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### Introduction

Family is an extremely important educational, care, socialization and cultural environment for the child. Children under observation and imitation of them, and intrafamily interaction between members of the family learn social norms, patterns of behavior, shaping attitudes, hierarchy of values. Today the family in Poland, especially those of young age and marital experience transform in their functions, social, emotional, educational and care. These changes are determined by global, macro-social changes, which include according to Zbigniew Tyszką [2002]:

- The weakening of social bonds,
- An increase of unemployment in the society,
- Atomization of social life,
- Globalization of culture and behavior,
- Liberalization of norms, patterns of behavior,
- Increased competition and the free market economy,
- An increase in aggression and conflictuality between social groups,
- The global economic crisis, the economic and social development.

These elements of social and economic life grew rapidly in recent decades, especially after the transition. They have a definite impact on the functioning and structure of the modern family. They contribute to the formation of a variety of family dysfunctions in the community, which most often manifested as aggression, conflicts between family members, unemployment of one or both parents, migration of parents, usually the father, loosening of emotional ties in a family environment, isolation of family members, especially children, the liberalization

of educational and care process, family socialization disorder, confusion of values accepted and recognized in the family. These elements threaten the functioning of the modern family and contribute to the crisis situation in the family environment, including disturbance of family structure expressing in its instability and the breakdown of the marriage.

Today we observe the process of growth in the number of single parent families. Incompleteness of the family may be constant or periodic (temporary). The cause of permanent incompleteness family is the death of a parent, divorce, single parenthood by choice, the abandonment by one of the parents. And temporary incompleteness of family, which in recent decades, becoming wider in size, primarily due to the migration of parents, especially the father, the parents work in a distant place from home, long-term illness of the father or mother.

There are much more incomplete families with single mothers than with single fathers. It is due to higher mortality of men in young age, allocation by family courts in 94.6% parental care to mothers and only 5% to fathers, the increase in the number of women opting for single motherhood, migration gainful primarily of men.

Single mothers, especially in the first period of a dysfunctional family structure are experiencing significant emotional and social tensions, which have a direct impact on the imbalance of a greater or lesser extent, the process of educational, welfare, social interactions and relationships within the family, ingested maternal attitudes, values recognized and patterns of behavior in the family and outside the family as well as social and professional position in the local environment.

### **Typology of incomplete families with single mother**

In Polish society, the number of single-parent families, including families with single mothers are growing. Today, the phenomenon of single motherhood is becoming quite common. Even in the first half of the twentieth century and earlier, single motherhood, as well as divorce was not socially acceptable. At the present time - twenty-first century – both: divorces, as well as the birth of a child born out of wedlock have become an element of social life that cause no emotional impact.

Families of single mothers in the literature are often referred to as „at least two-generation, incomplete social structures (non-biological, biological - legal or legal), which are characterized by long-term, or permanent deformation of the structure of the partnership and generational isolation generating the majority of mothers in making decisions about different validity of life, in relation to each other and the children, and a requirement solely responsible for the fate of the younger generation” [Trawińska 1996 p.10].

The characteristic features for the structure of incomplete family with single motherhood are, according to A. Kwak [2012], as follow:

- The biological father is outside the family - dead or living separately,
- Interruption of the primary emotional bonds that join an incomplete family with their absent father,
- Keeping independent household by his mother.

Typology of single-parent families with a single mother is generally made on the basis of the causes of such families. Different authors mention various reasons that causes for the incompleteness of the family, including single motherhood. Aulaytner J. [1995] typology of reasons making single motherhood, the classification of families with a single mother divides into:

1. Long-term or permanently incomplete families.
2. Temporary incomplete families with single parent.

The first group includes such incomplete families, which are:

- Orphaned due to the death of the father,
- Broken as a result of divorce or abandonment by the father, or husband,
- Incomplete biologically - unmarried mothers with a child.

The second group of families temporarily incomplete single mothers cite such cases as:

- Stay of the father in prison,
- The longer treatment of the father in hospital,
- Migration of the father abroad for work purposes,
- The nature of work outside the place of residence of the family.

Of all the categories (typology), family of single motherhood, family of single women, especially underage girls, is perceived by the public as the least positive. It should be noted that today many women are well off economically and professionally decide at mature age to conscious single motherhood.

Very interesting typology of incomplete families with single parents was introduced by L. Sarnowski [2001]. For its development he used following independent variables: education, number of children, marriage status, living environment, co-management with third parties.

1. Singlemotherhood by choice – these are women conscious and willingly choosing motherhood. They are characterized by a higher education, living in the city, having a high or medium financial status and professional.
2. Single motherhood by chance - applies to a group of underage mothers, with at most a high school education, manifest deficiencies in the qualifications, having difficulty in finding gainful employment. These families live alone both in town and in rural areas, they have difficulties in meeting material needs and therefore must use the assistance of social care institutions.
3. Not seeking single motherhood. This group of families of single mothers is in the form divorcees, widows, leaving the family by his father, his father's emigration. Mothers in these families are usually focused on the problems of education and care of their children.

4. Incomplete families but not quite single motherhood. These are miss with a child or widows that along with other people form household, so called multi-generational often feminized.

Families with single motherhood manifested in its functioning numerous difficulties. They are in a worse financial situation than a complete family, as mothers' income is the source of livelihood of the family. Moreover, as the Kawula S. claims [2005] mothers in these families are overloaded with responsibilities related to the care, education and efforts to maintain a decent economic situation. In the absence of a father in a family of single motherhood the socialization process is disrupted, family contacts with the local community are limited and social mobility of a single mother and her children is also limited.

### **Psychosocial difficulties in single motherhood**

No husband and father to the child in the family causes a lot of negative changes in mental and social functioning of the family environment. Single mothers often feel overloaded with household duties, caring, educating. They see themselves, as evidenced by E. Kopec [2003], as weak and helpless in the face with the requirements posed by the life, feel the lack of psychological, social and material support. They are, however aware of the fact that they are responsible for satisfying the needs of their children, their educational and living conditions.

Many single mothers manifest psychological difficulties in the form of: a sense of having been harmed by a former spouse or partner, understated self-esteem caused by loneliness and helplessness, a sense of natural life as a result of divorce, marriage, inability to meet its own aspirations and development plans and unions. These mental disequilibrium of single motherhood contribute to some difficulties at work, irritability and even conflictual in the family, community, concentration disorder and conceptually create quality of domestic situation both inside and outside.

The quality and degree of psychological difficulties met by single mothers are the most dependent on the cause and the period in which the phenomenon of single parent families took place. This applies especially to single motherhood of women widowed, divorced or girls with a child.

Single motherhood caused by the death of the husband causes by obvious reasons feeling of despair, grief that it's just such a tragedy that met her, longing for her husband. Psychological, material and social aid of close and further family leads in the long term for emotional balance.

Single mothers after the divorce met qualitatively different negative psychosocial situations. The increasing of difficult emotions takes place already in the period of marriage conflicts before the divorce, in these the aggression, psychical violence and of the physical one by husband towards wife and father towards child caused traumatic home situations. The divorce time is always full of stress and

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psychical tense for mother and a child. Post-divorce period is often combined with living home by ex-husband and father and it is psychological shock for the child, accompanied by a high degree of anxiety and despair by mother [Cudak 2010].

Single mothers at young age, are in a difficult psychologically and socially situation including under-age, as they are still emotionally immature, usually unprepared for the rigors of the care and upbringing of a small child. E. Sikora takes the view that single motherhood of young women “are not only difficult type of organizational or material, but also serious mental problems. Very often young and helpless in life girls are not able to cope with the new situation and for them to adequately fulfill the tasks associated with the upbringing and care of the child “ [Sikora 2000].

Mental experiences cause adverse life situations of families with a single mother, can also have negative factors in the process of educational and care in relation to the child. In addition to psychological threatens in single-parent family with a single mother what is essential for the functioning of the family, there are social conditions as well as the relationships and reactions of the local community in relation to different types of single motherhood. The view should be expressed that the modern state social policy is aimed at helping economic, social and mental aid to families in difficult economic conditions. In addition, public awareness has changed to a much greater extent than it was in the past, by accepting the incompleteness of the family, including single motherhood. Although social support and increasing awareness of the social acceptance of single-parent families, single mothers, according to a study conducted by G. Dabrowska [2000], in most fairly critically assess their social activities in the local community, while they fall in seclusion and themselves subconsciously isolate themselves from society. They feel as lower social status compared with full-functioning families

Children from single-parent families, who lost his father as a result of his death can count on the recognition and support of the local environment as well as good relations and social and emotionalities. In contrast, in families with a single mother due to her parents' divorce occurs mainly in children “a feeling of fear, anxiety and uncertainty about the future and the possibilities to improve the situation in the family, as well as to their importance and place in the lives of single parent families. Occur in their difficulties in establishing social contacts with peers, isolation from peer group, which is exacerbated in the verbal aggression” [Kawula 2005 p.128].

### **Educational and care problems in incomplete families with single mother**

Family is one of the most important educational environments. It forms the personality characteristics of the child, the action of the peer group, the quality of school education, a system of values, and aspirations and motivations for setting up of intrafamilial and outside the family. Any disorder in the structure of the family (parents' divorce, single parenthood, the death of his father, biological

unwed motherhood) results in a dysfunctional family environment, especially in the area of education and care.

Single motherhood in the fate of his family life and outside the family meets many tasks that mother is not able to perform on her own. These tasks are related to professional sphere to meet the needs of material nature, interaction with the school to implement educational duties of a child and to take care of his educational outcomes, taking care of the child, his proper socialization and also perform the functions of education. Multilateralism of parental tasks which must be performed by mother without the support of the father often cause behavioral problems with children's functioning in single-parent families.

A major problem that causes the disorder of influence process of single mother in bringing up sons as well as daughter is the lack of male personal pattern that should be given by father. Single mothers in assess of A. Maciarz [2004] are mostly aware of psychical and physical contact with their biological father. They are aware that the absence of father in the family, the depriving children of the personal contacts are often the cause of educational problems. What is disturbing is the bad phenomenon in educational reality, since 36,6% of mothers, as it can be drawn from the research of E. Adamczyk [1991] strongly opposes any physical contacts with the father of her children. Too many mothers surveyed (45.2 %) only tolerate sporadic contact with his father's children. It is a pity that only 18.2% accepts direct and indirect contacts with the children 's father. Single mothers, especially due to divorce feel the grief and harm done by husband and father and in a purposeful and conscious way they restrict or even completely eliminates the contacts children with their father. They believe, as a result of past traumatic experiences that their personal contacts can only bring negative impacts for education. Furthermore, single mothers are afraid of such father's influences that will induce children to live with his father's family. Children from families of single mothers, especially in adolescence, after meetings with biological fathers frequently exhibited in their behavior aggression, disobedience, truancy, conflictuality, tantrums, disregard the existing hierarchy of values.

Single mothers, especially those who have low educational culture and manners in their educational interactions use more punishment than reward. The most common punishments in these families is screaming, anger, constant remarks made to the child, explanations, reprimands. There were also corporal punishment for disobedience of the child. However, many single mothers, especially with higher education, regardless of the type of incomplete families feel their children are sufficiently disadvantaged and for that they will not punish them further, despite the often negative behaviors and making educational problems. They prefer to decisively used in the process of care and educational interactions awards than punishment [Kawula 2005].

Excess of household, economical, family and professional duties of single mother drawn from satisfying the material, consumer, educational needs of

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children will often neglect the care and education. Children from these families do not have unsatisfied psychological and social needs, but for the lack of time of their mothers they feel lonely, not accepted, lost, and even misunderstood by those closest to him. The feeling of loneliness for children of single mothers causes specific educational problems in the form of emotional and social isolation from the environment (family environment), they feel helpless, depressed, apathetic, closed.

Excess of household, economical, family and professional duties of single mother in incomplete family causes the reduction of control and meeting the psychical needs of children. Overtired mothers are not able to discharge the duties of control in the family and beyond [Cudak 2008]. Lack of control on the part of parents, in the broad sense of the word, causes on the one hand making children and young people different social contacts with informal groups, often adverse educationally, on the other hand, children in a family environment devoid of correction from the parents of illegal behavior, social norms and customs, family culture.

It is also disturbing that many single mothers and single-parent families with lack of time and physical or psychical fatigue limits or even eliminates the daily interactions of material, mental, and particularly social needs. Reducing material needs is often due to lack of work or a reduction in real income accounts - despite work by young mothers - because the income is not the father fed the family budget. The deterioration of the function of the material in these families is also reflected in the scarcity in meeting educational and cultural functions in relation to children. Single mothers with limited financial resources eliminate payable, extracurricular activities, school trips, wheels interests held in community centers or other institutions of cultural, educational and sports.

Cordial relationship of mother to child is the basis of satisfying psychological needs in the family, as well as the undoubted prerequisite for the development of emotional ties, satisfying feelings of love, safety, kindness. In single-parent families with a single mother must distinguish three types of functioning of these communities.

To the first group we may include these families that in overprotective way, with high emotional force fulfill the psychical needs of their children. In an effort to compensate for the lack of a father in a child's emotional relations in a family environment. This way of satisfying psychological needs, on the one hand strengthen the emotional bond between mother and child, the other too much overprotection produces scarcity of social contacts of children in a social environment outside the family causing disorders of socialization, especially in the peer group. Furthermore, the excessive concentration of maternal emotional in dealing with the child contributes to the shaping of his selfish attitude.

The second group of single-parent families with a single mother are those communities in which psychological and social needs are accommodated to



the insufficient extent. Excess household duties, family, occupational, economic negligence causes a single mother of her areas of child care, meeting his emotional needs. Mothers have too little time for contacts with the school, teacher, educator, dialogue with the child and daily heartfelt conversations on the topics of education, education, welfare, and social life.

The third group of single mothers are those who have a high pedagogical culture - the least in number - reasonably meet the needs of children mental and social striving to rational interpersonal dialogue benevolent, caring for a positive climate and proximity to home life emotional ties [H. Cudak, S. Cudak 2011].

A. Kotlarska-Michalska [2001] presents the view that factor differentiating the degree of fulfillment of the tasks care and education to children of single mothers in the family is their economic and social status, including level of education and the culture of life. The lower it is, the women are burdened with greater range of domestic and professional. In contrast, higher level of socio – economic and cultural causes more rational and conscious way to fill the needs of single mothers caring, social and education of children in a family environment.

Parenting style picked up by single mothers towards their children is manifested most often in an erratic or liberal way. Using erratic parenting style they make the educational activities depend on momentary emotional mood, the degree of mental and physical exhaustion – in some family situations they nervously react, too aggressively on the behavior of children. However, in other situations when they are rested, mentally positively and favorably oriented, maternal educational responses to these same behaviors are the child's acceptance or at least neutral.

Single mothers in single-parent families according to research Remisz M. [2007] devote to their children less and less time in each period of the development of their child. The older the child is, despite the fact that it needs more frequent conversations with his mother, the less time she devotes to his social contacts, emotional, his personal problems, school, peer. Hence, the number of children with a sense of loneliness in their own family, causing mental distance, conflict, misunderstanding between the mother in single-parent family and the child, especially in adolescence, when it needs both parents to create a proper climate of home life and optimal functioning in it.

### **Conclusions**

The phenomenon of incompleteness of family, especially single mothers raising children is becoming more and more common phenomenon in modern times. Regardless of the type of incompleteness family, it is widely recognized and accepted socially. Incomplete family structure with a single mother causes more difficulties in fulfilling the function of economic, emotional, and above all care and educational nature than a full family structure. The functioning of a single mother and her family is the most conditioned with one hand on the causes of

its incompleteness, on the other hand, the social and professional status of the mother, her level of education and educational awareness. The difficult financial situation of single parent families with a single mother has the most impact on mental health and the atmosphere of home life. These elements of functioning of family life certainly imply a parental attitude of her mother's quality of parental interaction, the way to meet the needs of social care in relation to the child.

Specific economic, socialization, educational and care difficulties in a family of single mothers are often the cause of getting the children of lower educational attainment and low social position in the peer group and classroom. Lower scores of socio-educational achievement of children in these families in relation to their peers are the consequence of demanding attitudes that have been formed by taking contemporary patterns of consumption and material goods. Limiting the ability to satisfy these patterns in children born with a single mother causes them to rebellion, anger and aggression in the behavior in family and social, local and peer environment.

**Abstract:** Family fulfills important functions of education and care. It fulfills the role of education and development of children. Contemporary, there are more and more single-parent families with a single mother. These families because of the incomplete structure (lack of the father) may have some problems in education and care. The severity of these problems is dependent on the type of the family and of the reason for the incompleteness of a family environment with a single mother.

**Key-words:** family, child, education, care, incompleteness of family, single motherhood.

**Streszczenie:** Rodzina spełnia ważne funkcje opiekuńcze i wychowawcze. Spełnia rolę edukacyjną i rozwojową dla dzieci. Coraz więcej jest współcześnie rodzin niepełnych z samotną matką. Rodziny te ze względu na niepełną strukturę (brak ojca) mogą mieć pewne problemy opiekuńcze i wychowawcze. Nasilenie tych problemów wychowawczo – opiekuńczych uzależnione jest od typu tej rodziny a także za względu na przyczynę niepełności środowiska rodzinnego z samotną matką.

**Słowa kluczowe:** rodzina, dziecko, edukacja, opieka, niepełna rodzina, samotne macierzyństwo

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