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## ON SOME SELECTED ASPECTS OF SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT, FAMILY AND SCHOOL

The issue of the Sinti who are an integral part of Czech society remains an undetected topic in social sciences and humanities. Only a small part of the population of the Czech Republic is aware of the existence of this Romani sub-ethnic group which differs in many socio-culturological aspects from the others. In general, the Sinti Romani belong to the Romani minority which Czech legislation bears in mind, in particular as part of Act no. 273/2001 Sb., On the rights of national minorities and amending certain acts. This Act deals with the rights to national and ethnic identity as a part of human rights, respecting the identity of members of national minorities as individuals and as a groups who especially exhibit their own culture, traditions and language. It places emphasis on the creation of a multicultural society and in its wording, it strives for harmonious coexistence of national minorities with the majority population. It guarantees the members of national minorities their right to effective participation in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, especially those concerning national minorities. It is founded on existing international treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms our state is bound by. In the context of the Romani community, the author of Palacký University in Olomouc, Eva Klimentová, discusses socio-pathological issues, especially the dependency relations of familial communities to be faced in the implementation of social work.

The influence of the social environment in which the individual lives, grows up, forms their personality and cultivates their social functioning is discussed by the Polish authors, Daniel Kukla and Mirosław Mielczarek. The former of the authors is a researcher at the Jan Długosz University in Cześćochowa, while the latter is a researcher at the University of Lower Silesia in Wrocław. They illuminate their topic by the interpretation of the famous leading Polish sociologist, Florian Znaniecki, who is thanks to its humanities-oriented sociology also considered to be a social pedagogue. He emphasized axiological attributes of the elements of human culture, made an appeal to the difference in epistemological investigation of phenomena related to manifestations of humans in comparison with natural phenomena, even in spite of the fact that people themselves are a part of nature. He maintained that research methodology of social sciences and humanities must always take this differentiation into account. He therefore put emphasis on interpretation.

The third contribution is directed at school education in its focus, opening the discourse on issues of the preparedness of elementary education teachers. It deals with the prevention of and intervention in risk behaviour of pupils educated within institutionalized school settings. Based on not only the statistics of the ministry of education available, but also on other published research findings, one can say that pedagogically adverse and socially inappropriate behaviours by the affected pupils are growing every year. Even the prevalence of various forms of such behaviours is growing. The text of the author of

the Silesian University in Opava, Eva Urbanovská, then highlights the key moments the pedagogical public should focus on while tackling this phenomenon.

The fourth contribution, which concludes the section of theoretical, survey, empirical and methodological studies, is the work of the author Vlasta Cabanová, a researcher at the University of Žilina in the Slovak Republic. The author opens quite a sensitive subject, as general perceived by the society, i.e. the phenomenon of ageing and death. A discourse of this concept is analyzed in the context of pedagogical science with an emphasis on defining new tasks of pedagogy as a social science.

This issue also presents the reader with two professional reviews of scientific monographs. The author of the first one is Martin Kaleja, whose critical eye analyzes the work of Hermína Mareková which, among other merits, was subjected to the author's habilitation procedure. The author's publication discusses family in historical and cultural context. The presenter of the second review is Kamil Janiš who analyzes the work of the authorial team Stanislava Svoboda Hoferková and Václav Bělík. Their publication confronts the topic of families in the issue of risk behaviour prevention in children and pupils.

This issue of the journal is concluded by a report by the author Martina Kaleja which lays out the planned strategic actions of the European Commission towards inclusive tendencies of state government policies in the European Union, including the Czech Republic. Their context finds a cross-section with the prevalence, prevention, intervention and variability of the causalities of socio-pathological phenomena.

Martin Kaleja



<b>ARTICLES</b>
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# THE INSIGHT INTO THE ISSUE OF ADDICTION IN THE PROCESS OF SOCIAL WORK AMONG ROMA FAMILIES OF SINTI

**Eva Klimentová**

## **Abstract**

Sinti belong to the quantitatively small groups of Roma people in the Czech Republic and they are different in many ways from other Roma people. Their culture is characteristic in terms of the emphasis on the autonomy towards the major society. In the same time, they respect the society and its laws, they want to be integrated, not to stand out. Sinti encourage their children to study, they are proud to be hard working and independent from the social benefit system, they are proud that they do not have any conflict with the majority. It is specific for this group to react strictly in the situation when the clan traditions and principles are broken and one of the worst is to become drug addict. This article describes clan rules of Sinti, which regulates the usage of drugs within the community. The goal of this article is to describe one case of a particular Roma clan, in which the tribal principles and rules influence also social work in its preventive and curative form when its solving the issues of drug addiction. The emphasis here is also on the reflection of the clan rules in the possibilities of the social work process with a drug addicted client and his/her family.

## **Keywords**

Roma people, Sinti, clan traditions, drug addiction, social work

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## **Historical introduction**

Although it is very complicated to define social work target group on the basis of the ethnicity, we can say, that Roma people definitely belong among important target groups of the social work in the Czech Republic. This does not mean, that every Roma person should be considered as potential social work client. We define the social work client as a person (family, group, community) who fails to solve his/her social problems by him or herself or with the support of his or her close social environment (alike Havrdová, 1999;

Navrátil, 2001; Matoušek, 2003). This definition would be valid for the majority of the Czech Roma population. The reasons for this lay mainly in the history.

Over the centuries the Roma people have been the nation without homeland, a minority in various societies and cultures, wanderers without homes, in diaspora. The Roma people in the whole Europe have common historical experience of persecution, discrimination, marginalization, oppression, social exclusion (Hübschmannová, 1998; Horváthová, 2002). The Roma people have been too different from the majority, because of their language, culture, ethnicity, life style.

Possibly the Roma people have been wandering to Europe since the twelve century from India via The Small Asia and Balkan. They have worked in the field of crafts to keep themselves alive. They worked as blacksmiths, they used to make kettles, also they offered music and juggler production, herbalism. The Roma people were future tellers, they cured animals and they were also horse handlers (Daniel, 1994; Říčan, 1998; Stewart, 2005). Their different life style (wandering, clothes, magic etc.) was seen as suspicious among the settled people. These fears were strengthened by the experience when Roma people used to steal goods, cheated during the horse trade and stole crops from the fields in times when their offer of services had no request (Daniel, 1994). It is understandable that the residents who were also poor and had poor sources reacted unfriendly. (Fraser, 1998)

The persecution of the Roma people was more or less permanent in the area of nowadays Czech Republic during the whole middle age (for more details see Horváthová, 2002). There were also issues in co-habiting of the Roma people with the others during the new age. In the years 1928 and 1929 took place the first process of summation of "*gipsies*" and there were almost forty thousands of Roma people older than fourteen years, who received "*gipsy legitimization*". This was the way to register and label not only the wandering people, but also other Roma people on the ethnical basis. Through this Roma people were more social excluded and stigmatized then before. (Horváthová, 2002)

The "*gipsy legitimations*" later helped in the process of concentrating Roma people in the time of the protectorate and in so called "*final solution*". Roma holocaust (Roma people call it Porajmos) was the end for approximately thirty-five thousands of Roma people from Bohemia and Moravia; overall it was not survived by two hundred thousands of Roma people (Rose, 2009). After the second world war only individual Roma people returned to Bohemia and Moravia and there they joined those Roma people who avoided the deportation thanks to their definition of being indispensable working force. It is possible that this extreme experience of holocaust was the reason to assimilate with the majority (Horváthová, 2002). Shortly after the war the approximate number of Roma people in the area of nowadays Czech Republic was in hundreds, somewhere between 600 and 1,000 people. (Nečas & Miklušáková, 2012)

Soon after the war there were hundreds of Roma people coming to Bohemia and Moravia from Slovakia. These were people who survived the war rampage in the Slovak state with significantly smaller damage. In Bohemia and Moravia, they were looking for better working opportunities and higher quality of life (Hübschmannová, 1998). The first migration was spontaneous, the next were organized and supported by the state, which

was looking for people working for the renovation of the displaced border areas. This way there were created places with high concentration of Roma people for example in Ostrava, Kladno, or Sudety (Haišman, 1989; Řičan, 1998). This process of insensitive settling of Roma people from various sub-ethnic and clan groups next to each other had negative impact on the harmony of Roma communities. Their natural sources of social control disappeared as well as their traditions, culture (Lacková, 2010). On the other hand, the totalitarian regime brought to Roma people the security of employment, dignified housing, undiscriminating social and health care. There were also many advantage in material and social sources for *"the citizens of Roma origin"*. This protective approach mostly paralyzed the Roma people, their problems were not solved, only covered by the backdrop which was liked by the majority. (Barša, 1999; Řičan, 1998)

All together these and many more negative influences led the Roma people into the deep social disintegration from the year 1950. By the disintegration in this context we mean the process of decomposition of the structural and functional unity of social group. For the members of the disintegrated groups it means the threat of social exclusion. This leads to exclusion from social network, barriers on the way to institutions and services, disappearance of the bonds between the majority and the social excluded group, restriction in horizontal and vertical social and spatial mobility. In the same time social disintegration and social exclusion deepens the polarization of the society, the social excluded get separated from the social values and norms, their social participation is weakened. (Navrátil, 2003; Duffy in Mareš, Horáková, & Rákoszyová, 2008; Topinka, 2013) The fall of the totalitarian regime in 1989 seemed to be a promise for the better future not only in terms of Roma issues, but Řičan (1998) emphasizes the negative consequences of the democratization of the society. In connection with the Roma people issues it is mainly unemployment connected with discrimination on the labour market and also easily reachable attractive but harmful substances. It is not only about drugs, but also about credits, loans and consumption. In the new social circumstances based on individual performance the Roma people have not been able to react flexible enough and many of them have fallen into deep social exclusion. This has been even deepened by traditionally negative attitude of the major Czech society toward the Roma ethnic. Červenka (2015) says, that in the representative research of the Centre for public opinion research 36% of the respondents described the cohabitation with Roma people as very bad, and 47% as rather bad.

### Current situation

Roma people count to be the biggest minority in the Czech Republic. The experts estimate, that in 2014 there were approximately 250,000–300,000 Roma people living in the Czech Republic. This is approximately 2.3% from the whole population. These expert estimations came from the professionals who worked with the Roma community, and the definition of a Roma was a person who considers to be Roma him or herself and in the same time he or she does not declare the ethnicity all the time (e.g. in the census),

and/or he or she is considered to be a Roma by a significant part of his or her social environment. (Zpráva o stavu romské menšiny v České Republice za rok 2014, 2014)

As it was mentioned above, the Czech majority considers the Roma minority as problematic with lack of motivation to contribute to social prosperity. This attitude is supported by some facts, for example (if we do not specify other way, Zpráva o stavu romské menšiny v České republice za rok 2014, 2014):

- the proportion of Roma pupils among all the pupils who are educated according to the document "Education programme frame for elementary schools and pupils with light education difficulties (mental retardation)" – it means education in special schools – is 32.4%. This number means, that the Roma pupils have 14 times higher proportion in these schools that is the proportion of the whole population of Roma people in the Czech Republic;
- in 2014 there were 80–85% unemployed people from the socially excluded regions, in which the Roma people make the majority. Many of the Roma resigned on the participation in the official labour market. They live on financial social benefits, some of them have illegal jobs, or other alternative ways to have some income (similarly Konopásek, 1998);
- according to the expert estimation, there are between 30 and 60% of Roma children living in the institutions. Because of their ethnicity, it is almost impossible to find families to foster these socially orphaned kids;
- the average life expectancy of Roma people is approximately ten years less than of the majority, infant and children mortality is twice bigger than the national average;
- among Roma people there are far more underage mothers and significantly lower birth weight of a new-born;
- 65% of adult Roma men smoke regularly, as well as 57% of adult Roma women, which is significantly more than in the whole Czech population, in which we see between 28 and 32 percent of adult smokers (Sovinová, Csémy, & Kernová, 2014). Roma women smoke also when they are pregnant, children begin to smoke in early childhood and if not, they face passive smoking. Lately there is an increase of illegal drugs users. Roma people abuse alcohol the same way like the majority;
- the data about Roma criminality are not collected. Nowadays we estimate, that the proportion of Roma offenders among the prosecuted persons is approximately eight or ten percent, which means, that the Roma criminality is three times or four times higher than in majority (Šišková, 2001; Romové v České republice: 1945–1998, 1999).

Despite what laic population usually think, Roma people are a significantly heterogeneous ethnic group. Individual subethnic groups of Roma people (clans) differ from one another in many important aspects, e.g. the rules of community cohabitation, preferred values, culture, the relation towards majority. It is not possible to describe the Roma people as homogenous group with specific way of life. (Fraser, 1998; Hübschmannová, 1998; Jakoubek & Budilová, 2009)

The biggest group among the Czech Roma people is the group of the Slovakian Roma people, whose ancestors came from Slovakia after the second world war or later. Slovakian

Roma people are 75–85 % of all Roma people in the Czech Republic. Approximately 10 % belong to the Olasky Roma people, who tend to isolate themselves from other Roma people and from the majority. The rest of the Roma people 10–15 % are Roma people originally from Hungary. There are hundreds of the Czech Roma people, descendants of those who lived here before 1939 and survived the horror of the second world war; and the German Sinti (Sinty, Sinto). (Davidová, 1997; Pavelčíková, 2004; Hlaváček, 2014)

## Sinti

It is necessary for social work with Roma people to respect the Roma culture, traditions and habits. For that, social worker needs to have knowledge of the different values, life experience, relation to the majority, and culture in its broadest sense. It was mentioned above, that Roma people are not a homogenous group, various sub-ethnic groups differ in many aspects which can have some influence on social work and its results.

This article focuses on the topic of Sinti, not a large group of Roma people living in the Czech Republic. The origin of the word Sinti is not clear. Sinti (Sinto, Cinto) belong to the group of German Roma people. In Germany there are far more Sinti than in the Czech Republic. Sinti use their own language which include many German words and phrases and it also based on French and English. It is not Romany language or its dialect. The language of Sinti is hidden from the majority, no expert description of it exists. (Rombase, 2003; Cohn, 2009)

Kašparová (2014) explains, that Sinti consider themselves to be so different from the other Roma people that the tribal names have to stand side by side – “Sinti and Roma”. Sinti are mostly very well assimilated (and not only in Germany), they have higher life standard than the other Roma people who migrated for longer time after the second world war looking for their own place within the majority. *“The different names Sinti and Roma do not refer only to the difference of origin. To be a Sinti means higher social status and the acceptance from the majority ...”* (Kašparová, 2014, p. 30–31)

In the Czech Republic region, the Sinti community until the 50<sup>th</sup> of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was concentrated in the border part of the country. There were only a few Sinti who were not killed in concentration camps or other ways during the second world war and they returned to Bohemia and Moravia, the rest settled in the democratic part of Germany. Nowadays the Czech Sinti live mainly in bigger towns and they keep in touch with their families in Germany and other countries. (Fraser, 1998)

## The information sources, methods of research

Sinti try to hide their culture, language and rules of the clan from the expert and laic public. That is why it is extremely difficult to gain such information (alike Horváthová, 2002). In following text, we present knowledge which comes from two mutually related sources. The first one is long-term social work process with one particular family of

the Czech Sinti. The main person in the family is Anna<sup>1</sup>, a woman in her middle age. When the social work started in the family, Anna was 25 years old. Anna accepted two children from her broad family to raise them (her mother's brother's children, so she is their cousin). The children were terribly neglected by their biological mother, who ethnically belonged to the majority, their mother's brother sexually abused both children. The father of the children was imprisoned those days and the children Robert and Veronika were approximately four and three years old. Anna was looking after both children for many years without any institutional assistance, the representatives of the institutions did not know about that matter. Anna did not receive any financial or other social support; her care was unconditioned but without any formal auspices. I was a social worker who started working with the family in the moment when the biological parents began to re-claim the children back to their care after the father return from prison. Anna submitted a custody proposal, so she could foster the children officially. The social work with the family was rather intense, lasted for a year and was finished by the agreement with Anna's successful custody. Social work with the family continued in the form of support for the foster family in cases and situations when the demands of the institutions were bigger then Anna could have managed. I keep in touch with the family for more than twenty years, Veronika and Robert are already adult and they have their own families and they are doing really well. At the moment Anna fosters another Roma boy, he is in school age. During the cooperation with the family, there used to come up the need to react to specific information about the clan habits which Anna present very cautiously and rarely. Anna slightly opened for me the doors which lead to the hidden world of ancestral traditions, which influence everyday life of the clan members. There were many interesting issues which I did not ask about, because I did not need the information for the anamnesis and because of the social work ethics I did not want to be too curious.

The second source of information presented here in terms of the issue of addiction in Sinti families is a research, which was supported by Open Society Fund and Norway Grants. The research was based on the qualitative research strategies and it took one year of longer or shorter interviews with Anna in years 2015 and 2016. Anna agreed with the goal of the research was specified as to undercover the traditions and culture of Sinti so it could be useful for the social workers and other helping professionals. The outcome of the research is a narrative biography *Anna* (Klimentová, 2016). The methodology of this article is based on the outcomes of this long-term observation and many narrative interviews.

The impact of the data is limited by the fact, that the only source of information here is Anna herself. The picture of Sinti tradition gained from her was not possible to compare with other sources of information or other communication partners from the Sinti community. When the members of the community were asked for the interview, they have always refused so far.

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<sup>1</sup> The names and other main data, which could be used to identify the individuals, who participated in the research, were changed.



## Sinti and drugs

Sinti are very strict in respecting the values and norms of the majority and they are active in their effort to fulfil them. They are proud of their ability to live independent life based on working and avoiding social benefits; the ability to gain property legally and managing the property is highly valued, they refuse loans and usury, they support children in education and they are anxious about cleaning.

Their community is significantly hierarchized and based on patriarchy principles. The head of the clan is nowadays a man in his middle age and living in Germany, to this man all other members of the clan are responsible. This man receives extraordinary respect. The same receive the members of the council, which has legislative and judicial power and consists of the older respected members of the clan. This council makes decisions about serious sanctions against the clan members. Among the major misdemeanours, which are punished by the council belong the violence against children and drug addiction. The most serious punishment from the council is the expel from the clan, which is going to be described further in more details.

In this point it is necessary to clarify the term *“the purity of the clan”*. Pure Sinti is that person, who has mother and father of pure Sinti blood. Those Sinti are of only a little number, in the Czech Republic there are probably only individual numbers. Many Sinti marry or live in partnerships with Roma people from other clan groups or the majority. Their children do not have pure blood but they are allowed to decide to become members of the clan, when they grow up, and when they are capable to fulfil the rules of the clan and follow the strict clan traditions. People like this must be accepted by the clan. Many Sinti are convinced, that *“mixing blood”* brings social pathology to the community and threatens the unity of the clan. This also about a great dilemma – it is not only disengagement, but also the tightening of the rules of keeping the clan blood pure, which brings potential risks to the community in its viability and the community can vanish.

The Sinti attitude towards psychoactive substances (drugs) is mostly negative. They distinguish two categories of these substances, which could be named as legal and illegal.

Legal drugs like alcohol and tobacco are tolerated. When an individual uses such drugs, the assessment of the community depends on the gender of the user. When a man is smoking and drinking alcohol, it is tolerated. When it comes to women, it is assumed that they avoid these substances. Anna remembered her father: *“My daddy, he was a smoker, and he used to go smoking outside, because of us, the children, and he always said: my daughter, you must never ever light up a cigarette, you must never smoke, you’d rather have a good chunk of meat ...”*. When Anna was raising her son (she named her foster kids daughter and son, but they used to call her *“Anička”*, the youngest boy nowadays calls her *“aunt”*), she used to tell him, when he was a teenager, *“...if you ever want to have a beer or so, it is not a problem, you are the man, so it is alright, but you must always return to your family and not to be too familiar with alcohol”*.

When the family gets together, it usually means that there are tens of related people coming from the whole Europe; the men are offered with alcohol, but the inebriety is not expected. If this situation comes forward, the drunk man is a target of derision and he is observed to be seen if it was only a single accident or if the addiction is developing. Women do not drink alcohol at all, or only in a symbolic way, for example a little glass of sweet liqueur. *"It is not decent for a woman to drink."* When a person drinks hard and the alcohol addiction develops, the situation is seen as a great failure and in the same shameful way as other illegal drug addictions; even more when the drinking person could not fulfil the expectations connected with the social roles.

The Sinti's attitude towards illegal drugs is very distinctive, they are strictly forbidden. The community reacts strongly and decisively towards all forms of interaction between a person and a drug. The prevention of drug addiction is in the centre of Santi's attention from very early childhood, because drugs are seen to be seriously dangerous for individuals, families and the community as such. *"There are really small children, let us say around seven, who must be clearly explained in a good will, and nice words. Father must be absolutely strict; it is not only about some "no-no-no" (Anna is very expressive in her gestures). And mother has to say that the drugs are wrong, in the ways they damage people. And then to show them what it can do with people, for example when they go mad. Or other examples alike. It is necessary to explain to the kids all the time."* Each family spends a lot of time raising their children properly and they *"make them study, and not to become criminals, or drug users, alcoholics"*. The mean of control is precisely and fixedly structured free time schedule which takes place under the control of parents and other relatives. Even when Anna's kids were in their teenage age and adolescence, they had to come back home from the outside at least at half past seven. They had a lot of activities out of home, but mostly under some adult supervision, for example in a kid's club or a sport club; or accompanied by a member of the family. *"It is stronger in our family, when the cousins come together and are also friends; then it is why nothing wrong can happen."* Anna used to fear the danger of drugs, she used to fear some youth groups and was afraid of their kids joining them. She used to be afraid that Veronika could have got pregnant. Anna remembers: *"... every mum, and I know this, loves her children and keeps them off drugs as far as possible. The same way as me in case of Veronika and Rob, when I used to tell them and begged on my knees, to let them know, that I would have had killed me, that it would have had destroyed me, if they would have done it. That is painful ..."*. Looking after children is a process accompanied with a lot of preventive measures, using deterrent examples. Anna welcomed all preventive activities from school in the topic of drugs and drug addiction. When the children told her about those activities, she supported all the arguments with her own ones and mainly with her emotionally coloured positive attitude. *"I was always grateful, when they were told about that at school. You know, that I was right and that it really is wrong and bad, and that it cannot turn right and what threatens them. They then had it at home as well as at school, well."*

If that may happen that a child is caught in the act of experimenting with narcotics, the family do as much as they can to help the child out of the danger of an addiction. In the

community it is acceptable “a little accident”, but long term abuse of drugs is a something to receive the strongest punishment which is disqualification off the community. This possible sanction is something that makes families act and put as much effort as possible to help the child avoid this unwanted behaviour. One of the tools for solving such problem is asking some other member of the family or community from a different town to look after the child for a while. They choose a place so the old social bonds can be broken including those with drugs, so the child is led off the bad environment. This process is usually absolutely non-formal, in case of under-age children without any cooperation with social institutions.

As it was mentioned above, to be expelled from the community is the strongest punishment and it comes to a person after usually two the most serious lapses. The first one is when they hurt children and the second is drug addiction. Excommunication can be temporary or permanent. In case of drugs, the expulsion is permanent, “...drugs, it is something to be punished with life-sentence ...”. Excommunications means, that the community breaks all contacts. The expelled person cannot come back, cannot count him or herself as Sinti anymore, cannot share house with the family, cannot share table, cannot be buried in a family tomb. It is absolute social isolation, which is also emphasized by the fact, that the individual has limited opportunities to join other social groups. Being Sinti in origin, the person is refused by other Romany people, who are also seen by this person (thanks to the lifelong “snob” education) to be unclean (*prasto*). The person is also refused by the majority, because of generally negative attitude towards Roma. Drug addiction stigma only strengthens this exclusion.

Anna explains the essence of the excommunication: “the person must not be buried in the family tomb ...he/she cannot sit with me by my table ...I shall not give him or her food or a drink.” In everyday life it is not strictly forbidden to have a formal contact with the expelled, which is even more painful for the one: “they would not criticize the person without saying ‘hallo,, they would have a chat, or so. But the form is to say, good morning, how are you and good bye. That is that. He/she cannot step under my roof ever, that is simply not possible anymore.” When it comes to the social work process, this situation is a great complication, because it is almost impossible to motivate the person to give up on drugs, when he or she has no peace to return and has no promise for a better future. He or she is not Sinti anymore, other Romany are considered to be “unclean”, majority does not accept him or her. In the same time the social worker cannot count with the family to be supportive for the person to avoid drugs. This form of social support is taken away from the addict as such.

In the family described here, we speak about this serious punishment in one case – the case of the father of the children, who Anna took care of. Despite they were in a very close family relationship, the decision of the council about expelling the father from the community was not questioned and was followed very strictly. In case of meeting him, Anna briefly informed him about the children, but he could not get any closer to them. Surprisingly the father after many years of using methamphetamines healed and fully avoided drugs in the time when the children just became self-lawful. He took detox and community therapy afterwards, also he took long outpatient aftercare. After all this

the father came to Anna to thank her for *"having the kind in proper education, in respect and honour"*. He gave to Anna great presents, Anna talked repeatedly about a huge bouquet. He apologized to the children. In spite of all this, the clan did not forgive him, even when the close family spoke up for him. The sanctions in the community function as means of general prevention, they should be seen as strong deterrent for the others. *"There is no way back ... It is forever, unfortunately ... you have put some dirt on the family and ... you cannot let such person into your flat, cannot meet him/her ... the person does not exist for you anymore, he/she is without a family and stay this way forever ... the family is not able to forgive, because of the rules, any when they say to do it, we do it ... You become a black sheep of the family beware ... otherwise the family get revenge."*

The father of the children remained sober in spite of all complications and problems until the last day of his life. His precocious death was caused by late somatic complications of addiction. According to Anna, his family begged for his sake and the clan finally accepted him to be buried in the family tomb. The funeral was classic Sinti with all traditional requisites, which also means, that a lot of relatives from abroad came over. They also paid for the expensive funeral and layout of the tomb. Anna tells this story with tears in her eyes, she says, that this is unbelievably beautiful happy end, to which she contributed. According to Anna, the issue of addictions is still an actual topic in the community and it is seen as one of the most serious. Nowadays the community discuss the option to expel parents of an addicted child. This is something Anna do not agree with. *"I agree with that completely, that this is not good, I tend to talk to the person, who suggests that, to show that there are ways, these days we have new age and it is not working. I know, that he or she wants to help, but when in the puberty a child takes something (drug) then the mother is not to be blamed. So you cannot blame the father or the mother, that would mean for fifteen or twenty years and it is not possible this way."* She also pronounces the argument about bigger families, where it is more likely to bring the children up in better way and for example *"one of them slips ... it is not about the genetics, it is about the system, which ...you let the kids out and they become friends with somebody and to become part of the group, they take it ... Because this can happen to anyone, I can have a grandchild or – God help – and it is not my fault, how can I prevent that, when simply the child goes outside with a group, you do not know anything and then you realize later."*

In the interview it was clear, that this topic was difficult for Anna. On one hand, she is conforming with clan rules and laws and she is proud of them; on the other hand, she considers herself to be a mother who can make as much effort as she can, any her children can be threatened by drugs anyway. She answers the question, how she would solve the issue of one of her children slipping towards drug use: *"... the eyes cannot tell, and anyone breaks the rules sometimes, so you understand ... you must always help your child first and then fight..."* But the possibility of sanctions makes her panicking. *"I do not know about that, this is even impossible to imagine, such horror. You know, this is terrifying ..."*

## Conclusion

To know the cultures of social work clients is the necessary basis for the efficient social work process. So called Romany issue is focused in the Czech social work from its early days, which we date to the raise of democratic Czechoslovakia in 1918. Despite many social policy measures, despite intense research effort and social work in the field, the integration of Romany into majority is not that successful, so we could name our cohabitation to be non-collision.

One of the causes of this unwanted situation may be the fact, that social workers see the Roma people to be value and culture homogenous group. This text points at one particular example of an individual Roma clan. This example shows how the traditions and habits influence social work process in its preventive and curative form when solving the problems of drug addiction.

Social work is a profession and one of its characteristics is the necessity of solving various and difficult ethical problems and dilemmas. In the example above, there is no stress in terms of the procedure of preventing drug addiction. In this matter, the values of Sinti and the majority are consistent and social worker can offer efficient support for the families to prevent their children from drugs. This help is not only accepted by the families, but also developed in an innovative way. Completely different is the situation, when the clan expelled a member for his or her drug addiction. To overcome the addiction, it is necessary to be motivated, which must be really strong, for drug addiction is a serious disease and the addict must be continuously supported not to fall into relapse. The Sinti community is not supportive for its members this way, because it would be in a conflict with their moral standard. Social worker walks on a thin ice of moral relativism. On one hand there is the moral standard of his/her profession which says, that he/she has to help. Social worker considers his/her moral duty to help the addict and motivate him/her to therapy and the professional standards leads him/her to make the family of the addict to cooperate effectively. On the other hand, there are culture values of Sinti, which are highly valued and supportive for their clan cohesion. These values say, that it is forbidden to help the addict. The status of the community towards the addict is not against the law and it is manifestation of individual culture, social worker should be able to respect that.

There is an inevitable question of the responsibility for change of the social worker in such situations. How big is the appropriate space for the community to fulfil its right for self-determination (Zastrow, 1992), and how big must be the space for the addict and his/her self-determination, when he/she is expelled from the community. How we can define the space for fulfilling the personal values of social worker, professional values of social work and value of majority. In such cases, when there is a conflict of interests, values, cultures, we can see the need of individualization social worker procedure and individual steps must be continuously reflected in the discourse. Veselský (2013) suggests this discussion to be broad, multidisciplinary and in the cooperation with supervisors in the activities of professional organizations.

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# IMPACT OF THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT ON THE UPCOMING PROCESS IN THE LIGHT OF F. ZNANIECKI'S CONCEPT

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## **Abstract**

The aim of the discussion is to analyse Florian Znaniecki's "Sociology of Education". The indicated author is an outstanding Polish sociologist originating from the Poznań scientific community. He gained international fame by work Polish Peasant in Europe and America, co-authored by William Thomas. In "Sociology of Education" the educational process was described and analysed from a sociological perspective. On the other hand, in this article, the authors propose to pay attention to other social factors in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which Znaniecki did not consider due to the period in which he lived. The thesis chosen for the presented work assumes that the issue of education is related to the field of science, which is sociology. The conclusions emphasize that such a relationship inclines to broaden knowledge in the field of sociology in the pedagogical environment and to use its achievements in educational work.

## **Keywords**

sociology, upbringing, sociology of education, sociology of upbringing

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## **Introduction**

Education can be considered a universal human activity. It is a process which task is to introduce successive generations to the social community. Education is usually considered in a narrow sense, as an intentional and conscious educational impact, broadly encompassing all impacts shaping the individual as a person, his aspirations, preferences, system of values, attitudes and way of functioning (Katra, 2014, p. 105). It is also consciously organised social activity, based on the educational relationship between the educators and the pupil, the purpose of which is to cause the intended changes in pupils' personality (Okoń, 2001, p. 445). The changes taking place in

the process of educating include both, the cognitive-instrumental and emotional-motivational sphere (Zarzecki, 2012, p. 12). The cognitive and instrumental sphere is related to the ability to influence it and to learn about reality through social contacts. On the contrary, the emotional and motivational sphere determines the formation of the relationship of the individual to the surrounding people and the world (Lusek, 2013, p. 203–204).

From a scientific point of view, various fields deal with education. Pedagogy, sociology and psychology should be considered as the main ones. Pedagogy mainly focuses on the formulation of educational goals and the activities of educators to achieve them (Lusek, 2013, p. 203–204). Sociology in the context of education “examines how and to what extent social, economic and ecological structures and processes shape human personality” (Miczyńska-Kowalska, 2012, p. 13). Psychology, on the other hand, analyses and examines the psychological processes that occur in the education process. Its task is to understand the fact that under the influence of specific educational activities a person changes throughout his life (Grusec & Hastings, 2008).

Educating and upbringing is a social process. It results, among others, from the fact that its primary goal is to educate the individual to function in society. Expanding knowledge about education as a social construct goes beyond pedagogy. Therefore, scientific research around the education process should be interdisciplinary. When analysing educational processes, it is worth basing on the achievements of other scientific fields, including, in addition to pedagogy, indicated sociology and psychology. This study focuses on linking the educational process with sociological knowledge. A special relationship between pedagogy and sociology occurs in the case of social pedagogy, in which sociology fulfils an extremely important source of knowledge, inspiration and provides research methods. An important period binding both areas was above all the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. At that time, two trends, “*pedagogical sociology*” and “*pedagogical sociologism*” arose, where it was assumed that education depends above all on social conditions, which fundamentally differ from natural reality (Literski, 2015). Complementarity of both sciences gave rise to a coherent scientific discipline which is the sociology of education. Today, this department of sociology draws on the scientific achievements created in its area over many years. The variety of concepts, approaches, currents and thoughts incline to consider the process of education from several levels (Choczyński, 2011, p. 95). The essence of sociology of education is the study of social relations occurring during the process of upbringing and education (Okoń, 2001, p. 360). The term “*sociology of education*” also functions in common utility. In Poland, on the other hand, the concept apparatus ‘*education sociology*’ is more often used, whose main precursor was the outstanding sociologist from Poznań, Florian Znaniecki, creating its foundations in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Karkowska, 2007, p. 12–14). His scientific achievements, insights, comments and experience in this field have achieved international status (Woś, 2016, p. 66).

### **The components of social environment affecting education**

Znaniiecki believed that education should be related to the social process as a result of which it does not take place only between the student and the teacher. That is why it is reasonable to realise that a given pupil lives in a society that constantly affects him (Znaniiecki, 1973, p. 3–37). In this case, the impact of the family environment, neighbourhood, peer groups, teachers and school should be considered.

Indirect education factors, such as theatre, books and cinema are also important (Znaniiecki, 1973, p. 162). In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is also justified to point to the computer and the Internet as those factors significantly translate into the education of the individual. However, Znaniiecki, considering the period in which he lived, for obvious reasons, did not mention them.

The first and most important component of social environment is the family. It is considered the basic social cell constituting the foundation of education (Okoń, 2001, p. 337). As Znaniiecki wrote over 80 years ago, its role in this respect has generally weakened. Parental responsibilities were levelled, and this essentially translated into the educational process. With time, duties of a family began to be reduced only to provide childcare in the early stages of his life, which the mother usually does. Already in the 80s of the twentieth century, a gradual transfer of the obligation to provide education to institutions, including schools, was observed. Znaniiecki pointed out that wherever there is marital and parental love as well as favourable socio-economic conditions, the family's upbringing function can be fully realised (Znaniiecki, 1973, p. 97–123).

Despite the passage of time, today there are also parents who commonly neglect or completely ignore the educational function of the family, which often translates into placing the child in a care and educational or resocialisation institution. In their actions, such parents usually focus on the child's physical aspects, thus forgetting that the child's upbringing should also take into account the mental sphere, because the educational process is a complex process and should be conducted in such a way. To prevent such situation, the quoted sociologist proposed a real pedagogization of society, including the family. Such activities should be implemented in workplaces, cultural centres and wherever there is a proclaimed need for parents to perform educational functions (Znaniiecki, 1973, p. 97–123).

The next social factor on which education depends is the neighbourhood environment. This term should refer to a group of people living near a given unit with whom it interacts with society. The form of these contacts basically goes from one phase called direct to another of indirect nature. When writing about indirect contact Znaniiecki meant telephone contact, but in the 21<sup>st</sup> century one should first of all, point to the Internet as the basic form of indirect interaction. As a result of such technological progress, the neighbourhood environment has significantly weakened. Education has its basis also in imitation. The young person begins to observe all types of norms, values and behaviours displayed by their immediate surroundings and, based on the indicated imitation, begins to manifest them. Znaniiecki emphasised that in this case there is a tendency to imitate, above all, negative traits without positive ones.

Neighbourhood can have both a positive and negative impact on the upbringing of a young person. The way it happens depends primarily on the closest social group with which the person interacts (Znaniecki, 1973, p. 124–142). Today, the role of the neighbourhood environment has disappeared. This is especially visible in large cities, especially in the so-called concrete settlements, in which even the closest neighbour is often not known to the person. Despite this, there are situations in which neighbourly living negatively affects education.

Another factor, or rather factors conditioning education is the teacher, as well as the school. This work treats both factors as complementary ones, but Znaniecki described them separately. Turning to the role of a teacher in raising an individual, it can be stated that this process should be accompanied by mutual reflection. According to this assumption, the teacher should think about the goal he wants to achieve with the student and what methods he will pursue. The student should, however, have a reflection on the need and necessity of learning. In a situation where the student is not aware of these two basic things, the role of the teacher is to highlight such a need and necessity. Thus, the correct effects of not only learning but also upbringing can be achieved through properly selected educational contact.

Analysing the role of the teacher, it has been noticed that much better educational results are achieved by teachers who are characterized by kindness, a friendly attitude towards the student and consistent behaviour. In the case of those teachers who are characterized by good methodological and theoretical preparation, and who are not kind, consistent and friendly to the student, educational effects will be negligible. In his publication Znaniecki somehow “warned” that the use of all types of forms of coercion, punishment and excessive requirements is not conducive to the formation of an appropriate educational relationship. Thus, such activities do not lead to satisfactory results both in teaching and upbringing (Znaniecki, 1973, p. 162–175; 2011, p. 49–58). As Szymański (2013, p. 124) noted, the school, like the family, is undoubtedly an institution influencing and educating. As a result, it is increasingly blamed for various types of problems and educational failures related to children and youth. Although the education and care of children falls under both school and family responsibilities, there are fundamental differences. One of the first views of Charles H. Cooley is that a family is a natural group through its spontaneous creation that evolves over time. The school, on the other hand, is a kind of formal organisation, established to fulfil the tasks assumed from above. That is why family-oriented educational activities are usually natural and unaware. The school, on the other hand, should carry out the education process in full awareness and with responsibility, because it is regulated by educational rules and adopted canons.

Another factor that from a sociological point of view affects education is the peer group. Its role in this aspect, despite many years, has not been weakened as in the case of the neighbourhood. Peer groups are extremely important for proper development, including the education of young people. They basically affect the development of adaptation and communication skills of young people. Thanks to them a young man assimilates certain rules and norms of conduct that are not imposed in the form of orders and prohibitions

universally binding in society but are those principles and norms that apply in a given peer group. An individual who is in such group learns cooperation and experiences fulfilling different social roles from those previously manifested. According to this, a child may be a leader dictating the conditions, and the other time someone who will have to comply (Szymański, 2013, p. 143–161, 176–199).

Analyzing Znaniecki's concept, one can only see the positive influence of the peer group on the upbringing process. Thus, it should be noted that there are groups that have a negative impact on young generations. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are increasingly encountering situations in which most peer groups begin to operate based on their own norms and principles that are in opposition to those acknowledged by most of the society. Belonging to a young person in this type of group adversely affects education process or can cause inhibition. What is important nowadays, most peer groups are identified with subcultures, which are quite often associated with gangs, crimes or sects. Such postmodern thinking encourages young people to become even more involved in a specific peer group to emphasise their diversity and independence. This disregards the rules and revolts against the values of most adults, which results in a faulty upbringing process.

The last social factor affecting education that distinguished Znaniecki is indirect education. The intermediate elements of upbringing include theatre, books and a cinema. However, it is also worth pointing to the computer, and more broadly to the internet, as an important (if not the most important at present) element affecting the education of children and young people. The characteristic feature of these factors is in this case not their direct impact, but as the name suggests indirect influence. In the case of films or books, their creators may consciously influence the education of the individual. That is why Znaniecki pointed out that not only direct contacts can shape the development, but also some kind of indirect elements that, through the message and then reception, shape a young person. Znaniecki noticed both the pros and cons of the influence of intermediate elements on the educational process. Negative aspects included the inflow of information, materials and forms of impacts for which a young person is not yet prepared, as a result of which many educational problems can occur. It is important that from many films and books one can also see those that will have a positive impact on the education of the individual through content appropriately selected for his age (Znaniecki, 2011, p. 200–210).

Nowadays, it is often observed the adverse impact of the growing number of mass media. Znaniecki did not raise this issue in his publication, because in his time this problem was not so visible. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, access to television, and what is characteristic, to the Internet, became widespread. However, it would be unreasonable to demonize all currently available media. On the one hand, they negatively affect a young person, on the other, they allow you to easily acquire knowledge and have faster access to information flow. However, the specific way the children and young people will use technology will depend primarily on parents, teachers and educators, because it should be inscribed in their upbringing process.

## Conclusion

To sum up, it should be noted that parents, neighbourhood, peer groups, teachers along with the school institution and elements of indirect education are not the only components of the educational environment. However, they are the most significant ones that affect the education of the individual (Znaniecki, 2000, p. 67). In pedagogical practice, it is worth emphasising the important knowledge of sociology that both, teachers and educators should exhibit in various types of care, resocialisation and educational institutions. Among the many tasks that are carried out in these centres, one of them is to lead and manage the upbringing process. Appropriate knowledge of social factors, which, as shown, have a significant impact on upbringing, will thus translate into educational success. Teachers, whether they want or not, are involved in a social "cobweb" relationship, which is inscribed in the school's institution. Therefore, this professional group as one of the few should use appropriate sociological knowledge. However, there are people who do not believe in the use of sociology in pedagogical practice. Thus, knowledge of the sociology of education can contribute to progress in teaching, as well as upbringing, because this is also the task of the school (Znaniecki, 2000, p. 317–318).

Components of the social environment play a fundamental role in the education process. Therefore, education both in families and in all types of facilities cannot be treated in isolation from sociology, and it should be skilfully used in pedagogical practice.

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## PROFESSIONAL READINESS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN ADDRESSING AND PREVENTING RISK BEHAVIOR<sup>1</sup>

**Eva Urbanovská  
Alena Petrová**

### **Abstract**

The paper focuses on the personality of a teacher and his role in the primary prevention of the risk behavior. The article presents the partial results of a questionnaire survey that has been carried out in 2017 with 302 teachers at 12 elementary schools and multi-annual high schools as a partial output of the project RRC/08/2016 *Professional readiness of primary school teachers for the risk behavior and its prevention in the Moravian-Silesian Region*. The aim of the questionnaire survey was to find out about the relevant facts on the current readiness of elementary school teachers for the risk behavior and its prevention from the point of view of the actual teachers. The questionnaire has been designed by the authors of this paper (consisting of 46 scalable items and 7 open items). Only data from scalable items are included in the paper. The majority of teachers are ready to cooperate with their colleagues and other professionals in the field of solution and prevention of the risk behavior. Most of them find the prevention activities beneficial, they incorporate them into their lessons. When looking for a solution to a given problem as well as when practicing prevention activities, the teachers make use of the discussion with students. Although the obtained results might be region-specific, the authors are of the opinion that these can be regarded as relevant and inspiring for the professional and teaching public.

### **Keywords**

primary prevention, risk behavior, teacher, professional readiness, elementary school, questionnaire survey

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## Theoretical bases

Pedagogical staff encounters behavior manifestations of some pupils and students that surprise them unpleasantly, or even throw them off guard, almost on an everyday basis. They often resolve the situations intuitively, according to their experience and the ability to improvise. The educational aspect is probably the most demanding part of the teacher's professional work in the entire school field. Behavioral disorders or even the occurrence of social pathology always have a multi-causal character. The teacher becomes a highly significant factor in the child's individual life journey within the socialization process, next to the dominant influence of the family and its main responsibility.

The teacher plays an important role in the process of primary prevention of students' risk behavior. A quality teacher with interest in the child, a positive school atmosphere, pedagogical staff and the class atmosphere are all essential for the fulfillment of objectives in this area. Teachers must have all the required competences. The relation between the teachers' social competences, or their approach strategies, and the occurrence of aggressive behavior of the students is documented, for example, in the study by Csémy et al. (2014). Unjust treatment from the teachers, the stressful character of the school, unpopularity of the school environment and excessive expectations of the teachers have shown to be significant predictors of the students' aggressive behavior. The study by Sádovská and Kusý (2019) demonstrated the negative effect of an insecure, dissatisfied, reproving and strict interaction style on the pro-social behavior of students. On the other hand, a positive effect was demonstrated in an organizing, understanding interaction that leads to responsibility. The relation between the teacher's behavior and the students' bad behavior in the class was studied by Lopes et al. (2017). All teachers participate in the resolution of risk behavior cases and its prevention. But how are they prepared for that? Many experts, both domestic and international, are currently seeking an answer to that question (e.g., Jedlička et al., 2015; Valenta, 2013; Vágnerová, 2014; Špatenková et al., 2017; Miovský et al., 2010; Kraus et al., 2001; Zimmermann, 2002; Werner, 1990; Haggerty & Garnezy, 1996; Jennings et al., 2017; Rucinski, Brown, & Downer, 2018 etc.), however, the scope of our work does not allow for a more detailed description of their contribution. The question of a teacher's readiness in the field of primary prevention and solution of risk behavior cases was examined in Research Project No. RRC/08/2016, *Professional Readiness of Primary School Teachers for the Risk Behavior and Its Prevention in the Moravian-Silesian Region*, which was supported within the subsidy on the Promotion of Research and Development in the Moravian-Silesian Region 2016. The project was implemented by a research team of the Institute of Pedagogical and Psychological Sciences at the Faculty of Public Policies of the Silesian University in 2016–2017. Its main objective was to determine the reserves in the professional readiness of teachers for dealing with specific problem situations in relation to education in elementary schools, as well as outside school. (Skopalová & Janiš, 2017; Kolaříková, Petrová, & Urbanovská, 2017).

## Research objectives and methodology

**Research objective.** The objective of the study, the results of which are presented in this paper, was to elicit relevant facts on the current readiness of elementary school teachers in the field of risk behavior and its prevention in the Moravian-Silesian Region, as perceived by the teachers themselves. In particular, the objective was to collect and analyze opinions of a selected sample of teachers on the occurrence of risk behavior manifestations at their schools, on preventive activities in the field of risk behavior at school, on the possibilities of addressing the cases of problematic behavior within the school environment, and on the self-reflection of the level of one's own competences to cope with the everyday school reality.

**Individual objectives.** The study provides a deeper analysis of the individual results. The individual objective was to uncover the structure of relations between variables, to examine the relations between the participants' statements and demographic factors.

**Research questions.** Several research questions were formulated in accordance with the individual objective with respect to the character of examination (the effort to map and analyze the situation in schools).

1. *What is the relation between the subjective perception of effectiveness of one's own educational activity and the participants' involvement in various training programs focusing on the prevention of students' risk behavior?* Is the effectiveness of the participants' educational activity, as perceived by them, positively influenced by their overall personal involvement in the area of preventive activities, including participation in various training programs focusing on the prevention of students' risk behavior?
2. *What variables are related to the application of effective educational measures?* Do the teachers who use effective educational and preventive measures also have adequate knowledge in the field of specific manifestations of risk behavior, or do the teachers who are successful in their educational activity have a sufficient level of personal prerequisites, rather than the knowledge of the specific manifestations, to intuitively resolve the undesirable students' behavior in a correct way?
3. *What role do the demographic factors of gender, age, work experience and function held by the study participants who are teachers play in the studied context?*
4. *What is the share of personal satisfaction from one's own work in the study group of teachers and how is that conditioned?*
5. *What does the occurrence of the subjective perception of low respect by students relate to?*

**Properties of the research sample.** The research group included a total of 302 teachers from 12 elementary schools (ES) and grammar schools with an extended study program. The schools had been selected on the basis of willingness to participate in the study (only 12 schools out of 52 schools we approached were willing to cooperate). As it was an available selection, the conclusions of the study only apply to the research group. The examined group included 45 men (i.e. 14.9 %) and 254 women (i.e. 84.1 %), out of

which 92 teachers (30.4%) were at the age of 40 and below, 193 teachers (63.9%) were at the age of 41–60, and 15 teachers (5%) were at the age of 60 and above. The largest group included teachers with professional experience over 21 years (162 teachers, i.e. 54.6%). With regard to the type of the school, 125 participants (41.4%) worked at the first level of elementary school, 148 participants (49.0%) worked at the second level of elementary school, and 26 participants worked at both levels (8.6%).

**Research method.** To fulfill the set objective, we chose a quantitative research approach and the method of a questionnaire survey. For its purpose, we created our own research instrument, an anonymous questionnaire of our own design. The subjectivity of answers acquired through the questionnaire survey did not represent any risks in our study but it corresponded with our intention: to elicit information on the subjective assessment of the teachers' own readiness to recognize and deal with problematic situations and to participate in the primary prevention of risk behavior.

The selection and formulation of the questionnaire items was based on the research objective, on the requirements and formulations of methodological recommendations of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in the field of primary prevention, and on the Standards of Professional Qualification of the Providers of Programs on the Primary Prevention of Risk Behavior. The questionnaire was consulted by the entire team and corresponding experts who provided their comments during its elaboration (the school prevention coordinator in the Moravian-Silesian Region and the head of the center for alcohol and other addictions).

The questionnaire is divided into three sections. The first section contains questions that elicit demographic data. The second, central part consists of 46 scalable items of the Likert type with the option to express one's attitude to the presented statements on a four-degree scale (definitely yes, rather yes, rather no, definitely no). The last section includes 7 open questions that request to provide free answers.

The data obtained by the questionnaire survey were organized in a matrix and then they were statistically processed using the calculation of relative frequencies, Pearson's correlation coefficient and factor analysis.

Out of the data obtained, only the part prepared by the authors of the article is presented for the purpose of this paper. Only data from scalable items generated on the basis of a factor analysis are included in the following text.

## Description and interpretation of collected data

### Factor analysis

A factor analysis had to be performed first in order to seek answers to the formulated research questions. The collected data were subjected to a factor analysis with a Varimax rotation, with a selected factor load of 0.39. The factor analysis created four factors with the following running titles:

- **F1 – Teachers' preventive activity** – includes 10 items that include program participation, cooperation with school methodological prevention and with the

educational and psychological counseling center, and it describes the involvement, engagement and cooperation with other colleagues and experts on preventive programs for students.

- **F2 – Problems with authority and discipline** – includes 7 items – describes negative feelings of the teachers concerning respect from students and parents, and also includes the level (frequency) of dealing with conflicts and disciplinary problems with students.
- **F3 – Effective educational and preventive influence** – includes 11 items – describes the friendly relationship to students and knowledge of effective methods of working with student groups.
- **F4 – Teachers' incomplete knowledge of specific manifestations of risk behavior** – includes 4 items – this factor combines items focused on insufficient knowledge and methods of work with student groups in the monitored area.

Tables 1–4 present the results of the factor analysis with a description of items and factor load.

**Table 1 Factor 1 – Teachers' preventive activity – Factor analysis results**

Item (with questionnaire order no.)	Factor loading
9. I actively participate in the implementation of primarily preventive activities for the students...	0.47
10. I have had the opportunity and have been present on a preventive program for students.	0.51
11. I am always interested in participating in a preventive program for students.	0.54
12. I assess the preventive programs for students that I have participated in positively.	0.54
13. During my presence in a primary prevention program... I learned useful information.	0.65
14. I cooperate with the school prevention methodologist when resolving problems with students.	0.71
15. I cooperate with the school educational counselor when resolving problems with students.	0.65
16. I cooperate with the school psychologist and the counseling center experts when resolving problems with students.	0.65
38. I regularly consult the planning of preventive activities and work with the class with the school prevention methodologist.	0.64
41. I usually consult other colleagues who teach in the same classes regarding educational and preventive measures.	0.44

**Table 2 Factor 2 – Problems with authority and discipline – Factor analysis results**

Item (with questionnaire order no.)	Factor loading
6. Some students show no respect to me.	0.70
7. We often deal with aggression between students at our school.	0.45
26. I often deal with aggressive parents; some even insult me.	0.41
28. Some students insult me.	0.68
29. I deal with the lack of discipline of students during lessons on a daily basis.	0.74
30. There are conflicts among students.	0.72
31. I am often disturbed by noise in the classroom during my lessons.	0.68

**Table 3 Factor 3 – Effective educational and preventive influence – Factor analysis results**

Item (with questionnaire order no.)	Factor loading
17. I prefer discussion when dealing with problems in the class.	0.44
21. As a form teacher, I organize regular class lessons.	0.47
23. I use the community circle in the class lessons.	0.64
24. When we visit a cultural event with a preventive intention, I try to have a discussion with the students afterwards, letting them reflect individually...	0.42
27. I think that the students trust me, they are not afraid to confide in me.	0.63
32. I manage to implement an individual approach to students.	0.51
33. Also, I often talk to students about their lives.	0.63
39. I always try to get the students in the right mood with a short informal conversation, game or a ritual before the lesson.	0.58
40. In the classroom, I use a specific form of agreement on mutual behavior (verbal or written) and I refer to it actively whenever needed.	0.54
42. I focus more on a positive feedback (praise) than on punishment and reprimands for undesirable behavior.	0.52
43. I consider it proper to address all the students in the same way.	0.42

**Table 4 Factor 4 – Teacher’s incomplete knowledge of specific manifestations of risk behavior – Factor analysis results**

Item (with questionnaire order no.)	Factor loading
22. I only use the class lessons for organizational matters.	0.43
34. I believe that single-time aggression between students is also one of the basic signs of bullying.	0.50
36. In my opinion, having a small amount of marijuana for the user’s own needs (according to the Czech Criminal Code) is a criminal offense.	0.45
37. I believe that if the police find illegal drugs on someone, they will confiscate the drug along with the things used for its application (e.g. syringe).	0.59

We analyzed the internal consistence of factors (using the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient) and determined their mutual correlations. The formulation of the factors helped us assess other criteria and relations between the individual groups of participants.

#### ***Correlation between variables and discussion on the results***

**The inter-correlations of factors (see table 5)** helped us answer the questions set above. The strongest relation, that is a medium-strong statistical relation, was determined between factors **F1 and F3**, which means that the factor of preventive activity is in a significant mutual relation with the subjectively perceived effective educational and preventive influence. This fact brings a positive answer to the first **research question**. Specifically, it means a connection between the subjectively perceived effectiveness of the teacher’s own educational activity and the activity in the field of prevention, willingness to cooperate with colleagues and experts, and the effort to behave supportively, emphatically, consistently and justly. A significant relation was also found between factors **F3 and F4** and it is expressed in the answer to the second research question. This positive correlation indicates a rather surprising relation when teachers use effective educational and preventive measures, while manifesting incomplete knowledge in the field of specific manifestations of risk behavior. In the context of this relation, the question is whether teachers who are successful in their educational influence have a sufficient level of personality prerequisites to address undesirable manifestations of students in an intuitively correct manner, or they are only more critical of their professional readiness. Factor **F2** does not correlate with any other factor.

**Table 5 Inter-correlation of factors**

Factor	F1	F2	F3	F4
F1 Teachers' preventive activity	-	0.04	0.40***	0.11
F2 Problems with authority and discipline	0.04	-	-0.01	0.12
F3 Effective educational and preventive influence	0.40***	-0.01	-	0.33***
F4 Teacher's incomplete knowledge of specific manifestations of risk behavior	0.11	0.12	0.33***	-

Legend: "\*\*\*\*" significant at level  $p < 0.001$

The answers to the remaining research questions are provided by the following values determined.

**Correlation of factors and demographic variables (third research question).** When monitoring the correlations of the individual factors with other variables, such as gender, age, duration of work experience, function and so on, no statistically significant relation was found in. We can only notice minor, non-random differences when we accept a lower (almost negligible) effect related to the lower values of the correlation coefficient (when we choose the lowest relevant value  $r > 0.10$ ). For example, women and younger teachers stated a higher involvement in the field of preventive activities than men and older teachers. As the age and duration of work experience increase, the subjective feeling of difficulties with discipline, aggression and lack of respect from the students also increases.

Considering the mentioned low values of statistical significance of the individual relations, the elicited relations need to be approached with the knowledge that they are implied tendencies that provide an approximate evidential value and their interpretation is only an inspirational contemplation.

**Correlation of demographic variables to the individual items.** When examining the correlations of demographic variables to the individual items, some interesting facts and significant differences, presented below, were ascertained.

In most items, no statistically significant difference was found in the answers of men and women. The following findings represent an exception: (a) women use agreement with students on adherence to the rules and talk to students about their lives more often than men; (b) younger teachers cooperate on preventive activities with a prevention methodologist and a school psychologist more often than their older colleague.

More significant differences were ascertained with regard to the duration of work experience. Teachers with a longer work experience are more likely to feel that they have issues with being respected as an authority, lower discipline and respect to their person, and they complain about noise in the classroom. The following questions emerged: Is the respect by the students really smaller or do older teachers require a higher level of respect? Are older teachers more sensitive to the students' behavior and cannot tolerate a noisy atmosphere in the classroom as much? Also, the level of cooperation on preventive



activities together with a school methodologist, school psychologist, the educational and psychological counseling center and so on decreases with the increasing duration of work experience. Once again, we could discuss the causality of this phenomenon: Are older colleagues more experienced and do not need consultations? Or does fatigue and unwillingness to cooperate play a role here?

**Correlation between individual items.** The correlations found between the individual items also indicate some important facts. There were relations found between whether or not the participant feels appreciated for his or her educational work, together with the opportunity to use his or her ideas to improve work, and also, whether or not the principal is interested in what happens in the individual classrooms.

Other connections were related to the **satisfaction of the teachers with their work**. The teachers who are satisfied by their educational work (93.4%) are more likely to state that they experience appreciation of their activity, that they can use their own ideas, and that the principals are interested in what happens in the classrooms. Also, they are less likely to have issues with discipline, aggression and conflicts among students in the classroom, they actively participate in preventive activities for their classroom, use the community circle in their homeroom periods, and approach students individually. They are also more likely to consult educational and preventive measures with their colleagues. It means that satisfaction with one's work in the case of our participants is related to the recognition and support from the principals, implementation of preventive activities and fewer difficulties with discipline. That is where we see the core of the answer to the **fourth research question**.

We found more frequent correlations in the item describing the level of **respect and discipline**. Teachers who feel a lower respect from students (approx. 27% participants) are more likely to show low involvement in the preventive activities for students, dissatisfaction with their work activity and a feeling of low respect, they are more likely to state problems with parents, daily discipline problems or aggression in the classroom. They are less likely to apply an individual approach and to approach all the students in the same way, they do not orientate as much on positive motivation and praise, and prefer punishment and reprimand. With respect to this and the aforesaid findings, we can state, in relation to the last, **fifth research question**, that the perception of low respect on the part of students and the higher occurrence of problems with discipline are related to the work experience of our participants, their lower involvement in preventive activities, and a less frequently applied individual and positive approach to students.

### Concluding summary

The presented questionnaire survey has brought numerous positive findings. Teachers in our research group are willing to monitor current events in education, to communicate with students and to create a safe environment in school. Teachers are mostly satisfied with their work, they feel appreciated, their principals are interested in what happens in the classrooms, and they can use their own ideas.

Most teachers are willing to cooperate with other colleagues, with the prevention methodologist, with school counselors, educational and psychological counseling centers and other experts. They consider the implemented preventive programs to be beneficial, even for themselves. Other positive findings include the teachers' effort to incorporate preventive activities into their own lessons. Most teachers prefer a discussion with students in the classroom when there is a problem. Discussion is often used within the homeroom period and after preventive events. The teachers consider the extracurricular offer in their schools to be sufficient and they appreciate its meaning with regard to primary prevention.

At the level of subjective assessment of the relationships with students and parents, there were also positive results. A high percentage of teachers believe that students trust them (over 90 %), most teachers speak with students about their reality, and they apply an individual as well as equal approach to all students. Most teachers mostly strive to provide positive feedback to their students, to create a positive atmosphere in the classroom, and to apply the agreed rules. The feeling of low respect from the students and the lack of discipline are more frequent in teachers who do not apply the aforesaid approaches as much.

The teacher's perceptiveness to the children's problems and a wide range of social and pedagogical competences are important both in the process of resolving negative consequences and in the process of primary prevention of risk behavior. Most of the teachers have encountered risk behaviors and they strive to address such situations effectively, with the assistance of consultants, and they develop activities to prevent such behavior. The responses to the set research questions showed a close positive relation between the perceived effectiveness of one's own educational activity and the overall personal involvement in the field of preventive activities, a relation between one's own personal satisfaction with work and the recognition and support of principals, implementation of preventive activities and fewer disciplinary problems, and finally, a relation between the perception of low respect and occurrence of disciplinary problems and the work experience, participation in preventive activities and less frequent application of an individual and positive approach to students.

Even though the presented results relate to a study that took place in 2017, we can assume that similar relations would be also found at present. However, it would have to be verified by a new research study. The conclusions of this survey, however, can only be applied to the examined group, formed by teachers in schools that were willing to participate in the study, which could influence the results to some extent. In spite of these limitations, the outcomes can be considered relevant and inspirational for the professional and teaching public.

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## ON THE PHENOMENA OF AGEING AND DEATH FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF HUMANITIES (THE TABOO OF THE PHENOMENON OF DEATH FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF NEW TASKS IN PEDAGOGICAL SCIENCES)

**Vlasta Cabanová**

*"It seems that the more we penetrate into natural sciences, the more we are afraid of reality of death and we deny it" (Kübler-Ross, 1990)*

### **Abstract**

The birth and death are natural parts of human life. The arrival of a baby to this world is often vividly and widely discussed issue in the family, media, at school (it is directly included in school rituals, school books and textbooks); we often encounter colourful descriptions of various aspects of the baby's arrival to this world. On the other hand, the phenomena of the end of human life are depicted only in a symbolic way; in modern societies of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the topic of death is being tabooed to large extent. In the era of a considerable demographic trend, when a noticeable ageing of the Slovak population can be witnessed, it is necessary to pay close attention to the phenomena of ageing and death.

### **Keywords**

ageing of the Slovak population, family upbringing, school education, loneliness, quality of life, positive ageing, understanding, preparation for death, pedagogical sciences, social pedagogy

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### **The ageing process as a taboo**

In terms of average life expectancy, the period of old age constitutes almost a third of life of a human being and the process of ageing constitutes more than half of life. This

is a considerable period of time in human life; however, little attention is being paid to ageing and to the processes and conditions associated with it. One of the most serious reasons may be the notion of ageing as a period of *disproportionately large losses*: it is the period associated with the loss of strength, of physical and mental weakness, fatigue and chronic illness. In the era of European culture of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which puts emphasis on youth, senior citizens find themselves at the periphery of society. Austrian psychologist Maria Fürst observes that “[a]t a time when youth has become a myth, it is wrong to be old. Old age is a taboo” (Fürst, 1997, p. 153). Cimický and Sámková (2018) draw attention to the fact that even senior citizens themselves claim that they already feel that they have reached the limit moment when their incapability and the loss of physical strength are manifested. In fact, such a perception of ageing by the public, as though even confirmed by senior citizens themselves, is to a considerable degree situational. The fact that people from close surroundings gradually leave the environment of an ageing person (Matoušek et al., 2007) significantly contributes to the fact that a person withdraws into themselves and focuses more on themselves, which also includes the identification of various symptoms of diseases. Given various forms of seclusion, senior citizens have more time which is available and consequently, they also ponder about the meaning of life (Adler, 1998) and thoughts about the end of their life.

It can be stated that in a period of experimentation, adolescents “play” with the ideas of death and an adult person only reflects upon death only at times of a severe crisis of existence, in the period of ageing, the thoughts of the inevitable death are much more persuasive and can induce anxiety even when the situation concerns a completion of a fruitful life. With the senior citizens, the structure and extent of the individual system as well as the perception of one’s own identity are permanently changing (Witte, 1989 in Nakonečný) from transient states, there is a resulting more depressed mood, hypochondriac anxiety, more intensive dissatisfaction, pessimism, and in certain cases, an exaggerated critical anger and an overt animosity towards the nearest surroundings (Cimický & Sámková, 2018).

In addition, an unjustified questioning of their abilities on the basis of age contributes to deepening frustrations of senior citizens. There are a number of reasons for people (in Slovakia, problems with finding employment emerge after the age of fifty) for experiencing the feelings of being social outsiders, because in many professions, despite their vitality, enthusiasm and willingness to work, they are unemployable and permanently sidelined (IVO, 2012; Gabrižová, 2017). From the perspective of modern society, a stereotyped image has been established, which is misleading on the basis of physical signs (Nakonečný, 1999) and claims that “senior citizens are slow and weak” (Atkinson et al., 2003, p. 195). They are often discriminated against on the basis of age, especially when looking for a job and the access to health care also poses more complications (Barát, 2012). In addition to these stereotypes, the perception of young people presents a negative intergenerational attitude in the form of the most widespread prejudices which deepen the intergenerational divide (Cabanová, 2012). As a result, this powerful emotional drive has an immense impact on vulnerability of senior citizens. According to surveys, the handicap of finding employment based solely on age – i.e. “ageism” presents

a frequent social prejudice and *the international measurement provides the strongest reason for discrimination in Slovakia* (Koval, 2001; Gabrižová, 2017), while the sources of ageism are primarily of social and cultural nature (Cabanová, 2012; Dončevová, 2017). Despite the fact that the Slovak Republic has joined several international declarations (2014), effective legislative measures against this social ill have not yet been adopted. Senior citizens feel rightfully frustrated and they *experience significant and irreversible uncertainties* (Matoušek, 1999). It is proven that *if a senior citizen has a sufficient amount of time, well-being and peace to solve a problem, they are successful in most cases equally well as a young, often unsettled individual* (Cimický & Samková, 2018).

In a micro-view at the individual level, the ageing process is understood as *the sum of qualitative changes in the structure and functions of human body that affect the increased vulnerability and decline of certain abilities and performance of the individual and they culminate at the terminal stage of death* (Langmeier & Krejčířová, 2006). Ageing involves a number of changes and it is a multidimensional process that presents the dimensions of natural transformation of personality, which is accompanied with the loss of performance, the scope of functions, various forms of declines and certain limitations. For centuries, the idea of ageing in this form has been considered a standard and a natural process.

Senior citizens are able to compensate their deficits, especially in terms of motor abilities, by wisdom and with the ability to evaluate experience more effectively. In the holistic perception of the issue, on the basis of previous experience, in the process of solving the problem, senior citizens acquire situational understanding much more quickly, rationalize and evaluate divergent solutions until choosing an optimal resolution. Slovak folk wisdom states *that older people walk worse but they think better*. This observation is evidenced by wisdom and performance of statesmen and politicians who entered public policy after the age of seventy, or whose performance culminated at this age, as well as scientists who brought to mankind significant discoveries, patents and inventions.

Therefore, the actual onset of the ageing processes is not precisely defined in time and it is genetically determined to certain extent (Šmarda et al., 2017). However, at the same time, it is closely related to external conditions of life of a particular person and their lifestyle that can take the role of initiators that either accelerate or deaccelerate the ageing processes. This is largely due to the fact that there are 40-year-old “grandpas” and “80-year-young men” (physically fit athletes and intellectual inventors, reformers, diplomats, etc.). Older age is not a hundred percent guarantee of wisdom and vice versa, youth is a hundred percent guarantee of ideas and innovation. On the basis of this reason, retirement can present a negative aspect for one person as it means losing his/her professional role to him/her (Polonský & Matis, 2004), worse social status and limited privileges. On the other hand, another person who has a lot of interests and a rich family life can look forward to the retirement and to the activities that they have planned over a long period of time (Křivohlavý, 2011; Janiš, Jr. & Skopalová, 2016). Certain features of an ageing personality, especially optimism, help to adapt to the conditions of the old age. A retired person symbolically leaves society for their privacy. The retirement affects all aspects of personality, as each person loses (depending on their preferences) more or less from the focus of one important sphere of their productive being, which in turn

affects his or her future course of life, further experience, reasoning and behavior. At this stage, the focus should be redirected in such a way that retirement life corresponds with the individual's philosophy of life. It is also necessary to strengthen his/her perspective of the world towards the integrity of their personality (Erikson, 2002). *Changes in social status directly affect their self-image, the awareness of one's own value as a person and as a member of society* (Cimický & Sámková, 2018).

In the macro-view, the generation of older people at the age of retirement can be regarded as a specific social minority in relation to society, characterized by a higher economic dependence on society and a limited possibility to intervene into its actions.

*The peculiarities of the ageing population in Slovakia pose serious challenges to social and educational policy in Slovakia and they are listed in the following:*

- a) *In a few years' time, Slovakia will become the country with the oldest population in the European Union* (according to the Slovak Academy of Sciences). In terms of demographic development, the Slovak population is ageing at a faster pace than populations in neighboring countries. By improving living conditions, life expectancy in most countries of the world has recently extended, and in Slovakia, this period stands for almost ten years (Wang et al., 2018). According to research, life expectancy has also extended in Slovakia, e.g., between 1970 and 2010, for men, life expectancy increased from 66.8 to 71.6 years of age and for women from 73.2 to 79.1 years of age (note: in this respect, the development in the Slovak Republic is more similar to the Hungarian than the Czech one). In particular, the country's demographic development needs to be addressed as *the minority will gradually become the majority*. It is necessary to take into account various factors, e.g., in 2009 Slovakia had 16.8 % of the population at the age 60 years or more and in 2050 this figure in Slovakia will approach 36 % (according to UN estimates). According to various estimates, by 2060, the number of the retired people in Slovakia will double (according to the Slovak Academy of Sciences, 2014). Already in 2035, there will be twice as many people over 80 in Slovakia (Vaňo, 2015a). The turning of people born in the late 1940s and in the 50s of the last century into old age will result into the fact that the society will age fairly dynamically. However, ageing will occur not only from below (i.e. low fertility and the birth rate) and from above (i.e. life expectancy), but also from the middle (i.e. the shift of numerous generations from the 50s and 70s into older age pyramid) (Vaňo, 2015b).
- b) *There are several questions dealing with the quality of life of retired people.* Despite the long-term predictions of the development of Slovak society, real Slovak society is not sufficiently (mentally and economically) prepared for such a rate of increasing the share of senior citizens in the population. 2012 was dedicated to the issue of active ageing and solidarity between generations in the EU (ERAS 2012). It was supposed to alert society and decision-makers that with demographic change, it was crucial to reflect on the position of senior citizens in society and on their ability to make use of their knowledge, work and human potential. Despite the fact that the standard of living of Europe's population is rising, the findings in



terms of maintaining the quality of life during the old age are less positive (Hasa, 2019). Nearly half of the population of Europe is afraid of retirement and of life during retirement. However, the worst prospects are expected by employees from Eastern Europe (European Pension Survey, 2017). Up to 60 % of Slovaks consider *the low standard of living the most serious problem of the elderly, which is followed by a weakened health condition*. Similar results are confirmed by the Institute for Public Affairs (IVO), which has been focusing on the position of senior citizens in Slovak society since 2012, as well as on issues of active ageing, participation and discrimination of senior citizens and public perception of these problems. *(The research team has set the goal of bringing new insights into the life situation of senior citizens and their experience with discrimination, as well as with their degree of participation in different areas of society; to recognize opinions on the status and rights of senior citizens; to point out age stereotypes; to analyze the readiness of the public and older people to accept the active ageing model and to contribute to the cultivation of the public debate on the rights of older people and to offer knowledge useful in public policy)*. Slovakia responded to the European Year for Active Ageing (2012) by approving the *National Active Ageing Program for 2014–2020*. In January 2014, the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic was re-constituted for the rights of senior citizens and for adapting public policies for the benefit of the ageing population. A. Zaidi et al. *(based at the European Center for Social Policy and Research in Vienna)* have developed a relatively detailed Index of Active Ageing, which should help to cover several aspects of active ageing and should measure the activities of senior citizens in their forms and experience based on different socio-demographic characteristics and in a broader context.

- c) Slovakia is seen as one of more conservative countries in Europe, yet the influence of *individualistic Western culture increasingly contributes to the isolation of senior citizens*. Life in the globalized world of advanced societies of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has caused a reduction in social contacts, a weakening of social ties and it has contributed to greater isolation of its members. Independence, uniqueness and autonomy – these are three qualities that Western society places great emphasis on and which promote individuality (Marcus & Kitayama, 1991). In the educational process of children and of the youth, there are strategies that are employed in order to promote the awareness of each person as a self-confident, original being who, above all, values their own freedom and is less willing to make compromises and to adapt to other members of the group. According to Marcus and Kitayama (1991), it is *the exaggerated emphasis on human uniqueness that causes the loneliness of people at present*. Withdrawing an individual into their world in a priority-oriented approach, relying on themselves (without sharing and opening up to their family, peer group at school and community) significantly contributes to the individualization while contributing to weakening cohesion in the current globalization of “tested” families and therefore, it contributes to the increase in divorce rate.

- d) *Increasing the share of lone senior citizens in society.* Loneliness presents a problem not only for people who grow old in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. According to research conducted by American sociologists, there is an increased amount of people who do not have any close friends. An increase in single parents, single parent families can be observed as well (Napora, 2013a). Naturally, there are economic and social consequences that are related to this aspect. One-adult households are at greater risk of poverty, not to mention old people whose pension is their sole income. Pope John Paul II. (2003) identified loneliness as the greatest threat for modern people. Young families are increasingly unwilling to integrate lone parents into their families and the caring function is taken over by the state but even the private and non-profit sector is not enough to participate. As a result, there are "waiting" advisors published on official websites of social services. Loneliness, together with a feeling of redundancy, significantly contributes to the increase in morbidity and suicidal behavior, the incidence of which increases with age. We do not even have to quote the classic (e.g., Jaspers) who claims that in essence, a lonely person can never be blissful. We assume that the topic of death appears more rarely in the thoughts of active senior citizens than in the thoughts and reflections of introverted and apathetic ones (Strieženec, 1996). Research indicates that with senior citizens who practice religion (more than 70 % of the population in Slovakia), there is a substantial decrease in a possibility of voluntary termination of life despite difficult living conditions (see Drotárová, Antoničová, & Drotárová, 2003).
- e) *The technology and informatisation of society weakens the ties between parents and children.* (Lorenz, 1973) and the atmosphere of trust dies out. Family members spend less time communicating, they are no longer living together; rather, they live side by side. While the younger generation to some extent compensates for the lack of physical and social contact – direct social interaction, functioning in the virtual world and sharing of feelings, they often solve personal problems with completely unknown people in online discussion forums. The unpreparedness of most senior citizens to work with new technologies, in contact with which they feel as "generation after their prime" presents another disadvantage. Senior citizens do not have enough opportunities to share and fulfill the feeling of belonging to the family; therefore, they are looking for other places where they can find partners for conversations.
- At this point, we can observe a great risk as the credibility of senior citizens (many of them returning to childhood with higher retirement age) who, by trusting strangers outside the family, can seriously endanger themselves.
- f) *Weakening of the position of senior citizens in families, a decrease in intergenerational solidarity.* The family is the most important social institution which influences the quality of life of senior citizens. The situation of a senior citizen is directly related to the conditions of the family (Ziemska, 1980) in which they live: the quality, frequency and intensity (i.e. cordiality) of relationships. At present, for several reasons, the frequency of face-to-face family meetings with the participation of elderly parents

is on decrease (Napora, 2013a). Even in the era of socialism, families, especially in the countryside had a much closer contact with senior citizens. There were not any serious decisions taken without consulting the eldest family members. In solving problems with the participation of the elderly who carefully deliberated and often tamed passions, they facilitated the resolution of internal conflicts and serious family crises. At present, they are often ignored in this process. For a long time, senior citizens dominated the ceremonial calendar (Matoušek, 1999) e.g., during celebrations of anniversaries, seasonal work, and leisure time which was spent together. The elimination of presence of senior citizens from these activities undermines the continuity of transgenerational transmission, as traditions that have consolidated the community for centuries and have fostered common awareness are not respected (Cabanová, 2006). Even the process of sharing an event such as passing away acted as a unifying motive for family life. The open demonstration of respect and dignity in dealing with the sick was of prime importance together with respecting their personality, associating their honor, adhering to their recommendations, respecting the decisions at the time of their "weakness", and later, preserving their memory.

- g) *A significant reduction in the number of multi-generation families.* A multigenerational family, rich in ties and opportunities for contacts provides a form of support for its members, a sense of belonging, even if one parent is absent from the family for a long time, even in a matrifocal family where the absence of a father is permanent (Skupnik, 2010). In a long term, grandparents are also able to substitute the absence of parents in the family (Napora, 2013a). E.g. grandfather in an incomplete family presents a model of male behavior to grandchildren that children would not observe in a family without father. The relationship of grandparents and grandchildren is of particular importance, which is mutually enriching and it unites a multi-generation family. Grandparents reflect themselves in their grandchildren and they can devote time which they did not have for their own children when they were in productive age (Napora, 2013b). After the eventual loss of this natural contact, the impossibility of restoring social ties with grandchildren, the ageing person loses the foothold and often the meaning of life as well. The meaning of human life is associated with the need for usefulness in family and in society, and the feeling of uselessness and loneliness is often reinforced with doubts about oneself.

## Death as a taboo

*The ageing process must be accepted internally.* According to Jung (1995), being unable to grow old is as embarrassing as the inability to abandon the age of childhood at the age of majority. Thus, the ability to accept the necessary is a part of the maturity of ageing. As Augustine (1997, p. 102) notes, the ending of being is the final and inevitable culmination of every human existence as *"creatures arise and perish ... not all of them*

age, but all perish”.

In the societies of the past, the notion of mortality appeared to be something personal and intimate. Social phenomena such as revolts, revolutions, wars, natural disasters, various diseases, low levels of health care and other life-threats contributed to the fact that death threats and death expectations were ubiquitous and were an integral part of everyday life in families of that time (Možný, 2008). These factors strengthened the acceptance of death as a matter of course, as a standard component, as an accepted necessity. The expectation of death was a part of the awareness of contemporary societies, which even intensified with the spread of Christianity (“a memento mori – remember death”) and strengthened in the consciousness of man along with his/her ageing. In European community for many centuries, since the Middle Ages onwards, the value of an optimal, Christian death has resonated (Dupkala, 2011). In the past, ceremonies related to the end of life – ceremonial *ritualization* belonged to the main identifying factors of the spiritual level of the community that concluded the existence of one being.

The end of being could be perceived differently in the awareness of the community; it was the subject of folklore and fairy tales. It is sufficient to read thematic-oriented fairy tales by Pavel Dobšinský, which have a touch of horror storytelling for listeners/readers at present and it can be seen how much distance in the past people took on various aspects of the *end* of human existence.

With the development of more complex social relationships, the view of the end of human life has gradually changed or it has been cultivated, respectively (note: the question is whether it was for the benefit of a dying person or for loved ones). From the perspective of various disciplines, the end of human life is defined in various ways, such as:

- In Christianity, the finality of life was a punishment for the original sin (Augustine, 1997). In this situation, death concerned only physical side, not the spiritual one (i.e. soul), but rather, it was its liberation. In a more recent religious approach, death is understood as the definitive “*breakup of the principle of life (soul) with the body*” (Sokol, 2010, p. 332).
- In philosophy, the issue of death and its acceptance has been analyzed for a long time from various perspectives since its inception. It is specifically dealt with in *thanatology*, which a branch of science dealing with the issues of the process of dying and death. At this point, on the one hand, we can see a confident view of the phenomenon of dignified death as a fundamental right of a free man among Greek philosophers, such as Socrates (note: for Socrates, death did not matter. He did not escape, although he had learnt from his disciples that he would be sentenced to death as he believed that punishment on the body could not hurt his soul). The idea can be found in Epicurus (1989), as a manifestation of free will of a man, despised by death to death as the good, which can be observed in Cicero (2009).
- In modern history, it is A. Schopenhauer who claims that a man goes inexorably into the face of death. In later stages, it can be seen in discussions about the right of man and the loss of this right to exist, especially with philosophers of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries dealing with this issue (they were strongly influenced by Protestantism or Reformism).

Both M. Heidegger and S. Kierkegaard claimed that existence is the personal core of a man whose expansive "I" is heading towards their own death. K. Jaspers considers death a borderline situation that cannot be avoided; we enter it as a whole. In the case of Jaspers' existentialism, the theory of borderline situations prevails. Jaspers was of opinion that the true meaning of being was revealed to a man only during deep shocks such as illness, death, irreparable guilt, anxiety and the like.

It is at these moments that the "decryption" takes place in which one frees himself/herself from the burden of worries of their daily life. Man reveals the world in the depths of his/her intimate existence, his/her true experience of God (i.e. the transcendent). In contrast with previous philosophical trends, the central issues and methods of existentialism have become the borderline, escalated life situations of man – death, guilt, suffering, loneliness and anxiety (Šlosiar, 2002).

According to existentialists, anxiety is a way of possible looking at oneself, it is a self-reflection of human freedom, it is what a person reaches if they want to "find" and not "lose" themselves if they want to be themselves. They are also what they voluntarily get rid of in cowardice in alternative, non-authentic forms of life (Šlosiar, 2002). When we enter it with eyes opened, we *become more ourselves* (Störig, 1993). This is evident in Levinas and Landsberg (Dupkala, 2011), but especially in seemingly pessimistic vision by Sartre which stems from the existential principle that he formulated: *"I have always realized that I had no right to exist ..... the only certainty that a human being has is the movement towards death"*. Generally, the questions of death and the finality of being are a timeless concept. The end of life is the nature of every organism; it is a negation and a denial of each individual. From philosophical point of view, which is seen as a state of non-existence, respectively, it is the end of open being and the completion of life, or as a *transition of being to non-being*. Thus, death is inevitable, it is the only certainty in life of the individual and of the group, and it is a universal component of all cultures *across time and space* (Jakubovská, 2016, p. 109).

- *Psychological aspects.* From the ontogenetic perspective, both ageing and old age processes are a natural part of the human life cycle and death presents the culmination and victory of involutinal forces. Říčan (2004) follows this idea by stating that one is aware of his/her existence and by knowing in advance about death, this awareness profoundly affects their behavior, feelings and thinking. According to Jung (1995), only the person who accepts their finality, i.e. understands death even as a *goal of life and as a certain fulfillment*. In Erikson's theory (2002), the outcome of good life is, at the eighth stage, an "optimal" old age manifested by integrity. Achieving a state of integrity is manifested by accepting one's life as a whole and by *understanding its meaning*.
- *Biological aspects.* The most significant identification of the end of human being can be performed on the basis of diagnostics of demonstrable parameters of the absence of life, which are external manifestations of "not" functioning of human

organism. This criterion is based on a biological and medical standpoint, which characterizes death as a cessation of activities, the absence of manifestations of vital functions and the loss of all brain functions and this specification is also employed in law-making (Michalco, 2019).

By definition, the end of human life can be characterized in various dimensions and it is also possible to affect the substance; however, the question is: What does death mean in terms of values of human life? At present, scientific literature is a frequent issue of the target and instrumental values of human life and of good and evil. By tabooing the issue of death, this phenomenon has recently seemed to be excluded from the axiological system. Taboos are not moral or religious principles, *they themselves present a form of a ban* (Freud, 1997, p. 29). The avoidance of the phenomenon of death in modern societies has contributed to the fact that leaving life is a mystery, discussed with fear, almost as a taboo of a "sacred shyness" (Freud, 1997).

Leaving life always presents an extremely difficult situation not only for the extinct existence, but also for its surroundings. At this time, it is essential to manifest certain form of contact, interest and understanding to contact persons. Fear is natural – even gods and demigods feared death (e.g. *The Epic of Gilgamesh, The Iliad and The Odyssey*); as a result, it is necessary to overcome this fear, to attain the state of reconciliation and forgiveness, to follow an optimal death (Dupkala, 2011). In every culture, there is a mechanism for the cultivation this fear of death and to make it bearable and rational. As Jung (1995) notes *In Confinio Mortis (As Death Nears) in the evening of a long and eventful life, the vision broadens itself out into unsuspected vistas. Such a man no longer lives in the everyday world and in the peripeteia of personal relationships, but in the sight of many aeons.*

## Discussion

What does the reality of being imply for pedagogical sciences? Both ageing and retirement are an integral part of the eternal cycle of being. For this reason, in the current understanding of European culture, the "displacement" of these topics in life, in school education, and in culture is generally inappropriate (Petríková, 2019); as e.g., the artistically presented end of human life "returns children to life in its holistic understanding". In the conditions of the Slovak Republic, these are mainly changes in the following areas:

- a) School policy: strengthening and an appropriate implementation of the issue in the content of school education at all levels of formal education. This process should take place in the context of linking life and school as an institution whose origin and mission are related to preparing children and young people for life (of which all phases of human life are an integral part), also in the perspective of present-day demographic trends. At present, the topic of the model of family with senior citizens is included in school education only marginally, the issue of *ageing and the end of human life* is completely absent from the curriculum of school education.

In the concept of education towards partnership life and parenthood, this issue is displaced and the same approach, in the form of “avoiding this hot topic” has been manifested in minimizing the issue of the end of human life in the contents and forms of formal education, including in the subjects of ethics, citizenship and religious education where this issue properly belongs. This implies *the necessity of the innovation of the content of education*, the appropriate implementation of the topic, which should be *sensitively introduced on the basis of the age of the pupil*. The issues of human coexistence are important: topics about grandparents, about families with older people, the status of senior citizens in society, relationship with and protection of senior citizens, ethical issues of being and coexistence, bio-ethical issues of ageing, and natural death, the issue of euthanasia, etc.

- b) *Preparing future elementary and secondary school teachers* for having qualified discussions with pupils on such challenging topics (this aspect is also related to the systematic training of teachers of courses in ethics, citizenship and religious education and subjects of primary and secondary schools, as well as the innovation of university study fields the subjects of this focus).

New challenges are also related to initiating the public debate on ageing and on the end of human life from various perspectives. There is a necessity of modification of social policy of the Slovak Republic which is based on the elaboration of the National Active Ageing Program for 2014–2020 and its projection into specific measurable steps (or goals) for the benefit of older people.

## Conclusion

Within European culture, ageing dominated by beauty, youth, competition and performance is complex (none of the above mentioned expressions can be marked as frequent in the dictionary of senior citizens).

It is also unpopular to talk about ageing in the countries of the Eastern bloc primarily for other reasons, mainly due to the perception of ageing, which is seen as a period of “dependence on others”. In the case of post-socialist countries, the “dependence on others” fully describes the economic dependence on children and the thin border between health and disease/poverty. In these countries, people are afraid of ageing for economic deprivation (it is the generation that gave away their children and no one led them to save for old age in the era of socialism, for health care was free). The third reason is that the natural outcome of ageing is death, which has been completely displaced from everyday life and the fear of the unknown is natural.

Nevertheless, old age can be considered a stage in life *that can be experienced very positively and pleasantly*, if we are able to accept it and take it as it is – then, *ageing can also become successful*. It is up to us whether it is death with a full stop or with a question mark. Ageing, however, poses ethical, medical, sociological and socio-educational questions for experts. The focus of both professional and public debate should have a deeper philosophical, educational, political and socio-economic dimension. However, this discussion

will only make sense if it results into specific measures for the benefit of senior citizens. In addition to greater support of families that care for senior citizens, trends in society should induce new awareness-raising tasks, e.g., how to influence young people in a more effective way – with the aim to change attitudes and relation towards senior citizens. With the statement “what you see in one person can be reflected in you” in education of young generation for empathy and understanding, we prepare a better old age for them.

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	<b>ON THE PHENOMENA OF AGEING AND DEATH FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF HUMANITIES (THE TABOO OF THE PHENOMENON OF DEATH FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF NEW TASKS IN PEDAGOGICAL SCIENCES)</b>	<b>VLASTA CABANOVÁ</b>	<b>61</b>
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	<b>REPORT</b>	
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## NEWS FROM EUROPE ON THE ISSUES OF INCLUSIVE POLICIES

**Martin Kaleja**

In the societal context in recent years here in Europe, an emphasis has been laid on issues concerning equality, fairness and inclusion in education. Apart from abundant discussions, advisory meeting, both professional and vocational, there are also ambivalent confrontations. Some contest the very ideas that the others support. Varying attitudinal tunings of variously defined groups of people in the society enhance, support and in some cases promote certain things equally, or even the more vociferously, the less they result in a grasp on the topic. An example is the educational community where there is no uniform perception, much less uniform implementation of inclusive education. Inclusive and integration phenomena become the subject of communication troubles despite the fact that by their nature, they should prevent conflict among stakeholders in education. The context of institutional school education of Roma children, pupils and adult Romani is exactly the same. It is conceived completely identically not only in the educational field, but especially in the context of the general social perception. This is why representatives of the Member States of Europe assembled on 10 and 11 October 2019 at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg to the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the International Dialogue between the Council of Europe and the Romani and Travellers to discuss difficult issues, problems and barriers with which the Romani are faced on their educational path. They encounter restrictions, limitations, diminishment and exclusion. Educational potential in some of the Romani of preschool age is not adequately stimulated. Non-participation in preschool education causes the loss of what attendance at kindergarten, or at least at one-year preparatory class of a primary school brings to other children.

Thus, socialization of the child is diminished. Communication and language skills are not developed by the appropriate required influences. However, language is the means of communication which facilitates the processes of teaching and learning. Communication needs to develop and enrich in an ontogenetically adequate way, not all language levels and linguistic dimensions. Language and communication are mechanisms of the development of cognitive processes. Their restriction and limitation mean a loss on and significant limiting intervention into school education, and consequently, of course, also into the quality of human life.

Education is a factor that affects our whole being. By its means, an individual makes decisions, determines, chooses from offers, selects, approves and sets for themselves their own form and level of conformity of their conduct and behaviour, evaluating and assessing normality, including the question of openness to disposabilities, variations and other modalities. As evident, education is more than just a "piece of paper" in the form of a "report card", or in the form of a diploma, confirming what education

should include in and of itself. According to available sources, almost half of Romani children of preschool age are still not participating in school education. If parents decide for the institutional form of education, they prefer elementary school preparatory classes to kindergartens (Kolaříková, 2015). Effective as of September 2017, the Education Act supposes obligatory participation in preschool education, which is implemented in terms of the Framework Educational Programmes for preschool education. Preparatory classes of primary schools have started implementing the character of preschool curriculum content since September 2016 and they are one of the possible legitimate alternatives of the realization of compulsory education fully guaranteed by the state. (Kaleja, 2019) A high number of Romani pupils gain their compulsory elementary education outside the educational mainstream. According to a survey by the Czech School Inspectorate from 2015, the total sum of 15.1% (5,167) of all 34,191 Romani pupils from a total of 4,098 primary schools were educated under the Framework Educational Programme with reduced content and lowered demands, which in practice represents not only lowered expected outcomes of key competencies, but also doubt about the correctness of diagnostic procedures and subsequent measures taken. (Vláda České republiky, 2016) What are the visions, the trends of educational policy taking into account the peculiarities of school education of Romani children, pupils and students, in the area of the European Union? The Council of Europe together with representatives of the Romani and Travellers, as declared at their 8<sup>th</sup> joint session on 10–11 October 2019 in Strasbourg, will be to promoting in the subsequent years:

- Change in pedagogical approaches applied in educational processes, including changing own personal approach of the educator. Configuration of the effect of teaching staff in the actual pedagogical configuration, as its current form is often far from the pedagogical paradigms.
- Change in the view of a pupil and their family context, and change of proper attribution towards the pupil.
- Support for the Romani language and its development and encouragement of its dissemination and interpretation, including the perception of its cultural attribute and perception of the importance to carry out research in the field of Romani language and literature.
- Subsequent definition of the possibilities of the mother tongue (Romani) in official communications and in the processes of schooling.
- Removing systematized errors that cause the enormous number of children and pupils to be educated outside educational mainstream, and finally focus on targeted active participation in social life and decision making.

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	<b>BOOK REVIEW</b>	
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## TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE FAMILY OVER TIME: CULTURAL-HISTORICAL PARALLELS

**Martin Kaleja**

Mareková, H. (2019). *Premeny rodiny v čase: kultúrno-historické paralely* [Transformations of the Family over Time: Cultural-Historical Parallels]. Brno: MSD.

The scientific monograph by Hermína Mareková opens a discourse on a subject that affects us all. It is not a purely specialist, professional, expert subject matter. On the contrary. It is a practical, tangible matter; a reality we live constantly, albeit not always fully realizing what its essence and meaning for our lives is. The monograph written in Slovak and published by the MSD publishing house in Brno last year offers a presentation and interpretation of the topical phenomenon pertaining to various family issues and their contexts, from various perspectives. However, within the scheme of the book reviewed here, the author especially assesses cultural, historical and other associated perspectives. For instance, she mentions the social dimension where in their conception within the author's research activity and output, it is the relationship of human to human, and the individual's attitude to, opinion of and personal feelings about those who constitute the family, as well as about the family as a whole of the entire existential entity of our being, that become the dominant attributes.

The monograph is structured into six chapters. Their subject matter framework and chronological succession reflect the appropriate methodological standards of the corresponding type of publication output while fulfilling requirements implied in the definition of the form and nature of interconnected interdisciplinarity, which is expected, or even latently demanded, within the bases of current social sciences and humanities. The reviewed work documents the necessary formal and technical parameters clearly. Individual parts contribute by means of their topics to the solution of the issues of current socio-cultural changes which affect family systems and their patterns. This way, the author confronts the social reality within the context of tradition, archetypes and the present appropriately, employing also historical, legislative and social perspectives by means of which she documents the described reality on the examples of prototype and stereotyping. She further develops this reality by presentation of theoretical concepts, or extracts sociological, psychological or other concepts from other fields relevant to the topic.

Our critical view of this aspect of the work encourages the thought whether the text as a whole would not benefit from integration of chapters designated by numbers 3 and 4 and whether the text would not profit from an implication of a denser delimitation of the family context, or from establishing connections to the issues of family, as it features in the very title of the publication.

From the linguistic point of view, the work is of a readable nature and characterized by logically assembled dynamics both in its scope, and in its content. The constituent parts of individual chapters of the book introduce the reader through their delimitation into the solution of the issues at hand, providing room for own understanding of the context of the sub-topics delineated by the author which are in a complementary way connected to the discussed phenomenon that the author of the publication interprets in her conception and her interpretation of which she presents to the reader.

From the perspective of critical parameters and points of departure of scientific knowledge of the very methodology of humanities and social sciences, one may say that the reviewed work at its core does not include any presentation of a particular research design which would include a description of its implementation and empirical findings arising from it. Within its context, the work includes a presentation of research findings which the author has reached thanks to the implementation of a number of research projects implemented either by herself or through the significant contribution of her own professional activities.

As regards the subject matter plane, the monograph does not fail to include the aspects of interdisciplinary cooperation, and the principles of mutual transfer and its proper determination, which follows from the text presented and the language means used, including the appropriate way of interpreting knowledge, theoretical concepts and empirical findings employed by the author. She also reflects on current trends which characterize the relevant disciplines.

The resources, sources and facts interpreted by the author, which she references in her text, correspond both thematically and factually not only to the phenomenon of the family, but also to its delimited cultural-historical field. The works cited point to an implementation of real reflection, also documented by the text itself, which drew not only on knowledge of domestic origin, but also on foreign works, represented in the bibliography by publications written in English, German and French. The scientific monograph **is valued positively and I believe that it will find appropriate reception on the part of its readership.**

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## FAMILY IN THE PREVENTION OF RISK BEHAVIOUR OF PUPILS

**Kamil Janiš**

Svoboda Hoferková, S., & Bělík, V. (2019). *Rodina v prevenci rizikového chování žáků* [Family in the Prevention of Risk Behaviour of Pupils]. Hradec Králové: Gaudeamus.

The reviewed publication *Family in the Prevention of Risk Behaviour of Pupils* focuses on highly topical current problem posed by prevention of risk behaviour of pupils in the school environment. Its content connects seamlessly to the previous publication of the creative team, namely *Prevention of Risk Behaviour in Pupils from the Perspective of Pedagogues* (2018), but its added value is the fact that it focuses on possible involvement of the second important factor in the prevention system, the family. In this regard, the present monograph, written in very comprehensible language, benefits not only parents and pedagogues, but also other members of the public who are interested in the issue of prevention of risk behaviour.

The authors focus on all manifestations which may occur in school environment. Precisely this problem becomes the subject of the first chapter "*Risk behaviour of pupils in today's Czech school*" (p. 9–34). Based on their study of professional sources, the authors define the central concept as follows: "*risk behaviour, which we understand as such behaviour of children and youth that endangers their health or the health of the society.*" (p. 9). Equally interesting is the view of pedagogues on risk behaviour which they perceive as the greatest trend and challenge. This is firstly due to the "increase in the number of phenomena that we deal with at school" (19 %) and also to the "greater awareness of teachers about the risk phenomena" (18 %). (p. 16–17). As the authors state, at present, we can see an increase in "aggressiveness, bullying, coarse language and truancy." However, the most puzzling about the trend is the lack of the parents' interest in the children and poor communication between the family and school. Another trend is greater interest of schools on being better informed about some of the manifestations of risk behaviour, but also activity of other entities who deal with the prevention of risk behaviour. This can be considered as positive, yet, many statistics still confirm a gradual increase in respective negative phenomena.

Part of the publication presents the results of an extensive research. Special attention was paid to the aggressive behaviour of pupils. The authors define aggression as "*multifactorial phenomenon conditioned by many aspects. In addition to personal dispositions, an essential role is played by the family and the general exposure of the child to aggressive behaviour (on the part of the parents, in the media), in a broader sense, the social climate and the degree of tolerance to violence in the society itself.*"

(p. 20). In the whole work, there are demonstrations of several case studies (some of them really “rough”) which underscore the serious situation of prevention.

The second area of risk behaviour manifestations present themselves is the cyberspace which is among today’s youth an immensely popular and widespread environment which occupies a sweepingly predominant part of many children and teenagers’ leisure activity. Even in this environment, it is possible to participate actively in some aggressive games, for example, but also to bully someone else (e.g. by sexting).

Spanning several pages, brief descriptions of several specific manifestations of risk behaviour are presented, including such cases as aggressive behaviour, truancy and substance abuse, which are supplemented by real case studies. Furthermore, the text mentions other phenomena.

One of the most interesting and central parts of the publication occurs in section *“Risk Behaviour of Children and the Role of the Family”* (p. 34–54), especially Table no. 5 (p. 34) which captures protective risk factors, such as the individual, family, peers, school, community, society. Of all listed multitude of factors enumerated, the authors focus primarily on the family, but they admit that there is some influence of endogenous factors (p. 37). For the system of prevention, it is extremely important to be aware that the risk factors in the family environment include *“dysfunctional family, unhealthy family lifestyle, undefined or non-existent rules of behaviour, disinterest of parents, positive attitude towards the violation of social norms or to risk behaviour, mental illness in the family, socially pathological or negative phenomena (domestic violence, addiction), poor socio-economic situation, unemployment and poverty, belonging to minorities, divorce or family break-up.”* (p. 35)

It is quite undeniable that the family is *“the most important socialization factor”* but at the same time, traits are presented which *“characterize the contemporary family as a potential factors of deviant (risk) behaviour”* (cf. Kraus, 2015). In accordance with the mentioned author, the authors include here the demographic situation, democratization of family life, socio-economic situation of families, disintegration of family life, the isolation of families, family lifestyle and shifts in the functions of the family (p. 38–41). There is undoubtedly nothing to disagree with about this. The question remains how the undesirable condition can be changed. Disorders related to family functioning represent an all-social (if not global) problem. This category includes inappropriate parenting styles (e.g. protectionist or inconsistent upbringing), and one of the undoubtedly most significant factors, divorce, family break-up and role of the single parent (p. 46–49).

The risk environment of greatest potential (and undoubtedly real) impact on the tendency to manifestations of risk behaviour in children is the family, especially one in which social pathologies are present. These are various addictions, but also domestic violence, neglect, maltreatment or sexual abuse of children, criminal activity, etc. (p. 49–52). All these factors may magnify if such family live in an excluded locality. As already mentioned, the authors illustrate all the factors presented in their case studies.

One of the most interesting and valuable chapters throughout the monograph is entitled *“Awareness of Parents About Risk Behaviour and Prevention in the School Environment”*

(p. 55–76). The chapter contains the implemented research of *“awareness of parents about risk behaviour of children and of the practical implementation of prevention of risk behaviour in schools”*. It presents the findings of a research notably interesting due to the answers to what parents actually imagine, or what parents consider as risk phenomena (p. 57–58). Such phenomena as risk sexual behaviour, lying, bad peer group or intolerance, are considered as less represented by the parents. *“It is also noteworthy that only a relatively small percentage of parents reported as risk behaviour children’s on-line presence* (p. 59), which may be considered extremely surprising in our present times. A series of further investigations confirms that it is in the on-line environments that a number of risk behaviour manifestations, or even beginnings of criminal behaviour, occur. It is true that this environment is considered by the parents as preferential as their children are staying at home and browse the virtual environment *“only”*. They obtain a great variety of new information, which means that the environment is not considered as dangerous by parents due to the fact that many parents cannot use information technology on a level comparable to their children’s.

Therefore, many parents are not aware of what content and which social networks their child frequents and with whom they communicate.

Equally interesting is the answer whether *“parents have noticed their children’s risk behaviour”* (p. 62). The result that only 14 % of parents responded in the affirmative, meaning that they have noticed risk behaviour in their children, is striking. In many cases, parents tend to overlook manifestations of risk behaviour in their children. The question remains whether consciously or unconsciously.

Awareness plays an important role. Parents feel sufficiently informed in the area of addictive substances (almost 26 %) and bullying (almost 17 %). A total of a fifth of parents has sufficient information about all the negative phenomena (p. 64). What is positive, however, is that parents showed the greatest interest in lectures on the mentioned manifestations of risk behaviour, such as risks associated with cyberspace and social networking, cyberbullying, sexting and online addiction (28 %). Addictive substances only follow these (21 %). Such findings are very interesting, as according to the results presented at an earlier point in the monograph, they are not afraid of the phenomena. Maybe they want to become more aware of the dangers. However, it is striking that they do not know of the existence of school prevention program, as only 1 % of parents know it from the school website personally (p. 69). Indeed, many parents are immune or tolerant to certain manifestations of risk behaviour. For example, the authors report that *“parents are aware that their child drinks alcohol but do not consider it as risk behaviour.”* (p. 72)

The last chapter *“Conclusions and Recommendations for Practice”* (p. 77–86) presents a number of interesting and constructive ideas on how to address the situation in family and school environments. The emphasis is on family upbringing, which can seem like somewhat utopian in a situation where a relatively large proportion of marriages end in divorce. A much more realistic applications are the so-called Early Intervention System (p. 78–81), Mentor Interventions (p. 83–84) and a system of lectures for parents of pupils (p. 84–86).

To evaluate the monograph as a whole, we may appreciate the effort of the two authors to highlight the role of the family and its example in the prevention system. This means that the entire publication can be an important source of inspiration for all those who deal with prevention of risk behaviour, as well as for teachers who are first in line to come into contact with the various manifestations of risk behaviour of pupils, and last but not least for the parents.

As a way of conclusion, let me quote from the review by Miloslav Jůzl: *“Apart from school, the family plays an essential role in (mainly primary) prevention of risk or criminal behaviour of children and youth, which is why, as documented by the authors through their research, without close cooperation with and involvement of the family, effective and meaningful preventive activities cannot be created or implemented. One may call it a uniform educational front”*. It remains only to add that there is room for improvements not only within the school environment, such as improving the corresponding “related” school lessons, the activities of educational advisor, the structure of prevention programs, but also within the communication between the school and the family, informing families and exhorting the parents themselves.

The publication has some internal imperfections, such as the non-corresponding pagination, the contents are inconsistent with the following chapters (e.g. the first chapter starts on page 9 and ends on page 34, but according to the contents, it should span pages 6 to 24).

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