helps them survive (Aptekar & Stoecklin, 2014). In this article, we join

the latest effort to break the victimhood perspective in research on street children by demonstrating their life styles.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN POLAND

In every country, the state and society are obliged to do everything in the best interest of a child, and all guidelines are contained in the law. In Poland, *The Constitution of the Republic of Poland* (1997), the *Act on Family Support and Foster Care* (2011), the *Act on the Education System* (1991) and the *Act on Taking Care of Children Below 3 Years Old* (2011) are the main legally binding acts related to children's rights. These laws refer to the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and give children:

- » the rights to life and development;
- » care from their biological parents;
- » free expression of their own views in all matters affecting them;
- » freedom of expression, thought, conscience and religion;
- » protection from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury, abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, and maltreatment, or exploitation, including sexual abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and demoralization (Stuart, 1991; Kantowicz, 1996; Freeman, 1998; Lundy, 2007; Alderson, 2008).

UNICEF presents research on respecting children's rights in Poland. The main problems children face in Poland are poverty, malnutrition, discrimination, sexual exploitation, and lack of freedom of expression and opinion. Children's opinion are routinely ignored. Poles are very attached to traditional ideas that advocate absolute parental authority and pay no attention to children's ideas. Consequently, children are rarely heard, even if they are the main subjects of a discussion. Laws and programs concerning children do not take their opinions into account and are thus poorly adapted to their needs (Fau, 2011).

Street children in Poland face all these difficulties. However, they try to feel free; that is why they choose the street as their living space. There they have right to express their opinions about anything they wish, and it is that right which they care for, not the right to shelter and the right to learn.

STREET CHILDREN IN POLAND

At the beginning, we would like to characterize the people we invited into our research project because the understanding of a Polish street child is not clear in pedagogical literature (Głowacka, 2003). The *Convention on the Rights of the Child* helps us understand the definition of a child. According to Article 1 of that document and Polish law (*Act on Ombudsman for Children*, Article 2), children are *every human being below the age of 18 years old*. The Council of Europe uses the same age to define a child. It explains:

Street children are children under 18 who, for shorter or longer periods, live in a street milieu. They are children who live wandering from place to place and who have their peer groups and contacts in the street. Officially these children may have as their address their parents' homes or an institution of social welfare. Most significantly they have very few or no contacts with those adults, parents, school, child welfare institutions, social services, with a duty towards them. (Głowacka, 2003)

In Poland, street children wander from place to place with their friends. They have an official address, predominantly, their parents' home or an institution where they should be living. Despite having an official residence, they prefer to spend time on the street.

A majority of street children in Poland have adults who should care for and protect them. Unfortunately, they are sometimes neglected and even abused by their parents. Other children should be living in child-care institutions but prefer to spend time on the street. It gives them freedom. There are no adult rules there. Of course, they return to the institution from time to time, but it is not a place where they live permanently. In Poland, these children are more like *children on the street* than *children of the street*³. We would like to focus on their situation⁴.

It is worth emphasizing that *children on the street* in Poland include both children who live in child-care homes and street children. It is a paradox that they should not be homeless but feel as if they are. Child-care institutions secure children's basic biological needs, protection and educational rights, but not love, belonging, recognition or self-realization. Educators who protect these children try to take the place of their homes, but is it possible? Unfortunately, it is not. It is very difficult to live and grow up in an institution. The children feel as though they are *homeless* (Nowak-Dziemi-anowicz, 2006). That is why children from child-care institutions look for their sense of life on the street. They try to find themselves between empty, ruined buildings, in abandoned places or in the old-fashioned railway stations. They try to compensate for lack of love and respect from their fellow street children. Of course, there is no warm shelter, food or comfortable place to sleep on the street, but they can find freedom and the possibility of being themselves.

One of us (Kamila Zdanowicz-Kucharczyk) was a volunteer in a child-care institution and noticed that children who lived there escaped to the street very often. When they had free time, which they were supposed to spend in their family homes, they went on the street to their friends, to their favorite places. There they had space that assured them of the right to privacy, which is not protected in institutions. The street was their bridge between the family home, where their basic needs were protected from time to time, and the institution, where they had to respect all adult rules. In these two spheres there was no place for their self-determination. That is why they felt *homeless* and why they became *children on the street* (UNICEF, 1989).

It could be a very interesting and urgent research problem to try to understand which rights are the most important for *children on the street*, given that they escape to the street, because the institution could not give them.

THE DOCUMENTARY METHOD AS A WAY TO COMMUNICATE WITH STREET CHILDREN

C. Hardman (1973) suggested giving children a voice in social sciences. She recommended *regarding children as people to be studied in their own right and not just as receptacles of adult teaching*. A. Prout and A. James developed this idea in the new paradigm of childhood. It is important to consider children as social actors and view their activity as a source of social change, to grasp childhood as constructed and reconstructed by and for children (James & Prout, 2003). Following this paradigm, our intention was to examine the street children's situation with these children and consider a sense of their rights.

Research with children can be problematic from an ethical perspective. There are four ways of seeing children and childhood in research: the child as the object, the subject or a social actor (Christensen & James, 2000), and a nascent approach that sees children as participants and co-researchers (Alderson, 2000; Woodhead & Faulkner, 2000). In our research, we consider these last two options. We perceive children as social actors with their own experiences and understandings. They act, participate, change and are changed by their social and cultural surroundings. Considering how socially active they are, we also include children in the research process. Following the *Convention*, we think children should be involved, informed, consulted and heard in the research process. According to Christensen and Prout (2002), "the understanding of children as social actors and participants is best founded on an a priori assumption of what we term 'ethical symmetry' between adults and children" (p. 482). In this research project, we pay attention to children's social actions, their use of language, and the meanings they attribute to words and actions. We have tried to be reflective researchers striving to create conditions that enable children to exert their sense of agency and to share their life (Punch, 2002). In addition, such an approach gives children an opportunity to have fun.

The best methods for research with street children include projective techniques such as open-ended sentence completions, human drawings, mental maps and photographic diaries (Young & Barrett, 2001; Aptekar & Stoecklin, 2014). In our project, we used a non-invasive, non-confrontational and participatory method that encouraged children to be active participants in helping us to do research – the visual method- documentary method. This method connects photos and group discussion. We also used observations and performance-related information, which, as Aptekar and Stoecklin (2014) note, are very useful in creating a non-invasive research environment for children participating in research projects.

The documentary method we applied was developed by R. Bohnsack, who was inspired by methodologies in art history (Imdahl, 1996) and adapted some of the

techniques to social science research by using images, photo reports. The reconstruction of the formal structure of pictures becomes of a central importance in analysis. The communication *about pictures* is seen in this method as understanding *through pictures* (Bohnsack, 2004). It is very difficult to communicate with children, not because they do not want to tell us about their world, but because we have different ways of expressing ourselves. We understand (or sometimes do not understand) their choices, plans and dreams from our adult perspective, which is often different from how children shape their lives. We adult researchers are no longer children; therefore, we need a translation into children's language to be able to understand them. Pictures and photographs are very helpful here. Children can not only tell us about their spaces but also show us. This way of communicating enables researchers both to see children's world and to understand how it is constructed.

The documentary method gives researchers different ways to communicate with subjects. Another way is group discussion. The group format is intended to discuss a given subject in a relatively "free" and "natural" way. Participants have a chance to share their perspectives, and the researcher discusses the topic in conversation, not in an interview (Bohnsack, 2004).

Consequently, using the documentary method (Bohnsack, 2004) – photo reports, and group discussions – we conducted a research project titled "My City." We invited two groups of children, ages 13 to 18, to show us their life on the street. Participating children had known one of us as a volunteer and were eager to let her in into their world. All the children who took part in the project did so because they wanted to. Walking with them through the one of cities in the north-east of Poland, talking and taking photos of their places helped us to know about their lives and made it possible to understand their choices. Children made photo reports composed of photographs and accompanying titles. We asked them to show us where they liked to be and what they liked to do. We allowed them to take the initiative. While they were creating their posters and deciding how to place the pictures, we had a group discussion of the photos and their lives on the street. They all commented on the photos and titles. We could ask them questions and confront them with our interpretations of their reports. This allowed us to understand their way of living. All these research activities helped us treat children as co-researchers.

Our aim was to capture street children's lives and photographs, letting them to express themselves. Nowadays, children grow up surrounded by technology, which transforms their way of playing and learning (Prensky, 2001). Therefore, taking pictures is a very good way of communicating with street children, especially those who do not trust adults. It gives them a chance to express themselves in ways other than verbal. The camera helped them show us their familiar environments through children's eyes (Benjamin, 1963, 1991). They could express their relations to places such as the street.

The documentary method gave us access to pictures of the children's conduct and interests. This research method empowered the children: they could decide which pictures they wish to take, which put on the poster and what to write below them.

What is more, selecting motifs to photographs is a creative process that evokes children's thoughts and reflections (Cele, 2006). In the process of analysis, we focused on both the photographs and the children's comments.

RESULTS

Special care for *children on the street*

Appealing to *the Declaration of the Rights of the Child*, which says "the child, by reason of her/his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care," the United Nations has proclaimed that children are entitled to special care and assistance (*Convention*, Article 1, the beginning of *Act on Family...*). It is obvious to adults who want to protect children from cruelty. Unfortunately, children can meet with neglect, abuse, violence. We, as their protectors, try to save them from abusive adults.

Although adults take care of children, sometimes they disappoint them. Children must protect themselves. *Children on the street* in Poland learn how not to be hurt by adults. Most of those who took part in our research come from families with alcohol problems. They face violence in their homes. They escape to the street because it is safer for them than their parents' home. These children know how to protect themselves, how to defend themselves from violence and how to support their friends on the street. So do they need our protection?

During the research project, we noticed two faces of children. Z. Bauman (2000) says that in post-modern society, people wear different masks depending on their situation, environment and where they are at a given moment. *Children on the street* from our research project sometimes behave as poor, weak children who need constant protection from adults. They wear this mask mostly in the child-care institution. They know it gives them advantages: good position in the institution, care, love and understanding from guardians. They use various diminutives to refer to themselves, such as *Maniuś*, *Gosiaczek*, *Olcia*⁵.

The masks look different on the street. Boys pose as tough, independent, clever and knowing how to react to and survive difficult situations like grown-up men. According to their own words during the group discussion and also in captions of photographs, they talk about themselves as *Cossacks* and *Bufs*⁶, which we interpret as an expression of the *macho type*. To illustrate this, we would like to describe one photo children took on the street. The boy who in a hooded sweatshirt is doing graffiti on the garage. He is standing in the center of the picture; he is the focus. This young teenager is looking out from the picture straight into our eyes. In his eyes, we observe anger. His spread shoulders give the impression that the boy is much bigger than he actually is. And he is only 13 (Picture 1).



Picture 1

The boy is presenting himself as an independent, very strong person, not scared of anybody or anything. We can read his position as “do not come near me if you want to stay safe and alive.” The hood covers his face, which shows he is trying to stay anonymous. That pose is relevant in the situation when a *child on the street* wants to hide from adults. This boy is presenting himself in his close environment. Life on the street is dangerous and very difficult. All children who grow up on the street must be strong and independent, or at least give the impression that they are.

In child-care institutions, girls are sweet, polite children who depend on adults. Boys describe them as *Olcia*⁷, (*Marta in the sunrise*)⁸. They behave otherwise on the street. In our research project, we call them *little women*. They display their femininity. They wear short skirts. They pose as models (Picture 2). When educators do not see and hear, boys call them *Slut of a brothel*, *Drunk in the bar*⁹.



Picture 2

Girls on the street's sexuality gives them an independent, high position in the hierarchy of street children. Unfortunately, it also gives them adulthood, which could be dangerous for them, according to their protectors.

We started this part of this article with a question: Do street children need special care, as proclaimed by Polish law? It is very difficult to answer. Our first thought is “Yes, of course, we must protect them.” However, during our research with *children on the street* in Poland, we learned that sometimes they know better than we do what they need. Furthermore, these children recognize which mask to wear to obtain what they want from us. If they need care and love, they are sweet boys and girls. If they are on the street – their territory – they show strength and sometimes cruelty toward adults.

Children on the street in Poland need our help and special care. We should protect them, but only if they want us to. They showed us that they know how to protect themselves and their friends on the street. We should respect their individualism, independence and choices. All our help for them should be *in the best interest of the child* (*Convention*, Article 3) and respect their opinion. The right to care should protect people who need it, but it should not constrain them (Lewin, 1990). As children show in our research, they have a better grasp of what they need. If we do not respect this, they will wear a mask that enables them to obtain what they want from us. Therefore, while children on the street need our special care, we should ask them what kind of help they need.

***Children on the street's* right to share their own views on their life**

The *Convention* proclaims that children should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. Adults, as their protectors, want to provide this for them. They have right to self-determination, self-upbringing and choice of living environment (Farson, 1992). In the photos, children present empty, ruined buildings, roofs of abandoned garages, water pipes through the parks and forests that are full of rubbish. We could not even imagine that children feel safe and calm there, but they escape to these places from their family homes and child-care institutions. Therefore, according these pictures, these are places where *children on the street* want to live.

As presented in the photos, children often talk about freedom, which they have on the street but not in their family homes or institutions. They create life on the street themselves, lay down their own rules and develop the area on the street as they want to. Adults do not always approve.

As an illustration, we want to present one of the *children on the street's* favorite activities: graffiti (see photo 1). Children who took part in our research project took many photos of graffiti. To them it is *street art* (Śliwerski, 2007), a way of *coloring*¹⁰ their gray reality and a way to rebel against the monotony of life. They mark their presence on the street, their places and, most important, their voice and will. It is *children on the street's* way of communicating with us. If we want to listen to them, we should treat graffiti not as vandalism, but as street children's language. Consequently, to provide children with an atmosphere of understanding, we as their partners on the street should not paint graffiti, but rather read their message and respect this way of communicating. And it shows that they are strong: *Bufs, Kings of the roof*¹¹, unafraid of difficult challenges.

Another street activity that gives *children on the street* an atmosphere of realization, happiness and tolerance for their ideas is parkour. It is street sport that involves moving as fast as possible from place to place while getting around all obstacles buildings, roofs and garages. Parkour requires skill, good conditioning, strength and cleverness. In the photos children demonstrate these abilities, which are also needed to survive on the street. Parkour is a metaphor for life, which lays down different barriers on our road and we jump over them (Parkour the art of movement, 2014). In this sport, the winner is the strongest, cleverest person on the street.



Picture 3

These activities, which *children on the street* presented during the research project, show it is not easy to understand and tolerate all their choices.

Nevertheless, if we do not allow them to be themselves on the street, they will do what they want (graffiti and parkour). However, the consequence of nonacceptance is worse because they will do these activities in secret places after escaping from the adult world.

Children on the street's right to believe in the future

The *Convention* (Article1) and the *Act on Family* (Article 4) state that children should be brought up in the spirit of peace, dignity, equality and solidarity. As we presented earlier, sometimes there is conflict between children's and adults' views on children's life. Children are vulnerable to power struggles with their educators. They are brought up in an adult-centred society. Their lives are regularly controlled and limited by adults (Punch, 2002; Alderson & Goodey, 1996). The power relationship arises when we consider the situation of *children on the street*. To adults, growing up on the street is unimaginable; therefore, the rule of equality and solidarity is often

omitted in their situation. Adults explain that something is in the best interest of the child, but unfortunately it is sometimes against children's will.

The *children on the street* who participated in our research project were very willing to show us their life on the street. Moreover, they were surprised by our attitudes. We wanted to know their world, so we gave them freedom on the street, which they do not have in the institution. This situation helped us to come closer to children. We wanted to listen to children about their lives, not tell them what we think they are. Consequently, we did not try to calm the children or stop them from doing parkour, smoking and other street activities. We had to choose between being good researchers and being good educators. Children liked it very much. We heard: *You are a great teacher who does not tell us what to do*¹². When we went with them on the street, we took responsibility for them, but not power over them. We can see that children took initiative on the street. They were *tour guides* for us *tourists* (Bauman, 1996) through the children's world. Surprisingly, the children behaved very responsibly. They wanted to show us their life; furthermore, they even wanted to praise themselves to prove to us that they could take responsibility better than we could. During this research project, we noticed that when we adults gave children trust and freedom, they could organize their lives better than we could. They know better what they need than we do.

The *Convention* (Article 12) and the *Act on Family* (Article 4) emphasize that children should have the right to express their own views in all matters affecting their lives. They should also have the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting them.

Children on the street proved in this study that it is worthwhile to give them a voice and to trust them. In the photos, they show that they can reach the sky if they want to. They took many pictures when they were standing on roofs and their arms were stretched in the victory gesture (Picture 4). They called themselves *The two crazy boys on the roof*³, but they were not afraid to take risks and change their behavior and life. These photos were taken from below. The children's power is striking. You can see that they can do anything if only given a chance. It surprised us researchers that they gave us hope and faith, not the other way around.



Picture 4



Picture 5

However, sometimes they do not believe in a better future. For example, they captioned Picture 5 *In 20 years*⁴. We asked them:

Interviewer: What in 20 years, prison?

Child – YES.

They feel strong and confident that they can change their lives, but they do not find the conditions to do it. *Children on the street* show us that they can do everything, even reach the sky. If they had some trust and respect from adults, it would be much easier for them to do so. The most important and, simultaneously, the most difficult aspect of working with children is trusting and supporting them.

DISCUSSION

This paper shows *children on the street* living and growing up on the street. This view is composed of children's rights presented in Polish law. As researchers, we try to consider children's choices and fully respect them to give educators advice on how to work with and help them. The documentary method allowed us to invite children to tour the street. In this research project, children became guides to their lives on the street.

Children on the street in Poland make choices that adults do not understand. They have a safe place to live in child-care institutions, but they feel homeless because of the atmosphere and the disrespect they feel there. They prefer spending time on the street to having a warm bed and hot meal in the institution. They choose freedom. However, they do not feel like victims. More often, they feel like winners. They know how to survive on the street, where to go, and where to have fun and meet friends – children like them. They know their rights, although they understand them differently than their educators do. So we do not have to understand their choices, but respect them.

Children on the street communicate with us by painting graffiti on the walls. Rather than tell them to stop painting, we should read it. It is their way of communicating, and we should respect it. If they want to color their world, why we do not let them do it? We want to talk with street children, but in our way. That is why they escape from adults' rules, which brings them dullness and the duty of silence.

Another aspect is the adults' prohibition of parkour. Children enjoy this street sport, which helps develop their abilities, fitness and dexterity. It is their way to create a hierarchy in the street group. The solution should not be to prohibit parkour, but to create safe places for children to do these activities. As their protectors we forbid it, but we do not give them anything to replace it.

In conclusion, we are responsible for the future of *children on the street*, and we do not believe that these children can change their lives unaided. *Children on the street* observe adults and learn how to create themselves by watching us. We should respect not only their choices, but also them as partners (Korczak, 2002), and give them belief and self-confidence. We can learn from them that everything is possible – that they can even reach the sky. Polish law gives children a chance to express their

opinions, but the problem is that we do not listen to children on the street. To them the most important thing is respect and understanding as equals. They know better what is best for them. We, as their partners in life, should not only protect their rights contained in *the Constitution, the Convention* and other Polish acts, but also give them power over their lives.

REFERENCES

- Act on Family Support and Foster Care. (2011, June 9).
- Act on the Education System. (1991, September 7).
- Act on Ombudsman for Children. (2000, January 6).
- Act on Taking Care of Children Below 3 Years Old. (2011, February 4).
- Alderson, P. (2008). *Young Children's Rights Exploring Beliefs, Principles and Practice*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Alderson, P. (2000). Children as Researchers: The Effects of Participation Rights on Research Methodology In P. Christensen, & A. James (Eds.), *Research With Children: Perspectives and Practices* (pp. 241–275). London: Falmer Press.
- Alderson, P., & Goodey, C. (1996). Research with Disabled Children: How Useful Is Child-Centred Ethics? *Children and Society*, 10, 106–116.
- Altanis, P., & Goddard, J. (2003). *Street Children in Contemporary Greece*. *Children and Society*, 18, 299–311.
- Aptekar, L., & Stoecklin, D. (2014). *Street Children and Homeless Youth: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Bauman, Z. (1996). *Etyka ponowoczesna*. Warszawa: PWN.
- Bauman, Z. (2000). *Ponowoczesność jako źródło cierpień*. Warszawa: Sic!
- Benjamin, W. (1963). *Das Kunstwerk im zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit: drei studien zu kunstsoziologie*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Benjamin, W. (1991). *Bild och dialektik*. Stockholm: Symposion.
- Bielecka, E. (2005). *Streetworking Teoria i praktyka*. Warszawa: Pedagogium.
- Bohnsack, R. (2004). Metoda dokumentarna- od koniunktywnego zrozumienia do socjogenetycznej interpretacji. In Krzychała, S. (Ed.), *Społeczne przestrzenie doświadczenia Metoda interpretacji dokumentarnej* (pp. 17–35). Wrocław: DSW TWP.
- Butler, U. M. (2009). Freedom, revolt and citizenship. Three pillars of identity for youngsters living on the streets of Rio de Janeiro. *Childhood: A journal of global child research*, 16(1), 10–29.
- Cele, S. (2006). *Communicating Place: Methods for Understanding Children's Experience of Place* (doctoral dissertation). Stockholm University.
- Christensen, P., & James, A. (Eds.). (2000). *Research With Children: Perspectives and Practices*. London: Falmer Press.
- Christensen, P., & Prout, A. (2002). Working with ethical symmetry in social research with children. *Childhood*, 9(4), 477–497.
- Convention on the Rights of the Child. (1989, November 20).

- Farson, R. (1992). Polityka dzieciństwa. In K. Blusz (Ed.), *Edukacja i wyzwolenie* (pp. 28–29). Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls.
- Fau, V. (2011). Children of Poland Realizing Children`s Rights in Poland. Retrieved from <http://www.humanium.org/en/poland>
- Freeman, M. (1998). The Sociology of Childhood and Children`s Rights. *International Journal of Children`s Rights*, 6(4), 433–444.
- Głowacka, B. (2003). Dzieci ulicy. In: *Encyklopedia Pedagogiczna XXI wieku* (p. 878). Warszawa: Żak.
- Hardman, C. (1973). Can there be an anthropology of children? *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford*, 4 (1), 85–99.
- Hurtubise, R., Roy, S., & Bellot, C. (2003). Youth homelessness: the street and work from exclusion to integration. In L. Roulleau-Berger (Ed.), *Youth and Work in the Post Industrial City of North America and Europe: With an Epilogue by Saskia Sassen* (pp. 395–405). Leiden, NLD: Brill Academic Publishers.
- Imdahl, M. (1996). *Giotto – Arenafresken. Ikonographie – Ikonologie – Ikonik*. München: Fink.
- James, A., & Prout, A. (2003). *Constructing and reconstructing childhood*. London: Routledge Falmer.
- Kantowicz, E. (1996). *Ochrona praw dziecka: w kontekście działalności UNICEF*. Warszawa: Żak.
- Korczak, J. (2002). *Jak kochać dziecko: prawo dziecka do szacunku*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie “Żak”.
- Kurzeja, A. (2008). *Dzieci ulicy- profilaktyka zagrożeń*. Kraków: Impuls.
- Lewin, A. (1990). Czy dziecko ma prawa? *Biuletyn Polskiego Komitetu Korczakowskiego*, 25.
- Lundy, L. (2007). Voice is not enough: conceptualizing Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. *British Educational Research Journal*, 33(6), 927–942.
- Mickelson Roslyn, A. (2000). *Children on the Streets of Americas: Globalization, Homelessness Education in Brazil, Cuba and the United States*. London: Routledge.
- More, J., & Seipel, M. O. (2007). Survival strategies of street children in Ghana: A qualitative study. *International Social Work*, 50(4), 489–499.
- Nowak-Dziemianowicz, M. (2006). Kiedy miejsca już nie ma. Rodzinne praktyki wykluczenia. In M. Mendel (Ed.) *Pedagogika miejsca*. Wrocław: DSW TWP.
- Olszewska-Baka, G. (2000). *Dzieci ulicy: problem, profilaktyka, resocjalizacja*. Białystok: ERBE.
- Parkour the art of movement. (2014). Retrieved from <http://parkour.com.pl/category/artykuly/>
- Prensky, M. (2001). Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants. *On the Horizon*, 9(5), 1–6.
- Punch, S. (2002). Research with children: The same or different from research with adults? *Childhood*, 9, 321–341.

- Rupsiene, L. (2004). Position, professional expertise and functions of a educator of child care homes in Lithuania. *Social Work and Society*, 2. Retrieved from <http://www.socwork.net/RupsieneLeliugiene2004.pdf>
- Stuart, H. N. (1991). From property to person status: Historical perspective on children's rights. *American Psychologist*, 46(1), 53–59.
- Śliwerski, B. (2007). Oswajanie kontestacji, czyli rzecz o postawach pedagogów wobec graffiti i grafficiarzy reformy pedagogiczne. In B. Śliwerski, *Pedagogika alternatywna: postulaty, projekty i kontynuacje. Innowacje edukacyjne i reformy pedagogiczne* (pp. 351–364). Kraków: Impuls.
- Stephenson, S. (2001a). The abandoned children of Russia: from “privileged” class to “underclass.” In S. Weber, & I. Lukanen, (Eds.), *Beyond Civil Society: Education and Civic Culture in Post- Communist Countries*. Basingtone: Palgrave.
- Stephenson, S. (2001b). Street children in Moscow. *The Editorial Board of the Sociological Review*, 530–547.
- The Constitution of the Republic of Poland. (1997, April 2).
- UNICEF. (1989). Guidelines for the application of the methodological guide on situation analysis of children in especially difficult circumstances. Bogota.
- Woodhead, M., & Faulkner, D. (2000). Subjects, Objects or Participants? Dilemmas of Psychological Research with Children. In P. Christensen, & A. James (Eds.), *Research with Children: Perspectives and Practices*. London: Falmer Press.
- Young, L., & Barrett, H. (2001). Issues of access and identity: Adapting research methods with Kampala street children. *Childhood*, 8(3), 383–395.
- Zdanowicz-Kucharczyk, K. (2012). *Codzienność uliczna z perspektywy dziecka*. Elbląg: Elbląska Uczelnia Humanistyczno-Ekonomiczna.

PRAWA DZIECI ULICY W POLSCE

ABSTRAKT: W artykule zaprezentowana jest sytuacja polskich dzieci ulicy oraz ich prawa. Opiera się na badaniach naukowych przeprowadzonych w ramach pracy doktorskiej, które trwały w latach 2009–2012. Pomimo odległej daty projektu badawczego, zjawisko dzieci ulicy jest nadal aktualne, co więcej skala tego problemu społecznego narasta. Dlatego tak ważne jest poznanie sytuacji dzieci ulicy oraz wypracowywanie metod pomocy materialnej dla nich oraz udzielanie im wsparcia emocjonalnego. Sytuacja dzieci ulicy jest zaprezentowana w tym artykule w odniesieniu do praw dzieci. Takie ukazanie tego zjawiska może pomóc pedagogom, pracownikom socjalnym i nauczycielom pracować z dziećmi ulicy. Wskazuje drogę towarzyszenia im. Materiał badawczy został opracowany w oparciu o metodę dokumentarną, która zawiera w sobie obserwację uczestniczącą, dyskusję grupową oraz reportaże zdjęciowe. Takie zestawienie metod pozwoliło badaczkom pozwolić dzieciom udokumentować ich życie, zbliżyć się do nich i spróbować zrozumieć ich wybory.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: dzieci ulicy, prawa dzieci, badania z dziećmi, metoda dokumentarna, Polska.

-
1. Corresponding author: Kamila Zdanowicz-Kucharczyk, Department of Administration and Social Sciences, Elbląg University of Humanities and Economy, ul. Lotnicza 2 82-300 Elbląg, Poland, kamzdan@wp.pl.
 2. Educator/child-care institution' worker who takes care of children (Rupsiene, 2004).
 3. According to UNICEF (1989), we can differentiate two categories of street children: *children on the streets* (the ones who return to the family home at night) and *children of the streets* (those who live on the street permanently and/or have limited access to housing and spend most of their time on street).
 4. In the research project we focused on the *children on the street*.
 5. Captions, girls' names.
 6. Captions.
 7. Girl's name.
 8. Captions below the photos. We have added a girl's name to better understand the context.
 9. Captions.
 10. One child's statement during the group discussion.
 11. Captions.
 12. A child's statement.
 13. Captions.
 14. Captions.