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Between Expectations and Reality. The Educational Function of Family Tourism

**Pomiędzy oczekiwaniami a rzeczywistością. O wychowawczej
funkcji turystyki rodzinnej**

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Abstract

Introduction. In recent years, there has been a growing demand for the implementation of modern teaching methods in order to make development harmonious and to provide favourable conditions for effective learning and developing future professional qualifications in the young generation. Searching for the forms and methods of influence that provide positive educational reinforcement includes various aspects of human activity, including free time. Particular importance is attached to tourism as an important factor integrating the process of acquiring knowledge in an interdisciplinary and multidirectional manner. The broad spectrum of the educational impact provided by tourism has resulted in growing interest from the academic community, including the author of this text, who has made family tourism the subject of this research.

Aim. Scientific research abounds in extensive typologies and classifications, showing new functions of contemporary tourism. While appreciating the wide range of opportunities, we should emphasize the educational function with particular reverence; the issues

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of justification of the reasons and ways of its use have become part of research on cultural change in the contemporary world. The subject literature gives various examples confirming the thesis about the usefulness of tourism in teaching process in schools or youth organisations. However, relatively little attention has been paid to family trips, which as the primary vacation space, are particularly important in shaping the young generation. The lack of information has led to research aimed at diagnosing the educational function of family tourism, including the perspectives of two research groups: parents, and children.

Methods and materials. The value of conducted research was to be the analysis of the opinions of both parents and their children. Therefore, a qualitative method involving two-way focus group research was selected. In line with the idea of focused group interviews, both sessions were based on a scenario prepared by the moderator and focused on the subjects corresponding to specific research questions. The research was conducted in April 2025.

Results and conclusion. Based on the research, the following conclusions have been drawn: 1) parents see the educational potential of family tourism; 2) the most important cognitive factor implemented through tourism is family integration; 3) both functions and dysfunctions can be identified in the educational role of family tourism; however, many more positive effects can be observed; 4) the biggest barrier to the educational function of tourism is the fact that parents often have no time for it; the biggest barrier for children is difficulty in communication and an overloaded trip schedule; 5) the expectations of children and parents are mostly compatible with their assessment of the reality they encounter.

Keywords: children, family, education, educational tourism, family tourism

Abstrakt

Cel. W ostatnich latach wzrasta zapotrzebowanie na wdrażanie nowoczesnych metod nauczania zapewniających harmonijny rozwój oraz dogodne warunki do efektywnego uczenia się, a także kształtowania przyszłych kompetencji zawodowych młodego pokolenia. Poszukiwanie form i metod oddziaływania dających pozytywne wzmocnienie edukacyjne obejmuje różne aspekty ludzkiej działalności, w tym czas wolny. Szczególne znaczenie przypisuje się turystyce traktowanej jako istotny czynnik integrujący proces nabywania wiedzy w sposób interdyscyplinarny i różnokierunkowy. Literatura przedmiotu obfituje w liczne przykłady potwierdzające tezę o zasadności wykorzystywania turystyki jako części procesu dydaktycznego szkoły lub organizacji młodzieżowych. Dotąd jednak stosunkowo niewiele uwagi poświęcono wyjazdom rodzinnym. Deficyt informacji przyczynił się do tego, aby podjąć badania nad wychowawczą funkcją turystyki rodzinnej.

Metody i materiały. Wartością przeprowadzonych badań miała być analiza opinii zarówno rodziców, jak i ich dzieci. Ze względu na to zdecydowano się na wybór metody jakościowej z wykorzystaniem badań fokusowych dwukierunkowych. Zgodnie z ideą

zogniskowanych wywiadów grupowych obie sesje przebiegały w oparciu o scenariusz przygotowany przez moderatorkę i koncentrowały się wokół wątków odpowiadających poszczególnym pytaniom badawczym. Badania zrealizowano w kwietniu 2025 roku.

Wyniki i wnioski. Na podstawie badań można sformułować następujące wnioski: 1) rodzice dostrzegają potencjał wychowawczy turystyki rodzinnej; 2) spośród dostępnych czynników poznawczych realizowanych poprzez turystykę za najważniejsze uznawane są te, które sprzyjają integracji rodzinnej; 3) w wychowawczej roli turystyki rodzinnej można wskazać zarówno eufunkcje, jak i dysfunkcje, przy czym obserwujemy zdecydowanie więcej pozytywnych działań; 4) dla rodziców największą barierą utrudniającą realizację wychowawczej funkcji turystyki jest brak czasu; dla dzieci – trudności komunikacyjne i przeładowany program wyjazdu; 5) oczekiwania dzieci i rodziców są w znacznej mierze kompatybilne z oceną rzeczywistości zastanej.

Słowa kluczowe: dzieci, rodzina, wychowanie, turystyka wychowawcza, turystyka rodzinna

Introduction

An attempt to understand and define the correlation between upbringing and tourism is like “reading tea leaves,” in today’s integrated world, this correlation can be seen both as a threat and an opportunity (Przeclawski, 1996). An analysis of books and periodicals shows that scientific communities are becoming more and more active in emphasising the need to adopt a conceptual approach that includes the coexistence of both negative and positive effects, which actually results from the dialectical character of both tourism (Meyer, 2008; Mika, 2004; Podemski, 2004) and upbringing (Dyczewski, 2003; Slany, 2002). Currently, the tourism market is characterized by large number of offers, which on the one hand is pleasing because it allows to adjust the offers to actual needs, but, on the other hand, it makes selection of the best option more difficult. Accepting responsibility—understood as the obligation to bear the consequences of someone’s own action, as well as actions of others—is particularly important in the culture of excess (Andrusiewicz, 2004; Szlendak, 2013), which requires that while making every decision data must not only be verified and reliable sources be found, but new and original offers must be searched for. It is a huge challenge for a family, in which the decision-maker acts in the interest of all household members. The process of making decisions in the family is determined by various factors. Type of a decision, age, and emotional maturity of the children, as well as the general culture of a specific household, are the most important factors. In the early period of a child’s life, the decision-making model is more centralized but it often transforms into a more

democratic model as young people grow, however, definitional maximalism can have negative consequences in this case:

If we consider democracy to be respect for all family members and respect for the proper dependence of children on their parents, then it is certainly something that we wish for. However, if it assumes equality and making decisions upon the consent of all family members, including children, it is a great educational mistake. (Dymara, 1998, p. 129)¹

Ultimately, therefore, it is the parents who are responsible for finding a relative balance between the expectations of their children and their own needs. When faced with the selection of a specific holiday option, they should be aware that their decision will have not only the immediate (selection of a destination or form of leisure), but also the long-term impact on the overall mental and physical development of children. The role of parents in the process of transmitting patterns of perception of reality, creating a broad cognitive perspective, and shaping patterns of behaviour is unquestionable. Therefore, we should consider the use of tourism's potential as an important instrument of educational impact.

The Notion of Tourism, Educational Role, and Family Tourism. A Subject Literature Review

The large diversity in the way tourism is defined means that every researcher dealing with this subject must struggle with terminological chaos. The problems that occur in the process of conceptualizing and operationalizing concepts are the effect of adopting a definition that is too broad, covering all relationships and phenomena related to the trip and stay of tourists in a specific location (Hunziker & Krapf, 1942), or too narrow that includes the division into types, forms, or goals (Liszewski, 2013). In order to avoid terminological chaos, let's assume that tourism will be treated in the conducted research as: "the phenomenon of spatial mobility associated with a voluntary, temporary change of a place of residence, rhythm, and environment, and with coming into personal contact with the visited environment (natural, cultural, or social)" (Przeclawski, 1979, p. 38)².

In accordance with the recommendations of the World Tourism Organisation, we do not include here trips aimed at gainful employment (WTO, 1995), and products

¹ Author's own translation.

² Author's own translation.

of tourism classified as educational tourism, even if they take place outside school hours, and are based on school circles or sightseeing and tourist clubs.

Every manifestation of human activity is determined by numerous impulses, which should be understood as a continuum between factors that are under our control and those that are independent of personal choices or preferences. It is not different in the event of tourism, which, as a multidimensional phenomenon, is the result of direct correlations and microsocial and macrosocial conditions. Understanding the specificity and importance of these correlations is essential because they directly affect the shape and model of tourism in individual or family dimension. The academic community most often opts for dichotomous (Jedlińska, 2006; Wasiak, 1978) or trichotomous classification (Alejziak, 2006; Nowakowska, 1989). The common issue that combines the above concepts is the division into a group (or groups) of external conditions, which include: national economy, income, savings, loans, marketing actions, culture, development of infrastructure, social development, *etc.*, and internal conditions referring to values, attitudes, aspirations, motives, or needs³. Without judging any of distinguished elements, adopted cognitive perspective directs our attention towards the two last elements, which initiate the whole process of tourist activity persuading to take actions in this direction. They are also treated as a fundamental criterion for selecting the roles to be fulfilled through tourism. Accepting a universal and generally agreed classification of the role of a tourism is a daunting task for at least two reasons: 1) firstly, typologies are developed by the researchers that deal with various fields of science, which results in the lack of comprehensive approach; 2) secondly, we must be aware of the intensity of the connections between separate elements, which makes it difficult to define clear boundaries between them. In this situation, all available classifications can be treated as a conventional effect of the adopted convention, and operationalization can be limited to presenting the educational role⁴. It is taken into account in all configurations, however, it may occur independently (Kurek, 2008) or as an element of a comprehensive system of meanings (Bochenek, 2008). Przecławski's model was adopted for the purposes of this article, which combines pedagogical and sociological perspective, recognizing that the educational role of tourism is: "The entirety of socio-cultural impact, group and individual, direct and indirect, formal and informal,

³ The classification, which divides factors into external and internal ones (Jedlińska, 2006), is flexible and universal enough to be applied under various conditions.

⁴ This goal of this article was not to list and analyse all the functions of tourism; therefore, the author focuses only on its educational role.

intentional and unintentional, resulting in relatively permanent change in an individual's personality towards socialization"⁵ (Przeclawski, 1996, p. 96)⁶.

It is a universal and diverse organizational form of upbringing, in which the proper use of mutual connections between mental, aesthetic, social-moral, and physical development determines the harmonious development of an individual (Ćwiakowski, 1967). These relationships are various in forms and configurations, creating the following subject groups: 1) cognitive factors: (learning about culture, nature, the environment, works of art from the areas visited); 2) psychosocial factors (shaping socially minded attitudes, developing openness towards other people, making new friends); 3) family factors (shaping feelings, strengthening contacts with the family); 4) health-promoting factors (physical and mental health enhancement, including the promotion of physical activity, rest, recovery, and health improvement); 5) factors determining the development of values (developing the ability to make choices, acquiring new experiences, being open to new, previously unknown experiences)⁷ (Mroczek-Żulicka, 2016; Przeclawski, 1996).

The suggestion presented includes approving actions that are considered appropriate and have a positive impact on the young generation. However, if the educational role of tourism is used in an incompetent or improper way, its impact can be negative. The dysfunctions that arise are the result of incorrect parental attitudes and behaviours or the outcome of unwise actions unknowingly conveying unfavourable patterns of conduct⁸.

Nowadays, it is commonly accepted that upbringing is a conscious and deliberate interference in the socialization process, emphasizing the importance of intentional impacts (Brzezińska, 2000).

The process of bringing up children, understood as the interaction between two individuals, assumes a two-way relationship, although their visions may differ significantly. This principle also applies to tourism because the activities suggested by parents do not always meet the children's expectations. These discrepancies result from different perspectives and developmental and social processes. Generally, we think that differences of opinion, or even conflicts between parents and children are something natural.

⁵ Author's own translation.

⁶ Reference to socialization understood as "affecting the personality of an individual by the process of social life and culture [...], that is, the acquisition or acceptance by an individual of the values and norms resulting from them, then by the processes of learning and shaping patterns of behaviour, including patterns of social roles" (Turowski, 1993, p. 39) [author's own translation].

⁷ The presented set of categories is in fact a categorization key that forms the basis for classifying and organizing data collected during qualitative research.

⁸ Dysfunctional factors were not included in the groups of subject factors discussed earlier; however, they are an element of the categorization key applied in the analysis of the research material, except that they are treated as a separate subject.

Therefore, the educational goal of tourism should be not so much the achievement of complete harmony, but rather the creation of space for the free exchange of ideas, dialogue, and specific activities with respect and understanding for both sides.

The last section of the theoretical chapter was devoted to family tourism, that is, the term that combines two words that form the pillar of the analyses conducted here: family and tourism. From a sociological perspective, a family is “the community of people connected by marriage, kinship, affinity, or adoption” (Tyszka, 1974, p. 70)⁹. Whereas the pedagogical perspective is mainly focused on the role of a family in the process of bringing up children, treating it as an environment in which the processes of socialization occur, and emphasizing its importance in individual and social life. Its connection with a specific space and material goods is also important (Dyczewski, 1994).

Transformation of a model of the contemporary family¹⁰ extending the way it is understood by including many systems that were previously outside the scope of this notion: “A family is a group of relatives, in-laws, friends, and other individuals connected to a family with a child, most often the mother” (Szlendak, 2011, p. 114)¹¹.

Based on these assumptions, it is assumed that family tourism is a social practice that provides benefits (educational), undertaken by related persons (parent/parents/child/children)¹², in which broadly understood kinship may, but need not be, the basis for taking a trip (Kowalczyk-Anioł & Włodarczyk, 2011)¹³.

Methodological Note

Despite the popularization of family tourism not only in everyday but also in academic practice (Łobożewicz & Wolańska, 1994; Nanda *et al.*, 2007) not enough empha-

⁹ Author's own translation.

¹⁰ The reference here is both to quantitative changes (modification to the family structure) and qualitative changes to relationships within the family. They both result in modernization of the family structure and moving away from the traditional two- or multi-generational family structure towards a modern one, which also includes alternative forms of family.

¹¹ Author's own translation.

¹² Due to the selected research sample and the research goals, it was assumed that the participation of the parent(s) and child(ren) in the trip was crucial here; however, the possibility of participation of third parties in this trip is not excluded.

¹³ Reference to the concept developed by Kowalczyk-Anioł and Włodarczyk, according to which family tourism can be understood in two manners: in the strict sense, when we mean travelling with related persons, and in the broad sense, when the purpose of the trips is, for example, visiting family, family gatherings, *etc.*

sis is put on the research into family trips in terms of using their potential in the process of bringing up the young generation.

To find the answer for the question of what the educational role of family tourism is, the results of the research on tourist activity conducted Katowice in 2025 were used. The main question was extended with the following specific questions: 1) Which of the available cognitive factors are treated as the most important? 2) Does family tourism generate negative educational effects (dysfunctions)? 3) Can you identify any barriers hindering fulfilment of educational role of family tourism? 4) Is the perspective of the parents within the scope of a form of leisure and declared needs fulfilled through family tourism compatible with the perspective of children?

The following hypotheses were assigned to the research questions presented: 1) The basis for tourist actions is supporting family factors; 2) Family tourism may cause undesirable effects (dysfunctions), but they are marginal in their scope and significance; 3) The lack of more free time is the most important barrier hindering fulfilment of educational role of family tourism; 4) There are differences between parents' and children's perceptions of forms of leisure and declared needs fulfilled through family tourism.

The above assumptions allowed the formulation of the main hypothesis, which is the following: Family tourism plays a key role in the process of bringing up children, providing support in mental, aesthetic, social-moral, and physical development. The general character of the hypothesis was as a consequence of the selected research method and corresponding to the specific character of such research, it was supposed to make it easier to understand broader patterns and identify specificity, creating a basis for describing the complexity of the phenomenon.

The research was conducted with the use of a qualitative method, conducting focus group interviews in two research groups: 1) group of parents (8 people) – discussion group; 2) group of children¹⁴ (8 people) – observing and commenting group.

Initially, Faracik's concept (2011) was selected as a way to select the respondents to this group; however, after meeting with potential respondents and conversations with parents, people at the age between 13 and 16 were selected to this group¹⁵. The condi-

¹⁴ Generalized term is used here: children/child without reference to sociological and pedagogical categorizations.

¹⁵ According to Faracik's concept, people at the age between 13 and 18 (teenagers) are more and more independent, and the ways they spend their free time (including trips) is becoming similar to those of adults. 17/18-year-olds were excluded from the research group because they are often independent and choose to travel without their parents, and it was decided to conduct a focus interview with 13–16-year-olds, treating them as people who are still subject to the process of upbringing and parental influence, but they are also becoming more and more aware and co-deciding partners in family trips.

tion for qualifying respondents for the research sample was a declaration that their family had a tradition of travelling together.

The goal of the research was to obtain opinions, assessments, and to understand the emotions of both parents and their children, although there was a risk that young respondents would find it difficult to identify their perceptions; therefore, the method of two-way focus group research was selected. This selection turned out to be accurate; listening to parents' statements made their children feel less discomfort and allowed them to freely express their opinions. The meetings, which proceeded according to a scenario developed by the moderator, were focused around the issues specified in the research questions. The moderator was a participating observer. Because she knew all the respondents in the discussion, it was determined that this would not have a negative impact on them.

Fulfilment of Educational Role of Family Tourism. Research Results

The interviews started from questions about the character of practiced tourism: its types, frequency of trips, and organization methods. Neither group was able to clearly identify their ways of travelling: "Our formula is very diverse, which means that there are actually several types of our trips" (R:1)¹⁶. "My family holidays are usually tourist and leisure-oriented. And also sports-oriented. Oh, and then there are also festivals [...]. I don't know how to specify it" (Dz:1).

The respondents also classified as family tourism short trips, weekend trips, and trips that do not involve overnight stays outside their permanent place of residence. These trips are often organized according to a specific pattern, that is, every family has developed a travel pattern or patterns that are mostly repeated every year. Strong emphasis is put on individualism, the personal character of trips, organizing them in accordance with style and preferences of specific families: "In some way they are just like us, a bit unpredictable, spontaneous, somewhat undefined" (R:7).

The respondents were highly expressive and lively while talking about their ways of travelling, evoking a series of memories and providing numerous examples. What is important that both parents and children use the plural form when talking about their family trips ("we," "our," "we like," *etc.*). Many respondents organize trips on their own, without the support of external institutions; they make use of such

¹⁶ The method of coding for individual respondents included the following numerical values: R:1–R:8 (for parents) and Dz:1–Dz:8 (for children), whereby, in order to facilitate the analysis of the research results and comparison of the parents' and children's perspectives, a principle was applied that the respondents from the same family have the same numerical value (R:1 – parent of Dz:1, etc.). All statements have been translated by the author.

support when it is required by the specificity of a specific trip (*e.g.*, horse riding trip, skiing trip, the need to use specialist equipment, or the assistance of an instructor), or when it is a trip to distant, often dangerous places (*e.g.*, African countries). “We always organize trips individually; we do not like mass tourism and organized trips. It is usually a secluded place, close to nature” (R:2). “Individually planned holidays, staying in an apartment, away from hotels” (R:4). Only a few of the respondents use travel packages, the so-called “all inclusive.”

The comprehensive spectrum of tourism provokes reflection on the importance of particular groups of cognitive factors experienced during trips. For parents, the most valuable aspects include integration and strengthening bonds between family members: “Being together, our most important goal is to spend time together [...]. Trips bring us so much closer together, for example, we switch our phones into flight mode and we can talk much more and create something together” (R:1). “The most important thing is spending time together [...]. It’s that moment in the year that we are having conversations and play together, which always brings our family closer” (R:2).

Then, they mentioned the benefits of discovering new places, history, culture, and traditions. The activities focused on the development of psychosocial factors were also mentioned as important: “We want to integrate with people, for example, the purpose of these festival trips is to meet people who think in the same way as we do and we learn from each other” (R:1). “We often travel without any plan, stopping at random places, and this is a great opportunity to feel like a part of the local community” (R:8).

The respondents often emphasized the importance of all the groups of cognitive factors mentioned. However, they paid the least attention to those factors that determine the shaping of values, creativity, and openness to new experiences. There were also relatively few references to preventive measures and activities supporting children’s physical or mental health, which may be surprising in the context of the large number of trips that fit into the model of sports tourism. This apparent discrepancy seems to result from the fact that although sport and physical activity are important to parents, they are treated more as an excuse to go on a trip than as a goal in itself. Children had a slightly different outlook on this subject. They attributed the greatest value to health-promoting factors and those that refer to physical activity: “We often select places, where we can practice sport, for example, in Suwałki we simply focus on sport [...], in winter we go skiing, and then the main goal is skiing” (Dz:4).

Then, they mentioned pro-family factors, which, in their opinion, can form the basis for building a foundation of social capital: “I think that the main purpose of tourism is to spend time together. I believe that the most important in life are memories and experiences, which are created by travelling” (Dz:7).

They also drew attention to the opportunities to learn and experience something new: “During each trip, we get to know the local culture, for example, local cuisine” (Dz:5).

Cognitive factors turned out to be the least important from the children's perspective; they do appreciate them, but believe that they satisfy the needs of parents more than their own: "They [parents] want us to see something, visit a castle or something like that" (Dz:8).

Analysing the statements of both groups leads to a conclusion that parents are guided by a holistic approach in assessment of cognitive factors, treating trips as a whole consisting of many interconnected elements (which translates into perceiving the possibility of fulfilling various roles in a single trip). Whereas children attach greater importance to individual elements referring to the main goal of a given trip (*e.g.*, to practice sport), thus being part of the reductionist concept. Generally, both groups agree that family tourism provides multidisciplinary knowledge, making tourism a unique product of the economy of experience (Pine & Gilmore, 1998)¹⁷.

Although tourism, especially family tourism usually generates positive associations, it should be remembered that it can also result in undesirable consequences. This subject is marginally treated in scientific literature; discussion on the anti-educational function of trips in the context of organized tourism (Przeclawski, 1996) is focused on the threats connected with promoting consumerism, a superficial approach to the places visited, or generating attitudes of disrespect for norms of social coexistence. Initially, the respondents were very reticent in expressing their views about the negative aspects of family tourism. The impetus for further exploration of the subject was a statement of one of the respondents:

What comes to mind is the fact that while travelling with a family, not all the expectations, desires or ideas of all family members are fulfilled. It sometimes makes children feel frustrated and they ask why someone's opinion is more important than opinion of other people [...]. Sometimes, I feel that we teach children that the adult's opinion is more important. (R:8)

This view also drew attention to other issues that were ultimately deemed harmful. They included too ambitious, overloaded trip plans, which can lead to a feeling of "ticking off" subsequent tourist attractions, rather than actually exploring these places, focusing on material objects (*e.g.*, souvenirs, buying useless knick-knacks), as well as treating the local community like objects: "I have a feeling that sometimes we cross the line a little [...] for example, while taking photos [...]. Then, I think that I am teaching children to disrespect these people" (R:7).

¹⁷ Reference to the concept of experience economy, in which the focus is not so much on goods or tourist services as on experiences, emotions, and acquired experiences.

For children, the dysfunctions identified by their parents are of little importance; although they notice them, and are aware of their existence, they are far from concluding that they may negatively affect their upbringing. On the other hand, young respondents are more precise in listing the barriers that may hinder fulfilment of an educational role of family tourism. Lack of time is the biggest problem for parents, while for children it is communication issues that often disrupt their trips: "What bothers me the most is the lack of communication and agreement on our plans [...]. Unfortunately, this leads to arguments making atmosphere tense" (Dz:4). "I am annoyed every time I have to choose a place to eat. Not everyone can make up their mind quickly, so it takes us a long time and causes general chaos" (Dz:8).

The common thread linking all the issues discussed in the research was an attempt to determine whether and how family tourism fulfils the educational role. It was obvious for the parents: every trip has an educational impact, and benefits are difficult to overestimate. "I believe that tourism is of enormous educational value, because there are many unpredictable situations and we can discuss them on an ongoing basis, draw conclusions and react to difficult situations, observe other people and talk about them" (R:1).

It is important that the potential of tourism as a tool for shaping the younger generation is recognized regardless of the form of recreation selected: "Whether it is survival with no toilets, or all-inclusive, educational value is enormous" (R:5). "We agree in 100% with the saying that 'travels broaden the mind' and every trip, even a short weekend one, teaches us something new and opens our minds to different things" (R:2). "Trips teach us many things, for example, overcoming weaknesses, perseverance" (R:4). "[Trips] provide natural opportunities to confront what children know only theoretically, for example, the coexistence of different cultures and views, respect for other people [...] also provide an opportunity to get to know not only yourself, but also each other" (R:8).

It's a great lesson of humility showing that we have to find a way out of every situation, even the most difficult ones. It's also a great example of how we, as parents, don't have all the answers, and sometimes the success of a trip depends on the children. For example, our son, who is the only one of us learning Spanish, was our translator and a bit of a tourist guide during our trip to Mexico. (R:7)

They see the greatest educational value of family tourism in the opportunity to spend time together and share experiences with their children. Intra-family communication and being together provide new opportunities for emotional, mental, and physical development. Children see the educational aspect mainly in cognitive and health-promoting factors, that is, those that allow the developing of specific skills, or allow the body to rest and regenerate. They value family integration, but do not equate

it with educational impact: “I do not think that these trips are of educational value, as their goal is relaxation and a break from the daily routine, school or work” (Dz:6).

It can be assumed that this discrepancy between research groups results from different contexts of interpretation of upbringing; for parents, it is the entirety of influences exerted in the family (and beyond); whereas, children treat this concept as synonymous with schooling and/or education, which they associate with school or other educational institutions. Minors claim that the basis of education is teaching individuals competences and skills, and the very process of passing on such knowledge is characterized by prohibitions or commands. It can be seen in the following statement: “Generally speaking, we have more freedom during our trips [...]. There’s no stress, and parents don’t really tell us what to do [...]. They let us get away with a lot, so I don’t see any educational value” (Dz:2).

In this situation, reconstruction of the process of bringing up and developing young people’s personality based on relationships, dialogue, and mutual understanding, and modulating desired behaviours through positive reinforcement and the possibility of using promoted patterns is becoming more and more important. Family tourism meets all these conditions and we can therefore hope that it will be an important vehicle for these changes.

Conclusion

Bringing up a young person is a difficult task; in the culture of competition, consumerism, and unlimited choice, it becomes a real challenge. It is therefore good to be able to use various tools that can make this process better, more effective, and more interesting. Undoubtedly, the strength of tourism, including family tourism, results from its broad spectrum of impact on various areas of individual development. Therefore, let’s verify the research assumptions and formulate a few conclusions based on the conducted research: 1) parents see the educational potential of family tourism, using it as a support in mental, aesthetic, social-moral, and physical development; for children, tourist activity more often is a means of achieving a certain level of satisfaction, satisfying specific needs; they are less inclined to unequivocally link tourism with education, however, they admit that it can be a way of learning about reality and polishing various competences or skills; 2) when it comes to available cognitive factors fulfilled by tourism, parents particularly appreciate those that promote family integration; according to the children, all the elements mentioned are used in the tourist activities selected by the family, with particular emphasis on sports activities and those related to new experiences; 3) both research groups emphasize the presence of both functions and dysfunctions; however, they can observe many more positive aspects; 4)

for parents the lack of time is the biggest barrier hindering fulfilment of an educational role of tourism; for children – communication issues.

Contrary to the research assumptions, no significant differences were observed between the perceptions of parents and children; it turns out that the expectations of both sides are not only consistent with each other, but also coincide with the existing reality. Parents unanimously think that the forms and methods of traveling selected by them are appreciated by their children; they are convinced that young people appreciate and willingly participate in these trips. It is a correct assumption and apart from minor drawbacks, the young respondents are mostly satisfied with family trips, and small differences do not affect the overall positive assessment of the trips. Of course, we could argue whether this is proof of a correctly conducted process of bringing up children, the mechanism of which is based on the assumption that the habits (here: travelling) learned in the early years of life determine later choices and preferences. However, this is a subject for further research. At this point, it is worth considering what – apart from the appropriate upbringing mentioned above – makes the needs and expectations of the two groups of the respondents compatible. It seems that the key to success may be the decision-making process. Both groups emphasized the fact that their opinion matters during trip planning, and although parent(s) have the final say, this is always the result of discussions with family members.

Balancing between the needs of parents and offspring is not an easy task, and family tourism is as a social space where intergenerational dialogue is still possible. We can only hope that conscious and well-thought-out planning of trips will be more and more synonymous with effective, valuable upbringing.

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