Education to participate and engage – Polish traditions and challenges of participation-oriented pedagogy

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ABSTRACT
The article reflects on the changes and developments of the pedagogical views on activism, participation and engagement in Poland. In the tradition of Polish social pedagogy there are some key elements that have influenced the way various educators see their role in shaping the participatory aimed education. The Author reminds that not only current models of education for democracy play important part in shaping social activism in the country, but also the ancestry of rich Polish experience, amalgamated from specific historical, cultural, political, social and pedagogical roots and traditions. The variety of these models as well as the tensions between the past, the present and the future, influence today’s difficulty seen among activists to rely on some common identity that would help them be recognized in the society as promoters of engagement. This, in turn, puts in question their role in social education development.

KEYWORDS:
participation, participation’ oriented pedagogy, activist, social pedagogy traditions.

Introduction
Transformation of the social environment into an environment that has a controlled stimulus, is a task taken by generations of social educators who aspire to shape the conditions that affect individuals and social groups towards more responsible society. Situations supporting education aimed at participation can include the initiatives of coopera-
tion that develop the framework of planned objectives, outcomes and strategies. They may be seen as the opportunities to promote social participation and voluntary commitment outside the school system. Beside the classic analyses of participatory approach (Arnstein, 1969; Hart, 1992) or global engagement models seen in UN, UE programs and actions, each country has its own national and local traditions of education regarding activism, engagement and participation, taking into consideration specific, selected elements shaping unique culture and tradition of participation. The below study develops reflection on the developments and potential of such education, which in Poland, in spite of rich traditions, is still rather a vague concept of strengthening active people than a coherent system of upbringing, and a holistic education for conscious and long lasting social participation of glocal (see: Swyngedouw & Cox, 1997) citizens.

**Diversity of participation patterns in Poland**

The question about who are the socially active people is also a question about the way people see the surrounding reality including their own perception of the collective identity developed by specific socio-cultural conditions, mainly the ideological contexts and socio-political framework, transmitting the knowledge and values.

In Poland there are assumptions and beliefs that strong influences on certain set of idealistic and emotional patterns of social activity come from romantic and positivist forms from eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Regardless of the answers providing for this question concerning individual activities, there are discussions taking place on role of education, teachers and volunteers to shape, motivate and sustain pro-social actions, that would be honest, based on empathy, relationship building and personal example (Piekarski, 2010, 2015).

The lack of common vision of these kinds of social actions in our country is a symptom of diverse attitudes and views as well as a consequence of selection of different traditions. Apart from different models of participation that exist in our social imaginaries (Taylor, 2010), and are result of different, often mixed models of democracy, the uncertainty of which foundations rely on are the consequence of unfinished and poorly established (perhaps never fully taken) discussions on the role of participation, its traditions and foundations in our country. The basic practical aspects and pragmatic descriptions then win as mostly used and understood by majority of practitioners. In a colloquial term, titles: “social activist” and “volunteer” are interchangeably used and confused, and sometimes identified also with philanthropy, as activities with a common root of freely taken actions for public good. Also the broad adaptation of the term “social” in the fields of various professional practices, rises definitional and conceptual chaos and ambiguous interpretations. Being nowadays introduced into new
roles, professions and initiatives, it undergoes the process of terminological evolution of knowledge development. The usually taken broad perspective, to some extend, captures the picture of the complexity and multifaceted nature of the phenomenon, but it also calls for more detailed explanations and clarifications. The main difficulty in connection with proper analysis is associated with the insufficient discussions of the issues in the area of theory and practice of social action, which in consequence lead to schematic, and at the same time arbitrary uses of terms and concepts.

These discussions include the characteristics of types of participation that appear in the Polish social reality and are presented below:

1. The first type of participation is represented by people who engage deep, on long-term basis, without remuneration.

In Poland, in the nineteenth century, the term: social action was identified with voluntary work that was done for the benefit of society or the local community, and the person performing such activity was called social activist or volunteer. Long-term social activism was associated either with persons performing state functions for the benefit of the society or with other well-known/recognized persons by the society (mostly celebrities, such as writers, who took up social change and social needs issues as the important part of their writing). In addition, representatives of minorities involved in the protection of the group cultural identity, local educators, members of cooperatives, members of patriotic youth unions and many other formally established groups that were forming interest' societies and associations could be called this way, not mentioning informal leaders. The ethos of Polish intelligentsia and the Christian understanding of mercy were also included in this type of activity formation. The influence of the movements against Austro-Hungarian, Russian and German partition before World War I and the resistance movement during World War II consolidated the concept of social activism in political and ideological areas. Nowadays, representatives of long-term social activism play important roles primarily in the Boards of associations and foundations connected with sports, culture or charity, that pursue their passions and long-term interests for these areas of social life.

2. The second type describes committed, professionalizing activists whose work has evolved into a paid profession.

In the period of the socialist times, the terms “social activist”, “activist”, an active member of the Party (aktyw partyjny), were the expressions of persons involved in the socialist process of building and developing the communist model of state and society. Payment was sometimes connected with this activity, certain privileges were obtained and it was often equated with political party involvement. People were forced to give their time (sometimes money, goods) to the society and it was rather obligatory than voluntary work, with consequences for those who protested against such “manipulated enthusiasm”. They needed to be managed and controlled by professional “activists”.

Due to the domination of the role of the state that developed at that time, there was no need for "private" social organizations and volunteers associated with them. The liquidation of charitable initiatives, including the confiscation of their properties, was a kind of social revolution aimed at eliminating the paternalistic elites. System changes in the 1990s became an attempt to establish new, liberated, democratic society. On the one hand, the "old-fashioned" pre-war connotations of activism were questioned, on the other, there were unacceptable models of political activists from the socialist Poland’ times.

After the political change, the entire term was associated negatively. Fascinations with Western models have contributed to the next change. The professional role of an activist, who is the specialist in a given field and a manager of social projects, became commonly accepted. Institutionalization and professionalization has been introduced with focus on professional paid work, associated with training and promotion systems (Retting, 2006; Prokosch & Raymond, 2002).

Such professional path, known as the model of the third sector (so-called NGOs), has strengthened in Poland for the past 25 years. This direction develops and uses management methods and techniques from different business areas. It naturally introduces market mechanisms and concepts of change based on the assumptions of the work for the public benefit with use of the methods of business administration may work well in the social and public spaces. Researchers interested in the “sectoral” identity of this expanding group of social activists from non-governmental organizations, observe now the generational change in our country: from the twentieth century “builders” – creators of the third sector, to twenty first century professionals forming young leaders entering these structures as professional career development space (Iłowiecka-Tańska, 2011). Their technocratic and specialist orientation (Dutkiewicz, 2009), forms new NGO styles (Gliński, 2006).

3. The third type is related to temporary social participation as a kind of intermediate commitment placed in between the permanent engagement and temporary participation. It is characterized by similar styles of activity undertaken voluntarily, without the expectation of payment (non-profit), that bring social benefits (pro publico bono). Such work also requires preparation, training or other forms of skills improvement. Lack of clear criteria and the scope of responsibility of such helpers caused at some point certain organizational difficulties, which led, among other actions, to the creation of the Law on Volunteerism and Public Benefit Organizations in Poland (2003) with the provisions on the formalization of this kind assistance and created a list of volunteer’s obligations as well as the responsibilities of social organizations / public institutions that use unpaid help. This kind of work can be treated as a form of preparation for employment or professional internship especially for students, but also as the formula of employee’ volunteering – popular in Western Europe and in the US way of
integration of corporations’ employee groups, doing some good together. In Poland, however, the Anglo-Saxon model of seeing the sector in the market lenses, assessing social activities by financial estimation of the value of social involvement (e.g. converting hours of social work into GDP, exchanging social hours in the so-called Time Banks, or showing volunteering in the CV as a mandatory element of the candidate’s social profile) has not been fully accepted. The Polish style of social participation continues to take the form of voluntary burst, a spontaneous heart impulse and ad hoc actions, which hinders on the one hand the examination of participatory reality, while, on the other, it creates the image of the society with low participation index. This impression is strengthened in relation to the results of research on the level of social trust (Czapiński & Panek, 2015), which shows that Poles do not trust too much institutions, but also have problems with trust to each other while trust, as Paweł Sztompka claims, is crucial for the creation of ties and establishment of appropriate conditions for cooperation (Sztompka, 2007).

Even though there are various formal voluntary service development programs and projects encouraging social engagement with an attempt to revitalize participatory inclinations, researchers who study them and see the weakness of mass interest, seem to miss the whole range of informal styles of social participation of different groups, so the above diagnosis requires much deeper research insight and more adequate tools.

4. The next type that is emerging nowadays, which will probably be significantly developed in the future, is the movement of free, associating only for one temporary action – activists (Chimiak, 2014). This style of participation is a novelty in our country and is associated with the dissemination of virtual paths of engagement, spread by modern technologies of mass communication, mainly in the area of information and promotion of social activities, but also relate to any initiatives of all so called e-communities or e-social groups. This is a new, global formula of existence in the social world (McCaughey & Ayers, 2003; Dorenda-Zaborowicz, 2014) – being and engaging in many places at once, exerting influence without the need for physical presence. It can be called the hastily virtual participation. The change in the style of participation raises the question of the social actions models in the context of the future. The elements of mass mobilization visible today, taken for any purpose, in any places and by/for groups, may later turn into social movements and more physical engagement or more reflected purposes, but may also lead to another direction of new virtual participation that is not known today or to apparent involvement aimed at manipulation of voices, redirecting financial resources or social interest into anti-social aims. Certainly this suggests the growing influence of the group of digital natives (Prensky, 2001) – people whose life and work are mostly carried out via the Internet and mobile devices. In connection with the existence of this new formula, it transforms and changes not
only the form of social action in Poland, but also extends (democratizes) the space of action and blurs the status (role) of acting/participating person. Attempts to formalize and name these new areas cease to exist in the face of growing variety of forms, individualization of content and blurring of the boundaries between private and social good, free time and work in social activities, activity in and out of physical place, combining and compiling various traditions, social issues put in geographical dimensions (international and national patterns), historical forms (social activist, volunteer, leader, helper) and traditions of the ideas of democracy that lead to such actions (solidarity, equality, common good etc.).

The issue of strict definitions framing and capturing in simple words this phenomenon is connected with unrestricted activism characteristics. The essence of social action is in its characteristics, that it escapes from the descriptions and institutionalizations due to its constructive character – the formation of further areas of engagement, corresponding to social changes, development trends and human needs, but also it is connected with tensions between participatory freedom and the formative social forces of pressure, trying to put them to a desirable shape. There is also growing conviction among practitioners about the need for the new language, also in the description of changes and factors shaping these new trends of social engagement. The types of participation presented above, require research and reflection on the flexible approaches towards certain model categories. They give rise to reflection on the need for more dynamic approach as to the role of pedagogy focused on participation. The variables are the roles as well as the functions of engagement and participation, complementing each other in the context of ways of implementing complex social tasks, visions of social inclusion or ideals of good. They also result from the combinations of different trends incorporated to the action, with the inconsistent attitudes of a person towards the cause, according to his/her conformism, influence related to social innovations/media promotion or accidentally captured ideas about the necessary factors of the change and development. The scientific discussions about the similarities and differences of paid – unpaid, professional – unprofessional, formal – informal character of such actions for the benefit of the public good do not stop. They also point that history of the development of social action in Poland dates back to the beginnings of humanity and develops along with civilizations (Leś, 2001; Radwan-Pragłowski & Frysztacki, 2009).
In the area of social participation, the discussion of seeking the space between subjectivism and the idealism of the individual, its roots in real life situations as well as in social creations, can be considered as constant element of cultural experience. In Poland, where the concepts of Enlightenment, Romanticism and the Positivist influences of social action were interwoven with each other, they fought for the right to take over new, better forms and solutions of social being “for others”. As a consequence they were consolidated into mixed types in the tradition of Polish social activity. At present, the influence of the past socially oriented eras is loosing on readability, and it is replaced by the randomness of chosen forms of social action corresponding to specific activists needs. This is the result of the lack of continuation of models of operation in modern concepts, as well as it shows the absence of the united and coherent thought about models, patterns of action, due to the dynamism of change and the instability of social actions and societal solutions. This also applies to deliberate persistence from making references to past failures, as well as ambitious aspirations for the creation and innovator in social action rather than being followers. By definition, many concepts become not only personal, possibly known in a limited group, but also are presented as “new” concepts. Moreover, the mechanisms of social dissemination and preservation on wider scale are not triggered – social initiatives usually remain associated with specific figures as their private achievements, or are rather limited to small, local ideas that do not seem stable. The mass character and democratization of social messages means that even returning to abandoned ideas, revitalizing past visions, have an extremely limited time of functioning. The modular, selective courses of education in pedagogical and social sciences are not supportive in making it more stable. The formula of the modern cultural message became more horizontal, and mostly has the nature of shallow postulates of integration, realized in the current space and time for immediate needs rather than as a way of leaning out to the future. New senses are created to develop and transcend the horizons of disciplines, but in -big hurry, they are deriving from the deeper interpretations of the patterns from the past. In result they lack more reflective process based on understanding of the original messages that led to creation of some types of responses. It then rises the feeling of lack of cognitive foundations and the overflow of various current, equally important sources of inspiration, floods of best practices (not always proven to be working), that raise the quest ions of the meaning of participation and

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2 Some elements of the text presented in this part are the modified and abbreviated version of the study written in Polish, included in the last monographic publication of the author (2014).
long-term purpose of its use. It also puts the question on the research roles for studying the past: especially if studies of participatory traditions are the scientific sentimentalisms of “good old participatory times” or if it has activating role of social collective memory processes, showing such activities in cultural and social development contexts (see: Golka, 2010). They also explore the universalities and specificities of thinking about social action. According to Barbara Smolińska-Theiss, there are not many people interested in the tradition of social and educational work in the situation when majority is chasing the present (Smolińska-Theiss, 2007). Therefore there is a problem of the continuity of the tradition of social engagement and participation, which should serve not only the understanding of social phenomena in their current shape and contemporary forms, but also may give a sense and purpose in the context of reflection on the anticipated directions of future social development.

In the history of social pedagogy, every researcher highlights the importance of the history of social engagement in different way. For Helen Radlińska, who is considered as the founder of Polish social pedagogy, for example, dealing with the history of social activism and social participation was the motive to search for factors of social development, connections and duration of existing solutions, as well as inspiration for researching the potential effects of wider educational interactions and natural social ties. For Aleksander Kamiński, who continued her work and propagated scouting education methods in Poland, it was also a kind of justification for the idea of self-organization and social self-governance. For Ryszard Wroczyński, their follower, it was obvious that dealing with the history of educational roles of the institution, could help discover roots and fascinating beginnings of the idea of help and social service that pedagogues cannot miss.

In Poland, the transformation of social actions, both in terms of assistance, as well as cultural and educational aspects can be divided into several periods (with blurred time limits), and as it can be seen below, it could be treated as the attempts to capture the dominant trends and forms existing until the end of the 20th century:

− Royal and aristocratic philanthropy with charitable activity of church institutions;
− Dominant philanthropy and charity activities, work at the foundations, workers' movements;
− Formation of the patriotic national social self-organization of the between-war period;
− Dominance of the guidelines of the Socialist Party promoting farmers and workers political and social activities;
− Post-transformation period with revitalization of grassroots social movements (the so-called young democracy of the 90’s);
− Stabilization, structuring, and further development of bottom-up initiatives as part of glocalisation processes.3

Such typology only remarks some legacies of participation in dominant socio-political arenas. In contradiction to this, for the indefinite period, in local communities there was always a local neighborhood help offered, support from religious groups given as well as spontaneous group assistance in cities and villages, including various educational and folk initiatives. In the cited study of Barbara Smolińska-Theiss, concerning the Polish tradition of socio-educational work, two trends emerge: 1) the trend of organic work in the political, organizational and legal context, from which social policy developed and its understanding of social issues together with macro-social view and strategic approach to taking remedies (represented by the ideas of Ludwik Krzywicki, Konstanty Krzeczkowski and Stanisław Rychliński); 2) the trend of universal education of adults, developing both on the level of literacy and raising the culture and education of societies, stimulating the development of individuals and groups, as well as their creativity, stressing the movement of self-organization and self-help – broadly understood as social forces/powers (siły społeczne) (seen in the ideas of Stanisław Karpowicz, Edward Abramowski, Stefania Sempołowska, Helena Radlińska, and Kazimierz Korniłowicz).

The latter trend has grown into three types of professions developed primarily thanks to the Study of Social and Educational Work of the Free Polish University (Studium Pracy Społeczno Oświatowej Wolnej Wszechnicy Polskiej) founded by Helena Radlińska in 1925:

1) educators, teachers dealing with literacy, dissemination of hygiene, helping in learning and reading (today’s educators, people involved in prevention and social education); 2) social supporters involved in care, help, support, intervention (today’s group of social workers and people working in the field of social welfare); 3) cultural educators and cultural animators (Smolińska-Theiss, 2007, pp. 21–22).

There is also an interesting research on bottom-up movements such as self-organization of peasantry and aristocracy and forms of social activity carried out by rural social activists (Bartkowski, 2011). Mental and social changes resulting from the process of village modernization and economic changes of the 19th century were of great importance for the ongoing transformations in Poland and in the area of social initiatives of Polish farmers, gentry and intelligentsia. The trend of education and social activism in the villages was later transformed into educational activities of the countryside with the emphasis on regional education, development of cultural socie-

3 Author’s typology prepared based on the study of the history of civic society in Poland presented in publications of Leś, 2001; Janiak-Jasińska, Sierakowska & Szwarc, Vol. I (2008), Vol. II (2009).
ties, scientific societies, tourism and sightseeing societies, local magazines. Many of them uphold and develop local social traditions to this day. A dynamic movement of civic associations operating for the social and economic development of the regions has emerged since the 1990s: Regional Development Agencies, Local Action Groups, foundations and associations supporting local and regional development, combining culture and tradition with social economy, agrotourism, regional cooperatives or social cooperatives, increasingly develop.

Mirosław Górecki also draw attention to part of the Polish social tradition related to the work of religious orders, including Cistercians, Franciscans, Jesuits, Salesians, as well as philanthropic activities of the Polish aristocracy and land gentry, as an example indicating, among others, action of Izabela Czartoryska in Puławy or Anna Paulina Jabłonowska (Górecki, 2013). A separate element of this tradition is the social and organizational work of clergy, including in the creation of aid institutions done by: father Jakub Falkowski, founder of the Deaf Blind Institute, priest Fryderyk Skarbek, founder of the Institute of Morally Neglected Children, or priest Henryk Szuman associated with the Pomeranian Society for Child Care. Many social initiatives of institutional nature were also initiated by merchants industrialists and Polish intelligentsia, as well as writers and artists (Leś, 2001). There are also known initiatives established by pedagogues, including the activities of Henryk Jordan – a doctor, professor, pioneer of physical education in an open environment known for his concept of Jordanian gardens for children, Kazimierz Jeżewski, founder and organizer of the Orphans’ Support Families and Kosciuszko’s Villages, Kazimierz Lisiecki, initiator of the Society of Street Children’s Friends and founder of Socio-Educational Centres, and others.

Among the newer studies, it is worth paying attention to a two-volume publication on female social activists (Janiak-Jasińska, Sierakowska & Szwarc, 2009), which presents the role of women in shaping social change in Poland. Thanks to this reading, it is possible to trace the development of forms of social participation of women: from pure charity, through educational and cultural initiatives, to political activity in the fight for social justice and new patterns for the rebirth of social engagement of women in contemporary Poland. The forms of such social involvement were, among others, the “underground” fight experience during the 1st and 2nd World War, work in political organizations, organization of guards, hospitals and self-help movements as well as political engagement in the Women’s League, the Polish Socialist Party, the Christian-National Union, medical, nursing, rural and landowners’ trade unions (ibid).

In the tradition of participation, not only political thought, but also the social history of help is important (Radwan-Pragłowski & Frysztacki, 2009). In today’s Polish activities there are seen influences that are penetrating our reality to this day: Greek philosophy and myths, ethics of Christian mercy, medieval customs and Enlightenment reforms, sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth-century concepts
of man and the world, ideas of pacifism, as well as the great utopias. In the practices and language of social activism in Poland, there are echoes of ancient alimony and the concept of clientele, the nineteenth-century institutionalization of charity, socialist workers’ collectives, and traditions of the international Red Cross, Catholic Caritas or Anglo-Saxon scouting. Nowadays, Western European and American traditions are increasingly incorporated into Polish social organizations (NGOs), shaping today’s image and the spirit of social participation.

A well known worldwide Janusz Korczak (Henryk Goldsmidt), a doctor, an activist and pedagogue whose life, work and writings influence great deal of Polish pedagogy, wrote many years ago about the need for engagement but he was critical about empty demonstration and pretending to be involved, which is also today’s problem. Much about his attitude to social participation is said in one of the fragments of his work – a Foreword in the book of Jędrzej Śniadecki: On the physical upbringing of the child. Korczak indicates the phenomenon of the lack of continuity of social activism ancestry from deserving people. He criticizes social hypocrisy in creating great figures, in building monuments for them, without imitating their attitudes. He reflects on leadership in social activities but also on the personal costs borne by the leader. He strongly criticizes the lack of true social participation. He states that when we admire the actions of others, we do not learn from them and do not realize the ideals of our life. His radical words were written to wake up people’s reflection on their own intentions and their own agility: “Let’s stop being parasites of well known leaders, let’s feel like fellow citizens; on their lives like on a corpse, let’s learn our own anatomy “(Korczak 1986, p. 9). It is interesting, however, that Korczak also shows through example of the biography of great social reformer the issue of unrealized potential, the ideal demanding implementation and constant undertaking of the deed that can not be completed (Korczak 1986) Korczak respected permanent, unchangeable principles and chose radical, honest, uncompromising actions. In his opinion they should include a sense of professional and human duty, without the expectation of any awards, often against public opinion and manipulations of social engagement beauty.

**Challenges in consolidating the theory and practice of participation in Poland**

In the Polish social tradition, one can notice several characteristic features that show the challenges facing today’s Polish participatory model:
1. The dilemma of charity: a spontaneous, voluntary, often accidental and irregular form of support identified with an ineffective, superficial style of participation from the heart impulse. On the one hand, this approach is questioned, on the
other, due to the mass appeal for help and involvement, engaging strong emotions; it condemns in a way this type of participation to the unchanged social functioning at the basic level.

2. Polish social participation has often been associated with the concepts of Polish patriotism: national liberation movements and the construction of national identity, both in inscribing it and fighting its exclusive character. The question of contemporary times concerns the difficulty in thinking of participation as ideologically neutral concept and the danger from the growing tensions between the various trends of selective ideological (national, religious, political) groups and representatives of universal principles – building local/regional/global communities, based on the acceptance of their diversity.

3. Striving for social integration after the periods of partitions and wars and equalizing opportunities in the spirit of social solidarity and the fight against social inequalities (improvement of life, education of peasants, workers, urban poor) and the ethos of social service, have changed the nature of support to engage in the fight for rights or privileges of specific groups. This involvement, supported by institutional organizational forms, limits the wider vision of social rights to the struggle for the status of “own” interest groups, which paradoxically produce the type of egotistic social activism.

4. A wide self-help movement in the field of cultural, educational and helping initiatives, that has obtained the heritage and social contexts of established traditions and past social movements, is increasingly taking on the nature of loosely functioning set virtual networks, internet forums, community groups in which the relationships are mediated and unstable. Their main task is to achieve specific goal but also to create quick relationships, that change the nature of participation into the task-oriented, sensational actions (the aim of participation is rather to excite and get things done then build long-term goals).

5. Traditions and continuations (interpretations) of Enlightenment ideas disappear – practically, contemporary social activists and social leaders especially in large cities, do not need “history”: neither they refer to it nor continue it. The syndrome of eradicated participation that eludes traditionalism is perhaps not only a Polish metropolitan characteristic of social movements, although it seems that they deal best with the integration of local communities that try to build their identity.

6. The tendencies of subsidized social participation that developed in Poland resulted from socio-economic and political systems that existed in our country in the last century. The current formula of public-private co-existence in the offer of solutions to social needs and problems seems to be an attempt at market-oriented response to the dilemma of looking for resources to implement social activities. Poland’s participation even if it is no longer induced by public funds, largely base
its current functioning (and seems to want to be based) on state funds (governmental, local governments, EU) or on the paid service offered to people in need, with all the consequences of change from voluntary to paid service.

7. Attempts to classify and organize different methods of social participation, assume a high degree of freedom of understanding what is and what is not a social participation, commitment, private/social interest, social/non-profit organization, etc.

The ideas of democracy, civil society and social participation are in Poland the subject of debates and reflection on the consequences of choosing specific patterns for social practice. The search concerns both differences between the vision of Polish democracy and Western democracies, as well as specific solutions most suitable for the development of our society. Difficulties and strong polemics concern the “intentions” of individual and community social actions and participation in the dichotomy between egoistic motives or individual interest, and the altruism, collective interest, or patriotic imponderabilia.

Studies also show that social action can be an escape from one’s own difficult situations, it can be kind of defense mechanism, a form of therapy or compensation that allows one to forget one’s own worries or make them less severe (Kotlarska-Michalska 2005). In addition, such motives as the search for the meaning in life or feeling strong social bond with people, may even cause eliminating the border between private life and social engagement (Ibid., p. 42). At the same time, apart from the discussions of the crisis of Masters/authorities (and participatory models), there is seen also a crisis of independence of thinking and feeling the sense of responsibility for others. Social activists themselves, who are often rebellious of not possible to accept reality and try to change it, indicate that there is no one to continue their work, people who would deepen, strengthen or broaden the work they begun. They are often criticized, sometimes deliberately, for their projects’ defects or their own weaknesses, to confirm the thesis about the lack of ideals, especially in the moral sense. The lack of master’s culture is replaced by the group of fleeting experts who strengthen attitudes aimed at individual success. Education that is supporting individualism and the concept of personal success, seems at the same time helpless in shaping internal communal sense of being “for others”, hence it shows weakness in the transmission of participative models that would not focus on personal benefit. The research carried out in 2013 on social activists’ education (Naumiuk, 2014) shows that these patterns are acquired mainly in the family and by observing or imitating significant others – people from the family or from outside of the family system, whose activities are observed for a long time. These important “other” may be the pedagogues if they are engaged, participate socially but being a pedagogue and talking about engagement or encouraging to it, does not imply directly the participation. Education faces new challenges of raising social awareness in the situation of act-
ing without authority, without feeling of being interdependent and without having the need for a sense of social responsibility. Educators have to deal with participation based on imitation, aimed at copying social solutions that succeeded, without proper reflection. Understanding the sense and the essence of participation, changes the quality of social change, because the possibility of social participation contributes to co-creation of appropriate living conditions, to shape pro-developmental social structures, to create fair interpersonal relations (Marzec-Holka, 2005), thus becoming an important factor in the co-production of public services (Kaźmierczak, 2011).

Educators understand that discussions and reflection on the concepts of participation, the obligations of the state and citizens towards common heritage and a shared future, are the important aspect of commitment-oriented (social engagement focused) education. It is not only a task of transferring knowledge but also the taken decisions about one’s role in co-creating social reality.

Conclusions

In the recent discussions on social policy, there has been a shift observed from thinking about top-down solutions for common living conditions to involvement of citizens in co-management of social reality, not only in politics but also in the social economy, that started to include co-governance concepts (Wódz, 2005; Sześciło, 2015; Mazur, 2015) and co-production (Bovaird, 2007; Kaźmierczak, 2011). Social pedagogy needs, in connection with extremely rapid changes in social reality, to participate in the discussions on the role of education and upbringing in shaping the generation, which should be prepared for co-ordination, co-management and co-production. It seems that despite the potential of these discussions on the role of pedagogy shaping the co-deciding participants and the role of participation in social changes, even in a small segment, a project or an initiative, such as participatory budgets (Naumiuk & Bron Jr., 2017), currently the existing educational systems in Poland have great difficulty in including this concept and into the implementation phase. The person becomes an activist or long-term participant when he/she experiences such activity on a daily basis, but it can not and should not be only an “off-school”, “alternative” or “innovative” action. It should constitute social environment for acquiring and increasing responsibility for living together. This may seem obvious, for some readers. But even at present, we are more interested in human rights and mostly focus on human needs. Engagement and responsibility are left on the ground untouched.

Pedagogy focused on education for participation, needs, through defining its goals in the area of attitudes towards activism and social participation, to reformulate the existing acceptance of styles of agitation, political language and polarized criticism of
participation, towards the direction of common understanding of needs and opportunities/potential but also to open and develop reflection on current participation patterns. Certainly, this issue is too little explored by educators today to say that the proposed solutions are best possible from education stand point. The use of the results of other disciplines certainly has advantages, but the specificity of educational dimensions of development for (co)participation requires that professionals in this field verify and supplement the concepts explored by social politicians, sociologists, psychologists, lawyers, and theoreticians of management, with greater use of pedagogical tools in educational reality viewing. Modern times demand reflection on the modern theory and practice of “pedagogy of social participation” and should deal with myths, stereotypes and propaganda which make it difficult to understand also ourselves as (pro)social beings. The very fact that education is focused on participation or is participating actively in social change is symptomatic and makes it impossible to deprive its axionormative traits from behavioral actions. This is also the key element of the all discussions that nowadays are so hard to tackle but they show the internal motives derived from internalized traditions and cultural norms of how participation and social engagement should look like and what it is. Democracy and the rise of social knowledge influence the process of such reflection and show that no longer they may be closed in the discipline itself, but it democratizes and demands that the opening for other actors and understanding of their narratives of the participatory tradition (and collective memory of it). Pedagogy aimed at participation can not any longer transmit simplistic knowledge of participation without building the multifunctional and multidisciplinary scientific approach towards pedagogy of action-learning role in social development, where past and present failures and success in educational efforts are seen, reflected and discussed.

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