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## “JUST LOVE ME”. POPULARITY OF UPBRINGING MYTH ABOUT THE LOVE ABLE TO REPLACE UPBRINGING AMONG MOTHERS OF YOUNG CHILDREN

### Introduction

“We are born pretty good. What is a human like before being spoiled by his/her upbringing?” – this question was touched upon in a special edition of a psychological guidebook in “Polityka”<sup>1</sup>. The author of the article adduces scientifically grounded arguments indicating that people are born socially-spirited, ready to cooperate, empathetic, full of dignity, self-sufficient, helpful and flexible. Unreflective acceptance of the article may lead to a conclusion that a child does not have to be raised and only requires love, since upbringing may in fact “spoil” it. Parents’ love to children is an evolutionary mechanism that evolved in the human species to make parents take care and look after their offsprings, who are vulnerable and depended on their parents for a long time since birth. In this way a human maximizes the chance to survive their genes<sup>2</sup>. This is the natural behaviour of human, which is mostly understandable. However, the statement “just love me” seems to gain in popularity, especially among many parents. Trempała<sup>3</sup> contends that the speech of “ideologists of love to a child” is becoming increasingly widespread in the social media. Moreover, they demonstrate “pedagogical ignorance” by claiming that love to a child substitutes upbringing. Trempała states that this is one of the myths concerning upbringing advocated by a number of parents, who then perceive their parental role through the prism of such ideology.

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<sup>1</sup> M. Sapała, *Rodzimy się całkiem udani. Jaki jest człowiek, zanim zepsuje go wychowanie*, „Ja My Oni. Poradnik Psychologiczny Polityki. Vol. 9. Jak się pogodzić z upływającym czasem” 2012, nr 2 (2), p. 12–15.

<sup>2</sup> R. Dawkins, *Samolubny gen*, przeł. M. Skoneczny, Kraków 2006.

<sup>3</sup> J. Trempała, *Obsesyjna miłość rodziców do dziecka. Przyczynek do dyskusji*, „Roczniki Naukowe WSiE TWP w Olsztynie” 2010, nr 1–2, p. 169–180.

Parenting goes beyond having children and fulfilling the corresponding social role<sup>4</sup>. It means establishing a relationship with a child and mutual interaction, where parents should play a major role of caregiver, mentor and educator<sup>5</sup>. Bakiera<sup>6</sup> divides parental activity into care-giving, which aims at fulfilling children's basic, somatic needs, and upbringing, which translates into the development of desirable psychosocial traits. One may not, however, neglect the importance of emotional atmosphere in the environment of a child.

The classic division of upbringing styles into authoritarian (strict, autocratic), authoritative (democratic), lenient (permissive, liberal) and careless (uncommitted, emotionless) is based, among other things, on the variation of "warmth" degree in the parent-child relationship. Emotional warmth is reflected in the demonstration of love, support and sensitivity that are given to the offspring<sup>7,8</sup>. High level of warmth is typical of the authoritarian and lenient styles, albeit the former is regarded to be clearly more favourable to children's development. Furthermore, a fundamental difference between the styles lies in child-rearing practices. Lenient parents have low expectation towards a child, with the scope and rules of control on their part being marginal. Permissive parenting seems to be a "no discipline" approach without clear rules or a small number of them. Permissive parent rarely establishes clear requirements and is reluctant to impose limits of permissible behaviour on offspring. Children raised by permissive parents have often enough difficulty in learning how to self-control, socialize, and adjust to social standards and principles of public morality because caregivers simply place the responsibility for upbringing on their children<sup>9</sup>. However, it should be noted that sometimes children should be given more freedom, which can have positive effects. The perfect example is the development of emotional intelligence of a child, which can be shaped in the process of upbringing<sup>10</sup>. This kind of intelligence ensures self-regulation, increases self-awareness, reinforces empathy and assertiveness. The discussed competencies are significant for success achievement in private live and professional careers.

Perceiving the myth "It is enough to love a child, they do not have to be raised" as upbringing imperative can have negative effects, resulting in the undesirable maturity development of a child. By way of an example, Trempała points out the research on the resistance to temptation<sup>11</sup>, summarizing that it is possible to create favourable conditions

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<sup>4</sup> I.a. A. Kwak, *Spoleczny i indywidualny wymiar rodzicielstwa*, [w:] *Rodzicielstwo między domem, prawem, służbami społecznymi*, red. A. Kwak, Warszawa 2008, p. 7–16.

<sup>5</sup> J. Trempała, *Obsesyjna miłość...*, op. cit., p. 169–180.

<sup>6</sup> L. Bakiera, *Zaangażowane rodzicielstwo a autokreacyjny aspekt rozwoju dorosłych*, Warszawa 2013.

<sup>7</sup> D. Baumrind, *Socialization and instrumental competence in young children*, [in:] *The young child: Reviews of research*, vol. 2, ed. W.W. Hartup, Washington 1972, p. 202–224.

<sup>8</sup> E. Maccoby, J. Martin, *Socialization in the context of the family: Pattern – child interaction*, [in:] *Handbook of child psychology: Socialization, personality and social development*, vol. 4, ed. E.M. Hetherington, New York 1983, p. 1–102.

<sup>9</sup> M. Przetacznikowa, Z. Włodarski, *Psychologia wychowawcza*, Warszawa 1981; M. Przetacznik-Gierowska, G. Makiello-Jarża, *Psychologia rozwoju i wychowania wieku dziecięcego*, Warszawa 1992.

<sup>10</sup> D. Goleman, *Inteligencja emocjonalna*, przeł. A. Jankowski, Poznań 1997.

<sup>11</sup> J. Trempała, *Rozumowanie moralne i odporność dzieci na pokusę oszustwa*, Bydgoszcz 1993, p. 158.

which make impossible to succumb to the temptation of committing a fraud. This applies particularly to small children who should be controlled by caregivers, as their morality emerges from the necessity to abide by the decision of adults<sup>12</sup>. However, it must be emphasized that a complete mastery of social norms is indispensable for establishing and maintaining positive relationships with others. Such defiance of social norms was demonstrated by children brought up stress-free in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The style stems from antypedagogy<sup>13</sup> and laissez faire ideologies<sup>14</sup>, promoting rejection of traditional upbringing (i.e. based on punishment, caveat and child "training") for the sake of maintaining close parent-child relationship the warmth of parenthood, cordiality and full acceptance of a child. In principle, stress-free parenting was aimed at reducing the excessive stress placed on child, however, the style became distorted as parents were drawn to perceive any and all forms of parental control as stress-inducing, and thus refrained from limits, disciplining and drawing consequences from undesirable behaviour. The term "stressless upbringing" (implicitly meaning: mannerless) became pejorative and was associated with undisciplined children who bothered, annoyed and humiliated other children and even adults.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century should not be understood as a stress-free approach to parenting, but as the time significant for the process of child development according to the parents' wishes<sup>15</sup>. Planning diligently children's future, many parents strive for shaping "a perfect child"<sup>16</sup> – the best at everything, as this attributes of the child could make them proud. These children are required to attend a wide range of additional courses and extracurricular activities to enhance their learning experience as well as overall development, and cognitive development in particular<sup>17,18</sup>. Children burdened with an excessive number of activities are often tired and "overstimulated". Honoré<sup>19</sup> is opposed to the so-called concept of tiger mother<sup>20</sup>. He urges "give children peace and quiet" and underlines that children should be allowed to enjoy themselves and develop at their own pace. Perhaps the parental myth of love replacing upbringing, represents a distortion of Honoré's assumptions on freedom in upbringing. Mothers, who follow the myth are convinced that love may ensure

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<sup>12</sup> J. Trempała, D. Czyżowska, *Rozwój moralny*, [w:] *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka. T. 3. Rozwój funkcji psychicznych*, ed. B. Harwas-Napierała, J. Trempała, Warszawa 2004, p. 106–130.

<sup>13</sup> B. Śliwerski, *Pedagogika negatywna*, [w:] *Pedagogika. Podręcznik akademicki*, t. I, red. Z. Kwieciński, B. Śliwerski, Warszawa 2003, p. 436–451.

<sup>14</sup> M. Rozmus, *Bezstresowe wychowanie – prawdy i mity*, „Samorządowe Centrum Edukacji w Tarnowie. Biuletyn” 2004, nr 8, [http://www.sce.pl/upload/File/biuletyn/biuletyn\\_8.pdf](http://www.sce.pl/upload/File/biuletyn/biuletyn_8.pdf) [1.06.2017].

<sup>15</sup> D. Wojtkiewicz, *Wspieranie rozwoju dziecka w perspektywie rodziców*, [w:] *Dziecko i dzieciństwo: wybrane konteksty badań*, red. M. Nawrot-Borkowska, D. Zając, Bydgoszcz 2017, p. 240–252.

<sup>16</sup> A. Szymanik-Kostrzewska, *Dziecko jako projekt rodzicielski? Przekonania matek na temat wychowania i ich percepcja zachowań dziecka*, Warszawa 2016.

<sup>17</sup> H. Domański, A. Dukaczewska, *Samodzielność i chęć polegania na sobie*, [w:] *Elementy nowego ładu*, red. H. Domański, A. Rychard, Warszawa 1997, p. 331–354.

<sup>18</sup> A. Firkowska-Mankiewicz, *Czym jest sukces życiowy dla współczesnego Polaka? Kontekst socjodemograficzny i psychospołeczny*, [w:] *Elementy nowego ładu*, op. cit., p. 303–330.

<sup>19</sup> C. Honoré, *Pod presją. Dajmy dzieciom święty spokój!*, przeł. W. Mitura, Warszawa 2011.

<sup>20</sup> A. Chua, *Bojowa pieśń tygryscy. Dlaczego chińskie matki są lepsze?*, przeł. M. Moltzan-Małkowska, Warszawa 2011.

offspring broadly defined success and, in the name of love, they reduce (and even neglect) parenting efforts for the sake of showing love to a child.

The presented research focuses on the opinion of mothers' of young children about the acceptance the parental myth that love may replace upbringing, as well as typical behaviours that correspond to the concept. The aim of the study was to explore whether the interviewed mothers accept the myth that "It is enough to love a child, they do not have to be raised" and if they apply the concept in the upbringing of their children.

### 1. Methodological assumptions

The presented study constitute an integral part of a larger project conducted by Michalina Zychal and Janusz Trempała<sup>21</sup> and accepted by the Research Ethics Committee at the Institute of Psychology of the Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz. The research was conducted on a group of mothers whose children were from one to seven years old, and who were recruited by students of psychology at Kazimierz Wielki University by means of the "snowball" sampling method. The interviewed mothers were informed about the aim and organization of the survey, as well as the rules for withdrawing their consent to the interview. They were provided with a high degree of anonymity. The completed questionnaires were coded immediately upon receipt. After encoding the questionnaire it was impossible to identify the interviewed person, withdraw the consent to the interview, or provide feedback on the study results to a specified participant. The research was preceded by a pilot study on 33 individuals (the results were included in the survey sample). The contents of the questionnaire was understandable for the respondents. The main research question was whether the surveyed mothers accept the myth that "It is enough to love a child, they do not have to be raised" and they follow this rule in the process of upbringing their children. The detailed research questions are as follows:

1. How strong is the belief that love can substitute upbringing among the interviewed mothers?
2. What is the intensity of the declared behaviours among the interviewed mothers in the context of substituting parenting by love?
3. Are the beliefs and behaviours of the interviewed mothers consistent?
4. Is the intensity of specific beliefs/declared behaviours comparable?

The study employed the Mother's Obsessive Love to a Child Questionnaire Scale (MOLCQ by A. Szymanik-Kostrzewska and M. Zychal) – Love instead of Upbringing (LU). The MOLCQ scale consists of 10 statements given in a random order. The study participants had to mark on the scale of 1–5 (Likert scale), to which extent they agree with each contention ("strongly disagree", "rather disagree", "neither agree nor disagree", "rather agree", "strongly agree"). The LU scale included two subscales: a – 5 statements constituting opinions on upbringing; b – 5 statements concerning to declared behaviours,

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<sup>21</sup> See A. Szymanik-Kostrzewska, *Dziecko jako projekt rodzicielski?...*, op. cit.

according to convictions. Compatibility of the statements in pairs was estimated as complete on the basis of opinion of three competent arbiters. The scale factors reflected the following assumptions: "Love to a child ensures its proper upbringing. It is enough to love a child, thus there is no need to exercise control over the child and set requirements". Also, three competent arbiters, psychologists, estimated the accuracy of the scale. After implementing recommended modifications, the arbiters fully agreed that the selected statements were adequate to the theoretical assumptions of the scale.

The survey sample comprised 113 mothers of children aged 1–7. The youngest surveyed mother was 22, the oldest was 50 ( $M = 33,56$ ;  $SD = 5,58$ ). 73 of interviewees had a university degree, 31 – secondary education, the remaining 8 – primary or vocational education. 35 of respondents lived in villages, 35 of surveyed mothers – small towns, 43 of population lived in big cities (over 100 000 inhabitants). 93 surveyed mothers declared average financial situation, 15 – below-average, and 5 – above-average. At the time of the research two mothers were not in a partnership, 91 of interviewees were married, 20 – in non-formalized partnership. The respondents had on average two children ( $SD = 1,1$ ;  $\max = 9$ ), aged 1–26 years, however, the expressed opinions were to apply to only one child of their choice. The group of children included consisted of 60 girls and 53 – boys (the average age was 4,5;  $SD = 1,8$ ).

## 2. Research report

At the beginning of the analysis Statistica 12.0 Stat Soft the following criteria were defined: 1) the intensity of mothers' beliefs; 2) the intensity of mothers' declared behaviours. The Likert scale consists of 5-point scale, where the average result constitutes 3 +/- one standard deviation; results below the average were considered low, whereas above the average – high. The intensity of mothers' beliefs that love may substitute upbringing, stood at an average level ( $M = 2,66$ ;  $SD = 0,68$ ). The intensity of behaviours declared by mothers corresponding to their beliefs, was also at an average level ( $M = 3,07$ ;  $SD = 0,64$ ), but significantly higher than beliefs ( $t = -7,59$ ;  $p < 0,001$ ;  $d = 0,62$ ). The coherence of beliefs and the corresponding behaviours, estimates on the basis of correlation (Pearson) was moderate ( $r = 0,62$ ), and the level of acceptance of mothers' beliefs in a rather moderate extent explained the intensity of declaration, which was compatible with their behaviour ( $r^2 = 0,38$ ).

The obtained results for the two subscales need to be taken with a degree of caution as the accuracy of data for the subscale "a" – "beliefs" and "b" – "behaviours", was quite low (Cronbach  $\alpha = 0,66$  and  $0,57$ , respectively). The analysis of the significance of individual statements revealed that after removing the statement LU4a, the reliability of the subscale "a" increased to  $0,76$  – sufficient to be regarded as accurate (after removing:  $M = 2,23$ ;  $SD = 0,81$ ). After removing the corresponding statement in the subscale "b" (LU4b), the credibility of the measurement increased to  $0,63$  – but the result is still too low to be deemed reliable (when removed:  $M = 2,66$ ;  $SD = 0,78$ ; in relation to the result

in the subscale “a” –  $t = -6,79$ ;  $p < 0,001$ ;  $d = 0,54$ ). This suggests the necessity of a qualitative analysis of the answers given by the interviewed mothers. Moreover, it allows us to put forward a hypothesis on differences between the average results for individual statements.

The statement that the interviewees agreed with to the greatest extent involved a declaration of behaviour, which consists in providing love to a child as a primary way of ensuring success in adulthood (LU4b; in relation to the lower result LU4a<sup>22</sup> – see table 1). This variable was characterised by a high result. Slightly lower, but also regarded as a high result, involved the variable constituting a belief that that parents’ love is the most important factor determining child’s success in adulthood (LU4a; see table 1). The lowest result was obtained in the context of the statement: “If a child is truly loved, it needs neither discipline nor control” (LU2a; in relation to the next, higher result LU3a:  $Z = 4,19$ ;  $p < 0,001$ ;  $d = 2,34$ ). Higher, but still below the average result – in the case of the belief that a loving parent should not set requirements for a child, but let it develop naturally (LU3a; see table 1). The results of the remaining statements were within limits of the average results in accordance with the adopted criteria.

The variables representing beliefs correlated with the variables constituting declarations of adequate behaviours in a range from low to moderate (see table 1). However, it should be noted that the interviewed mothers to a greater extent declared behaviours that consist in substituting upbringing with love, than agreed with the beliefs that love is able to replace parenting (except the pair of statements LU3a and LU3b – see table 1).

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<sup>22</sup> Wilcoxon’s non-parametric test is used because of the lack of a normal distribution for individual variables, skewness and kurtosis exceeding the value of +/-1.

**Table 1. Characteristics for individual variables**

Scale items for Love instead of Upbringing	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Z	R
LU1a. I think that parent's love to a child, but not setting requirements, ensures a child's good development.	2,69	1,2	0,37	-0,78	4,19*** d = 0,77	0,22*
LU1b. I do my best to make my child feel loved and happy rather than do what I require of it.	3,33	1,17	-0,33	-0,67		
LU2a. If a child is truly loved, it needs neither discipline nor control.	1,63	0,85	1,52	2,37	7,19*** d = 1,15	0,48***
LU2b. My child feels that I love him/her, so I do not need to exercise control over my child or check up on him/her.	2,33	1,02	0,38	-0,74		
LU3a. I think that a loving parent should not set requirements for a child, but let it develop naturally.	2,1	1,2	1,06	0,17	1,28	0,42***
LU3b. My child is simply loved and thus he/she develops naturally, but not because of my control, dos and don'ts.	2,25	1,05	0,91	0,62		
LU4a. I think that parents' love is the most important factor determining child's success in adulthood.	4,38	0,95	-1,79	2,88	3,29*** d = 0,41	0,29**
LU4b. I try to make sure that my child becomes successful in adulthood – especially by showing him/her love.	4,71	0,65	-3,59	17,2		
LU5a. It is parental love to a child that ensures good upbringing, and not the manner or style of parenting.	2,5	0,99	0,82	0,16	2,0* d = 2,17	0,64***
LU5b. I ensure good upbringing of my child mainly through showing him/her love; the way or style of upbringing is less important to me.	2,74	1,28	0,44	-0,95		

\*  $p < 0,05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0,01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0,001$

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the presented study confirmed that the interviewed mothers were inclined to follow the parental myth of love being able to replace upbringing, albeit they more frequently declared to undertake behaviours typical of the myth, rather than accept the beliefs constituting it. Cohesion of beliefs and declared behaviour was moderate. But as far as belief – behaviour pattern is concerned, the presented beliefs supported the declared behaviours in 38% of the cases. On the one hand it may indicate that there is a need of be-

ing consistent and avoiding dissonance arising from the differences between personal beliefs and declared behaviours<sup>23</sup>. Lack of cohesion in the answers tends to evoke tension and, consequently, a person may feel inclined to reduce it by means of adjusting declared beliefs to displayed behaviours. On the other hand, it is quite possible that the surveyed mothers were not fully aware of what beliefs lie at the root of their behaviours (responding in a habitual and unreflective manner). When a person encounters verbalized statement which she does not fully accept, she is less likely to admit to sharing the belief, than deny behaving in a particular way. It is also possible that the interviewed population felt inclined to declare behaviours associated with the parental myth, despite not fully agreeing with the actual myth in order to maintain high self-esteem. This arises from the need of social approval which determines the desire for acceptance from other people and readiness to behave in a socially acceptable way<sup>24</sup>. The higher level of intensity, the greater tendency to present oneself in a favorable light, and thus to provide information which may convey a positive impression about the surveyed person. Hence, the interviewed person, consciously or unconsciously, “distorts” the personal information. Consequently, the accuracy of the obtained data may be lower. Perhaps the surveyed women gave such answers, which – according to them – indicate behaviour consistent with social expectations. Thus, instead of presenting behaviours they relate to, they focus on behaviours that are felt expected. Finally, it should be noted that the drawn conclusions applying to the declared behaviours by the mothers should be treated with a degree of caution on account of the unsatisfactory reliability of the measurement. Despite these limitations, on their basis we can formulate a suggestion on varying degrees of intensity of behaviours related to the acceptance of the parental myth that “it is enough to love a child, they do not need to be raised”.

The analysis of individual statements revealed substantial differences in regard to the acceptance of individual beliefs as well as the declared behaviours. The interviewed population agreed that, more than anything, they try to help their children succeed in adulthood by showing them love. Simultaneously, the surveyed women on the above-average level agreed with the belief that the parent’s love is essential for ensuring success in child’s life. It is not a surprising result because the belief that there is a need to provide children with love is widely accepted and socially adopted. In the context of the scientific knowledge we can focus on the issues applying to the different types of emotional attachment in the child-mother relationship<sup>25</sup>. The research in respect of the issue explicitly indicates that the relationship based on love, safe connection, high responsiveness, physical and mental availability for a child and the predictability of reaction to the child’s signals may contribute to success in the subsequent stages of the child’s development. Such behaviours towards a child have long-term consequences as they translate into the ability to establish and maintain close relationships with other people, as well as instil a conviction in

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<sup>23</sup> E. Aronson, T.D. Wilson, R.M. Akert, *Psychologia społeczna. Serce i umysł*, przeł. J. Gilewicz, Poznań 2007.

<sup>24</sup> A. Zalewska, *Potrzeba aprobaty społecznej – co oznacza u osób dorosłych w badaniach anonimowych*, „Przegląd Psychologiczny” 2005, nr 48 (4), p. 401–415.

<sup>25</sup> H.R. Schaffer, *Psychologia dziecka*, przeł. A. Wojciechowski, Warszawa 2005.



the child that people are friendly and have good intentions. What should be noted is that they affect the ability to self-regulate emotional states and the accuracy in identifying emotions of others. The interviewed mothers who adopted this way of thinking may have assumed that they "ensure success in" experiencing positive emotional states in the subsequent stages of the child's development. However, it must be emphasised that "obsessive love" to a child does not translate into said success<sup>26</sup>.

The surveyed population agreed marginally with the statement about the lack of necessity for disciplining and controlling a child, if the child experiences true love. Evidently, the participants of the survey recognized that love to a child cannot substitute child-rearing practices. However, at the same time the mothers had a moderate tendency to declare that they do not have to exercise control over their children or check on them, because the children feel loved. Therefore, it can be noted that the consistency of individual beliefs and behaviours declared by mothers, albeit moderate, was not complete. Significant differences were observed in four out of five pairs of statements. The exception was the belief that "a loving parent should not establish requirements, but allow a child to develop naturally", as well as the declared behaviour: "My child is simply loved and thus he/she develops naturally, but not because of my control, commandments or prohibitions". The moderate acceptance of the statements constituting the parental myth that love is able to replace upbringing suggests that love is regarded by the mothers as a more substantial factor than parental control. However, the population does not contest the necessity to raise a child.

In conclusion, the presented study bears certain limitations. Primarily, owing to a small number of respondents we could not generalize the data. Moreover, the simple model of statistical analysis selected due to the exploratory nature of the research, limits the possibility of formulating more advanced conclusions. Another fact to note is that survey-based studies are prone to numerous distortions, among others, connected with differences in the interpretation of the statements by the interviewees. The unsatisfactory accuracy of the subscales in the (LU) scale – Love Instead of Upbringing Scale – suggests that the number of statements should be increased. It would also be helpful to state some of the statements more precisely, e.g. what "success of a child in adulthood" actually means (for the part of the surveyed population, the statement does not need to imply maintaining valuable social relationships or finding a well-paid job, but young adult's optimistic approach to life resulting from parent – child relationship filled with love). Apart from that, further scientific research could aim to determine what mechanisms encourage parents to follow the parental myth of love being able to substitute upbringing, as well as what would be the long-term implications of this.

*Translated by Agnieszka Nowicka*

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<sup>26</sup> J. Trempała, *Obsesyjna miłość...*, op. cit., p. 169–180.

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**„Tylko mnie kochaj”. O popularności wśród matek małych dzieci mitu wychowawczego o miłości zdolnej zastąpić wychowanie**

Prezentowane w artykule badania dotyczą zagadnienia akceptacji przez matki małych dzieci przekonania, że miłość rodzicielska może zastąpić wychowanie. Główne pytanie badawcze brzmiało, czy badane matki akceptują mit, że „dziecko wystarczy kochać, nie trzeba go wychowywać” i kierują się nim w wychowaniu swoich dzieci. Do badań wykorzystane podskale Kwestionariusza Obsesyjnej Miłości Matki do Dziecka (KOMMD) – Miłość zamiast Wychowania (MW). Próba badanych obejmowała 113 matek dzieci w wieku od roku do 7 lat. Na podstawie uzyskanych wyników badań można wysunąć wniosek, że badane matki kierowały się mitem o miłości zdolnej zastąpić wychowanie w stopniu umiarkowanym, przy czym częściej niż akceptację przekonani składających się na mit deklarowały podejmowanie zachowań z nim związanych.

**Słowa kluczowe:** wychowanie, miłość, rodzicielstwo.

**“Just love me”. Popularity of upbringing myth about the love able to replace upbringing among mothers of young children**

Research presented in this article focuses on the issue of mothers of young children accepting a belief that parental love can replace upbringing. The main research question was whether the mothers that took part in the research accept the myth that “it is enough to love the child and there is no need to bring up the child” and whether they follow this rule in the process of bringing up their children. The study used the subscale Questionnaire of Obsessive Mother’s Love towards the Child – Love instead of upbringing. The sample of examined individuals, included 113 mothers of children between the age of 1–7. The results of the research can conclude that the examined mothers tend to adhere to a moderate level of believe to the myth that love can substitute upbringing but at the same time they are more likely to take behavior associated with it rather than accept all beliefs of the myth.

**Keywords:** upbringing, love, parenthood.

