THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF POST-ADOLESCENT DAUGHTERS: DAUGHTERS’ AND PARENTS’ ACCOUNTS

Prava i obaveze kćeri-postadolescentkinja: Viđenja kćeri i roditelja

APSTRAKT Rad se bavi konceptualizacijom i procesom pregovaranja o pravima i obavezama kćeri-postadolescentkinja u njihovim porodicama porekla. Sve više mladih Evropljana i posebno mladih Slovenaca ostaje sa roditeljima u postadolescentskom periodu (pa i nakon toga), ili svakog vikenda dolazi kući iz grada u kojem studiraju. To znači da dve generacije odraslih žive zajedno u istom domaćinstvu, što ih stavlja u situaciju da pregovaraju o pravima i dužnostima mlađe generacije u različitim oblastima, od veoma liknih sfera (npr. izgled) pa sve do dalekosežnijih životnih odluka (npr. životna situacija nakon studija, odlazak iz roditeljskog doma). Istraživanje omogućava bar delimičan uvid u procese pregovaranja o pravima i dužnostima u porodicama sa kćerima postadolescentskog uzrasta. Podaci su prikupljeni pomoću polustrukturisanih intervjua obavljenih u jesen 2006. godine u Sloveniji sa 70 prvorođenih kćeri u periodu postadolescencije i oba njihova biološka roditelja. Ispitanici su odgovarali na zatvorena i otvorena pitanja koja su se odnosila na četiri vinjete sa kontroverznim situacijama. Odgovori su omogućili sagledavanje konceptualizacije prava i obaveza postadolescentkinja, distribuciju moći odlučivanja i načina rešavanja takvih situacija. Rezultati su pokazali da su kćeri-postadolescentkinje veoma zavisne od svojih roditelja u različitim oblastima. Ispostavilo se da je savremena slovenačka porodica sa kćerima u ovom uzrastu spremna da pregovara: obrasci unutarporodične komunikacije idu od tradicionalno zasnovanog »naredbodavnog« stila u kojem se deca moraju bespogovorno povinovati (mada se manje od 10% roditelja oslanja isključivo na upotrebu autoriteta), pa sve do obrasca aktivnog pregovaranja gde je prisutna ravnoteža moći i postizanje konsenzusa se smatra veoma važnim.

KLJUČNE REČI postadolescencija, porodični odnosi, porodična prava i obaveze, Slovenija

ABSTRACT The article deals with the conceptualisation and negotiation of post-adolescent daughters’ rights and duties in their families of origin. More and more young Europeans and particularly many young Slovenians are staying with their parents in the post-adolescence period (and even later) or come home from their university city every weekend. This means that two adult generations live together in the same household; so they have to negotiate the rights and duties of the younger generation in different areas, from very personal domains (e.g. appearance) to more far-reaching life decisions (e.g. the post-study life situation, moving out of the parental home). The study provides at least a partial insight into the
processes involved in the negotiation of rights and duties in families with post-adolescent daughters. The data stem from semi-structured interviews conducted in autumn 2006 in Slovenia with 70 first-born post-adolescent girls and both of their biological parents. The respondents answered closed- and open-ended questions referring to four vignettes suggesting controversial situations. The answers allow a view of the conceptualisations of post-adolescents’ rights and duties, the distribution of decision-making power and the way of dealing with such situations. The results show that post-adolescent daughters are very dependent on their parents in various areas. It turned out that the contemporary Slovenian family with post-adolescent daughters is prepared to negotiate: patterns of intrafamilial communication range from the traditionally grounded commanding pattern where children have to obey unequivocally (but less than 10% of parents resort to the bare use of authority), to an open, active negotiation pattern where the balance of power is more equal and the achievement of consensus is very important.

KEY WORDS post-adolescence, family relations, family rights and duties, Slovenia

Authority Relationships between Parents and Young People

Parent-children relationships have changed over the past few decades from a basic pattern of restrictive parental direction and the corresponding obedience of the child to a pattern of recurrent negotiation between parents and children. Postmodernisation processes have dislodged the previously predominating authoritarian character marked by internalised authority (of parents, especially of the father, institutions and societal norms). Among postmodern trends, the following should be pointed out in this context: rejection of the modernist concept of authority, the rise of new values and lifestyles allowing more room for individual autonomy, diversity, quality of life concerns and self-expression; easing of traditional obligations; substantial women’s gains in gender relationships; pluralisation of family forms and the individualisation of family styles; interference of educational and advisory institutions; and children’s early contact with commercial culture (see Inglehart, 1997; Lasch, 1979). These trends have contributed to the disappearance of the traditional patriarchal family, especially the changing role of the father’s authority and his role as a mediator of societal norms and ideals (Horkheimer, 1976; Lasch, 1979). The loss of traditional parental authority is an intrinsic aspect of the change from premodern to (post)modern society and a corollary of the greater intimacy between parents and children. Youth is no longer a period of obedience to authorities, restricted freedoms, predefined roles, duties and rights (Ule et al., 1995).

The new, “postauthoritarian” character type is, among other factors, the result of changes in the traditional life course of young people (Ule, 1988). Transitions to adulthood are shifting from the traditional normative expectations and no longer follow the prescribed criteria of growing-up. The pathways to adulthood have been diversified.¹ The criteria for entrance into adulthood are no longer clearly defined. Since the transition to adulthood has become increasingly longer, more risky, more uncertain and more multi-dimensional, young people are achieving the more far-reaching and important adulthood criteria only at later ages, e.g. the gaining of

¹ Although transitions to adulthood are individualised, structural restrictions (e.g. gender, region, nationality or ethnicity, economic position) continue to play an important role (Walther, 2006).
financial independence, which is usually tied to a regular job, and the starting of a family. While on the other hand they have the right to early autonomous decisions in fields such as leisure time, friendships, intimate relations, life philosophy and the personal sphere (aesthetisation and stylisation of one’s own body and immediate surroundings) (Ule et al., 1996; Ule et al., 2000; Hurrelmann, 1996). Thus, the traditional criteria for growing up are not synchronous, i.e. young people in modern industrial societies do not simultaneously achieve autonomy across different areas of life.

In Slovenia, representative studies of the secondary school population (Youth '93 in Ule and Miheljak, 1995) and the university-level student population (Youth '95 in Ule et al., 1996) have demonstrated that biographically-fixed points fall into three groups. The first group consists of events and experiences which signify personal autonomy vis-à-vis their parents and other adults, and therefore represent a departure from childhood. More than a decade ago, such events in Slovenia were significant for youngsters between the ages of 13 and 16. The second group consists of events and experiences which indicate the first formation of independent life decisions for the secondary school population (first sexual experiences, going out and coming home at will, finishing school). In the past, such events used to happen between the ages of 17 and 20. The third group consists of events and experiences which demarcate the actual transition to adulthood (marriage, parenthood). More than ten years ago young people expected that such events would happen at around the age of 25.

Taking into account the shifting of central biographical boundaries to an older age period and the earlier achievement of relatively trivial, but ‘points of growing-up’ that are key to one’s personal identity, it is important to know how, if at all, young people are negotiating the issues of autonomy and responsibility with their parents. The patterns of decision-making in families have been researched among others by Dornbusch et al. (1985; 1990) and Bosma et al. (1996), who demonstrated the powerful influence of different family structures, socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds on family decision-making behaviours and especially in their relationship to adolescent adjustment. An even deeper insight into the scope of parental regulation of different adolescent behaviours and choices during the growing-up period can be derived from the so-called social domain approach (e.g. Turiel, 1983; Smetana and Asquith, 1994) which focuses on studying the legitimacy of parental authority as regards different issues relevant to the adolescent’s life. Smetana (1989) investigated how adolescents and their parents interpret different domains, e.g. moral issues (entailing fairness and the rights or welfare of others), conventional issues (social conventions in everyday interactions, e.g. using good table manners, talking back), prudential issues (relating to a child's safety and health, e.g. smoking, drinking alcohol, taking drugs) personal issues (issues that only affect the child), friendship issues and multifaceted, i.e. overlapping issues. She found that parents of preadolescents and younger adolescents view all events in children's lives as being under parental jurisdiction. As adolescents develop, parents generally ease up their control regarding personal and friendship issues but not regarding moral, conventional and prudential issues. By late adolescence, almost all issues become subject to negotiation (they are not under parental jurisdiction) and some topics are
not any longer discussed with the parents (e.g. sexuality) (Smetana, 1995; Smetana and Asquith, 1994; West, 1999).

In spite of numerous investigations into communication and decision-making processes within the families with young people in different phases of growing-up, the questions of young people’s decision-making/acting autonomy boundaries, especially the corresponding negotiation styles and argumentations, are still not adequately explained. Even more, most studies do not follow up the expectedly further changing perceptions of areas of parental legitimate authority after late adolescence (e.g. after the age of 18). But the period of co-dependency and cohabitation of parents and young people has been extending even into the early thirties, especially for young people from the Mediterranean, a lot of the new EU members and other Southeast European countries (Mandič, 2007; Ule and Kuhar, 2008; Bendit et al., 2004: 80). For example, according to Eurostat (2008) in 2005 in the EU member states 66% of young women and 78% of young men aged between 18 and 24 still lived with their parents. In Slovenia, 86% of young women and 92% of young men in this age group still live with their parents.

In Slovenia, like in most other post-socialist societies (comp. Kovacheva, 2006; Tomanović-Mihajlović, 2000; Tomanović, 2003) the family presents a space of utmost importance for all kinds of support for young people, and the reliance on the family of origin is strong and even increasing (Ule and Kuhar, 2003; Rener et al., 2006; Ule and Kuhar, 2008). The studies of the phenomenon of the prolongation of staying in the family home in Slovenia show that students feel that life in the parental house is comfortable and cheap; they enjoy a relatively high level of autonomy at home and have friendly relations with their parents who provide them with material and emotional security (Ule and Kuhar, 2002; Ule and Kuhar, 2003; Rener, 2007; Ule and Kuhar, 2008).

Against this background, the aim of the research project is to provide an insight into authority relationships between parents and post-adolescents. Post-adolescence or pre-adulthood has been theorised by some scholars as a new stage of development that is typical especially of students. Arnett (2000) calls this stage ‘emerging adulthood’ and argues that it is characterised by a ‘relative independence from social roles and from normative expectations. ... Emerging adulthood is a time of life when many different directions remain possible, when the scope of independent exploration of life's possibilities is greater for most people than it will be at any other period of the life course’ (p. 469). This stage has been recognised as a special life phase particularly for students (Ziehe, 1991).

Post-adolescents are in a contradictory position in their life phase: they are physically mature, they are adults legally speaking, yet they have still not reached complete self-sufficiency and independence from their parents (Aquilino, 2006). Parents are in a similar position: they need to acknowledge the adult status of their sons and daughters and relinquish control; at the same time, they have to remain ready to provide care and material support for their offspring. There is no set of expectations and social norms as to how parents and children in this age group (actually two adult generations) should negotiate the relationship. But in this phase the interactions between the parents and children have to be reassessed, their needs and wants defined, and their mutual responsibilities defined (ibid). Ideally, parents
remain emotionally supportive and support their post-adolescent children in their search for autonomy.

The study of different areas of post-adolescents’ lives has recently become a research paradigm in the USA (see Arnett, 2000), but in-depth data from other countries are still lacking. With this research I will focus on the processes of acquiring autonomy which is clearly a very relevant issue in Slovenia taking into account the long duration of the cohabitation of parents and children. The research is based on empirical tools of the cultural theory of the development of rights and duties (Finkel and Moghaddam, 2005) which should itself be further developed. The theory postulates that the relationship between children and their parents is marked by a continual negotiation about rights and duties, with children (who have less power) constantly emphasising personal rights and independence and the parents (who have more power) focusing on the duties that restrict the behaviour of children more than rights (Moghaddam and Riley, 2005).

The main research question is: how is the children’s autonomy negotiated in post-adolescence. More concretely, the analysis will show how post-adolescents and both of their parents abstractly and concretely conceptualise post-adolescents’ rights and duties in a range of conflict situations that open up the question of post-adolescents’ autonomy and which differ with regard to the level of importance of consequences for the youngster and the parents (e.g. appearance, moving out of the parental home, work plans, political participation). These conceptualisations will offer the basis to infer who decides upon the post-adolescents' autonomy and in which ways/how decisions (about rights and duties) are made.

Due to the complexity of the study of parent-adolescent authority relationship patterns, the research sample was restricted to first-born females from intact families (two biological parents) who are students. The research was limited to the post-adolescence period because this age group is, in comparison with adolescence and even with young adulthood (e.g. Aquilino, 1997; Biggart et al., 2002), under-researched when it comes to relationships in the family of origin. Moreover, in Slovenia the majority of young people study at the tertiary, at least the graduate level.

Methods

Participants

The sample consisted of 70 female students aged 20 to 24 years studying at the University of Ljubljana and coming from all over the country, and both of their parents. Only first-marriage intact families were included in the study. The method used was snowball sampling: postgraduate students interviewed one child and both parents from their acquaintance families (each student 3-4 families). This was part of their course requirements during a postgraduate research seminar. Snowball

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2 This study is the first phase of my postdoctoral project that deals with communication and authority relationships between young people and their parents in different phases of adolescence (early, middle, late adolescence and post-adolescence).
sampling is a non-probability sampling technique involving snowball samples that are subject to numerous biases. It therefore cannot be used to extrapolate from the sample to the general population. Any generalisations obtained from such a sample must be filtered through one's knowledge of the topic under study (Salganik and Heckathorn, 2004). Since the sample is small and very homogeneous mostly a qualitative analysis was used rather than quantitative variables of sample stratification.

The mean age of the participating students was 20.3 years (standard deviation 1.1), the mean age of their mothers was 45.7 years (stand. dev. 3.2) and the mean age of the fathers was 47.4 years (stand. dev. 3.5). 62.3% of the daughters are the only child in the family, 32.8% are from families with two children and 4.9% of the daughter respondents are the first-born of three children. 90% of them are from middle-class backgrounds (an estimate of the mother’s and father’s level of education and the employment of both). Approximately half of them stem from urban environments, with other half coming from rural areas which reflects the population distribution in Slovenia in terms of urban/rural places of residence.

In Slovenia, 69% of young people aged between 20 and 24 years live with both parents and 16% live with only one parent (Census 2002, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia). The majority of young people in this age period are studying: 59.9% of women and 38.5% of men (Statistical Yearbook 2006, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia). According to the same source, 42.9% of students of the University of Ljubljana live with their parents during their studies. In my study, 50% of the respondents live with their parents while studying, the other half are in student dormitories or in private (rented or owned) flats in the capital, e.g. their place of study.

**Procedures**

In October/November 2006, post-adolescent daughters and their mothers and fathers answered the semi-structured questionnaire regarding their perceptions of post-adolescents’ rights and duties. The respondents were guided by trained interviewers. During the interview, interviewers were alone with the individual respondents, and interviews with all three family members immediately followed one another. Participants were presented with four vignettes depicting different scenarios and they were asked a series of questions of the quantitative and qualitative type. At the end, they answered some demographic questions.

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3 Even the average age of the daughter respondents turned out to be at the lower age limit with a small standard deviation – this also means that those post-adolescents who are not living with their family of origin during their studies have not been living independently of their parents for a longer period. Also for that reason the differences in the answers of those living with their parents and those who were separated were not studied. Even more, most Slovenian students who are not living with their parents while studying return home every weekend (Ule et al., 1996).

4 Both parents can also mean foster parents, not only biological parents. There are no data on how many young Slovenians live with both biological parents.

5 The rest of the same generation (15%) of those aged 20 to 24 live in their own families, in cohabitation, alone and in other household forms.
The choice of the situations presented in the vignettes is based on four focus groups with female students at the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Ljubljana, conducted in October 2006. The participants in the focus groups (6-8 participants in each) discussed various situations that were potentially contentious, ranging from more private ones (e.g. one’s appearance), different kinds of collective family participation (e.g. household chores), young people’s social life and leisure activities to more far-reaching decisions such as the choice of further education/career etc). The respondents discussed the perception of their rights (personal freedoms) and duties in the respective areas.

Notwithstanding the age (contrary to Smetana’s presumption about late adolescents’ decision-making autonomy), the focus groups’ participants still considered private decisions (e.g. the image, appearance), free-time activities and household chores as contentious. Important and long-term decisions (education, employment, moving out of the parental home) were even more often said to lead to disagreements. Based on these discussions, four vignettes were generated to exemplify the most common disagreements. The vignettes are shown in Table 1.

### TABLE 1: Vignettes used to elicit conceptions of rights and duties

1. **Appearance.** M, 20 years old, wants to cut and colour her hair in a very different new style. She tells her parents about it. The parents do not like this new style at all. M says: ‘It's my right to do this’. The parents say ‘It's your duty to listen to us and not to do this’.

2. **Work.** S, 23, is just about to finish her study and does not want to get a job. She confronts her parents with her dream: she would find a temporary job, earn some money, and then travel around for a few months. Her parents exert pressure upon her that she should finish her studies as soon as possible, find regular employment and abandon her ‘dreams’. Does S have the right to follow her wish or a duty to obey her parents?

3. **Moving out.** T is 24 years old, just about to finish undergraduate study, and has started to date a boyfriend who is already working. T is very much in love and wants to move to a rented flat with her boyfriend. The parents are against T moving out of their home before she finishes studying. They forbid her cohabitation with the boyfriend. Does T have the right to move out or a duty to obey her parents?

4. **Political participation.** M, 22, has joined a political group. M helps with putting up posters, gathering signatures, spreading news etc. M's parents want M to stop. Does M have the right to choose to continue or a duty to obey the parents?

Each vignette was followed by open-ended questions that called on the respondents to complete the story by suggesting what they and their mother/father think of the situation in abstract terms and how they would respond if faced with such a situation.

More concretely, the questions were the following:

- To what extent does the person (daughter) in the scenario have the right to do/decide, as she intends/wants without having to discuss the issue with the parents (quantitative; on a 1-5 scale)?
• To what extent do the parents have a say without a discussion with the daughter (quantitative; on a 1-5 scale)?
• Do the parents have the right to set rules about this issue if such a situation were to happen in their real life (quantitative; on a 1-5 scale)?
• What reasons most closely fit the post-adolescent’s, mother’s and father’s thinking that their daughter’s behaviour in the vignettes is wrong (if it is perceived as wrong at all) (qualitative)?
• What do they specifically think of the scenario situation (qualitative):
  o What are the daughter’s rights in the situation in question?
  o What are the daughter’s duties in the situation in question?

At the coding the open responses first all the answers were examined and then categories were constructed by two different coders. The coders then compared and discussed their coding and then the final typologies of answers were selected. Other typologies are discussed individually in the results section. In the rare cases where more than one answer was mentioned, only the first one was coded. Afterwards, the response frequencies for qualitative questions were converted into proportions of total responses.

Results

Quantitative results

The chosen vignettes presume different fields of the post-adolescent’s strive for autonomy: a very private choice of hairstyle which is important for personal identity although eccentric; the choice of important life decisions (travelling instead of starting a job; moving out of the parental home to a common household with a boyfriend); and the choice of political participation which is connected not only with leisure-time activities but also with familial openness towards broader society. The respondents answered questions on the parental vs. daughter’s decision-making power for the imaginary vignette situations and a similar question for their actual situations. The question about decision-making in real situations reflects the power relations between the parents and their daughter or offers an insight into the degree of the daughters’ autonomy regarding decision-making in the stated situations; while a comparison of these answers with the estimate of whether the parent/daughter can make independent decisions in the same situations speak about the perception of the legitimacy of the parents’ authority.

All respondents (daughters and parents) in the study supported the unquestioned decision-making autonomy of the daughters in the vignettes in all areas much more than the parental right to enforce any kind of rule. But still, the daughters were on average statistically significantly more supportive of their own autonomy than their mothers and fathers (see Table 2). Both do not ascribe any rights to enforce the rules to the parents with the slight exception of the father’s opinion and mother’s opinion regarding the ‘haircut’ vignette. The areas where most of all three parties ascribed autonomy to the daughters were the choice of life path after finishing studying and moving out, followed by the choice of haircut and
political participation. These results give the surprising impression that the daughters have more rights to autonomous decision-making in more important life decisions than in more ‘private’ decisions such as appearance and political participation in their free time. The results also show that both mothers and fathers ascribe to themselves a similar level of autonomy/power to enforce the rule – here they seem quite unanimous.

Table 2: The rights of parents in the vignettes to enforce the rule and the daughter’s right to an autonomous decision/act (* - statistically significant differences – correlation between the mother’s and daughter’s reply and between that of the father and the daughter)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(means, 1-min, 5-max)</th>
<th>Daughter</th>
<th>Mother</th>
<th>Father</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HAIRCUT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter’s right to decide/act without a discussion with the parents</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.7*</td>
<td>3.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ right to enforce the rule without a discussion with the daughter</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.2*</td>
<td>2.3*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WORK</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter’s right to decide/act without a discussion with the parents</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.3*</td>
<td>4.3*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ right to enforce the rule without a discussion with the daughter</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.8*</td>
<td>1.9*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MOVING OUT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter’s right to decide/act without a discussion with the parents</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ right to enforce the rule without a discussion with the daughter</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.9*</td>
<td>2.2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POLITICAL PARTICIPATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter’s right to decide/act without a discussion with the parents</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.6*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ right to enforce the rule without a discussion with the daughter</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentages of those who answered yes or no to the question of whether the parents have the right to impose a rule in their life situations that are similar to those in the vignettes are presented in Graph 1; others chose the need for compromise or a partial parental right to impose a rule. The results show that only the minority of parents have the absolute right to impose a rule but, on the other hand, just 20-50% of the parents (the number varies regarding the vignette and gender of the parent) claim for themselves that they do not have this right at all. In most cases, the daughter and the parents would try to reach a compromise through conversation.

The highest percentage of answers saying that a parent can impose a rule is seen with the ‘haircut’ vignette. In the other vignettes less than 10% of the parents have such an absolute right. Parents think they have the smallest right to impose a rule in the case of political participation – and an even considerably bigger percentage of daughters think that their parents do not have this right. There is also a big gap between the parents’ and daughters’ standpoints regarding the ‘moving out’ vignette where one-half of the daughters think that their parents do not have the right to impose rules, which is however not corroborated by any mother and almost any father. In this vignette parents mostly advocate their partial right to either impose
their rule or discuss the problem and try to find a compromise. In the ‘work’ vignette a very clear distinction is seen between the percentage of mothers and that of fathers who believe they do not have the right to impose a rule. In this case, many more mothers think they do not have this right. Also in the ‘haircut’ vignette proportionally more mothers than fathers think they do not have the right to impose a rule.

Graph 1: Parental right to impose a rule

(The answers were: yes, partly, no, and we would discuss it and reach a compromise – in the graph only the ‘yes’ and ‘no’ answers are shown)

Compared with the answers to the first two questions it is immediately clear that ascribing the daughter the right to make her decision without consulting her parents proves to be abstract and does not reflect the actual situation. In real situations in most cases the family looks for a compromise or the parents do not have the full decision-making right without discussing the matter with their daughter. Graph 1 indicates that daughters’ decisions are the most autonomous in the case of political participation.

Qualitative Results

Explanations Why the Daughter’s Planned Behaviour is Wrong

The first qualitative question was about which reasons most closely fit the respondent’s explanation of why the daughter’s behaviour in the respective vignettes is wrong. The daughters were also asked about their perceptions of the parental stances. Results show that the respondents were predominantly answering in the first person, and not for the imaginary daughter and imaginary situation. Many respondents (especially) answered that the daughter has a right to autonomous decisions in the individual fields, i.e. that the parental and not the daughter’s stance/acting in the respective vignettes is wrong.
Graph 2: Why, if at all, is the daughter’s planned behaviour in the vignettes wrong? – The daughter’s behaviour is not wrong – she has the right to an autonomous decision

In all the vignettes many more daughters advocated the daughter’s rights for autonomous decisions than the parents (see Graph 2). In the case of the answer that the daughter has a right to an autonomous decision, the daughter’s perceptions are more congruent with the mother’s given explanations than with the father’s. Fathers presented themselves as being more liberal than their daughters assume them to be. But for both parents the daughters overestimate their parents’ readiness to give their daughters full autonomy, while they correctly assumed that the parents are not so ‘generous’ as regards the ascription of full decision-making autonomy to them. In opposition to the previously presented results, these results highlight that for the parents the most autonomous domain is political participation, while the decision to travel instead of starting to work after studying proved to be the least autonomous decision in the parental opinions.

Frequent answers were emphasizing that the daughter has a right to self-determination:

For a child of this age political participation is her own personal matter which nobody can prevent. Parents can provide guidance, advocating depending on our political belief (mother 4).

Personally, I think that a 20-year old can have her haircut according to her desires, yet she should be aware of the possible consequences. Sometimes it is necessary to have an experience which enables you to later recognise a wiser and better decision (mother 18).

Parents have no right to prohibit or make decisions about their children’s moving out of home to live with another person. A prohibition without any discussion is out of the question (daughter 44).
Graph 3: Why, if at all, is the daughter’s planned behaviour in the vignettes wrong? – Compromise seeking

The choice of the post-study life path (the ‘work’ vignette) appears to be the least autonomous choice for all the parties. Nevertheless, some parents pointed out that the restrictive action of the parents in the vignette is wrong ‘because the child has to live out their dreams, because later there will be less possibilities and time for this…’ (father 2).

The need to talk/need to reach an agreement was not expressed often; most often it was expressed by daughters in the ‘moving out’ vignette (see Graph 3). A characteristic example at this vignette is as follows:

The daughter and parents should talk; the daughter should present her partner before she expresses her opinion to live with him. They need to talk about what she is entering into, what are the possible consequences (mother 11).

The need for a discussion was also reflected in other vignettes in all groups of respondents, such as:

The daughter is still a burden for her parents and they have to discuss, they have to talk to her about what is the best for their child (work vignette, daughter 68).

She is of age and has the right to make decisions about her actions but since she lives with her parents and depends on them, they have the right to define and set limits, but it is more correct that they should talk and find a consensus (political participation vignette, mother 36).

It is the parents’ right to require that their child listen to them, but it is also their duty to listen to the child and discuss the problem together (haircut vignette, father 19).

In contrast to other groups of answers, this type of answer implies the need for an open dialogue and the finding of a consensus. The results indicate that post-adolescent daughters are more in favour of such a solution to the conflict situation than their parents. Graph 2 also shows that the daughter’s perceptions of her mother’s reactions are too optimistic especially in the case of the ‘haircut’ vignette and too pessimistic as regards the mother’s emphasis on dialogue in the case of the
‘work’ vignette. The daughter’s perceptions of her father’s reactions are more congruent with the father’s answers, but still far too optimistic in the cases of the ‘haircut’ and ‘moving out’ vignettes.

Answers which differ from the emphasis on the daughter’s self-determination or compromise seeking show those answers where the daughter’s planned behaviour is considered wrong for different – more or less paternalist – reasons. On average, the third most frequent open answer in all four vignettes was that the parents are restricting the daughter’s autonomy because they are worried about the daughter (see Graph 4). The answers collected within this framework reflect varying issues such as the parents’ wish for their daughter to conform to the social environment (especially in the case of the ‘haircut’ vignette), the wish for her financial and personal emancipation (the case of the ‘work’ vignette), the wish for their daughter’s happiness in her partner’s relationship (the ‘moving out’ vignette).

The most widely varying viewpoints between the daughters and mothers are seen with the ‘haircut’ vignette, where mothers on average expressed a greater concern than the daughters. The daughters predicted well that their mothers are very concerned about this issue. The following sentence represents the opinions of many mothers regarding an unusual haircut:

My daughter’s decision for this haircut is improper because her parents do not want her to discredit herself and only wish her well. Because she will be sorry if she does something stupid with her haircut (mother 60).

On average, the daughters’ and fathers’ answers are quite congruent. An interesting finding is that the fathers seem more worried for their daughters (and are consequently more restrictive) than the mothers. For example, in the ‘moving out’ vignette the following father’s attitude emerged in several examples:
I would be worried that she would ruin her life with her boyfriend who she knows too little (father 1).

Some parents also pointed out their worries due to the “irrationality” of the child’s decision:

I would be worried because when you are in love you do not think rationally, they are not aware of the real situation and their incapability to lead an independent life (mother, 45).

In the ‘political participation’ vignette the parents often expressed concerns about the potential harm that might arise from dealing with politics or they pointed out the daughter’s insufficient knowledge about political matters or her not having enough experience in politics.

All of this political propaganda could be damaging for her later in life (mother 24).

My mother would say that her daughter is not fully aware of what she is doing or getting herself into, that she is too young for these things, too naive, and she really should not be burdened by politics (daughter for mother 11).

Other explanations of parental conduct were not frequently mentioned. The responses given to all vignettes but which were relatively rare by themselves are as follows: the daughter’s dependence and immaturity, parental experience, and the daughter’s personal characteristics (less than one-tenth of the respondents in all three groups for each vignette). For example, in the ‘work’ vignette many parents’ substantiation of their daughter’s wrong decision was similar to the following:

She should not shirk her responsibilities, she should finish school, get a job, stand on her own feet and prove that she is an adult (mother 11).

My father would say that the key thing in life is to have a higher education, an important work position and a lot of money; that personal happiness is not important (daughter for father 9).

Some parents indicated their disagreement with the daughter’s intention in the ‘work’ vignette as the daughter has been ‘momentarily daydreaming and lost touch with reality’ (father 15) or with ‘immaturity, youth, and not being serious’ (mother 3).

Also in the ‘haircut’ vignette some parents ascribed the daughter’s intention to her personal characteristics:

If I wanted to have such a haircut, they would attack my character. Saying that I am rash, stubborn, that this was a thoughtless act (daughter for mother and for father, 54).

On other hand some would support the daughter’s decision due to her maturity or her personal characteristics, for example in the ‘moving out’ vignette:

My mother knows that I think twice about everything before I do anything and so she would support me (daughter for mother 34).

In some cases emphasising the daughter’s dependence and the superiority of the parental experience merely indicates the use of parental power to make the final decision. It seems that among all the respondent parents a parental reference to bare power is relatively rare. In all three cases parents gave these answers significantly
more frequently than their daughters and the daughters’ estimations of the parental answers were quite in line with the parental answers. An authoritarian parental attitude is expressed in the following cases:

*My father would certainly react in the very same way. He would justify his act with a well-known and often heard sentence that ‘so long as I live under his roof I will obey his rules’, and otherwise I can leave and do what I want* (haircut vignette, daughter for father 22).

*This is abnormal. I say no because I say no. It is simply that we know better* (haircut vignette, mother 69).

The reference to parental experience often sounded patronising:

*The daughter has to consider her parents’ experience as the parents know her best, have more life experience and know very well what is best for her* (haircut vignette, father 68).

*I know the history of the nation, the political circumstances of the past and what is the motivating force of individual political groups in order to get what they want. I understand social and political circumstances better than a 22-year-old girl* (political participation vignette, father, 39).

*You will understand when you grow up* (haircut vignette, mother 57).

Among other answers three were specific and significant in numerical terms (10% or more of answers at least in one party) for the individual vignettes (see Graph 5): concern for social reputation in the ‘haircut’ vignette, ideological disagreement between the parents and the child in the ‘political participation’ vignette, and parental ‘well-being’ in the ‘moving out’ vignette.

Graph 5: Why, if at all, is the daughter’s planned behaviour in the vignettes wrong? – Specific reasons
As regards the ‘haircut’ vignette, concern for the family’s reputation was emphasised by one-tenth of the mothers and a slightly smaller share of fathers but not also by the daughters. The daughters overestimated parental concern for one’s social reputation.

My mother would refer to what our relatives would think, especially my grandmother who is old-fashioned and would not accept me with this haircut (haircut vignette, daughter for mother 21).

In the case of the ‘moving out’ vignette, one-tenth of the mothers emphasised parental psychological pain as the argument explaining why the daughter’s behaviour is wrong. The same answer was given by less than 5% of the fathers and by almost none of the daughters. The daughters’ perceptions of these parental explanations were underestimated in the case of the mothers and almost congruent with the fathers’ explanations.

The daughter should also think of her parents. Her early leaving of home, just like this, would be a traumatic experience for the whole family (mother 67).

With the ‘political participation’ vignette, an ideological disagreement was mentioned by more than every sixth mother, by every tenth father and almost every tenth daughter. The daughters’ perceptions of parental answers were slightly underestimating in the case of the mothers and a little overestimating in the case of the fathers.

The father’s reason would be that the party has the wrong political colour (daughter for father 55).

Politics is dirty and parents do not want their daughter to get her hands dirty from it (mother 60).

The Daughter’s Rights in the Respective Spheres

Post-adolescents and their parents also answered open questions on the daughter’s rights and duties in the respective domains in their everyday situations. The daughter’s right to self-determination was expressed by high percentages of all groups of respondents with all vignettes, with the exception of the ‘work’ vignette; however, even in the latter there were several of such answers (see Graph 6).

For example:

The child has the right to become a responsible young person who knows what they want and how to get it (moving out vignette, daughter 33).

With the ‘haircut’ vignette statistically significantly more daughters than mothers and fathers answered that the daughter has the right to decide alone about her haircut, appearance, personal style; or that she has the right to the freedom of expression through appearance, the freedom to experiment, a search for self through her appearance etc.

6 The questions were asking for a right and a duty (a singular form) in the respective fields. Some replies actually comprised several answers – as is seen in the qualitative answers that are presented.
Graph 6: The daughter’s right in the field of the question: self-determination

In my opinion the daughter’s and youth rights in general in this area are very open. Everyone should be able to choose their own style of dressing and haircut... If the parents make prohibitions, it is not improbable that this is just what the child would do to spite them (daughter 22).

Other responses only allowed the daughter a restricted freedom of self-determination, e.g. when coming of age; within the range of acceptability for the parents or according to certain social standards etc.

It is my right to decide about my looks, provided they are still tasteful and not too eccentric (daughter 30).

She is old enough to decide about her looks and style – that is her right, but she also has to consider certain social norms (mother 69).

With the ‘work’ vignette only approximately one-half of the daughters, one-half of the mothers and less than one-third of the fathers in the sample advocated the daughter’s right to an autonomous decision, choice of future or life pathway, fulfilment of dreams etc.

The young have the right to travel the world, I do not see anything bad in that (mother 17).

It is young people’s right to make their own decisions about what they are going to do in life. If they are interested in something and know they will be unable to do this later in life, it is right that they do it when they can (mother 13).

With the ‘work’ vignette, the daughter’s right to an autonomous decision was mostly postponed to the time she would be financially independent or was restricted due to the parents’ wish for the daughter’s emancipation.

The daughter has the right to make her own decisions; such travel would mean new experiences important for her life. Yet, as she is not financially independent or her future could be insecure, the parents have the right to set rules,
as it is in their interest to enable their child to conclude her studies and be able to find a job and live her life instead of being eternally dependent on them (father 11).

With the ‘moving out’ vignette the majority of respondents claimed the daughter’s right to make an autonomous decision to move out. The others again conditioned the right to her autonomous decision-making with her financial independence or even maturity and with the need to take her parents’ opinion into consideration.

It is my daughter’s right to make her own decisions about her own future (mother 10).

The daughter is old enough but she can only move out when she finishes her studies, which the parents are financing, and finds work. She has to rent an apartment with her own money. That is, she has no rights (father 40).

With the ‘political participation’ vignette most respondents (albeit more daughters than mothers and fathers) supported the daughter’s right to political determination/expression/activity/decisions at the daughter’s own will (in some cases the parents added that the participation should be legal).

It is young people’s right to choose their political actions and beliefs (daughter, 38).

It is the daughter’s right to decide on her own about her political beliefs and belonging so long as it is legal (father 61).

A few parents, especially the fathers, restricted this right so as to include: an awareness of responsibility; not neglecting other duties (household chores, study); keeping the parents informed; respecting the parents’ perspective. For example:

She has the right to her own decisions but she should also listen to the advice of her experienced parents (father 28).

It is her right to do this but she should inform her parents so that they will not be worried (mother 69).

The Daughter’s Duties in the Respective Spheres

At least to a small extent answers to the question about the daughter’s duties contradict the more pro-autonomy answers claiming certain daughter’s rights. The daughters’ and parents’ statements about the daughter’s duties in individual domains of their everyday situations were quite similar (see Graph 7). One of the most frequent answers about duties in the ‘haircut’ and ‘work’ vignettes was that the daughter should reach a compromise with her parents; with the ‘moving out’ vignette ‘only’ about one-third of the respondents stated making a compromise with the parents as the daughter’s duty, while with the ‘political participation’ vignette various duties were stated, with compromise (consultation and agreement with the parents) being stated by only approximately One-fifth of all respondents. In the first case, this is in direct contradiction with those statements about the daughter’s rights.
The respondents described the daughter’s obligation to talk to her parents in different ways, reaching from ‘only listening to parents’ to ‘finding a middle way’ (consensus):

> It is the daughter’s duty to consider her parents’ opinion up to a point. If she intends to have a ‘wild’ haircut I think it right that she talks first to her parents, and especially if they finance it, to try to find a middle way which would suit everyone (haircut vignette, daughter 50).

> Her duty is to listen to her parents and to what they have to say and to respect their opinion, even though she may not follow it (moving out vignette, mother 54).

With all the vignettes, especially the parents often stated obedience as the daughter’s duty which they explained in different ways, such as:

> As long as we finance her it is her duty to listen to us (haircut vignette, mother 27).

> It is the daughter’s duty to respect her parents’ opinion and advice and to decide within the context of the values of the family and society in which she lives (political participation vignette, mother 57).

With the ‘haircut’ vignette, other common answers were self-responsibility for her acts and taking into consideration some (social) rules, decency. These answers indeed reflect those the respondents gave to the question about the daughter’s right in a particular area, when they restricted her right to make her own decisions with certain conditions. Further, the other answers (except that expressing the daughter’s duty to ensure conversation or obedience) for the ‘work’ vignette reflect the answers given to the question about the daughter’s rights – namely those where the parents themselves expressed that the daughter’s rights are restricted. Thus, finding a job, emancipation, settling down as soon as possible as well as thorough deliberation, responsible conduct, and not burdening the parents
financially again figured among the frequent duties together with consulting the parents or even only informing them about her intention on time. Some of the cases for the ‘work’ vignette are shown here as an illustration:

So long as they are paying for my education and I do not have a job it is my duty to respect and consider their rules even if I do not agree with them. I guess they know what is best for me (daughter 44).

It is her duty to consult her parents and present her plans for the future (father 13).

With the moving out and ‘political participation’ vignettes, besides answers expressing the need to find a compromise the other answers were very diverse. With the ‘moving out’ vignette the other daughter’s duties that were recognised were the following: emancipation (finishing study and/or find a job); providing for her own future; thorough deliberation, responsibility for the consequences of individual acts; considerateness towards the parents, and making the transition easy for the parents. For example:

It is the daughter’s duty to believe that her parents’ actions are for her own good (mother 65).

For the ‘political participation’ vignette, the stated duties were very diverse, e.g.: political self-determination; serious, responsible, quality co-operation in political activity; legal, ethical conduct, daughter’s consideration of parental opinions, advice, agreement etc.

With such a delicate theme as politics it is the daughter’s duty to listen to the opinion, ideas and political orientation of her parents and to respect this in her final decision (father 54).

It is her duty not to make her parents worry because of her irrational decisions (Father 13).

Discussion

Although the intention of this study was to analyse conceptualisations of rights and duties as well as negotiations on different issues of autonomy (from more personal to more far-reaching life decisions), the study opened up the problem of the difficulty of studying interpersonal processes. The same respondent sometimes gave apparently inconsistent answers (for individual vignettes). Also the daughters as well as the mothers and fathers (from the same families) on average gave somewhat incongruent answers. This finding also highlights questions of inter-objectivity – which factors contribute to different family members holding diverse rather than shared understandings of the same realities; and above all what are the consequences of different views of the same event for members of the family as a whole. This also raises the question of the extent to which it is sensible to study individuals’ cognitions (intersubjectivity) or whether the most suitable observation unit is the (interdependent) behaviour of individuals in a communicative event (interactivity) (Koerner and Fitzpatrick, 2002). On the other hand, maybe somewhat unclear questions after scenarios could also be a source of incongruity in responses, and in
every case great attention should be paid to developing relevant measures within the framework of the cultural theory of rights and duties and also in the vignettes methodology.

Despite the incongruence in the answers, some trends connected with post-adolescent daughters’ autonomy and negotiations about their rights and duties in the corresponding families (middle class, intact families with first-born or only daughter-students) can be successfully induced. Contrary to earlier findings among younger-age cohorts (e.g. Smetana and Asquith, 1994), more parents still have authority over post-adolescent daughters even in personal domains – represented in the current study with the haircut choice. Of course, some parents, but on average only a minority, grant their daughters complete autonomy in some fields so that they even do not need to discuss possibly controversial issues. Nevertheless, the great majority of respondents does not perceive that parents have the right to decide on different issues involving the daughter, at least not without a discussion with their daughters. Comparatively, parents put more emphasis on conformity in areas that are important for keeping post-adolescents on the path of ‘decency’ (haircut), and also productive adulthood and independence (the ‘work’ vignette).

The quantitative and qualitative answers demonstrate that a matter such as an unusual haircut still falls under the legitimate influence of parents of approximately half of the sample while at the same time, generally at the abstract level the majority agrees with the daughter’s right to an autonomous decision. A concern for the family reputation does not seem to be one of the most important explanations for opposing such an act, rather a more common explanation is general parental concern for the daughter (e.g. how the daughter’s colleagues or teachers would perceive her etc.). Such an (over)protective and/or paternalistic stance turned out to be a very significant reason for restricting the daughter’s autonomy in all cases, especially with the ‘political participation’ vignette, limiting the daughter’s scope of participation and thereby endangering her participatory rights (comp. Tomanović-Mihajlović, 2000).

However, the daughter’s ‘political participation’ seems to be under direct parental jurisdiction to the smallest extent. Yet this finding may be connected with the altogether low level of political engagement and political participation of 16- to 29-old Slovenians (Kuhar, 2005). The ‘political participation’ vignette represented the post-adolescents’ outside the home, namely ‘leisure’ time activity connected with the family’s relation to broader society. Although such activities are relatively rare among the population studied they were estimated as controversial in the focus group discussions (in opposition to most of other leisure-time activities). But even here, more than 40% of the fathers claim they have the right to impose a rule. This field is more regulated by the father’s authority than the mother’s, implying a low level of women’s civic engagement and political participation in Eastern countries (Mežnarič and Ule, 1994).

In a more far-reaching decision such as moving out of the parental home to cohabit with a partner, the data reveal the general attitude that a daughter has the right to an autonomous decision and in practice the parents stressed the need for a discussion instead of recourse to the direct enforcement of authority per se that would restrict the daughter’s right to an autonomous decision. The daughters were more in favour of directly putting their own decisions/wishes forward. The parents’
stance of approval was somewhat surprising considering the figures on the prolongation of living in the parental home in Slovenia. The results direct us to the need to study in-depth the factors underlying a prolonged stay in the parental home. Is the established, ‘serious’ partnership one of the main factors of advancing the children’s residential emancipation?

The decision for a post-study life path (the ‘work’ vignette) represented by the daughter’s adventurous wish to travel to foreign countries for some time instead of her immediate decision for a ‘normal’ work path, was also an example of more important, albeit not necessarily far-reaching life decisions. In this case, the advocacy of the daughter’s right to self-determination at the general level was the lowest in comparison to the other vignettes. Most parents speak in favour of the daughter’s financial emancipation and settling down as soon as possible. Considering how difficult it is for young people in Slovenia to find employment (see Trbanc and Versa, 2002), it is relatively easy to understand such parents’ second thoughts although, on the other hand, these could also be interpreted as excuses due to the parents’ having other worries about their daughter travelling abroad for several months. In general, the parents’ and daughter’s answers differed mostly in explanations of why the daughter’s behaviours were perceived to be wrong (e.g. parents more often than daughters exposed concerns for the daughter, and their wish for her financial independence).

In general, despite the inconsistencies in the answers of individual respondents and across the families it may be concluded that Slovenian post-adolescent daughters are still dependent on their parents in almost all spheres. This is seen in the fact they are willing and want to talk to their parents about the themes studied here and reach an agreement on them; and the fact that they made decisions on their own in relatively few cases. Thus the study puts into question some recent findings (e.g. Smetana, 1995; Smetana and Asquith, 1994) stating that in late adolescence at the latest the young are able to make their own decisions on all issues important for their personal integrity, and far-reaching decisions. Also the parents mainly advocate decision-making based on finding a consensus and only a very few make decisions for their children or resort to the use of bare power.

The research results corroborate the findings of du Bois-Reymond et al. (1993) and Büchner et al. (1995) showing that modern families are prepared to negotiate and that the balances of power inherent in parent–children relationships have become more complex, less transparent and more difficult for the people involved. While Tomanović-Mihajlović (2000) showed that the Yugoslav (Serbian) family is patronising in children-parent negotiations with parents having the last say and using different infantilisation strategies, seemingly the families in our sample are on average quite close to the model (or the ideal) of the modern family as a community of partners. Naturally, in the studied families the patterns of intrafamilial communication range from a traditionally grounded demanding/commanding pattern, where children have to obey unequivocally and with small or non-existent negotiating margins (although less than 10% of parents would resort to the bare use of authority), to an open, active negotiation pattern, where the balance of power is more equal and the achievement of a consensus is very important (on average, more than half the families in my sample) (cf. du Bois-Reymond and Ravesloot, 1996: 183). The results obtained confirm the starting theoretical thesis that in
contemporary society parent-children relationships have generally become democratic, i.e. they are more and more marked by equality, mutual respect, autonomy and deliberative decision-making.

The results suggest also that parents have constructed communities which are attractive to their children. The democratisation of relationships may imply also that parents and post-adolescent daughters are allying against the dangers, conflicts and stresses stemming from the outer world, which poses great demands on young people, especially as regards the difficulty of finding regular employment. It is unclear whether or to what degree partner-like relationships are the result of cultural patterns (e.g. high value attached to children, protective parenting), reflective parental decisions (to cultivate warm, quality relationships in children) or the consequence of contemporary values and lifestyles (the high value of the quality of everyday, individualised life). Whether the parents perceive their concern for the children as a self-sacrifice or they enjoy their (over)protective parental role also remains a question. Due to the importance of parental support and quality family relationships in contemporary societies, it needs to be emphasised that young people who are deprived of warm and supportive family relationships are much more socially and also psychologically vulnerable.

The framework of rights and duties has proven useful for the study; however, its methodology needs to be developed further. The inconsistency of the answers (especially the difference between abstract and concrete viewpoints) is connected to a contradiction at least between attitudes and behaviours (Kuhar, 2002) and also to the fact that principled/general attitudes turned out to be very complex regarding the studied situations. I am expanding the cultural theory of rights and duties (Moghaddam and Riley, 2005) by laying a more explicit emphasis on the way of negotiating rights and duties. In any further studies it would seem even more sensible to draw a more detailed distinction between the distribution of power in the family (e.g. ranging from sole parental decisional jurisdiction to the daughter’s autonomous decision-making) and the way of enforcing power (e.g. ranging from the undialogical to the dialogical). The results obtained here confirm previous findings of the social framework theory which show that these phenomena and processes need to be studied relative to specific areas of family life, not aggregating across areas.

The study also tested the vignette methodology approach. This method has not often been utilised in parent-children relationship studies. In contrast to Phinney et al. (2005) and Moghaddam and Riley (2005) who innovatively applied the vignette approach, most studies dealing with authority/parenting/autonomy processes have mainly used quantitative scales. Other methods (such as experiments) have been rare. This method works well for intimate topics such as family relationships and authority patterns. The respondents predominantly answered in the first person, even if the question referred to the family in the scenario. With this method and in this concrete case the questions need to be further elaborated – also in accordance with the elaboration of theories about the ways of negotiating on the rights and duties of the young. Of course, one limitation of this method is the improbability sample with its very demanding data-processing as its downside. Another important limitation of my study was the relative homogeneity of the sample. Ideally, the sample would be at least representative of both genders and all social classes. Since the sample was
also unexpectedly relatively homogeneous in age, regretfully a potentially very relevant comparison of the results regarding age could not be carried out. For further research in this direction it is necessary to consider whether it would be more sensible for the vignettes to include descriptions which would also relate to planned behaviours – as were included in my research – or descriptions where the transgression has already occurred – the child has already done something which most parents would probably oppose.

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