

Jacek Kurczewski
Agata Oklej
Warsaw University
Institute of Applied Social Sciences

POLISH GRANDPARENTS AND GRANDCHILDREN – MUTUAL NORMATIVE EXPECTATIONS

Historically one of aspects of family that were permanently undergoing change is the relation above the generations, that is between parents of one's parents and the offspring of one's children. When normal breeding age used to start earlier than in most of the world today, the chances of meeting of these two and elder/younger generations were higher, today with increase in longevity again these shall be on rise. More significantly, however, the relative increase in the number of elderly, their share in the population makes important both the use of their sustained life amongst the younger as well as the need to secure concern with them which cannot be left only with state or private agencies. Availability of the breeding option for the old women as evidenced in some recent cases makes possible also that the long-standing assumptions as to the physical fitness of the parents may be changed. We do not assume that the individual need for giving birth coinciding with the societal needs for rebuilding of the demographic base in the most developed countries will lead to the two layers of mothers, the young ones and elderly ones that would coexist at home, though certainly the degree of such blurring will importantly increase in the coming decades leading further to the disfiguration of the traditional family notion and transforming it into flexible network of relations (Fuszara and Kurczewski 2005; in print).

It does not mean that the transgenerational families are absent in the contemporary experience. The senior author may witness to the contrary as he was raised in the 1950s by grandmother and her female friend and his brother 4 years older by grandfather and the said two women. War and political terror exterminating, imprisoning or forcing to live in exile large sectors of the parental generation was in the XXth and still is in the XXIst centuries a sad fact that makes the „normality of parental family” unrealistic.

The research presented in this paper is of limited scope but it resonates well with the wider knowledge. The project on „Normative Expectations Across the Generations” run by Chair of Sociology of Custom and Law, Warsaw University included two elements. In Warsaw metropolitan area several hundreds of grandparents have been approached and interviewed as

to their experience and more importantly as to their normative expectations concerning the relationship with grandchildren Oklej 2006). Secondly the project „Bridge Across the Generations” (Łączymy pokolenia 2006) set up by an insurance agency provided opportunity to compare the opinions of people from both generations who went through the extra contact in form of the transgenerational exchange.

Demography of Poland at the moment is such that in the period 1950-2000 the share of people above 60 years of age doubled from 8.3% to 16.7% of population. In the longer perspective this is even more manifested as at the beginning of 20th century there were 13 grandparents alive for each of 100 grandchildren, while at the end of the century 51 grandparents for 100 grandchildren (Szatur-Jaworska 1997:13). The number of three-generational household is, however, on decrease – 9.3% of all households in 1995 and 7.5% in 2002. If however one adds the households in which grandparents live with grandchildren the share of such households that unite elderly people with the younger ones is 17.2% of all. Though most of the elderly do not live together with their offspring, the contact is frequent. According to survey by Polish Gerontological Society made in 2000 majority of 71% of people over 65 living separately had seen their children during the last week, and 69% had seen their grandchildren. Only 10% had seen their children more than 1 month or further ago. As for Christmas 4.3% spent the holidays alone, 18% in company of the life partner, 28.1% at children's home and 49.7% in their own home with children and grandchildren (Czekanowski 2002).

L. Dyczewski characterises Polish family as based upon strong sense of community, high position of woman-wife-mother, high value of home that functioned for centuries as shelter against the alien public power, family religiosity and festive rituals. All that strengthens the intergenerational bonds and places grandparents in special position as moral guardians of family, so the cross-generational bond between grandparents and grandchildren is often stronger than that between parents and children (Dyczewski 1981). Dyczewski discerns 4 types of intrafamily transfers: offering the residence or assistance in acquiring the housing; material assistance in kind or in money; children's care and other services. Despite all peculiarities as elsewhere in the West the intrafamily transfers go in Poland in contrast to the public transfers: from elder to the younger people. As for residence we know from 2000 survey that 28.2% of people aged 65 years or more have offered co-residence to their offspring on regular base and 11.1% sporadically (Czekanowski 2000:165). In 1995 survey of

households receiving the external financial assistance majority of 56.7% declared that the aid comes from the parents, especially the child rearing families. In general 13% of households were receiving financial assistance and almost 18% assistance in kind, mostly food, medicines and clothing. Of the receiving financial assistance households 10.5% were receiving it from the children and 56.7% from the parents, as for the assistance in kind the figures are respectively 15.9% and 59.9%. Almost 15% of household were assisted in the child's care, and in 91.7% of cases the assistance came from the grandparents. As for the other services the direction is inverse as it was offered by adult children to 61.2% of households in need and by parents to the adult children in 16.5% of cases, though there was only 7% of households in such need amongst the all households (Golinowska 1999:82).

All these scattered data where generations are mixed may be summed up by stressing that the birth of the grandchildren makes the substantial change in the relations between new parents and their parents, if alive. The grandparents start the new role, which is the apparently revival of their role in youth, that is, at least partial, nursing and caring for the new generation in family. But this is a new role and the new task as the age as such, as well as its threatening correlates like ill health, physical weakness, and dramatically shortened life perspective make the grandparenting the new task that challenges the elderly. For the grandchild, on the other hand, the grandparent is usually not the substitute for parent but the different significant other with its own peculiar characteristics.

Normative Expectations of Grandparents

Relationship between grandparents and grandchildren does not depend solely of the whims of individual love and affection. The Polish law puts the transgenerational bond under its regulations. Family and Tutelage Code of 1964 (with further amendments) in article 128 puts the general maintenance duty (*obowiązek alimentacyjny*) defined as „the duty to provide the means of subsistence, and according to need also the means of upbringing” upon all relatives in direct line independent of the degree of relationship. The next article 129 para 1 of the Code establishes the sequence in which the duty is to be assumed by saying that „maintenance duty is due to descendants before the ascendants, and ascendants before the kin; and if there are more ascendants or descendants it is due to closer relatives before further ones”. Article 132 precises also that „maintenance duty of someone in further distance arises if there is nobody closer or if such person is unable to fulfil its duty or if receiving the needed maintenance in time is impossible or linked with overburdening difficulty”. In case of the misery (great) grandchildren may thus ex lege request the maintenance by the (great) grandparents.

The letter of law seems to be, in this case, less important than the living law or intuitive law that governs the family relations (cf. Petrazycki 1901). In the survey of so-called “Third Age Universities” several hundreds questionnaires have been distributed that included questions on the normative duties of the grandparents to grandchildren and vice versa in order to achieve more detailed knowledge on the current normative views of the older generation. About one third, i.e. 144 questionnaires have been filled and returned to the researcher and the most relevant findings are here reported (Oklej 2006). As to the grandparents duties, out of the list of 24 options offered in the questionnaire, respondents were allowed to select up to 8 and to rank them from 1 to 3, the results are presented in the Table 1 below.

Table 1. Grandparents’ duties in their own opinion.

	chosen	I place	II place	III place
	N = 144			
	%*			
Transmitting moral principles	71,5	34,0	9,0	9,7
Readiness to listen to confessions	71,5	9,0	17,4	13,9
Passing religious beliefs	45,1	4,9	14,6	7,6
Common walks	33,3	1,4	5,6	5,6
Transmitting practical skills (e.g.: housekeeping, do-it-yourself)	25,7	0,0	3,5	6,3
Transmitting the knowledge about national history	38,9	0,0	4,2	9,7
Financial assistance in critical situations	34,7	2,1	4,9	2,8
Transmitting a flat / a house	11,8	0,0	0,7	1,4
Transmitting hobby, interests	19,4	0,7	0,7	0,7
Giving tidbits	24,3	0,7	0,0	2,8
Permanent financial assistance	6,2	2,1	0,0	0,7
Hugging (giving a sense of security)	59,7	6,3	11,8	7,6
Assistance in doing homework	16,7	0,0	1,4	0,7
Taking care while parents are away	77,1	17,4	9,0	6,3
Invitations for Sunday dinners	20,8	0,0	1,4	3,5
Transmitting inheritance	7,6	0,0	0,0	0,0
Common holidays, weekends, etc.	24,3	0,0	1,4	2,1
Giving love	56,9	15,3	6,3	6,3
Giving pocket money	15,3	0,0	1,4	2,1
Transmitting the knowledge about family	51,4	1,4	3,5	4,9
Reading books	32,6	2,1	0,7	1,4
Preparing everyday meals	6,9	1,4	1,4	0,7
Spoiling, i.e. fulfilling dreams	25,7	0,7	1,4	2,8
Others	4,2	0,7	0,0	0,0

* The given table cannot be summed up, neither their columns nor lines to 100% as the studied people were asked to choose 8 duties from 24 in the order of their importance.

Grandmothers obviously moralise their role, as for one third of them (34%) the transmission of moral principles is the first rank generational duty. Notably, when taken

together independent of the rank the foremost place is taken by more practical duty to take care of the grandchildren when their parents are absent (77% as compared with 71% in case of the moral principles). Taking into account the total, there is also the third element amongst the duties listed by the overwhelming majority, that is the readiness to listen. (71%), known from the literature as the fact that it is easier to confess one's problems, doubts and queries to the relatives a step further beyond the parents themselves (also uncles and aunts),

The next in popularity comes affective duty to offer psychological security through hugging (59.8%) and giving love in general (56.9%), ending the set of affective duties acknowledged by more than 50% of the surveyed grandparents. Slight majority (51.4%) imposes upon themselves transmitting the knowledge on history of family.

The more general duties are mentioned by minorities of the respondents. Of these the most often mentioned is transmission of religious faith (45.1%), followed by duty to transmit the knowledge of national history (38.9%).

Practical duties are mentioned by not more than one third of the respondents from the elderly generation. This set is topped by the financial aid in crisis situation (34.7%), joint walks (33.3%), reading of books (32.6%), which is followed by transmitting the various practical skills, such as house keeping, or do-it-yourself (25.7%), helping in school's homework (16.7%) and giving the pocket money (15.3%). Of another character are duties such as fulfilling the dreams (25.7%), offering liked delicacies (24.3%), joint holidays (24.3%), offering the Sunday meals (20.8%) and transmitting the interests and hobbies (19.4%). Among the rarely mentioned are the serious duties such as transmitting the house (11.8%), leaving the legacy (7.6%), preparing the daily meals (6.9%), and permanent financial support (6.2%) of the grandchildren.

We observe the striking homogeneity in these answers. The education which usually is the most differentiating effect in Polish public opinions has left no influence here. It may result from the special character of the sample that does not exclude the low educated, and on the other hand it involves people who are interested in further learning. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that people with university education (N = 66) and without (N = 76) are of similar view on the duties to offer moral, religious or political socialisation, practical duties or psychological support to the youngest generation.

Most of our respondents were women. The effect of gender on their opinions cannot be studied, but the gender differentiation of the grandparental roles could. From such comparison the picture of opinions is emerging that involve the gender-neutral core of the role and the gender-related versions.

As to the first one must list transmission of moral principles which is expected equally from women (59,6%) as from men (55,3%), another one is reading the books. Then there is a set of more often male oriented expectations – joint walks, teaching interests, hobbies and practical skills, transmission of national and family history, and financial help in crisis. The rather female oriented duties involve readiness to listen, hugging, transmission of religious faith, providing delicacies and fulfilling the dreams, care in absence of parents, offering love and Sunday meals. These genderisation of the grandparental role is also independent of the level of formal education in our survey.

Table 2. Grandmother and grandfather's duties in their own opinion

	chosen		I place		II place		III place	
	GM*	GF**	GM	GF	GM	GF	GM	GF
N = 94								
%***								
Transmitting moral principles	59,6	55,3	41,5	35,1	3,2	4,3	2,1	2,1
Readiness to listen to confessions	69,1	23,4	10,6	3,2	23,4	9,6	11,7	5,3
Passing religious beliefs	30,9	10,6	4,3	2,1	12,8	3,2	8,5	2,1
Common walks	11,7	36,2	0,0	10,6	4,3	10,6	1,1	7,4
Transmitting practical skills (e.g.: housekeeping, do-it-yourself)	22,3	45,7	1,1	16,0	4,3	6,4	6,4	14,9
Transmitting the knowledge about national history	8,5	37,2	0,0	3,2	3,2	19,1	3,2	7,4
Financial assistance in critical situations	11,7	25,5	0,0	3,2	2,1	6,4	8,5	5,3
Transmitting a flat / a house	5,3	5,3	0,0	1,1	0,0	2,1	1,1	1,1
Transmitting hobby, interests	5,3	38,3	0,0	2,1	1,1	6,4	1,1	18,1
Giving titbits	18,1	8,5	2,1	0,0	2,1	1,1	6,4	2,1
Permanent financial assistance	2,1	5,3	0,0	2,1	0,0	1,1	1,1	0,0
Hugging (giving a sense of security)	46,8	13,8	7,4	0,0	8,5	5,3	16,0	2,1
Assistance in doing homework	5,3	19,1	1,1	0,0	1,1	5,3	1,1	1,1
Taking care while parents are away	54,3	29,8	9,6	6,4	14,9	3,2	12,8	7,4
Invitations for Sunday dinners	20,2	3,2	1,1	0,0	1,1	0,0	1,1	0,0
Transmitting inheritance	1,1	8,5	0,0	0,0	0,0	1,1	0,0	2,1
Common holidays, weekends, etc.	11,7	16,0	0,0	2,1	1,1	0,0	5,3	3,2
Giving love	36,2	26,6	12,8	5,3	6,4	3,2	3,2	3,2
Giving pocket money	4,3	17,0	0,0	1,1	1,1	3,2	2,1	0,0
Transmitting the knowledge about family	20,2	37,2	0,0	3,2	3,2	5,3	2,1	9,6
Reading books	19,1	21,3	1,1	1,1	4,3	3,2	0,0	3,2
Preparing everyday meals	10,6	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,1	0,0	3,2	0,0
Spoiling, i.e. fulfilling dreams	21,3	9,6	4,3	1,1	1,1	0,0	1,1	1,1
Others	2,1	2,1	2,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0

* GM – grandmother's duties

** GF – grandfather's duties

*** The given table cannot be summed up, neither their columns nor lines to 100% as the studied people were asked to choose 5 duties from 24 in the order of their importance.

Genderisation may involve also the gender of the grandchildren concerned. The number of answers here was much smaller, one may assume that it follows from the conviction of majority that differences do not matter. However, those who answered the question definitely

sustain the partially gendered concept of the upbringing. As for granddaughter, nobody mentioned transmitting the national history and almost nobody mentioned introducing into family history, while psychological security needs (readiness to listen, hugging, giving love) were in general three to two times more often mentioned in relation with them than with the grandsons.

Grandmothers (mostly) were also asked what is due to them from the grandchildren. Most of them (92.7%) think there is such normative counterpart. Here, the two detailed questions were asked, one addressing the duties of the small grandchildren, second – the adults, and, naturally, these two questions need to be discussed separately.

Table 3. Grandparents' expectations towards their young and adult grandchildren

	chosen		I place		II place		III place	
	children	adults	children	adults	children	adults	children	adults
	N=93	N=111	%*					
Transmitting moral principles	18,3	54,1	3,2	6,3	3,2	5,4	1,1	4,5
Readiness to listen to confessions	32,3	51,4	4,3	9,9	3,2	4,5	1,1	5,4
Passing religious beliefs	7,5	9,0	1,1	0,0	0,0	0,9	0,0	1,8
Common walks	67,7	37,8	7,5	4,5	7,5	4,5	9,7	6,3
Transmitting practical skills (e.g.: housekeeping, do-it-yourself)	12,9	10,8	1,1	0,9	1,1	0,0	1,1	0,9
Transmitting the knowledge about national history	21,5	18,0	0,0	1,8	3,2	2,7	1,1	1,8
Financial assistance in critical situations	3,2	35,1	0,0	2,7	1,1	7,2	0,0	6,3
Transmitting a flat / a house	9,7	31,5	0,0	7,2	1,1	6,3	2,2	3,6
Transmitting hobby, interests	7,5	41,4	1,1	4,5	1,1	8,1	1,1	8,1
Giving tidbits	81,7	56,8	11,8	5,4	10,8	9,9	11,8	6,3
Permanent financial assistance	3,2	2,7	0,0	0,0	1,1	0,0	2,2	0,0
Hugging (giving a sense of security)	68,8	19,8	11,8	2,7	14,0	3,6	9,7	4,5
Assistance in doing homework	66,7	72,1	15,1	15,3	10,8	8,1	12,9	12,6
Taking care while parents are away	18,3	53,2	1,1	3,6	4,3	7,2	2,2	6,3
Invitations for Sunday dinners	7,5	31,5	1,1	0,0	0,0	3,6	0,0	1,8
Transmitting inheritance	77,4	2,7	5,4	0,0	7,5	0,0	16,1	0,0
Common holidays, weekends, etc.	23,7	10,8	0,0	0,0	2,2	1,8	4,3	1,8
Giving love	68,8	53,2	22,6	14,4	9,7	5,4	4,3	4,5
Giving pocket money	60,2	54,1	9,7	5,4	8,6	6,3	9,7	9,0
Transmitting the knowledge about family	14,0	63,1	1,1	12,6	1,1	7,2	4,3	8,1
Reading books	15,1	2,7	0,0	0,0	1,1	0,0	0,0	0,0
Preparing everyday meals	4,3	10,8	0,0	0,9	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,9
Spoiling, i.e. fulfilling dreams	34,4	25,2	0,0	1,8	5,4	2,7	2,2	0,9
Others	2,2	2,7	1,1	0,9	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0

* The given table cannot be summed up, neither their columns nor lines to 100% as the studied people were asked to choose 8 duties from 24 in the order of their importance.

As for the small grandchildren, their most often expected duties are of psychologically supportive character. Hugging and offering love is expected by almost three quarters of the respondents (68.8%), slightly less speak of joint walks (67.7%) and sustaining joy of life (66.7%). These psychologically substantive expectations are paralleled by the expectation of the ritualised expression of love and concern for the elderly on part of the grandchildren such as remembrance of the Granma's Day and Grandpa's Day (81.7%), offering the own hand's commemorative paintings and drawings (77.4%), remembrance of the birthdays etc. (60.2%). Minority mention practical duties such as shopping (18.3%), nursing in illness (14.0%), living together in order to offer help (9.7%), preparing meals (4.3%), financial help in crisis, permanent financial aid (3.2%). Listing some of the duties that sound correlative to the inverse duties of grandparents themselves suggests their more mutually supportive character than it had been presented when taken in separate. Thus apart from already mentioned by large majority joint walks significant minority of grandparents lists readiness to listen them (32.3%), joint holidays (23.7%) and reading the books (15.1%).

Picture changes with age and already adult grandchildren are expected above all to help and nurse in the grave illness (63.1%) as well as in the shopping (54.1%). The psychological affective support remains expected at the same level or increased (sustaining the joy of life – 72.1%; offering the love – 53.2%; readiness to listen – 51.4%), while minority expects other strongly practical duties to be performed by grandchildren such as helping with health protection by giving medications, visits to a doctor (41.4%), living together in order to help the grandparent (31.5%), financial help in crisis (35.1%). Ritualised expression of love is slightly less often expected when grandchildren are adult, but still by majority. Noteworthy is appearance with coming of grandchildren to adulthood their duty to keep grandparents in touch with modernity (18.3% in case of small grandchildren and 53.2% in case of the adults). Symptomatically, here the difference between less and more educated grandparents is remarkable. While grandparents of less than university education expect in 12% introducing them into (post)modernity by their small grandchildren and in 42.9% by the adults, the relevant figures for grandparents with university level education are 25.6% and 66.7% as to prove that more one knows the more she wishes to learn.

Let us observe that while education played no role in the normative self-expectations of the grandmothers, it does in more than one case as to the what is expected from the grandchildren. Apart from the „modernisation” of grandparents, the better educated more often expect from their adult grandchildren financial help in crisis situation, readiness to listen and to walk together. To sum it up, it appears that better people expect more verbal action on

part of their grandchildren, they may also have grandchildren in a better economic position to expect the financial aid.

Transgenerational Mutual Expectations

The research linked with the project *Łączymy pokolenia* (2006) *Bridging the generations* provided the opportunity to compare the experience of two generations, as in the project that put on common tasks such as listening to history etc. young people aged from 7 to 25 years and the old people 50s well into the 80 years of age. The evaluation of the project involved interviewing 100 young and 100 old people sampled from those who took part in the project and two 100-persons groups with matched socio-demographic characteristics (gender, age, locality). Apart from open interviews the structured questionnaires were filled by the interviewers. In the interview some questions related to the mutual expectations of two generations. First of all, however, the three generations have been put under scrutiny as both “grandchildren” and “grandparents” were asked what they do owe to their own grandparents. It means that today’s grandparents were asked about their grandparents alive at least 50, and mostly 60 or 70 years ago, while today’s grandchildren about their grandparents alive at least 25 and mostly 15 to 10 years ago. The answers to this question are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. What do the grandchildren owe to their grandparents (in 1950s/in 1990s)

	Grandmothers of participants	Grandmothers of non-participants	Grandfathers of participants	Grandfathers of non-participants
Care and upbringing	77/88	81/84	70/67	75/66
Feeling one is loved	84/93	98/87	84/90	84/80
Religious faith	80/79	86/66	77/68	70/48
Moral principles	86/77	84/64	88/77	79/63
Love for country	80/64	65/47	82/76	79/65
Traits of character	73/61	75/61	79/75	77/67
Knowledge of family history	77/85	79/83	84/90	77/72
Knowledge of historical details	41/52	60/61	81/77	73/71
Interests, hobbies	41/36	44/38	48/57	61/51
Practical skills	69/59	81/56	67/38	60/51

The experience of love has been the most common gain from the relations with the elderly generation. Almost the same level of satisfaction had been derived from the cultural transmission of moral values, independent of gender, and religious faith and political values with female ancestors slightly more responsible for the former and the males for the latter. Though about three quarters of the interviewed recognise the care and upbringing by their grandparents, there is also majority who had been introduced by those in some practical skills like cooking, bricolage, etc and even the degree of transmission of some interests and hobbies remains high. Though, of course, the gender issues may be subject to the generalising reworking of memory, the only consistent difference being that dads have more influence on the historical memory of the young generation.

The last point is self-evident for those who know the contested history from their own background. Poland belongs to the wide category of nations that due to the complex political history had through generation the difference between the official history supported by the state school and state political apparatus and the history preserved privately, often in clandestine. Under communist dictatorship certain facts from national history had been totally neglected for some years and most of the modern history was interpreted in the way contrary to the experience and sentiments of the people who lived through these events, like Polish-Soviet war of 1920, Molotov-Ribbentrop secret partition of Poland in 1939, Warsaw anti-German insurrection of 1944, and imposition of Communist rule by Red Army after WW2. At home the official version was contested and the opposite version had been provided together with „normal” family history forming together the powerful affectively loaded knowledge.

When it comes to the currently alive generations, the picture changes only slightly. First, as to general care and upbringing the role of the ancestresses is now slightly wider acknowledged (by more than 80% as compared with under 70% when it comes to the grandfathers). The male role in political socialisation is more marked and goes together with the grandfathers' importance in transmission of history. What is interesting is that despite the fact that the young generation in our study is the first generation that is coming to the adulthood in the politically independent Poland since 1939 the private transmission of history remains as important though this time perhaps as argument in favour of this or another interpretation of the now openly disputed public history.

Another way of approaching the mutual normative perspective of two generations was through asking “And what is above all expected by you you're your

grandmother(s)/grandfather(s)?"'. As the question was open the figures in the Table 5 cannot be directly compared with the previously reported.

Table 5. What the young generation is expecting from their grandparents today

	Grandmothers of participants	Grandmothers of non-participants	Grandfathers of participants	Grandfathers of non-participants
Upbringing	8	14	3	2
Acceptance and sympathy	20	1	8	13
Contact	10	24	7	2
History	4	4	2	4
Practical skills	-	-	2	3
Financial support	2	11	2	6
Health	8	6	5	4
Change	5	3	2	3
Love	32	34	18	23
Psychological support	18	24	12	16
Joy	8	2	5	2
Others	1	2	2	2
None	7	6	8	11
Doesn't apply	2	4	2	4

It comes out that the expectations of the youth are various, though love, psychological support, acceptance and sympathy dominate.

As for the elderly we asked them first, what they owe to their grandchildren receiving less response than in the previous questions:

	Grandparents participants N = 56	Grandparents non-participants N = 55
Love	16	24
Happiness	29	38
Concern	18	18
Assistance	14	24
Change of perspective	29	11
Satisfaction with grandchildren	16	16
Other	2	11

The answer illustrate the fact that the contact with grandchildren is mostly rewarding per se and thus may be added to the psychological well-being of the elderly person. It is noteworthy

that there are slight differences between participants in the project and non-participants that point to the possibility that the contact under the pre-arranged conditions led some to change their way of seeing the world and to put in doubt their unconditional acceptance of the grandchildren.

Finally, we have asked also what grandparents think the grandchildren expect from them and answers to this question are presented in the Table 6 below.

Table 6. What grandchildren today expect from their grandparents according to the latter

	From grandmothers (participants)	From grandmothers (non- participants)	From grandfathers (participants)	From grandfathers (non- participants)
Love	63	59	41	43
Acceptance and sympathy	22	23	12	16
Upbringing and education	30	38	44	38
Transmission of tradition	9	11	12	17
Care and help	50	48	34	35
Financial support	10	16	7	11
Joy and play	3	9	2	7
Other	3	4	3	4
Don't know	3	6	9	14
total	100% = 106	100% = 104	100% = 106	100% = 104

On the one hand, in both groups elderly rightly expect themselves most often that grandchildren expect from them love, especially in case of grandmothers, on the other, there are many other things which are not expected by grandchildren contrary to the expectations of their grandparents. This is, above all, the widely understood upbringing and education, including transmission of the moral values, religious faith, respect for other people, honesty and responsibility and transmission of family tradition. This offer is not neglected by the

grandchildren as it is mentioned by them when asked directly what do they owe to grandparents, but it is put behind. It seems therefore that relatively short-lived happiness offered by grandchildren to grandparents might be supplemented by those, more practical aspects of the transgenerational bond.

Here we may start to compare the upbringing experience as remembered by Poles brought up in the 1940s or 1950s and in the 1980s or 1990s. Understandably as for era of television and acceleration of technological change learning of practical skills from grandparents is reported more rarely today, but the same with the basic values complex: as to religious faith in 3 out of 4 comparisons it is less often mentioned, as to moral and political principles in all 4 cases. Even as for traits of character the role of elderly generation seems to be slightly on decrease. What remains, nevertheless, relatively stable is the affective bond, general care and upbringing and on the other hand, the instigation in (some, we guess) interests and hobbies.

CONCLUSIONS

Family, as the other social fields is not only what happens but also what people think and feel about it. In our study we have focused on the normative aspect of transgenerational relations understanding that it permeates the frustrations and aspirations people have about their own and the others' life. The future is to be seen not only through the practices of past and of today but also by these more hidden aspects of 'how it should look like' and 'what is the direction I would like the most to go'.

Love, trust and personal security seem to be the affective capital that is provided by relationship with one's own grandparents, it seems to be replicated in the mutual exchange and offered by grandchildren.

Both surveys revealed also the uneasiness of respondents with the strictly normative discourse on family relations. Many have written on the questionnaire form that the grandparents do not have a duty, but they should offer given service so far as it is possible. As some explained „nursing the grandchild is for me not a duty but my pleasure”. Taken literally, it would mean, of course, the total rejection of the normative basis of the cross-generational transfer of services. Instead, one should propose a hedonistic discourse of „grandparental pleasures and joys”, similar to the „joys of motherhood and paternity”.

Let us observe here three points. First, there are in the normative psychology as described long ago by Leon Petrażycki (1901) the free duties and bound duties or obligations to which correspond the rights to expect the fulfillment of the given duty on part of its addressee. Petrażycki used to define the Christian ethics as of the first type, that is of the free duty to love thy neighbour independent of what he does or wishes. The classic example of such, purely moral duty is a beggar whom we may give alms but who does not (unless we think otherwise) has the right to expect from as the gift. The contemporary psychology of family relations may be of such moral type, that is the grandparents feel the duty to do a good though they do not consider that a grandchild has the right to expect its provision.

Though that may be right in some cases it is not our impression that this is the dominant normative characteristics of the cross-generational relations. Instead one may think of the unnecessary linking of duty with lack of pleasure. Some duties may be self-rewarding and quite obviously this is in case of the face-to-face relations with people with whom one shares the life. This where the familial love enters as the psychological reality. Until the love continues the relation remains unproblematic, it is only when it fails and crisis appears that the relationship is reinterpreted in terms of the mutual rights and obligations.

Czekanowski P „Rodzina w zyciu osób starszych i osoby starsze w rodzinie” [Family in Life of the Elderly and Elderly People in Family] in: B. Synak (ed.), *Polska starość*, Gdańsk 2002.

Dyczewski Leon, „Rodzice jako dziadkowie” [Parents As Grandparents] in: Adamski F. (ed.), *Milosc, malzenstwo, rodzina*, Cracow 1981: 509-534.

Fuszara Malgorzata and Jacek Kurczewski “ Family Law and Family Values: Opposition or Continuity” in: M. Maclean (ed.), *Family Law and Family Values*, Hart Publishing, Oxford 2005

Fuszara Malgorzata and Jacek Kurczewski, “Who is the parent? Post-modern puzzle” (in print)

Golinowska Stanisława, (ed.) *Ku godnej starości. Raport o rozwoju społecznym Polska 1999* [Towards the Dignified Elderhood. Report on Social Development. Poland 1999], UNDP, Warsaw 1999.

Łączymy pokolenia (Bridging the Generations), redsearch report, Institute of Applied Social Sciences, Warsaw University, Warsaw 2006.

Oklej Agata, „Rola babki i dziadka we współczesnej j rodzinie polskiej” [The Role of Grandmother and Grandfather in Contemporary Polish Family’], unpublished MA in Sociology dissertation, Institute of Applied Social Sciences, Warsaw University, Warsaw, December 2006.

Petrażycki Leon, Teoria prawa i państwa w związku z teorią moralności (Theory of Law and State In Relation With Theory of Morality], Polish edition, Warsaw 1960, translated from first Russian Edition, St. Petersburg 1901.

Szatur-Jaworska B, „Solidarność i partnerstwo w relacjach międzypokoleniowych w rodzinie” [Solidarity and Partnership in Intergenerational Relations in Family] in: Partnerstwo w rodzinie i na rzecz rodziny, Raport Instytutu Pracy i Spraw Socjalnych, 13, Warsaw 1997.