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**ON THE QUESTION OF CHILDREN'S POSITIVE
SOCIOCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (THE NETHERLANDS'
EXPERIENCE)**

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Abstract

The article discusses the Netherlands' approach to the problem of children's positive sociocultural development. Due to significant changes in the world sociocultural reality the debates on how to develop future generations is increasingly actualized. In this regard the Netherlands' experience is relative as it allows observe how a proficient participator of globalization performs in the sphere of upbringing and education, developing the 21st century personality. Using the historical and culturally sensitive method the authors reconstruct historical and cultural circumstances which determined the Dutch specific mentality for children's sociocultural upbringing. The authors believe that one of the main conditions of children's positive development is giving them a visible place in culture and in generations' chain. Dutch society and culture are "child-centred" and all efforts are aimed at reproduction of fully functional generations who had a thorough grasp of its culture and values. Government and businesses providing various working patterns allow build a close and secure relationship with both parents. The article also recognizes play as a key factor in the Dutch model of upbringing. The least euphemistic culture in the world which respects freedom, openness, transparency and directness transfers those qualities to their children, teaches them the art of polemics and productive communication skills.

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1. Introduction

It is well-known that sociocultural development plays the main role in person's development. When an individual accepts his culture values, rules and norms, it influences upon his life philosophy, value system, personality's development and adult's life in principle. Society and culture are the main and direct determinants in personality formation. In any society person's sociocultural development is extremely important as any society welfare and development depends on reproduction of fully functional generations who had a thorough grasp of its culture and values.

1.1. The choice of the Netherlands' culture to analyze some problems of children's sociocultural development is determined on the following grounds. Positive development in some way may be linked with the feelings of a person himself, how he is satisfied with life and being in his culture, how happy he is (together with other measurements). Happiness as the category which is difficult to measure today it is increasingly being researched (Durand, 2018; Gandelman, & Porzecanski, 2013; Helliwell, Huang, & Wang, 2017; Korolyova, 2013; O'Donnell, Deaton, Durand, Halpern, & Layard, 2014; Ott, 2010; Shamsetdinova, 2008).

According to statistical data children in the Netherlands are the happiest children in the world (Helliwell, Layard, & Sachs, 2019). A stable position at the top of the list suggests that this country chose the correct model of children's raise. In addition, on the list of happy adults the Netherlands also takes the fifth highest position. In this regard one may draw a parallel between subjective children's senses with those of the adults' ("Happy parents raise happy children" or "Happy children become happy adults").

1.2. In the voice that modern world sociocultural situation changed dramatically (computerization, digital world, enormous speed of technologies' development, man-made disasters and hazards, etc.) it must be stated that the Dutch community does not express its fear of globalization as many other cultures, and it also raises research interest. The Netherlands is one of the first world cultures which engaged in the globalization processes. Consequently, it becomes possible not only to carefully observe sociocultural processes characteristic for globalization as a matter of principle but to review how a proficient constituent of globalization performs in the sphere of upbringing and education, how functions its unique model of the 21st century personality development.

2. Problem Statement

2.1. Person's sociocultural development directly depends on the person's habitat; the ethological landscape is formed historically. The primal semantics of the word "ethos" included the notion of "biding place, common domicile". A more recent sense notion of "custom, habit, character, temper" points to the close etymological connection between them (Davidson, 1908). The connection between place and psychological type of its inhabitants, the interdependence of geo-climatic conditions and human dimensions induced strong interest of many authors such as Democritus, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Vail, Gatchev and others. At the current stage ethos is interpreted as the totality of practices, behavior patterns, equates with morals or treated as community life style, a general culture orientation, accepted hierarchy of values (Orlova, 1994).

Investigating the phenomenon of the Netherlands' culture, we noted that due to a huge amount of work with unique physical landscape the creative person's participation in settling in his sacral area was tremendously significant; a human factor became crucial. The Netherlands' landscape almost fully became hand-made; it was the result of close interaction between nature and person. So physis in many ways contributed to emergence of such personality traits as openness to meet challenges, ability to risk, tolerance for failure, highly cultivated imagination, savvy, hard head, rationality, practicality and individual responsibility in the Dutch ethnos. As well as tenacity, straightness, tolerance and yearning for freedom. Such components of the ethogram played a great role in the Dutch national character-building, formation of stereotyped behavior patterns which provided optimal interaction with external environment for the ethnos (Korablina, 2011). This conclusion is indirectly confirmed by studies of the authors (Hughes, 2004; Rooi, 2007; Serebryanny, 1990). In particular Rooi (2007) writes that the consultation and consensus culture, the phenomenon of tolerance, love for freedom, the roots of entrepreneurship, rationality, thrift, modesty and simplicity originated in the polders (pp. 43-49). Dutch positive life experience is rather specific but that is exactly what lies at the heart of the children's raising model and is transferred to generations.

Each culture forms its own educational approach based on its belief of the benefits for people and society. Nevertheless, many cultures mark that their models of children's upbringing do not comply with ideals. In this sense cross-cultural studies of approaches to the problem of children's sociocultural development is of strong interest.

2.2. In our opinion it is also necessary to observe children's positive development for the appropriateness and compliance with a world new sociocultural situation. T. Kuhn considers that a modern person in his both (social and cultural) spaces feels a huge stress. McLuhan (1980/2005) marks that a person is more often *between* cultures (new and old), in the state of "somnambular transition". The world community puts forward a task to bring up the person of the future who will be able to adapt to a new culture as painless as possible, at the same time preserving important values of traditional culture. We consider that a person today is more often not only between old and new cultures but between his *own* and *alien* cultures; this position dictates to search effective ways to function in this new reality.

Increasing of pluralization of sociocultural reality is inescapable and this problem is actively discussed in many works (Malkovskaya, 2005; Bhagwati, 2005, and many others). This problem is particularly important for Western societies which became multicultural areas as a result of an open-door policy, when discourses connected with a pluralistic paradigm (co-existence of different cultural codes, world perceptions, traditions, experiences and faith) are intensively intersected. It brings to compression of poly-cultural space, to differentiation and diversification of cultural differences. And the only solution is to confess them. The pluralistic paradigm reflects multiplicity of ideologies including non-Western ones directed at multicultural society which performs glocal, global and fragmentary "universe of diversity". All emergent discourses focus on pragmatic approaches to the world diversity; how to live in this world and how to rule it (Malkovskaya, 2005, pp. 4-5), how to learn "polycode space" (Almazova & Chernyavskaya, 2010).

Thus, a high degree of complex interactions, co-existence of many cultures is one of powerful trends of modern sociocultural reality which constantly accumulates new ideas of plurality, multiplicity,

mosaicism and polyphony. And it is becoming obvious that positive sociocultural development also means to provide children's understanding of a diverse world, its positive perception, obtaining skills of a healthy and fulfilling life in the 21st century.

2.3. Another problem which also needs solution is sustainable children's development. It includes many aspects: to improve children's lives, reduce child inequality and poverty, ensure healthy lives, ensure lifelong learning, promote peaceful societies and many others.

UNICEF adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, the global development agenda for 2030. A very important inclusion in the Goals was made in 2015. We mean Early Childhood Development (ECD). Having realized the crucial importance of the earliest years of children's lives, it was clearly announced that early childhood development was the foundation for sustainable development. "By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education" (Britto, 2015, para. 4). So governments and societies "must act urgently to make investing in early childhood development a priority in every country to achieve the 2030 goals" (Early Childhood Development, 2018, para. 16). In this sense, the Dutch model of children's upbringing is undoubtedly very supportive as its main accent is on early all-round development and not only because of that.

3. Research Questions

3.1. In current scientific literature the question of correlation between adults' life satisfaction and their childhood experience is extensively disputed. The researchers Clark, Fleshe, Layard, Powdthavee and Ward point out that such adult factors as "people's social relationships, their mental and physical health affecting happiness are influenced in turn by the pattern of child development: the best predictor of an adult's life satisfaction is their emotional health as a child" (Clark, Fleshe, Layard, Powdthavee, & Ward, 2017, p. 124). Apart from other researchers who try to measure "happiness factors" by such determinants as meaning, anxiety, depression, enjoyment, etc., they use "a democratic criterion" (give individuals to evaluate their own wellbeing). Adults' happiness depends on adult situation – economic situation (income, education and employment), social situation and personal health (physical and mental). These factors partly depend on our intellectual, behavioural and emotional development as children which in turn depend on family and schooling" (Clark, Fleshe, Layard, Powdthavee, & Ward, 2017, p. 124). Intellectual development, behavioural development and emotional health are main dimensions of child development. In another work, concerning the same problem, "The long-lasting effects of family and childhood on adult wellbeing: Evidence from British cohort data" the authors say: "the effects of many aspects of childhood ... are rather remarkably stable ... child non-cognitive skills are the strongest predictors of adult life satisfaction at all ages" (Fleche, Lekfuangfu, & Clark, 2018, p. 2).

3.2. As it was discussed above, the power of early children's development (ECD) today is well-understood and investigated by specialists. Researches prove its strong influence on person's sustainable development. But it is a challenge for many societies to recognize that the first years of a child's life are the basis for all future growth.

The UNICEF worked out the programme "Early childhood development", where main problematic zones were defined: severely underfunding of ECD programmes in many countries, low

governmental investment, little public understanding of the importance of children's first years, not enough strong public demand for funding, policies and programmes etc. Lake (2015) notes that today everybody better understands that early children's development influences upon child's brain development much more than education. It is proved that "in the brain-building process, neural connections are shaped by genes and life experiences"; the combination of nature and nurture (good nutrition, protection, stimulation from talk, play and responsive attention from caregivers) provides the foundation of a child's future (Early Childhood Development, 2018, para. 2). Besides, at the very early age child's brain has the highest ability to develop in a complex and full way; they can get necessary skills for flourishing in the 21st century (Britto, 2015). The Director of the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University J.P. Shonkoff says: "The time to invest in the future strength of our nations, our economies and our communities is in the earliest years of life The time to act is now" (Early Childhood Development, 2018, para. 21). The only question here is how to act on early children's development?

3.3. One more important question we tried to answer was – which values and norms should be transferred in order to achieve better children's adaptation to a new and challenging sociocultural situation? In our research we rely on the typology of Minyushev (2004) who distinguishes between daily (routine, grass-roots) culture, specialized (high) culture and popular (mass) culture. Everyday culture is the basic one for the others two. It includes everything, necessary to learn in order to become a member of society. It contains values (semantic and instrumental), norms (moral and legal), traditions and beliefs, knowledge in the form of life experience, reference models, skills and competencies for living in community. The researcher divides daily culture attributes into three units: organizational, cognitive and transfer of socially significant experience. The organizational block corresponds to "home economic culture, interpersonal, family and marriage relations (values and norms)". The second includes practical knowledge, stereotypes, folk wisdom and mundane aesthetics. The third block contents transfer of positive life experience through family upbringing, parental guidance and social pedagogics (Minyushev, 2004).

4. Purpose of the Study

4.1. Systematization of the Netherlands' culture experience in the sphere of positive sociocultural development is one of our main targets. The necessity in such systematization is determined by the variety of ideas and approaches to young generations' upbringing and training processes, their positive and sustainable development, which are broadly represented in scientific papers, emerge while observing the experience of an emancipated and urbanized culture and its fairly harmonious functioning in the era of globalization.

4.2. Improving educational methods and approaches is one of the most important targets not only for Russia, but other countries as well. Reflection on the Netherlands' experience may inspire and encourage search for new ideas, develop traditional upbringing methods in accordance with sociocultural values, point towards right direction.

5. Research Methods

5.1. Theoretical methods: study, interpretation and correlational analysis of scientific literature devoted to characteristics of the essence of children's positive sociocultural development, of modern technologies and their effectiveness. Due to the sophisticated structure of the studied object the research was based on the methodology of complex analysis, combination of different methods which were mutually supportive and reinforcing. Historical and culturally sensitive method was supportive in the reconstruction of historical circumstances which determined the Dutch specific mentality for children's sociocultural upbringing. This method provided comprehensive historical and cultural analysis of the Dutch culture in the context of its development (present times alongside with prior periods retrospective journeys), defining the link between the Netherlands' modern culture and its roots.

The hermeneutic methodology was vital and meaningful in the analysis of in-depth foundations of the Netherlands' social and cultural landscape. The phenomenological approach was drawn to explain the phenomena of Dutch culture.

5.2. Empirical methods: result generalization of using specific approaches to the problem of children's sociocultural development in the Netherlands; the analysis of innovative technologies in this sphere and discussing their use appropriateness in other cultures.

6. Findings

6.1. The first and important evident thing is that Dutch society and culture are "child-centred". It is directly and indirectly confirmed by many statistical papers and researchers' conclusions. In UNICEF studies on children's well-being in 29 rich countries, 2007, 2013, the Netherlands heads the table of children's subjective well-being (95% of Dutch children report a high level of life satisfaction). Six measures were used: material well-being, health and safety, educational well-being, peer and family relationships, behaviours and risks, subjective well-being; Dutch children were in the top five in each assessed categories and the highest in two (in 2013). Other research surveys also noted positive aspects of children's upbringing in the Netherlands (World Health Organization, Britain's Child Poverty Action Group and others).

All efforts of families, government, social and cultural institutions are aimed at educating future generations happy and satisfied with life. The Dutch experts are not surprised by the reports' results. P. Vangeert, professor of developmental psychology at the University of Groningen, marks that "The Netherlands has always been a very child-centred society. In particular, there is a lot of focus on young children. On the one hand you have objective indicators in the report like health, income and education. The Netherlands is a very rich country. On the other hand, and perhaps more importantly, are the subjective indicators, young people's own subjective sense of well-being" (Westcott, 2007, para. 3-4).

S. de Roos says that Dutch teenagers' life satisfaction has not dropped since 2013, explains: "Dutch children have generally positive interactions in all their social surroundings. They have a supportive environment at home, with friends and also at school. Dutch parents give a lot of support and have mild control. There's an egalitarian climate, teachers are not authoritarian but accept the feelings of pupils, and pupils trust teachers" (as cited in Boztas, 2018, para. 7). The last Health Behaviour in School-

aged Children (HBSC) study also confirms that young Dutch are happy. They are in the top five for having kind and helpful classmates, eating breakfast on weekdays and what is more important – they are in the bottom five for feeling pressure from schoolwork, being overweight, having sex before 15. They find it quite easy to talk to parents, do not experience much bullying. As for risk behaviours despite the Netherlands' reputation for cannabis smoking the data confirm that the percentage of Dutch children smoking, using alcohol and drugs is relatively low in comparison with other countries. Due to well-thought sex education the rate of teenage pregnancies is the lowest in the European Union.

So, in report after report, Dutch children, teenagers, students and adults are in the top for high life satisfaction and well-being that the only possible conclusion is that the Dutch do something right, that their model of children's upbringing works, it is relevant to modern conditions.

We strongly believe that an important requirement of children's positive development is giving them a visible place in culture and in generations' chain. It is essential when children are heard and seen.

6.2. To grow up happy children the Dutch have their own system. The main emphasis is on early child development, from the age of 0. The early period is ideal for absorbing positive life experience and positive world perception, for building child's brain. Researchers proved that over 80% of baby's brain is formed by the age of three. Understanding that this life period is very short the Dutch create the situation of total inculturation. They firmly place children in the centre of culture and do everything to make them happy. A unique aspect of Dutch parenting is that they let their children explore the world in appropriate for them way, in play. They keep them out of any traumas, physical or spiritual.

In the 17th century a famous physician and writer J. van Beverwijck wrote about the system of upbringing in Holland: "Providing children with raising and education do not tighten up the reins. Let them enjoy their childishness. Do not shoulder a burden of adulthood beforehand on their delicate shoulders. Protect a fragile nursery soul from early troubles" (as cited in Boucke & White, 2002, p. 240). It is obvious that not many cultures value such approach as effective. The English author S. Sheima remarked: "In the 17th century Dutch children were much more infantile than their peers in other countries. Parents intentionally kept them in such state" (as cited in Boucke & White, 2002, p. 240).

Much attention is given to building a close and secure relationship with both parents. Ability to enjoy parenthood is provided by government support. Parents have a good work-life balance. Comfortable work schemes (part-time working, job sharing, telecommuting, compressed workweek, flexi-time employment) allow them to spend more time with children. In 1996 Dutch government gave its part-time employees an equal status to that of full timers and according to the latest statistical data, the Netherlands has the highest number of adults working part-time in Europe (26.8% of men and 76% of women, in other countries – 8 % and 32 %). "The next generation," says P. Dijkstra, a Dutch politician and the MP, "is turning our part-time culture from a weakness into strength" (as cited in Bennhold, 2010, para. 8).

Due to such variety of alternative working patterns Dutch men spend more time with their children (at least one day during the workweek and weekends). Dutch vocabulary included the "daddy day" in its stock (alongside with Oma day – grandparents play an essential role in their grandchildren's lives when children get their loving childcare on a regular basis). Besides, gender equality in the Netherlands means

that both parents take an equal part in children's upbringing so Dutch fathers actively and seriously take child-rearing responsibilities; that also positively influences upon child's emotional health.

As for Dutch mothers, they are considered to be the happiest in the world ("Dutch women don't get depressed"). E. de Bruin, a Dutch psychologist explains this phenomenon by personal choice freedom concerning life partners, sexuality, religion etc. (as cited in Bennhold, 2010, para. 27). P. Vangeert, professor of developmental psychology at the Groningen University, explains: "The percentage of young mothers in the labour force is not very high in comparison to comparable countries. There is a strong tendency for mothers to raise children or take a long time off work after children are born. Dutch children are used to a highly protective, highly positive caring environment" (as cited in Westcott, 2007, para. 7).

The government contributes monthly amounts to the families to help with expenses (a child allowance, child benefit stipend, the combination discount and childcare allowance etc.). So the country places the children's well-being and happiness at the top of its targets recognizing that it is not only a moral obligation but it is in the self-interest of the Dutch society.

6.3. Another important determinant in the Dutch model of children's positive socio-cultural development is play. In some way it can be defined as a key factor. The system of upbringing in the Netherlands is thoroughly thought out; through play children recognize the main values of their culture: individual and social freedom, openness, tolerance, directness, positive communication and others. They let their children play a lot and encourage their curiosity.

It is accepted that any society's mentality and worldview are mainly formed and developed through philosophy knowledge. In our opinion in the atmosphere of plurality an exclusive Dutch philosophic and cultural model was created in 1938. We mean the conception of Huizinga (1992) who worked out the idea of play as the main property of any culture, its way of being and justified that play is ontologically characteristic for a person; the play element is woven into culture. Culture authenticity is characterized by a proper balance between play and non-play elements alongside with the key ethical or moral factor. Having studied the role of phantasy and myths in the history of human civilization and play as a universal principle of human culture emergence, Huizinga (1992) proved that any culture form was a play because it was launched as the free choice. This culture theory is often reviewed as a daring hypothesis about the nature of human culture genesis and a social person as a playing person.

Dutch children play a lot and everywhere. From around two to three years they can go to "toddler playrooms" ("peuter speelzaal"), whose main purpose is to help children make friends and play with them. The environment is safe and controlled. Many cultures believe that a "preschool" must properly prepare for school so preschools are often becoming real "schools". On the contrary, in the Netherlands they do not have preschools at all. They have "playschool" instead for children up to four years old. At the age of five they go to school but do not have any homework until they reach high school. The Dutch let them do "playfully learning" games and activities and officially start structured learning at the age of six.

In the context of the latest debates among specialists and practitioners we should admit that some of them confess that introducing tough exams on maths, grammar and punctuation for the six and seven years old they not only rob children "of the delights of natural discovery, learning freely through play, awe, wonder", they also "pave the way for future more mental health problems", says Dr. M. Sunderland

(2016, para. 2), Director of Education and Training at the Centre for Child Mental Health in London. “Children are struggling to cope with the complex world around them. From the demands of school to the pressure of the digital age, children are feeling pressured to conform and be successful like never before. We need to give them a break – it’s time to let them have some fun and play”, says Children’s Commissioner A. Longfield (as cite in Hayes, 2016, p. 15).

So in this sense the Dutch who provide their children with stress-free schooling and play pre-primary and primary education (without exams and tests) behave reasonably. The result of such approach is reflected in UNICEF research: Dutch children like going to school, they do not feel pressured by schoolwork and find their peers at school helpful and friendly.

6.4. Understanding that one of the powerful centres of culture and society forming processes is a museum, Dutch government provides museums with great support. The country has the highest museum density in the world, and these important culture institutions are full of children who enjoy exploring the world with the help of interactive activities, family guided tours, family quests, multimedia tours, digital family games, fun tours, AppLabs etc. The approach is the same – to provide children with an extensive range of learning activities in a playful way. Due to excellent art of display, professional museum management, government financial support, museum modernization and introducing the latest museum technologies Dutch children have an opportunity to explore the world in an appropriate for their age way. Being the highly-developed information society the Dutch use all smart possibilities of integrating information technologies into such social and cultural areas as museums (Aladyshkin, Kulik, Michurin, & Anosova, 2017), helping their children identify themselves in digital communication environments (Gashkova, Berezovskaya, & Shipunova, 2017).

There are many “living museums” recreating historical and cultural settings to simulate past time periods. Amsterdam Tropical Museum is a good place to visit with children. A separate part of the museum is dedicated to them – Tropenmuseum Junior, the oldest children’s museum in the country. It is famous for its museum concept (touching, seeing, hearing, experiencing and participating). Presenting world cultures to children with the use of light, sound, multimedia, exotic décor the museum announces its mission: to stimulate children’s open outlook on the world, to make them feel that to be open to others can be enriching and inspiring. Children up to three years have free admission.

The Museon in The Hague, one of the most popular museums among children, is packed with creative activities cultivating respect for science. With the help of models, lab activities, computer programmes, engineering workshops, science shows children explore the world and learn about their planet, world cultures and science in a playful way. The current exhibition “One Planet” is aimed to provide children’s understanding of the key to a just and secure world (fair distribution of water, food, energy, the acceptance of differences in cultural identity). The exhibition corresponds with The UN seventeen Sustainable Goals and is conceptually designed. A serious museum objective is achieved through fun-filled, exciting educational exhibition for the whole family; many interactive elements offer children an entertaining way to find out how people can cooperate to build a sustainable and healthy future for the whole planet.

The Maritime Museum can become an example of using the 21st century exhibition means – activities, multimedia, attraction park elements, plays and video games for children, shows, theatre group

playing some scenes from the history of the relationship between the Dutch and the Sea. Everything is served to pass on Dutch traditions and history to children. There is a special exhibition for the kids from age six; free admission up to four. Children explore the ship, participate in fun activities. The real ship which is a museum exhibit at the same time is becoming the element of past and present Dutch culture; in the context of the whole museum exhibition it acquires a new meaning and becomes the symbol of love for national culture.

6.5. One of the questions drawing our attention concerns values which Dutch society transfers into their children. A value is the main principle of cultural and personal identity (Shypunova, 2014). First and foremost we would mention freedom (the broadest spectrum of freedoms in the world), tolerance, equality, openness, directness, positive risk-taking and respect for diversity.

Dutch tolerance which was formed as a psychological pattern ranks high in the historically formed value space of the Netherlands. It was initially dictated not only by the difficulty of Dutch landscape but by its small space as well when search for optimal quality of interpersonal relationships was primary and intensive. In modern times tolerance in the Netherlands is still partly explained by purely pragmatic considerations (the highest population density in Europe and the second highest in the world); it is reasonable. To add the philosophical grounding for tolerance it is worth noting the fact that the first published in Dutch in 1586 philosophy work “Art of Ethics” by D. Coornhert presented the author’s teaching on religious tolerance and person’s free will; so in the Dutch value system tolerance historically took the meaningful position. It is a psychological phenomenon (trust and mutual understanding), social (mindset determined by the type of social interaction and its cultural regulators, including values) and cultural phenomenon on the whole. The specificity of Dutch tolerance understanding is based on the idea of unequivocal and equal person’s ethical value and freedom when every individual recognizes his own right to free self-fulfillment and the same right of other people as well. The Dutch believe that tolerance is not only an important value but a reliable means for moral and technological progress; it goes with democracy and also indicates the high level of political, law, religious and worldview culture. The society which accepts such idea provides congenial conditions for harmonious co-existence of different cultures and traditions. Implementing tolerance in children from the very early age is one of the most important targets of Dutch society.

That is why the society opens its own culture and other cultures, Culture on the whole to its generations, tries to bring up a positive, open, free and tolerant personality, helps them understand that different points of view, different life attitudes have potential to enrich and complicate the system of views and may be productively used for person’s and culture development, teaches to live in a multicultural world.

The Netherlands as the least euphemistic culture in the world which respects openness, transparency and directness transfers those qualities to their children, teaches them the art of polemics, productive communication skills, positive drive for constructive dialogue, avoiding categorical and ultimate judgements, transparent discussion of all problems. That significantly contributes to children’s positive sociocultural development, their self-esteem, social and cultural identity.

7. Conclusion

Positive children's sociocultural development is a complicated and serious target for each society. In our research we tried to look at how another culture handles this problem and why Dutch children get a better and more positive start to life than in other cultures.

An important conclusion is that in the Netherlands there is no gap in the process of family and governmental policies concerning children's upbringing. Close collaboration of governmental, municipal and provinces' authorities, social and cultural institutions is aimed at early and positive sustainable development of young generations. It is a "child-centred culture" and in many ways the appeal of UNICEF to make investing in early childhood development a priority is not relevant for the Netherlands as it is clearly understood and achieved. The Netherlands, being one of the most worker-friendly countries in the world, provides perfect work-life balance, gives parents possibility to closely engage and involve with their parents, "build the brains of the future". Gender equality is also not the problem here so fathers' participating in the process of upbringing is another valuable contribution to positive children's development.

The Dutch believe play is very important in the process of positive children's development. It is an authentically worked out technology of the Netherlands. Huizinga who set play and culture side by side insisted on the play priority. Play possesses a great civilizing function.

All in all, parental style, government support, the whole society intention and acts are aimed at children's positive development, creating a safe and loving environment to provide children with everything they need to feel their well-being, well-adjustment, health and happiness.

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