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**Psychosocial correlates of the involvement of mothers of adolescents with epilepsy
in implementing parental tasks**
(synopsis)

Motherhood of women bringing up children with epilepsy is a topic that has not yet been elaborated on in Poland. The few available publications and scientific articles focus on the medical aspects of the disease, the psychosocial and cognitive functioning of the child with epilepsy, and the quality of life of families raising children suffering from this disease. The goal of the research presented here was to establish correlations between mothers' involvement in tasks related to raising their child with epilepsy and variables determining their perception of the child and their disease, their perception of social support, their preferred coping strategies, their level of available optimism, and their sense of self-efficacy. The assumed research problems included not only verifying the indicated correlations but also checking the intensity of the variables, considering the control variables of the sex and age of the child, the level of their intellectual functioning, age at the time of the diagnosis, their functional status (the level of independence and locomotor skills), and the nature of epilepsy: treatable or drug-resistant.

The study group, mothers of children aged 10 to 19 with diagnosed epilepsy, was selected using deliberate sampling (Babbie, 2003).

The research used the diagnostic survey method and respondents filled in a questionnaire. The material was collected using the following tools: the Parchomiuk and Kręcisz-Plis Parental Involvement Scale, the Kansas Inventory in the Polish adaptation of Pisula, Słomińska and Noińska (2011), Carver's Inventory to Assess Coping with Stress (Mini-COPE) adapted by Juczyński and Ogińska-Bulik, Berlin Social Support Scales developed by Schwarzer and Schutz in the Polish adaptation of Łuszczynska and co-authors (2006), the Life Orientation Test by Scheier, Carver and Bridges in the Polish adaptation of Poprawa and Juczyński, the Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale by Schwarzer, Jerusalem, and Juczyński, and a questionnaire of our own construction.

The obtained research results show that parental involvement of mothers of children with epilepsy is average. This concerns implementation of activities resulting from the role of a parent towards a child with a chronic disease, the motivation to undertake them, and satisfaction with performing them. Respondents' fulfillment of parental obligations, lower than their level of motivation, suggests that they are willing and ready to fulfill their maternal obligations by caregiving and upbringing their child, but they are not always able to engage in fulfilling them to the extent they would like to. The respondents perceive their children not only through the prism of the difficulties associated with the disease and its symptoms, but they are also able to see the positive aspects of raising a child with epilepsy. Adaptation strategies such as Active Coping, Acceptance and Seeking Support were among the coping strategies most frequently used by the surveyed mothers. The social support received by the women is lower than the current and perceived support. The respondents show an average level of dispositional optimism, but high confidence in their self-efficacy. The results confirmed the hypotheses related to the correlation problems. Positive relationships were found between the involvement of mothers of adolescents with epilepsy and positive perception of the child and their disease. The existence of positive relationships between the parental commitment of the surveyed women and the use of adaptive strategies of coping with difficult situations was confirmed in some of the analyzed areas. In the course of the analyzes, we also confirmed the assumption about positive relations between the maternal commitment of the respondents and social support, disposable optimism and the respondents' conviction about their self-efficacy. In terms of the obtained regression models, a significant contribution of some control variables was found, such as the child's sex, the level of their intellectual functioning, and - at a trend level - the child's age at the time of diagnosis of epilepsy.

Our research results provoke a reflection on the need to pay more attention to the situation of families raising children with epilepsy and to provide them with adequate social support, from the earliest moments related to informing parents about their child's chronic disease. Particular attention should be paid to mothers who, assuming the role of the main carer of their sick child, often undertake tasks and duties that exceed their abilities. It is also very important to take appropriate action aimed at optimizing the functioning conditions of a child with epilepsy, both in the home and school environment.

Keywords: mothers, parental involvement, psychosocial resources, epilepsy, adolescence

Eliška Wjara - Páris