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INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCIES OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS

Abstract

This study was aimed to examine the intercultural competencies of parents of children with developmental disorders (DDP). The study involved 203 parents (89% female), divided into two groups. The first group included DDP (N=65), while the second group was consisted of parents of children with typical development (TDP) (N=138). Questionnaire used in this study included Modified Serbian Version of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS), the Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy (EE), and a variety of questions related to sociodemographic data and intercultural experience. As the ISS did not reach significant levels of reliability, we used only the Interaction Confidence (IC) subscale in further analysis. Statistically significant differences between DDP and TDP in terms of IC and EE are not noted. IC increases with more experience in interacting with people from different cultures. TDP who are younger and who have more children report higher IC. EE increases with higher education, greater experience in interacting with people from different cultures and having more friends of different ethnic/religious affiliations, and decreases with more frequent experiences of discrimination based on ethnicity or religion. Statistically significant differences in IC and EE between individuals who have grown or currently living in predominantly monoethnic or polyethnic environments do not occur.

Key words: intercultural competencies, intercultural sensitivity, ethnocultural empathy, parents of children with developmental disorders

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Introduction

Present era of globalization, interdependence and multicultural societies requires from an individual to adapt to the unknown, to live and work in an environment that is full of diversity, and free of hostility to differences (Chen & Starosta, 1997). The international community promotes values which are based on the assumption that a policy of recognizing and encouraging ethnocultural diversity can expand human freedoms and strengthen human rights (Stanković-Pejnović, 2010). However, in order to live in harmony and to understand and respect each other, members of different cultures need to interact, ie. to possess a set of abilities called intercultural competencies (Chen & Starosta, 1997).

According to Chen and Starosta, intercultural competencies represent a set of cognitive, affective and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in different cultural contexts (Chen & Starosta, 1996, 1998). Intercultural sensitivity enables greater potential for the manifestation of intercultural competencies (Hammer, Bennett, & Wisemanc, 2003). In this paper, the focus will be placed especially on the intercultural competencies' affective component, with special reference to empathy, which is recognized as its central element (Chen & Starosta, 1996, 1997). Ethnocultural empathy represents the perception of another ethnocultural group's member's feelings, in a way that allows an individual to feel the emotional state of another from the point of view of the another one's culture, as well as the emotional response to those feelings. Ethnocultural empathy is a key skill for better managing cultural differences (Wang, et al., 2003), as it can reduce prejudice, intolerance, conflict and discrimination, while increasing understanding, respect and tolerance between people of similar or different cultural or ethnic backgrounds (Albiero & Matricardi, 2013; Levin, et al., 2016; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; Wang et al., 2003).

Although the Balkans represent a multicultural environment, in terms of ethnicity, language and religion (CESID, 2016), literature data speak in favor of high prejudices against ethnic minorities as in our country (Bajović, 2013; Ivanov, 2008; Kalaba, 2013; Mihić & Mihić-Lisul, 2003), as well as in the region (CEDEM, 2013; Puhalo, 2003; Turjačanin, 2011). The presence of low trust and high ethnic distances and prejudices towards other ethnic groups, even among the younger generations, was also recorded (CESID, 2016; Kandido-Jakšić, 2008; Milošević Đorđević, 2015; Pavasović-Trošt, 2013; Tomanović & Stanojević, 2015; Žeželj, et al., 2019).

Although it is considered that the intercultural competencies of young people represent the result of a successfully implemented educational process (Catalano, Beglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2004; Council of Europe, 2016), it cannot be said that Serbia's educational system promotes interculturality (Petrović & Jokić, 2016). The fact that ethnic distances among young people strengthen due to strong family pressures (Žeželj, et al., 2019), speaks in favor of the importance of parental role in developing intercultural competencies. Such data are particularly concerning in the context of strong intergenerational and family ties which are

common in Serbia (Nauck, 2001; Tomanović & Stanojević, 2015). The foundations of interculturality are being set from the earliest age, and the first teachers of interculturalism are the child's parents (Ljubetić, Bedrica, & Slavinjak, 2018). Even though family upbringing exceeds the goals of institutional education, very little is known about parental intercultural competencies.

The educational process in Serbia is based on fairness and accessibility of education for all (Law on the Education System Foundations, according to Petrović & Jokić, 2016). The goal is to eliminate social exclusion that is a consequence of attitudes towards diversity, on any grounds — not only on the basis of race, ethnicity, and religion, but also the children's abilities (Ainscow, 2005). As the incidence of developmental disorders increases (Boyle, et al., 2011), and insistence on inclusive education is more frequent, we can assume that school system will have more and more children with disabilities in the years to follow.

As parents who have children with developmental disorders often struggle with stigma and discrimination, and their children require additional support during educational process, we thought that it would be especially interesting to examine their intercultural competencies. Therefore, this research was aimed to explore differences between parents of children with developmental disorders and parents of typically developing children in terms of intercultural sensitivity and ethnocultural empathy. Also, we wanted to examine the role of sociodemographic factors and previous intercultural experience in predicting the intensity of parental intercultural sensitivity and ethnocultural empathy.

Method

Sample

The study involved 203 parents of both sexes (89% female), divided into two groups. The first group consisted of parents of children with various developmental disorders (N=65) (DDP), while the second, control group consisted of parents of children with typical development (N=138) (TDP).

DDPs' age ranged from 24 to 53 years (M=37.66, SD=6.52). More than half of these parents have faculty or postgraduate education (58%) and the majority are married or cohabitating (94%). About half of the parents live in Serbia (52%) and have two children (46%). Their children with developmental disorders aged from 1 to 29 years (M=7.55, SD=5.63).

Two parental groups were matched in terms of age ($t=1.78$, $p=.077$), level of education ($\chi^2=3.33$, $p=.505$) and the number of children ($\chi^2=2.75$, $p=.601$).

Instruments

The research battery was consisted of several sections. In the first section, respondents answered various questions about sociodemographic data and their previous intercultural experience.

In the second section, intercultural sensitivity was measured by modified Serbian version of *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale-ISS* (Petrović, Starčević, Chen, & Komnenić, 2015). The scale is designed to measure the individuals' ability to develop positive feelings about cultural differences and their desire to achieve positive outcomes in intercultural communication. It is consisted of 15 items, grouped into four subscales: Interaction Enjoyment, Interaction Engagement, Respect for Cultural Differences and Interaction Confidence. Parents were asked to choose a number from 1-5, where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 "completely agree". The reliability was satisfactory (Global score: $\alpha=.78$; Interaction enjoyment: $\alpha=.73$, Interaction engagement: $\alpha=.65$, Respect for cultural differences: $\alpha=.59$ i Interaction confidence: $\alpha=.75$).

In the third section, Ethnocultural empathy was assessed by the Empathic Feeling and Expression subscale (Wang, et al., 2003). The questions refer to the way individuals understand the views and emotions of other cultural groups' members. The scale is consisted of 15 items. Parents express their degree of agreement on a five-point Likert-type scale, by choosing a number from 1-5, where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 "completely agree".

Procedure

Data was collected through an online survey. Respondents were guaranteed anonymity. Obtained data was treated in accordance with the code of ethics. In order to recruit DDPs, the questionnaire's link was sent to parents from Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Hercegovina, whose children obtained speech and language therapy within the Institute for Experimental Phonetics and Speech Pathology "Đorđe Kostić", in Belgrade, Serbia. The link was also placed within Facebook groups whose names contained keywords that referred to various developmental disorders. Some members from mentioned Facebook groups who have children with typical development showed interest to participate in our research, so we used their answers to form a control group. Other TDPs were recruited through The National Association of Parents and Teachers of the Republic of Serbia (NARNS).

Data analysis

As the ISS did not reach significant levels of reliability, we used only the Interaction Confidence (IC) subscale in further analysis. We used descriptive statistical measures to analyze and describe the sample, to present data concerning parental intercultural experiences, and to show the levels of Interaction Confidence and Ethnocultural Empathy. The t-test for independent samples was used to examine age differences, Interaction Confidence and Ethnocultural empathy between two parental groups, as well as to examine Interaction Confidence and Ethnocultural empathy in relation to the environment in which parents grew up in and in which are currently living in. The chi-square test was used to examine differences in the level of education and the number of children between two parental groups. Multiple linear regression was applied to predict the intensity of Interaction

Confidence and Ethnocultural Empathy based on sociodemographic factors and intercultural experiences. To examine the relationship between the Ethnocultural Empathy Assessment Scale and the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale, we used Pearson correlation coefficient. Data were processed using the SPSS package, v.20.

Results

First, we will present the descriptive measures concerning parental previous intercultural experiences, as well as those related to the applied instruments. Afterwards, we will present the research results on parental Interaction Confidence and Ethnocultural Empathy.

Descriptive statistics: Parental intercultural experience

The majority of respondents from our sample declare themselves as nationally (86%) and religiously determined (93%). About two thirds of parents (70%) are orthodox Serbs. Slightly less than half of the respondents grew up (46%) and are currently living (44%) in a multinational environment. Almost two thirds of respondents (59%) have never experienced hostile behavior based on their ethnic or cultural affiliation (59%), while 1% of parents believe they were exposed to hostile behavior on a daily basis. Even 39% of respondents believe they have a lot of experience in interaction with people from other cultures. Most of the parents communicate moderately in a foreign language: 9% on a daily basis, while 14% of parents communicate only in their mother tongue. Nearly two-thirds (60%) of parents have more than five close friends of other ethnic or religious backgrounds than their own, while 6% have none.

Descriptive statistics: Instruments

Only the Interaction Confidence subscale, from the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) reached the recommended .70 level of reliability. As the Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests show statistics that are significant, we conclude that the distribution of scores on all scales and subscales deviates from normal (Table 1).

Table 1
Descriptive statistical measures in relation to the applied instruments

		M	SD	Min	Max	α^*	KS (p) [*]
ISS Global score	TDP	4.48	.41	3.47	5.00	.45	.125 (.000)
	DDP	4.52	.39	3.47	5.00		
	Whole sample	4.49	.40	3.47	5.00		
ISS Interaction enjoyment	TDP	4.73	.45	2.75	5.00	.55	.369 (.000)
	DDP	4.82	.30	4.00	5.00		
	Whole sample	4.76	.41	2.75	5.00		

ISS Interaction engagement	TDP	4.20	.71	2.25	5.00	.58	.133 (.000)
	DDP	4.25	.66	2.50	5.00		
	Whole sample	4.22	.69	2.25	5.00		
ISS Respect for cultural differences	TDP	4.58	.52	3.00	5.00	.12	.264 (.000)
	DDP	4.62	.55	3.25	5.00		
	Whole sample	4.59	.53	3.00	5.00		
ISS Interaction confidence	TDP	4.36	.74	1.00	5.00	.72	.206 (.000)
	DDP	4.33	.72	2.00	5.00		
	Whole sample	4.35	.73	1.00	5.00		
Ethnocultural empathy	TD	4.23	.67	2.07	5.00	.65	.135 (.000)
	DD	4.20	.54	2.73	5.00		
	Whole sample	4.22	.63	2.07	5.00		

* On the whole sample level
 α –Cronbach’s α
KS(p) -Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic and its significance

The correlations between the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale’s subscales and Ethnocultural Empathy scale are shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Relationship between Intercultural sensitivity scale and Ethnocultural empathy scale

		ISS Global score	ISS Interaction Enjoyment	ISS Interaction Engagement	ISS Respect for Cultural Differences	ISS Interaction confidence
Ethnocultural empathy	r	.517	.317	.505	.398	.167
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.017

r –Pirson’s correlation coefficient
p –correlation’s significance

Since only the Interaction confidence subscale reached a satisfactory level of reliability, and its correlation with Ethnocultural empathy scale was the lowest, so the overlap of measured constructs is probably small, we decided to use only this subscale in further analysis.

Parental interaction confidence

The majority of respondents reported high or very high Interaction Confidence (96%). Statistically significant differences between DDP and TDP are not recorded ($t=.285$, $p=.776$). The average scores regarding Interaction confidence are shown in Table 1.

When it comes to predicting the intensity of Interaction confidence, the logistic regression model showed to be statistically significant at the whole sample level ($R^2=.087$, $F(7,195)=2.65$, $p=.012$). *Experiences in interaction with people from different cultures* emerged as a good predictor ($B=.100$, $SE=.050$, $\beta=.163$, $t=2.024$, $p=.044$), which indicates that parents who had more experience in interacting with people from different cultures have greater interaction confidence.

The regression model was significant within the TDP group ($R^2=.141$, $F(7,130)=3.038$, $p=.005$). *Parental age* ($B=-.020$, $SE=.010$, $\beta=-.173$, $t=-1.983$, $p=.049$) and *Number of children* ($B=.190$, $SE=.078$, $\beta=.214$, $t=2.423$, $p=.017$) emerged as good predictors. The obtained results indicate that the Interaction confidence is higher in younger parents and those who have more children. The regression model was not significant within the DDP group ($R^2=.111$, $F(7.57)=1.014$, $p=.432$).

Factors such as parental gender, marital status, country of residence, nationality and religion were not included in the regression models, given that the majority of respondents were female, married or cohabiting, living in Serbia, and being orthodox Serbs.

The environment in which parents grew up in ($t=-1.618$, $p=.107$) or are currently living in ($t=-1.576$, $p=.117$) does not have a significant effect on their Interaction confidence.

Parental ethnocultural empathy

The majority of respondents reported high or very high Ethnocultural empathy (96%). Statistically significant differences between DDP and TDP are not recorded ($t=.310$, $p=.757$). The average scores regarding Ethnocultural empathy are shown in Table 1.

When it comes to predicting the intensity of Ethnocultural empathy, the logistic regression model showed to be statistically significant at the whole sample level ($R^2=.115$, $F(7,195)=3.60$, $p=.001$). *Parental level of education* ($B=.099$, $SE=.042$, $\beta=.171$, $t=2.375$, $p=.018$), *experiences in hostile behavior* ($B=-.098$, $SE=.044$, $\beta=-.153$, $t=-2.227$, $p=.027$), *experiences in interacting with people from different cultures* ($B=.092$, $SE=.042$, $\beta=.172$, $t=2.165$, $p=.032$) and *friends of other ethnic/religious affiliations* ($B=.047$, $SE=.023$, $\beta=.155$, $t=2.046$, $p=.042$) emerged as good predictors. Such results indicate that Ethnocultural empathy increases with higher education, greater experience in interacting with people from different cultures and having more friends of other ethnicities and religions, but decreases with more frequent experiences of hostile behavior based on ethnicity or religion.

The regression model was significant within both groups of parents - TDP group ($R^2=.145$, $F(7,130)=3.15$, $p=.004$) and DDP group ($R^2=.211$, $F(7, 57)=2.17$, $p=.050$). When it comes to the TDP group, *level of education* ($B=.127$, $SE=.056$, $\beta=.203$, $t=2.272$, $p=.025$) and *friends of other ethnic/religious affiliations* stand out as good predictors ($B=.067$, $SE=.029$, $\beta=.213$, $t=2.311$, $p=.022$). The obtained results indicate that Ethnocultural empathy is higher among TDPs who have higher education and more friends of other ethnic/religious affiliations. Experiences in

hostile behavior emerge as a significant predictor ($B=-.182$, $SE=.059$, $\beta=-.378$, $t=-3.087$, $p=.003$) within DDP group. Such results indicate that Ethnocultural empathy decreases with more frequent experiences of hostile behavior.

Factors such as parental gender, marital status, country of residence, nationality and religion were not included in the regression models, given that the majority of respondents were female, married or cohabiting, living in Serbia, and being orthodox Serbs.

The environment in which parents grew up in ($t=-.461$, $p=.645$) or are currently living in ($t=-1.290$, $p=.198$) does not have a significant effect on their Ethnocultural empathy.

Discussion

Although the foundations of interculturality are being set from the child's earliest age, and the first teachers of culture are child's parents, very little is known about their intercultural competencies. As the incidence of developmental disorders is increasing, and insistence on inclusive education is becoming more frequent, we can assume that an increasing number of children with developmental disabilities will be present in the school system in the years to follow. Studies on parental intercultural competencies, especially those concerning vulnerable families do not exist in the literature. So, we believe that the findings of this paper significantly contribute to a better understanding of intercultural competencies of this specific population. The results will be explained and interpreted based on the available literature.

We begin the discussion with the findings concerning the applied instruments's metric characteristics, as they slightly changed the further analysis' course. Namely, as it turned out that only the subscale Interaction Confidence (IC) reaches satisfactory levels of reliability and that it has the lowest correlation with the Ethnocultural empathy scale (EE), we decided to use only this subscale in the further analysis. The fact that the modified Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) wasn't reliable in the parental sample can be explained by the fact that an extremely high percentage of parents (96%) reported high or very high IC, as well as high or very high EE. Therefore, we can assume that parents were probably giving socially desirable answers. Some authors explain this tendency by respondents' concerns that their responses may be interpreted in terms of racism and discrimination (Rasoal, Jungert, Hau & Andersson, 2011). Therefore, we believe that future researchers should measure detected behavioral indicators or use more indirect and implicit measures to assess intercultural sensitivity (IS) and EE. Furthermore, one may get the impression that our respondents overestimate their abilities. Such behavior may origin from the belief that intercultural competencies do not require the possession of specific skills and abilities. Namely, one can get the impression that a certain number of respondents from our sample could be located

in the phases of Denial (denying cultural differences), Defense (doing everything to avoid the existence of cultural differences) or Minimization (emphasizing similarities between individuals from other cultures at the expense of differences). Therefore, future studies could include the Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (Bennett, 1993), which would provide a deeper insight into the stages of IS development and potentially enable clarification of the obtained findings. Finally, it should be said that the potential explanation of the obtained results partly lies in the sample's structure. That is, as it has been shown that the effect of education on EE is significant, as well as that women show higher cultural sensitivity and ethnocultural empathy (Cundiff & Komarraju, 2008; Hansen, 2010; Rasoal, et al., 2011; Sprague-Zones, 1995), our findings are not surprising, as our sample was mostly consisted of highly educated females. However, gender differences could not be examined as only a small number of fathers participated in the study. The recommendation for further research would be to include a relatively equal number of men and women.

The most obvious explanation for the absence of differences between the two parental groups in terms of IC and EE would be that the child's diagnosis does not have a significant effect on the parental intercultural competencies. However, we believe that those differences could not be recorded, taking into account the above findings on generally high IC and EE scores.

Results on the predicting intensity of IC and EE will be discussed in the following text.

Experiences in interacting with people from different cultures have emerged as a good predictor of IC. As IC is one of the elements of IS, we can say that the results of this study are somewhat in agreement with literature data, which indicate the presence of a positive correlation between intercultural experience and IS (Altshuler, Sussman, & Kachur, 2003; Paige, Jacobs-Cassuto, & Yershova, 2003). Considering the theory that the mechanism for raising self-confidence in particular skills is through direct practicing (Bandura, 1986), the obtained results are not surprising. Namely, as IC refers to how confident a person feels in the intercultural environment (Chen & Starosta, 1997), it is not surprising that direct experience in interacting with people from other cultures develops certain intercultural skills, which furthermore raises interaction confidence. However, looking at the two parental groups separately, the prediction model was not significant within the DDP group, while within the TDP group, the parental age and the number of children emerged as good predictors of IC. That is, the results indicate that younger parents and those with more children have higher IC. The fact that younger respondents have higher IC does not necessarily indicate that IC decreases with ageing. Namely, one gets the impression that the younger generations of parents are most likely raised and socialized in a culture and era that highly value the possession of self-confidence, and in which society encourages intercultural interaction. Also, we can assume that younger respondents had more available resources during their schooling and maturing, which could potentially

bring them closer to other cultures, such as foreign language courses, media, social networks, but also the general development of technology. As the concept of intercultural sensitivity is similar to the concept of interpersonal sensitivity, which refers to a person's ability to perceive how other individuals differ in their own behavior, perception, or feelings (Bronfenbrenner, et al., 1958, according to Chen & Starosta, 1996), we can assume that parents who have more children, most likely have a greater sensitivity to individual differences, and thus greater self-confidence regarding the general management of these differences. The fact that the regression model was not statistically significant within the DDP group indicates the need for further studies aimed at this particular population.

When it comes to Ethnocultural Empathy, the prediction model was significant, both at the whole sample level, as well as on the level of two parental groups. The results indicate that EE increases with higher education, greater experience in interacting with people from different cultures and having more friends of other ethnicities/religions, and decreases with more frequent experiences of hostile behavior based on ethnicity or religion.

The greater ability to understand other cultures' members' opinions and feeling (Wang, et al., 2003) can be seen in more educated individuals. Some authors argue that a general lack of knowledge about other cultures can lead to barriers to sensing EE (Rasoal, Eklund, & Hansen, 2011). Therefore, we can assume that more educated individuals are more likely to have greater potential and capacity to develop cognitive aspects of intercultural competencies, which relate to cultural awareness, i.e. understanding of cultural conventions that affect how a person from another culture thinks and behaves (Chen & Starosta, 1996, 1998). Through their own academic development, as well as later employment, educated individuals probably have more opportunities to interact with people from other cultures, which consequently leads to greater EE.

The fact that EE is lower among less educated individuals further emphasizes the importance and role of teachers in creating and strengthening the intercultural competencies of children and adolescents attending primary and secondary schools. Furthermore, as it has been shown that experiences in interaction with people from other cultures, experiences in hostile behavior and number of friends of other ethnic/religious affiliation are good predictors of EE, we can say that personal intercultural experiences have a significant effect on the individual's EE intensity. The obtained results are in an agreement with studies which indicate that more practical experience regarding interactions in other cultures that are different from one's own leads to more EE (Rasoal, et al., 2011). Given that EE refers to a person's ability to feel, understand, and care about what a person from another culture cares about (Rasoal, et al., 2011), this effect is expected to be stronger in friendships, as friendships themselves imply a certain level of intimacy. Also, as empathy is a counterbalance to hostile attitudes and behaviors (Litvack-Miller, MacDougall, & Romney, 1997, according to Rasoal, et al., 2011), we hypothesize that this effect may have the opposite direction, that is,

that individuals who experience hostile attitudes and behaviors by others, based on their own ethnicity, are more likely to develop an aversion to other cultures, and therefore have difficulties empathizing with them.

The results of this study also indicate that statistically significant differences in IC and EE between individuals who grew up or are currently living in predominantly monoethnic or polyethnic environments do not occur. A similar study showed that ethnic diversity is not a significant predictor of EE (Rasoal, et al., 2011), so it could be said that similar results were obtained in our study. Such findings confirm the claims that multinationality, i.e. ethnic diversity, does not necessarily imply interculturality, i.e. the interaction of individuals. On the other hand, the mentioned study showed that individuals who grew up in smaller cities have higher EE, so the recommendation for further studies would be to take into account the size, i.e. the type of environment in which the respondents grew up and are currently living in.

Finally, we will look back at the limitations of our study. Although the number of surveyed parents was not small, the sample examined in this study was relatively homogeneous in terms of country of residence, nationality and religion, which prevented comparisons within subgroups of parents. A larger and more heterogeneous sample would significantly contribute to a deeper understanding of the intercultural competencies of parents from our country, but also from the region. Also, as mentioned earlier, sociodemographic factors such as parental gender and marital status were not included in the prediction models, as most respondents were mothers. The recommendation for further research would certainly be to include a larger number of male respondents.

Conclusion

The analysis of obtained data showed that the child's diagnosis does not have a significant effect on the parental intercultural competencies. However, as a very high percentage of surveyed parents report high interaction confidence and high ethnocultural empathy, we believe that the population of parents is generally prone to giving socially desirable answers, as well as overestimating their own competencies.

Experiences in interacting with people from different cultures emerged as important predictors of interaction confidence. The parental age and number of children are shown to be good predictors, but only within the group of parents with typically developing children. The intensity of ethnocultural empathy is higher in more educated parents, individuals with more experiences in interaction with people from other cultures and those who have more friends of other ethnicities/religions, and lower in parents who have experienced hostile behavior based on their own ethnicity or religion. The environment in which the parents grew up and the environment in which they are currently living in do not have a significant

effect on interaction confidence nor ethnocultural empathy. Such results speak in favor of the importance of personal experience in interacting with people from other cultures.

The results of this study indicate the need for interventions, both at the individual and social level, i.e. the need to create educational programs aimed at less educated individuals, as well as to place greater emphasis on the role of teachers employed in primary and secondary schools in creating and strengthening intercultural competencies of children and adolescents. Also, at the global level, it is necessary to further promote tolerance and mutual interaction of people from different cultures, as well as to raise sensitivity to individual differences. We believe that this research provided answers to certain questions, but also opened the new ones, and that additional, extensive studies aimed at the parent population are necessary.

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INTERKULTURALNE KOMPETENCIJE RODITELJA DECE SA RAZVOJNIM POREMEĆAJIMA

Apstrakt

Cilj ove studije bio je ispitivanje interkulturalnih kompetencija roditelja dece sa razvojnim poremećajima (RDRP). U istraživanju je učestvovalo 203 roditelja (89% žena), koji su bili podeljeni u dve grupe. U prvu grupu su bili uključeni RDRP (N=65), dok su drugu grupu činili roditelji dece tipičnog razvoja (RDTR) (N=138). Upitnik korišćen u ovoj studiji je uključivao Revidiranu srpsku verziju skale za procenu Interkulturalne Osetljivosti (SIO), Skalu za procenu Etnokulturalne empatije (EE), kao i niz pitanja koja su se odnosila na sociodemografske podatke roditelja i njihovo pređašnje interkulturalno iskustvo. Kako SIO nije dostigla zadovoljavajuće nivoe pouzdanosti, u daljim analizama korišćena je samo subskala Samopouzdanje u interakciji (SUI). Statistički značajne razlike između RDRP i RDTR u pogledu SUI i EE nisu evidentirane. SUI se povećava sa više iskustva u interakciji sa ljudima iz drugih kultura. Mlađi RDTR, kao i oni sa više dece prijavljuju više SUI. EE se povećava sa višim obrazovanjem, većim iskustvom u interakciji sa ljudima iz drugih kultura i posedovanjem većeg broja prijatelja drugih etničkih/religijskih pripadnosti, a smanjuje sa češćim iskustvima diskriminacije po osnovu etniciteta ili religije. Statistički značajne razlike između SUI i EE između pojedinaca koji su odrasli ili trenutno žive u predominantno monoetničkim ili polietničkim sredinama nisu evidentirane.

Ključne reči: interkulturalne kompetencije, interkulturalna osetljivost, etnokulturalna empatija, roditelji dece sa razvojnim poremećajima

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