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Types of Relationships Between the Family of a Gifted Child and the School and Other Environments That Support the Child's Development

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to describe and clarify the relationships that are found between families of talented children and schools, institutions, and other organizations engaged in the development of children's potential. The developmental concepts of talents prevalent in the current discourse emphasize their dynamic and interactive nature, meaning that the development of children's abilities is processual and proceeds in the course of intricate, time-dependent interactions between internal and external factors. A significant role is played by the influence from close social circles. From this viewpoint, positive relationships between the family and school or other social environments may help children's capabilities to flourish.

The article draws on data originating from individual, in-depth interviews conducted with 18 families raising children with special academic, artistic, or athletic talents. The analysis identified three types of relationships between families and schools, institutions, and other organizations supporting the development of gifted children: cooperation, conflict, and natural development of a child's talent. However, there were evident differences depending on the type of talent shown by the child, the stage in the education

system they were in, and the specific profile of the school, educational institution, or organization conducting a given type of education.

Armed with knowledge on the relationships between family and school and other social environments, it is possible to both understand and mold them in accordance with the expectations of all parties and the needs of the gifted child.

Keywords: relationships of family with school and social environments, gifted child's family, development of abilities

Introduction

The developmental and dynamic nature of giftedness was brought to light by scholars back in the 1980s (e.g., Feldman, 1986; Tannenbaum, 1983). This concept has been sustained and elaborated on in the following decades (e.g., Gagné, 2005; Mönks & Katzko, 2005; Piirto, 1999; Subotnik et al., 2011, 2015; Ziegler, 2005), eventually becoming the approach toward children's and adolescents' special talents that currently prevails. According to this notion, giftedness should be considered differently at each stage of life. In childhood, a gift is seen as potential to pursue successful activities in a specific area, whereas in adulthood it transforms into a talent that manifests in some exceptional achievements. Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius, and Worrell (2011) maintain that

giftedness can be viewed as developmental, in that in the beginning stages, potential is the key variable; in later stages, achievement is the measure of giftedness; and in fully developed talents, eminence is the basis on which this label is granted. (p. 7)

A child's potential does not guarantee that the child will have outstanding and innovative achievements in adulthood, because the potential needs to be nurtured and developed in order to transform into a mature talent. The authors of developmental concepts and models of capabilities have undertaken to describe the gradual transformation

of a child's predisposition into mature talent. Gagné (2016, p. 127) mentions four stages in the development of talent: novice, advanced, proficient, and expert. In turn, when describing the process of transformation of a child's talent, Subotnik et al. (2015, p. 12) point to potential in the early stage, followed by competence, achievement, and excellence.

The developmental concepts emphasize yet another aspect of the nature of giftedness, one that is significant for this article. The crystallization and development of children's abilities occur in the course of complex and time-dependent interactions between internal factors (personality, mental and cognitive processes, and general, specific, and creative abilities) as well as external factors (first and foremost, the influence of close social circles, such as family, school, and peers, as well as sociocultural, economic, legal, and political conditions), each of which play a specific role (e.g., Gagné, 2005; Mönks & Katzko, 2005; Piirto, 1999; Renzulli, 2005; Subotnik et al., 2011, 2019; Ziegler, 2005). Among these factors, and in their synergistic impact, it is possible to distinguish variables with a positive or negative effect on the development of a child's abilities. It has not been determined conclusively which factor is the most important one, but the developmental concepts of giftedness attribute a special role to the closest social circles. The dynamic interaction between both the individual developmental needs of a gifted child and the family and school/other environments and coherent relationships among different circles are important. From this perspective, when the actions taken by parents, teachers, and other professionals are coherent, their positive influences on diagnosing children's potential and supporting their development are enhanced, leading to results which might not have been expected if such influences had come from separate sources.

Much has been written about the relationships between family and school. Scholars analyze the forms and scope of cooperation between parents and teachers; they provide evidence of the benefits derived from teachers' and parents' collaboration, investigate the requirements necessary to ensure parents' participation in everyday school life, and make efforts to construct models of cooperation of the two social environments (e.g., Anderson & Minke, 2007; Epstein et al., 2002; Goodall & Montgomery,

2014; Hoover-Dempsey, 2005; Hornby, 2011; Janke, 2002; Lulek, 2008; Lulek & Reczek-Zymróz, 2014; Łobocki, 2007; Mendel, 2000, 2007; Mikler-Chwastek, 2020; Porter, 2008).

One of the viewpoints from which relationships between family and school or other social environments can be analyzed is by considering the joint activities of family and school for the sake of developing the child's potential giftedness. The current knowledge on processes of transforming a child's potential gift into mature talent clearly shows that parents and teachers, as well as other professionals, need to collaborate in order to support the development of children's individual abilities in their education. In Poland, this concept has so far been addressed only marginally in studies on the education of gifted students (e.g., Giza, 2006; Dyrda, 2012; Łukasiewicz-Wieleba, 2018). These investigations substantiate the conclusion that the parents of talented children should be more engaged in the work of teachers and other special education experts. The question of cooperation between family and school/other social environments in support of the development of talented children and adolescents has been explored to a greater extent by researchers in other countries (e.g., Bloom, 1985; Colangelo, 2002; Hornby, 2011; Penney & Wilgosh, 2000; Porter, 2008; Salyers, 2014; Silverman, 2013; Stephens, 1999; Strip & Hirsch, 2001; Radaszewski-Byrne, 2001; Rotigel, 2003). These authors describe highly diverse behavior of parents when dealing with the school – from adaptive behavior to indifference. While scholars indicate benefits from collaboration between parents and teachers, they underline common worries among parents and parents' readiness to build positive relationships and to participate in the everyday activities of schools, institutions, and other organizations addressed to talented children.

While the call for collaboration seems justified, in practice, the achievement of this goal is fraught with many complexities. An endeavor has been made in this article to describe the types of relationships between families with talented children and the schools, institutions, and other organizations engaged in the development of children's potential.

Methodological Assumptions

The results presented in this paper originate from a study conducted in 2018, where the objective was to reconstruct the experiences of families who discovered and developed the potential of their talented sons and daughters and to identify the meanings they assigned to these experiences. At the stage of developing the research concept, two research questions were defined: How do processes of discovering a child's capabilities progress? How do families organize the daily processes of transforming their children's talents? Subsequent research problems emerged by applying a circular research model (Flick, 2010; Urbaniak-Zajac, 2009). One of these was a question about the relationships which develop between families and schools, institutions, and other organizations when diagnosing and working with a talented child's potential abilities.

In total, 18 families with at least one gifted child participated in the study. The sampling of participants was purposive and employed the maximum variation rule (Flick, 2010). The fundamental criteria for inclusion in the study were the child's achievements (most often high or very high academic achievements, high rankings in local, national, or international academic, artistic, or sports competitions, and the potential for high achievements, especially by the youngest children). Other criteria differentiating the research sample were the type of special talents and the stage of their development. The children of the participating families showed their talents in one of three areas: academic knowledge (in the humanities, sciences, or foreign languages), artistic skills (musical instruments, singing, rhythmic, fine arts, or dance), or sports (swimming, tennis, volleyball, short track, kick boxing, or acrobatic gymnastics); age (early school age, early and late adolescence), and place of residence (town or countryside). The children represented different stages in the development of their talents: they included novices, apprentices, practitioners, and experts (Uszyńska-Jarmoc & Kunat, 2018). While constructing the research sample, the age of talented children was also considered. Initially, it was assumed that the research would cover only families with children of early school age (6–10 years old) and early adolescence (11–16 years

old). Eventually, families with older adolescents (15–20 years old) were also included, as 14 out of the 18 families were raising more than one child and the participants in their retrospective interviews recalled family experiences of discovering and developing the talents of their older children as well. Another factor taken into account when constructing the research sample was the place of residence (large, medium-sized, or small town or village). However, families living in small towns and villages were strongly opposed to taking part in the research and many refused to participate in it.

The research employed the technique of individual in-depth interviews with only modest structuring (Maison, 2022; Miński, 2017). The interviews were based on a list of topics related to the diagnosis and development of a child's talents. Open questions were asked during each interview so as to guide the respondents. However, the interviewees were free to raise any related topics which they considered significant. Next, these points were discussed in greater detail.

The decision to conduct most interviews with just one parent, though the family served as the research unit, requires clarification. The justification was the interpretative research paradigm in which the research was embedded. Based on the theory of symbolic interactionism (Hałas, 2012), it was assumed that families of gifted children – within intra- and extra-family interactions – negotiate the image of the talents revealed by their children and the possibilities of their further development. The processes of inter-family interpretations have been confirmed by studies dedicated to family narrations, which imply that members of a family create a coherent description of the world that is negotiated by all members of the family (Cierpka, 2013). Thus, a decision was made to conduct an interview with only one parent in 14 out of 18 of the interviewed families. The appropriateness of this choice was confirmed by the preliminary analysis of the first interviews conducted with both mother and father, in which the two parents presented very similar narratives. It should be added that many families agreed to participate in the study on the condition that the interview would be conducted with only one of the parents. Eventually, 22 interviews were carried out, including 17 with mothers and five with

fathers. All interviews were recorded. The shortest interview lasted 35 minutes, and the longest one went on for 2.5 hours.

The research participants had higher and secondary education (16 and six, respectively). There were 12 teachers (including four academic teachers), three managers, one government official, one professional soldier, one sports coach, one tailor's shop employee, one warehouse employee, one shop assistant, and one housewife. The interviewees and their families lived in urban areas (four families in large towns, four in medium-sized towns, and two in small towns) and in rural areas (six families in suburban villages and two in the countryside). Most of the families were two-parent families, while two were single-parent families. The financial standing of the families, apart from one (single mother), was stable.

The analytical procedure consisted of multi-criterial data processing. The raw research material (transcripts of the interviews written in a simplified Gail Jefferson transcription system) was preliminarily encoded using both etic codes, derived from the literature on the subject, and emic code, derived from the data (Glinka & Czakon, 2021). The strategy of encoding event after event enabled us to capture the sequence of events and the context in which they occurred (Gibbs, 2010). The rich empirical material meant that it was difficult to use any other encoding approach. Next, thematic encoding was performed, in which a template of the meanings and replies given in the interviews was sought. The following step was the construction of a network of mutual links between the subjects (Glinka & Czakon, 2021). Constructing analytical categories and mapping the relationships between them made it possible to identify the most important subject areas.

Research Results

It needs to be underscored here that the preliminary encoding of raw empirical data was done using etic codes created according to the family-school interaction model developed by Colangelo and Dettmann (Colangelo, 2002), which was elaborated on for the needs of counselling

families with talented children. The second-level encoding (by subject) did not add new codes (resulting from the data) that were significant for the description. This model presents the following interactions: cooperation, acceptance of natural development, conflict, and interference. Two of the types of interaction are based on family and school environments engaging in collaboration, while the other two are based on conflict (Colanagelo, 2002). Three of these relationships were identified in the experiences of the participants: cooperation, conflict, and natural development. Clear distinctions surfaced depending on the type of talent shown by the child and the stage of education, but also on the specific type of school, educational institution, or other organization providing special education.

Relationships between families of children with academic talents and their preschool and primary school (grades 1–3, integrated early school education). The analysis of the research data led to the identification of two types of relationships between families with academically talented children and the preschool and primary school that they attended.

Cooperation. One type of relationship can be understood as cooperation. It is where families are informed about the talents demonstrated by their child. This information is transmitted to the family relatively early, at preschool age. In some cases, parents were informed even in the first few weeks of their child's education in a preschool ("As soon as she went to preschool, her teachers immediately noticed her. We were informed immediately" [1/1/K]; "Here, right from the start, one of the teachers told us that a child like this is one in a million" [XII/15/K]). The diagnosis of children's talents made by school experts helps families to verify their own evaluation of the child's predispositions, which they may not have noticed or acknowledged properly:

The teacher, already in the four-year-olds, signaled that (.) our child has a mathematical talent::: and sings beautifully. [...] I know how my child sings. Obviously, I like it but it is not the kind of singing that:::, that (.) you can single out the child. [...] But the teacher said he has an extraordinary sense of rhythm:::, that he is very musical. [...] This was not so evident for me. (IV/6/K)

The relationship of cooperation also entails informing parents about ways to tailor working with a child during educational activities. These include activities of a formal nature, such as providing education according to an individual syllabus which is adjusted to the student's special educational needs, dictated by the child's talents and interests. In compliance with the provisions of the education law, its implementation depends on the consent of the child's parents. However, this form of support of a talented child is rarely used in practice.

The teacher said that she would try to adjust the program for him. And this was probably the time when she was working for her professional advancement, [so] my son was a research subject. [...] So, she suggested preparing a syllabus for him and said she would teach him accordingly, and I agreed. (VI/9/K)

In general, the work with an academically talented child in preschool and the first three years of primary school is informal. It assumes the form of additional or more difficult tasks. Families are not informed about such work on an ongoing basis, but learn about them by chance or from their children:

It was at the beginning of the school year, and the preschoolers were taking the oath. The children would recite poems. All of them together. But at the end of this show, Marysia sang a song. And many children could not even speak well at all. And the teacher had not told us beforehand that she would sing. (1/1/K)

The children weren't sleeping, but were lying still in beds. They had an hour of such calmness. The daughter said that the teacher would give her a book and she would read to the children. (1/1/K)

It is worth noting the support provided to families of academically talented children given in moments of temporary difficulties. Didactic difficulties are diagnosed by teachers during their ongoing work with

pupils, but families are engaged in the corrective measures carried out ("He refused to write, so the teacher told him to draw those borders, different frames, and patterns so that he could practice his handwriting" [X/13/K]; "The teacher noticed that she had difficulty pronouncing words. I started practicing with him, starting from simple words, the way the teacher recommended" [XII/15/K]). Families, on their own initiative, turn to preschool and school specialists when encountering problems bringing up their children. Parents are particularly concerned about the socio-emotional development of talented children. They may fail to understand the pattern and specific nature of this development among gifted children.

And it is her sensitivity that gives us sleepless nights. She experiences everything so strongly. I have even been (.) at school to discuss the issue. And there, I was recommended a certain psychologist, so then we consulted her in a clinic. (II/4/K)

The relationships classified as cooperation also include giving advice to families on the further education of a child with academic talents. This, however, most often occurs in preschools. The most popular solution is to send the child to primary school earlier ("When he was in preschool, we were asked to send him to school" [VI/9/K]). Not all families decide to do so, but for many, the opinion of their child's teachers was essential in making that decision ("I had trust in the teachers, and they said, 'Don't let her go to school yet; we feel she isn't emotionally ready for that.' So I didn't let her" [XVII/21/K]).

Natural development. At the stage of preschool education and early school education, it was possible to identify another type of relationship between the families of academically gifted children and educational institutions. It pertains to the mutual acceptance of the natural development of talents and relies on the assumption that talents can develop without any special educational support. Families did not express any expectations that the preschool or school would treat their children differently; they did not question the passive attitude of teachers. They

followed the usual curriculum in working with their children. However, it is worth highlighting that the approval of the teachers' work in preschool and primary school was mostly a consequence of the parents' being unaware of the special talents that their son or daughter had ("As for the talents, honestly, I didn't notice them" [II/3M]) or being uncertain about the children's predispositions ("It turns out that she is a talented girl. I knew that she was wise, but I probably didn't realize that she was so outstanding among her classmates" [XVIII/22/K]).

For some families, a preliminary diagnosis of their child's strengths during preschool and primary school education was not an objective evaluation: "All these children really have identical certificates. There is this phrase: such talents, such talents. Let's see what happens later, when Polish or mathematics lessons begin. Then we'll see if the child is talented or not" (II/4/K).

However, the families encouraged their children to work at home, at school, and outside of school, but considered them more like a form of play ("Why don't you go there, let's try this" [XVIII/22/K]; "They attended different extracurricular activities, rhythmic, art classes. The point was for them to be with other children, to jump and sing, to dance, and paint [...] So, they were learning in such a natural, playful way" [III/5/K]).

It is worth emphasizing here that all the families participating in the study stimulated the multidimensional development of their children in different ways. Among the activities at home were games played together, reading, listening to audiobooks, telling fairy tales, singing, dancing, drawing, and listening to various kinds of music. Over time, the scope of activities was expanded, including after-school classes held by specialist educators (Stańczak, 2019).

Relationships between families of children with academic talents and their primary school (grades 4-8, teaching by subject) or secondary school (4-year general secondary schools). The type of interaction between families of children with academic talents and the child's school changes drastically when the child moves on to later stages of education.

Conflict. At that point, a relationship of conflict emerges, caused by the dissatisfaction of the family with the education provided by the school.

General primary and secondary schools mostly offer participation in school clubs or in competitions for talented pupils. This, however, does not satisfy parents' expectations, who would rather see more customized educational pathways for their children. The families expressed several complaints regarding school clubs, mostly concerning the timetables ("The children take a school bus at 3 p.m., so nobody stayed at school for extracurricular classes" [III/5/K]; "The teachers have other duties to attend to, so they scheduled these activities when it was convenient for them" [IV/6/K]), or regarding the content and methods used during these activities ("This year she attended a German language club. I asked her what they did and she told me, 'We listen to music.' It's hopeless" [1/1/K]). The parents had equally negative evaluations of the preparation of pupils for competitions. Many teachers would only inform their students that they could participate ("The teacher told them, 'You, you, and you – you are to take part'" [1/1/K]) or would provide them with materials for learning ("This year, all the teacher did was to give her a worksheet with exercises. And she solved 60 exercises all by herself" [XII/15/K]; "He revised for these competitions on his own" [X/13/K]).

The negative attitude of families toward the school's actions usually prompts them to look for opportunities to develop their children's talents outside of school ("I just read in a newspaper that there was going to be a spelling contest" [1/1/K]; "We submitted her work outside of school" [1/1K]) or to support their development by buying inspiring educational materials ("We always buy her some additional resources" [XII/15/K]).

Relationships between families of children with artistic and sports talents with the schools, institutions, and other special education organizations. The analysis of the research data reveals completely different relationships between the family environment and school/other environments of children who excel in arts or sports. Whether a child was in an early or advanced stage of developing their talent, the dominant type of relationships between parents and teachers/educators was cooperation. The artistic talents of the participating children were developed in art schools (primary and secondary music schools or ballet school), after-school educational institutions, and cultural organizations, as well as by

private tutors. In turn, sports abilities were developed in state sports schools, sports classes at school, sports clubs, and sports organizations (Stańczak, 2019).

Cooperation. For relationships based on cooperation, a characteristic trait was the active participation of the families in the process of developing artistic and sports talents, which gradually became more tailored to the child. Many families are aware of the importance of their engagement in the relationship with schools, educational institutions, and other organizations engaged in gifted education ("The parent-teacher cooperation is important, and this is manifested here. The teacher is happy and so are we" [IX/12/K]; "At first, it was only hard work and, in my opinion, it is only the parents' work. And a good coach, if you find one" [VII/10/K]; "This calls for great sacrifice on the part of the children, but also on our part, because it is time-consuming, so to speak. It requires many sacrifices. But I believe it will pay off for them in the future" [IV/7/M]).

The role of families goes far beyond organization – such as efficient transport between school and the special education institution/organization ("This one needs a ride and that one needs a ride. This one needs the guitar brought to him, this one needs to be picked up. And then we wait until another finishes classes" [IV/7/M]; "Sometimes, I have to bring some food to the music school" [XVI/20/K]) or financial help, for example, buying the right accessories which the experts recommend ("As the child develops, we need to buy a better musical instrument" [IV/7/M]; "And all those clothes must be bought in a ballet shop" [V/8/K]; "His sport costs us a lot, these clothes and skates" [XIII/16/K]) or paying fees for camps or workshops that are crucial for the development of the child's talent ("It's the cost of the workshop plus travel there, staying overnight and food" [XIII/16/K]). Families also partly fund the children's participation in competitions, tournaments, shows, etc.: "All these competitions (.) take place in other towns (.) and so you need to drive the child there or, if he travels with the teacher, you have to provide funds to pay for everything" (IV/6/K).

One of the greatest challenges that schools/institutions/organizations providing special education pose to families with children with artistic or sports talents is motivating the son or daughter to practice regularly.

Families employ different tactics; one solution is to accompany the child and ensure that they accurately perform the task assigned by the expert ("I sit down and check the work according to the teacher's guidelines" [IX/12/K]); another one is to perform laborious exercises together with the child ("I used to sit with her and we practiced" [II/4/K]). Moreover, families explain to the child how important it is to be responsible ("I was always telling him I didn't want to remind him every day. I wanted him to do it of his own will and to remember about it" [V/8/K]).

THIS IS WHAT YOU WANTED; it was your decision. You made this decision two years ago, so now it has been two years of hard training, YOUR training. This has been YOUR effort. Do you – let me say – do you want to waste it? If you want to waste it, I won't stop you. (XIII/16/K)

Another way to motivate the child is by family members attending concerts, shows, sports events, competitions, tournaments, etc. ("I have always gone to all competitions" [XIII/16/K]; "Sometimes he goes with the coach and sometimes we go with him" [VII/10/K]).

Another task of parents is to ensure that the child does not engage in any activities which carry a high risk of injury ("For example, he was an avid roller-skater, but now roller-skates are not allowed" [V/8/K]). Families conscientiously adhere to the recommendations to avoid risky activities, sometimes even foregoing their favorite leisure activities ("My husband was told by the choreographer that hiking in the mountains was out of the question – and we loved going to the mountains so much" [V/8/K]). In addition, there is a need to adhere to special diets, which is particularly important for children with special sports talents.

For the relationship of cooperation, families of children with artistic and sports talents need to be in constant contact with the school, institution, or other organization ("We talk a lot with the teacher" [IX/12/K]).

It should be emphasized here that the families of children with artistic and sports talents expressed positive opinions about the proposals for developing their children's talents ("He is very well guided" [IX/12/K];

"She already has a path laid out – all the preparations for the show for this year" [XV/19/K]). They appreciate the professionalism and personality of the educators working with their children ("Our child's teacher is highly professional, but at the same time warm and very dedicated" [IX/12/K]; "These women who run the club are developing themselves as coaches, and the kids are developing" [XV/19/K]). They have full trust in them and comply with the requirements ("We trusted this woman and were not disappointed; and she is never disappointed by us because we act as she wants" [IX/12/K]).

Discussion of the Results

The results indicate three types of relationships between the families of talented children and their schools, educational institutions, and other organizations dedicated to developing their talents. To some extent, this outcome mirrors the model of interactions between families of gifted children and schools developed by Colangelo and Dettmann (Colangelo, 2002; Limont, 2013). They distinguished the relationships of cooperation, conflict, and natural development of a child. However, we did not identify in the testimonies of families the fourth type of interaction described in the model: interference. It involves an active attitude of the school in supporting the development of a student's talents and a passive approach from the parents, who worry about the consequences of special educational support for the natural development of their child and their peer relations (Colangelo, 2002; Limont, 2013).

This study revealed a variety of types of relationships depending on the type of talent a child demonstrates, the stage of the child's education, and the particular profile of the school, institutions, and organizations providing the education. Academic talents are mostly developed in general schools. It was observed that the relationships between the families and the schools at the preschool and early primary school stages were characterized by cooperation or acceptance of the natural development of a child's talents. However, at later stages of education, they clearly

shifted toward conflict relationships. In turn, artistic and sports talents are developed in schools, institutions, and other organizations providing special education. There, the relationships with families take the form of cooperation.

The discrepancy between the results of this study and the cited model of Colangelo and Dettmann concerns the types of relationships and their image. Differences can be identified within the relationships categorized as cooperation and conflict. A cooperation relationship runs a different course in families raising academically gifted children than in families who have children with special artistic or sports abilities. Cooperation presupposes the leading role of the school in identifying and developing students' talents, but this does not mean complete passivity of the families (Colangelo, 2002; Limont, 2013). However, the relationships described by the analysis of the interviews in this study had a subordinate role to the preschool or primary school. There was no space for a mutual exchange of information about the child and the child's needs and possible educational paths or any mutual support in the pursuit of shared activities. The families were delegated the role of recipient of the school's actions (informing families of the type of talents that their children possess, the selected formal ways of working with them, and the opportunities for further education, as well as offering the families help in solving educational difficulties) or the responsibility of implementing the teachers' recommendations (e.g., the families were engaged in ongoing corrective measures). The families were deprived of any chance to influence these activities.

Such tendencies have been confirmed by other authors (e.g., Anderson & Minke, 2007; Goodall & Montgomery, 2014; Hornby, 2011; Lulek, 2008; Mikler-Chwastek, 2020). In educational practice, the traditional model of parental involvement, where the ideas and expectations of school are implemented, is still firmly entrenched. A different image of collaboration emerges from the experiences of families of children with artistic and sports talents, where a much higher degree of shared efforts is achieved. Families and the schools, institutions, and other special education organizations mutually support each other's endeavors. Families

are not treated as mere recipients or contractors; instead they are actively involved in the process of developing children's capacities and are delegated important roles, such as creating conditions that favor the development of the child, organizing regular practice, or motivating the child.

Certain differences also appear in the relationships of conflict. These were identified in the experiences reported by families of children with academic talents. Conflicts arise when the active attitude of the families and the passive one of the school clash. Conflict interactions typically generate three types of parental behavior. The first one involves the constant struggle with school, in the second one families take over the initiative and search for educational opportunities to develop their children's talents, and the third one involves constantly criticizing the school and blaming it for any possible problem with the child, eventually withdrawing from any direct contact with the school (Colangelo, 2002; Limont, 2013). This study indicates that the source of conflict between families and primary schools (years 4 to 8) and secondary schools was the dissatisfaction of families with the range of education offered to gifted children (mere participation in school clubs and competitions), the poor quality of education (unattractive teaching style or inadequate teacher involvement), and the fact that the needs of school children are neglected when extracurricular activities are organized. Weaknesses of the support offered to talented school children in Polish schools have also been pointed out by other scholars (e.g., Giza, 2006; Dyrda, 2012; Łukasiewicz-Wieleba, 2018).

Conclusions

The development of children's talents is processual in nature and depends on intricate and time-dependent interactions between many factors. From this perspective, positive relationships between family and social environments both in school and outside of school – assuming the form of collaboration – can contribute to the children's potential flourishing. Parents and teachers or other professionals need each other

to accomplish the tasks they face in the process of developing the individual talents of children (Penney & Wilgosh, 2000). They can support each other by sharing ideas, motivating each other to carry out tasks, creating the educational program together, and sharing the responsibility.

This study brings to light the shortcomings of general education schools in terms of cooperating with parents for the sake of developing children's talents, especially those situated in the field of academic abilities. It is therefore necessary to take measures in order to educate parents and teachers about the role of family in identifying and developing the talents of girls and boys. Considering the current position of parents in school, the initiative to build positive relationships between school and home rests primarily with teachers.

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