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## School – Possibility or (new) Risk for Young Females in Correctional Institutions

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IVANA JEĐUD BORIĆ<sup>1</sup> AND ANJA MIROSAVLJEVIĆ\*<sup>2</sup>

*Educating a girl child means educating the family*  
*Croatian folk proverb*

☞ In this paper, the authors deal with the education of girls in a Croatian correctional institution as a risk factor for social exclusion based on the data obtained via semi-structured interviews with experts and the girls and via the documentation analysis method. In this regard, the paper deals with two perspectives, i.e. the girls' and experts', in the context of risks related to schooling, intertwining these risks through the past, present and future, according to the stories of the research participants. The authors compare the perspectives given and explore the questions related to possibilities of the education of girls in correctional institutions.

**Keywords:** girls, correctional institution, schooling, risks, social exclusion

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## Šola – priložnost ali (novo) tveganje za mlada dekleta v prevzgojnih ustanovah

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IVANA JEĐUD BORIĆ IN ANJA MIROSAVLJEVIĆ\*

*Vzgoja deklice je vzgoja nove družine.  
(Hrvaški ljudski pregovor)*

☞ V prispevku avtorici obravnavata izobraževanje deklet v eni izmed hrvaških prevzgojnih ustanov kot faktor novega tveganja za socialno izključenost. Podatke za raziskavo sta pridobili s polstrukturiranimi intervjuji, ki sta jih opravili s strokovnjaki in z dekleti, ter z metodo analize dokumentov. Tako predstavljata doživljanje deklet in ocene strokovnjakov o vzgoji in tveganjih, ki so povezana s šolanjem. Pri tem se prepleta predstavitev tveganj v preteklosti, sedanjosti in v prihodnosti v življenju deklet, vključenih v raziskavo. Avtorici primerjata omenjene vidike in analizirata vprašanja, povezana z možnostmi in dosegom izobraževanja deklet v prevzgojnih ustanovah.

**Ključne besede:** dekleta, prevzgojne ustanove, šolanje, tveganja, socialna izključenost

## Introduction

After the primary form of socialization (family), the educational setting is probably one of the most important “areas and instruments” of socialization of children and youth. It is extremely important, and it greatly influences the development of children. Children and youth spend a significant part of their day at school; it is a place where one can learn and play and is a place of both education and care.

The Croatian Ombudsman’s Annual Report (2011) stated that the educational rights of children placed in correctional institutions are being violated, especially in regard to their status and treatment in mainstream elementary and high schools. In addition, it is stated that the most common problems that children living in correctional institutions deal with are stigmatization and exclusion due to the fact that schools are not able to adequately respond to the specific needs of children with behavioural problems.

Documents such as the United Nations’ Declaration on Human Rights (1948) and the Croatian Constitution (1990) guarantee everyone the right to education. Education is closely related to (un)employment, which is consequently linked to social exclusion. Social exclusion is a rather multidimensional phenomenon that weakens relations between the individual and the community. This weakening can have different effects (e.g. economic, political, socio-cultural, spatial, etc.). The more ways in which this relation is affected, the more the individual is vulnerable (Asenjo et al., 2006). This means that social exclusion is more than a lack of money or material goods, because exclusion includes economic, as well as social, cultural, political and other dimensions. The complexity of the concept of social exclusion is also evident through attempts to determine its dimensions. In that sense, different authors (Burchardt et al., 2002; Böhnke, 2001; Gallie & Paugam, 2004; Poggi, 2003; Kunz, 2003; Kronauer, 1998) talk about different dimensions or fields of social exclusion. In the context of this topic, it is important to observe that education and exclusion from the labour market are significant dimensions of the phenomenon of social exclusion. Social exclusion is usually perceived as a vicious circle consisting of three components: unemployment, poverty and social isolation. Various components of social exclusion affect each other, creating a spiral of uncertainty. Job loss leads to the risk of poverty, and living in poverty creates additional difficulties in searching for a job. Individuals are thus caught in the trap of long-term unemployment. At the same time, unemployment and poverty make it difficult to participate in different social activities. Social connections are reduced and the likelihood of social isolation increases. It is important to mention that

exclusion from the labour market is one of the central dimensions of social exclusion. Therefore, if one's employment is the precondition for inclusion, then education is a key mechanism of social inclusion. The most important determinant of employability is education. The degree of employability is associated with the possession of qualifications and skills. Educated individuals are more mobile and more easily adapt to new circumstances. Therefore, social exclusion and educational failure are causally related. Education contributes not only to the acquisition of knowledge and skills, but affects the socialization, inclusion and empowerment of the individuals. Education (as with work) is also a mean of personal fulfilment (Šučur et al., 2006).

Since the focus of this paper is the risk of social exclusion of the girls with behavioural problems placed in an institution, due to their educational status and with that associated employment opportunities in the future, we shall briefly examine the field of education as a risk factor. Various studies have demonstrated the presence of specific risk factors related to education to be an important risk for behavioural problems. The following are some of the key studies:

- Wong, Slotboom, and Bijleveld (2008) analysed 26 studies conducted in 12 European countries from 1982 to 2008. According to the results of a meta-analysis, the authors extracted risk factors specific for girls: a high level of negative life circumstances, disobedience, suicidal behaviour, no support from mothers, bad relationships between mothers and daughters, permissive parenting, physical abuse, *poor school achievement, weak school attachment and commitment*.
- Zahn et al. (2008) analysed 2300 scientific papers and book chapters in USA dealing with risk and protective factors related to delinquent behaviours of girls aged 11 to 18. The data revealed that gender-specific protective factors important for girls are, among others: *good school success, positive school experiences, and positive relationships in school*.
- Bloom & Convington (2001) made a typical profile of a girl in an intervention system in the USA: she is between 13 and 18 years old, a member of an ethnic minority, has abuse experiences in the past, *manifests school failure*, social pathology is evident in her family, has an addictive type of relationship with older men, has a history of drug abuse, *truancy and drops out of school*.
- Fine and Zane (1989, in Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 2004) determined that girls are *seven times more prone to drop out from school* (mainly for family reasons, i.e. care of their brothers and sisters or their own children).
- Rapuš Pavel (1999) in her study from Slovenia identified two periods of

school failure: 1) transition from lower to higher grades in elementary school. In this period, girls' *school failure was attributed to learning difficulties and inadequate family situation*; 2) transition from elementary to high-school. This period is full of *truancy, disagreements with teachers and lack of interest in school*.

- Žižak, Maurović, and Jeđud (2010) analysing girls in three types of treatment (institutional, day treatment and community treatment) in Croatia concluded that common characteristics of the beneficiaries are *learning difficulties and poor school achievement*.

These studies show that education is undoubtedly a significant risk factor regarding girls with behavioural problems. In addition, schooling and education is an important factor in the aetiology of behavioural problems, but it is also important treatment area which, in the context of social exclusion, can decrease the vulnerability to and risks of social exclusion of girls in their future life.

A young, undereducated woman/girl from a dysfunctional biological family and history of behavioural problems leaving a correctional institution is not on an easy life path. All the aforementioned place her into vulnerable group for social exclusion and increase the risk of falling into the whirlpool of social exclusion.

## Methodology

### Aims and methods

The research presented in this paper is based on the qualitative approach, and aims to improve the understanding of different perspectives (those of experts and beneficiaries) regarding the specific issue of education of girls with behavioural disorders. Opting for the qualitative research approach is especially important in order to enable the girls' voices to be heard, as well as to have their specific experiences discussed in terms that are significant, well-known and close to them (Gilligan et al., 1988, according to Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2008).

*The general aim* of the research is to gain insight into the perspective of the young females, the beneficiaries of the correctional institution, as well as the experts employed in the correctional institution regarding the young females' education. Along with the general aim, the following *research questions* are indicated:

- What are young females' experience and views on their schooling?

- How do young females perceive education in relation to their future?
- What are experts' views on the education of young females with behavioural problems?

### Research participants

The research was conducted in the Bedekovčina Correctional Institution (BCI), the only institution of its type in Croatia, which provides boarding and treatment for one third of all girls with behavioural problems from various parts of Croatia. Therefore, it may be expected that beneficiaries and experts from the BCI are relevant participants regarding the set aims of the research, i.e. they can be seen as an “information-rich” sample, as described by Patton (2002).

Twenty-five young females, beneficiaries of the correctional institution, and ten experts participated in the research. Table 1 provides a more detailed account of both groups of participants.

**Table 1.** *Review of Research Participants' Characteristics*

Young females - beneficiaries of the BCI	Experts employed in the BCI
<p>Altogether, <b>25 young females</b> (out of 26 residing in the institution at the time of research) participated in the interview after giving their voluntary consent following the principles of the Ethical Code of Research Involving Children (2003).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The average age</b> of the girls at the time of the interview was <b>16.2 years old</b>. The age range was from 15 to 19 years old.</li> <li>• The girls had spent <b>an average of 10 months</b> in the institution at the time of the interview (ranging from a month to two years).</li> </ul>	<p>A total of <b>10 participants*</b> (8 females and 2 males) were involved, out of whom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 people spent their entire working life in the BCI (30 or more years of service);</li> <li>• 2 people worked for the BCI, changed their job, but have since returned to work for the BCI;</li> <li>• 2 people with over 10 years of service in the BCI, working in treatment;</li> <li>• 1 person who is not directly employed in treatment, but in professional education work;</li> <li>• 2 male educators who work for the BCI;</li> <li>• The Director of the BCI.</li> </ul>
<p>* The care and treatment work involves a total of 16 employees.</p>	

With the specific focus of the paper in mind, the following table provides a review of key characteristics of the educational status of girls participating in the research (Table 2).

**Table 2.** *Key Characteristics of the Educational Status of Girls Participating in the Research*

<b>Educational status of the girls</b>			
<i>Primary school</i>	<i>Secondary school</i>	<i>Vocational education programmes</i>	<i>Not in school</i>
<b>12</b> Some of the girls attend regular primary schools in the town where the institution is located, while others take exams without attending school.	<b>2</b> One girl is attending a vocational programme in sales, while the other one is trained to become a hairdresser. While conducting this research, one of them was expelled from school for having too many failing marks and stealing during internship. The aforementioned girl has subsequently been restricted from residence and treatment in the correctional institution.	<b>9</b> Special educational programmes in the institution which provide schooling for auxiliary jobs: junior chef, waiter and tailor.	<b>2</b> The reason for not attending school is the "inability to get involved in the education process".* One of the girls was placed in the correctional institution in the second half of the second educational period, and up to then had not started attending school. The other girl was not receiving education because of the inability to continue the commenced education in the pedicure technician programme, given the fact that no schools in the vicinity of the correctional institution offer the aforementioned programme.

\* According to data from beneficiaries' personal records.

In this context, it is important to mention the placement process itself, which often takes a few months, and in which the intervention itself slows down the education process (e.g. not attending school while waiting for placement order). Moreover, it has an adverse effect on the possibilities of opting for the desired secondary education. These types of situations may increase the distance from school and obligations, and cause further educational deficits, and prolong the duration of schooling.

### **Data Collection Method**

The data was collected using the semi-structured interview method. The interviews were recorded and afterwards transcribed word for word. The interviews with girls were conducted following the Ethical Code of Research Involving Children (2003).



## Data Processing Methods

In data processing, qualitative text analysis was applied, the purpose of which is to summarize, structure, comprehend and interpret the empirical contents obtained in the process of collecting information. Specifically, in the research that is the subject of this paper, the qualitative analysis process was conducted in the following ways: first, reading the interview transcript and selecting those parts of the text (coding units) that refer to schooling; second, ascribing codes to the selected text units; third, connecting codes into more abstract (superior) categories; fourth, interpreting the data regarding the categories.

In the final step of information interpretation, a logical model (matrix) was offered to facilitate understanding the results. The results representation matrix was formed primarily based on the time dimension, which was recognized in interviews with the girls and the experts. For instance, both groups of participants talked about the past (the course of schooling before placement in the correctional institution), the present (schooling in the correctional institution) and the future (plans and hopes regarding schooling).

The information was processed separately for the two groups of participants, in order to obtain specific insight into both perspectives. In the final interpretation of information, the two perspectives were considered and interpreted altogether.

## Results

The results will be given separately with regard to individual perspectives, i.e. groups of participants or more specifically in relation to the categories. The research participants' original quotes<sup>3</sup> will be given in order to support the results.

### The Young Females' Perspective on Education

WHAT DO THE GIRLS SAY?		
PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
School as part of wider problems	Different experiences with education in the correctional institution	Education as part of plans for the future
Problems in school		
Lack of motivation and willingness to go to school	The importance of school for the future	
Rejection and feeling of isolation in school		

**Figure 1.** The Young Females' Perspective

<sup>3</sup> The categories have been marked in **bold letters**, while direct quotes of the research participants have been marked in *italics*.

Within the girls' perspective, seven separate categories have been individuated. These can be seen in relation to the following time dimensions: the past (four categories), the present (two categories) and the future (one category) (Figure 1).

The girls discuss school and schooling in the **past**, i.e. before placement into the correctional institution, using following categories: school as part of the problem, problems in school, lack of motivation and willingness to go to school, rejection and feeling isolated in school.

When discussing their lives before placement into the correctional institution, and problems that led to the placement, the girls mention **school as part of wider problems**. In addition to problems such as running away from home, fights with parents, alcohol abuse, associating with antisocial peers and committing offences, there are always accounts of problems in the school environment (*Then as if the devil had possessed me. I just, I started running away, not going to school at all. I got in with a bad crowd. I would go out and not come home for days*). More specifically, the girls discuss problems in school, such as bad (failing) marks, lack of discipline in class, aggression towards teachers and peers and skipping classes (*I didn't listen to the teacher; instead I would throw rubbers at my colleagues*). Some girls report good academic achievement when they were younger, i.e. mainly in the early stages of primary school. Some girls ascribe problems in school, i.e. the emergence of problems, to the peers that they were socializing with, and their own suggestibility to peers with risky behaviours (*Then there was this girl who liked to cut classes. Being somewhat suggestible as I am, you know, I started cutting classes with her, you know*). In their reports about how problems in school began, the interesting thing is that fairly often the girls state that along with skipping school there were other risky behaviours, such as disobedience and fights with parents, running away from home, getting in with antisocial peers.

In the context of **problems in school**, descriptions of skipping school are especially individuated (*I went to school for the first two or three days, and then I didn't feel like it, and I always found a reason not to go to school*), as well as descriptions of longer periods of absence from class (two months, a semester), while one girl mentions that she does not have the habit of going to school (*I'm not used to going to school. I'm used to skipping school*). These longer periods of absence from school definitely have a negative impact on the education process, as well as the process of gaining knowledge and academic achievements. They also contribute to the lack of interest and motivation for school. Absence from school can finally result in withdrawing from the educational process, which can result in new risks for the girls.

The category entitled **lack of motivation and willingness to go to school** consists of statements of girls who primarily talk about not being willing to study or to be in class. The girls most often describe this using the following expression: *I didn't feel like it*. With the aforementioned problems in school and lack of motivation to study and be in class, the girls mention **rejection and feeling isolated in school**, which is manifested in negative labelling, isolation, feeling different and rejected by the peers (*Well, they knew me as a rebel, as a bully. You know, they thought badly of me; they would say mean things to me, attack me.*).

Two categories have been placed in the present dimension: different experiences of schooling in the correctional institution and the importance of education for the future.

The category that contains reports and experiences of girls about their **schooling in the correctional institution**, presents a continuum of **different experiences**: from very positive ones that report improved current academic achievement, as well as improved relationship with peers (*Great, everyone is really good, I mean when I first told them I lived in a correctional institution, you know, they didn't believe me, I mean no one sees me that way, as being that girl from the institution, but you know, as a normal, you know, as a normal girl. I have two or three best friends, and all the others are all right, I have a good relationship with most of them, but there are some that I don't have a good relationship with.*), to descriptions of dissatisfaction caused mainly by the (in)ability to attend the preferred school. Accordingly, one of the participants expresses dissatisfaction with relatively low requirements for students schooled in the institution (*I would offer more subjects because this is, I don't know, I feel like we're stupid because we're in a correctional institution, we don't have enough subjects. I'm used to... I went to both primary and secondary school...in secondary school I had around 15 or 16 subjects. This is too easy for me. I think I can do more than that.*). Some of the girls demonstrate indifference regarding education, i.e. they are focused on completing a certain level of education fast and without much effort (*I don't go to school on a regular basis, I just take exams. And, for example, it is good for me that I just take these exams now. It's easier. We are given study materials we use to study and then I just take the exam*).

When talking to the girls, **school** is clearly recognized as **important** in regard to their (positive) **future**. The girls are aware of the need to continue and complete education (*I have realized that without school you are nothing; Well, I have to finish my primary and secondary school so that one day I may find a nice normal job, have my own money, my own place, and so on.*). Some of the girls equate finishing school with leaving the correctional institution (*I have to spend*

a year here, I have to finish school. When I finish school, I'm going home.), and recognize the correctional institution as a supportive environment for finishing school (*I know that if I go home now, you know, I won't wake up in time for school, I'll cut classes. And here, I am at least certain that I'll go to school every morning, get up in time, come to my internship in time and not cut classes. And that's better for me.*).

The category **education as part of planning for the future** is a continuation of this category in the present dimension, where finishing school, i.e. completing a vocational programme, is seen as an important precondition for a good (normal) life: *Well, I don't want to be anything special, like famous or anything. I want a normal life. I want to finish school, have my own place, like for instance... I'll probably finish hairdressers' school so that maybe I'll work in a hair salon or something.*

### The Experts' Perspective on the Girls' Education

After obtaining the girls' perspectives of the risks related to schooling, we were interested in what the experts say concerning girls' education.

WHAT DO THE EXPERTS SAY?		
PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
School as part of wider problems	Treatment and possibilities	Concern for the girls' future
Phenomenology of behavioural problems		Wishes and suggestions for improvement

**Figure 2.** The Experts' Perspective

Within the experts' perspective, five separate categories have been recognized. These can be seen in relation to the following time dimensions: the past (two categories), the present (one category) and the future (two categories) (Figure 2).

The experts perceive school and schooling before placement into the correctional institution (in the past) as **part of the wider problems** that led to the placement in the institution. In the context of risks, among other risks factors, they regularly talk about schooling as both an important etiological risk factor for developing behavioural problems, as well as a manifested form of their behavioural problems with which they enter the institution.

Therefore, in addition to problems in education, experts also mention family problems and pathology (*Family is a disaster. When one reads their reports, one is amazed that these children behave the way they do. It is a heavy*

pathology.), problematic partnerships (*For them I guess that in that way they are trying to get the love they miss so I guess they probably think that through these relationships with guys they'll get, I don't know, some kind of emotional support or something like that. And actually they are just exploiting them, and after that they [the girls] are just frustrated, then they cut themselves, go nuts, run away...*); socialization with antisocial older people (*Very early start contacts with problematic persons which sneak them into the world of alcohol, too early sexual activity, promiscuity, experiments with drugs*). Some experts also mention genetic factors (*For many of them psychiatry intervenes. Heredity and genetics are important here.*)

When discussing girls' prior risk factors and behavioural problems, even the experts say it is difficult to distinguish what is the cause and what is the effect/consequence of the **behavioural problems phenomenon**, but they mostly talk about the family, combined with schooling as important risk factors (*Well, in principle: family...Family situation at home, neglecting and school abandoning, running away from home. But, I think that in the background of all is actually the family... Very few families actually function. Mostly they are divorced parents, single parents who cope with problems with great difficulty*).

In the context of the phenomenology of schooling problems, experts discuss the early recognition of problems, truancy and girls' educational deficits. Some experts mention that problems regarding school are early recognized (*They mainly start to be apparent very early in school*). However, it seems that although such problems are recognized early in school there is no adequate response, apparently because an adequate intervention is found for them relatively (too) late. In addition to the above, in the context of problematic school behaviours, the experts talk about their prior truancy and school drop-outs, and also about girls' large educational deficits (meaning discrepancy of educational and chronological age of girls).

The dimension of the present consists of a category entitled **treatment and possibilities**. The category contains data about girls' problems with and in school, education as a treatment field and inadequate way of schooling.

Experts related to the problems with school mainly talk about girls' lack of motivation for learning and school (*Bit of a problem is the fact they are integrated into regular classes now. So they go wild, don't attend, make a mess; we have a big problem with girls who are...the law says that 'til the age of 15 they must be included in the regular [education] system, and we have some [girls] who don't want to go to regular school...; We have 5-6 girls who are under 15 and who for the second time, meaning the third time are enrolling the same class. I think that is impossible; they don't like school, don't like learning, they avoid learning; they*

*are simply not persistent. They don't have enough strength and energy to go...).*

However, despite the above, all experts talk about schooling as an important area of treatment on which they work during the stay in the correctional institution (*And self-esteem I think we can only bring it back through knowledge and learning, which is a big problem for our girls. So, somehow I would say education and giving back the self-esteem, in addition to finishing school. Education should be essential, the first area should be education. Without an education – what can she do? Very few of them leave the correctional institution without some school finished – elementary or high school... So we do a lot regarding schooling because we share an opinion that the future is in schooling.*)

Some experts perceive schooling (probably because it is the easiest way to see the girls' progress) as an important criterion for monitoring the treatment progress (*School is the most important criterion to monitor them.*)

However, some of the experts are aware of the educational possibilities provided for the girls in institution, so in that sense they talk about inadequate way of schooling, that is education for unpopular and non-marketable professions (*Dressmakers... that is cheap work; it is hard to expect one could earn some money from that... There are Chinese shops on every corner with cheap cloth, so...; here we have that catering, and we have textile direction. That lasts for two years and nowadays that are unpopular professions especially for this type of children, but we cannot offer them anything else.*)

Two categories have been placed in the future dimension: concern for the girls' future, and experts' wishes and suggestions for improvement.

The category entitled **concern for the future** is consists of the statements of experts who primarily talk about their worries what will the girl do in the future without education. The experts most often describe it using following statements: *I am worried about today or tomorrow when they leave this institution or another one after us... simply, their future worries me. I always think how they will manage without school, without working habits... Where this child will end up... their future... I think about that often... and that worries me. Where will our so-called unsuccessful cases end up?*

In addition to the above, some experts report girls' generally low-quality life path burdened with many difficulties after leaving the institution (*I think that 80% [of the girls] live very bad later. They become pregnant very early, get married, so marriage problems occur because they usually find equally problematic types. There is alcohol, unemployment, especially they don't finish any school. I think there is a lot, a lot problems).*

The category **wishes and suggestions** consists of statements regarding some new needs related to schooling and new types and forms of professions/

education (residential education/internal school, working cooperatives, fast and short-term trainings; trainings for florist or nurturer).

When talking about new needs related to schooling and education some experts mention internal school mainly because they have no mechanisms to “force” girls to attend regular schools (*Very big problems. We need an internal school. If we had one here, I think it would be different because they would be under control of experts. If needed, one would even sit with them during the class in order to stay calm and so they would be here; This [going to mainstream school] gives them an excuse to leave [the institution] and run away and make a mess down in the municipality and in the school. I think that internal school should exist so we could have them here together and work with them individually and things like that*).

In addition, when experts talk about new types and forms of professions/education, they mention several things. In that context, one expert talks about working cooperatives so the girls could learn how to work and in order to learn to respect the value of work (*We should have some form of working cooperatives so they could respect work more, in order to do something. Once they had garden and pigs they fed and that kind of stuff... what now? They have a negative attitude toward work: work is shameful. That should be changed... There should be something organized for them to work. Besides schooling and learning... to do something. To get to know the value of work and to respect work.*). When it comes to new forms and types of professions, some experts mention “*Some kind of fast trainings... So they could be educated in a short time... training for nurturer, florist or something like that... so the school does not last for three or four years, but to be fast so they could be quickly trained for some form of independent life*”. In this regard one of the experts sums it: “*The institution should be equipped quite differently- from the choice of vocations to the content and staffs’ level of education.*”

## **Discussion and conclusion**

The results obtained in this research will finally be considered through the prism of both perspectives: that of the beneficiary and that of the expert, in relation to the time dimension and the risk and strength concept. Discussing results in the aforementioned way offers a possible logical frame of interpreting obtained information (Figure 3).

	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
THE GIRLS			
THE EXPERTS			

\*Index: Dark grey: risks area, Light Grey: strengths area

**Figure 3.** A Logical Frame for Interpreting Results

Considering the two perspectives regarding the risks and strengths areas, it is evident that the girls are, in their reports, “more positive”, or more positively directed than the experts with regard to their education. Among the girls, the risks can be most easily identified when they are talking about education in the past, when they point out numerous problems in school (and broader), lack of interest in school and feeling rejected and isolated. In the present, the girls’ perspective on risks can be partially ascribed to dissatisfaction with schooling options in the correctional institution and the indifference in putting effort into education. In girls’ experiences, schooling can be perceived as a strength, and even more as an opportunity, primarily in relation to their positive outlook and the awareness of the importance of school for success in life. This strength is even more accentuated in orienting towards the future, where completing (and continuing) education is seen as an important element of good (desirable, in their opinion) life.

In contrast, the experts’ perspective is more negative; they are mostly oriented towards risks recognized in the past and the present, as well as in the future. Their ideas about risks in the past is conditioned by the experience of school problems as elements in the aetiology of behavioural problems, educational deficits, as well as skipping and switching schools. The experts state numerous problems in the current education of girls, which may indicate a lack of insight in the girls themselves in relation to their current situation, but also to the lack of recognition of positive trends by the experts. As regards risks in the present dimension, the experts recognize inadequate options for educating the girls according to their preferences, as well as market positions of the occupations offered to them. Educating the girls for occupations that do not provide fast and easy employment (often unstable employment), such as different auxiliary occupations, certainly presents a great social risk. Not even in relation to the future do the experts share the positive outlook of the girls. They express concern for the girls’ future, precisely regarding problems in relation to education. Where the girls show vision and ambition, the experts show only concern. It is expected that the experts’ concerns are based on their experience so far, not only with these girls, but with many generations before them, and also the fact that they witnessed what happens when girls do not obtain adequate education.



It is vital to emphasize the fact that the experts' perspective is not completely "dark"; on the contrary, when they talk about the future, the experts mention new strengths and opportunities in the form of creating new educational opportunities and programmes, as well as internal schools within the correctional institution, which are considered to be very useful in motivating and supporting the girls in persisting and succeeding in their education.

Based on the presented results and the comparison of perspectives using the logical model, we are presented with a few possible conclusions, or (better yet) with a few new questions:

- *How does the presented educational process of the girls in the correctional institution contribute to their social inclusion (or exclusion)?*

As we have already said in the introduction, education and exclusion from the labour market are important dimensions of the social exclusion phenomenon. Therefore, one's employment could be seen as the precondition of his/her inclusion. In that regard, education is the key mechanism of social inclusion. This qualitative analysis showed that the area of education is (among other problems) an important risk factor for girls in the correctional institution. Nevertheless, schooling and education are important treatment fields of work, which can be (or must be) used in order to decrease the vulnerability to social exclusion of girls leaving the correctional institution. The reason the risk of social exclusion of these girls is even higher lies in the fact that in this research we have identified that many more different risk factors exist in addition to educational problems. These risk factors are related to the girls' families (growing up in incomplete families with low socio-economic status, low parental educational status, unemployment of parents), social environment (risks in local community, risks related to peers and company), or to the characteristics and behaviours of girls themselves (low educational aspirations, behavioural problems).

- *What are the possibilities of intervention into the educational process for girls with behavioural problems?*

The possibilities of interventions will be dealt with on two levels: general (social) and specific (individual). On the social level, it would be useful to start initiatives for opening new educational opportunities in correctional institutions for girls, primarily by offering a wider selection of vocations that would be more in line with the needs of the job market, as well as the girls' interests. Moreover, it seems important to once again consider opening internal schools within correctional institutions that would provide ways (methods, techniques) and contents of teaching suitable for the girls (their cognitive, behavioural etc. characteristics). Bearing in mind the fact that starting internal schools may to

an extent decrease the inclusion of girls into the regular life of the community and that normalization is a goal of modern treatment, we nonetheless find that internal schooling can have positive outcomes for some of the girls, at least in a certain period when they are adapting to the institution or in the period when their behavioural problems are intensified.

Regarding the girls themselves, especially taking into account what we have heard from them in this research about the importance of school, the treatment programmes should, among other things, focus on: motivation and persistence in attending school, motivation and persistence in learning, help in studies and managing school assignments, strengthening the positive image about the importance of education, i.e. strengthening the direction towards goals which the girls already perceive in a positive way.

- *What has been left unexplored in the girls' perspective, i.e. what should be additionally explored?*

The results obtained in this research, in line with other research thus far, indicate schooling as a risk factor. Findings from the literature have been confirmed through perspectives of both the girls and the experts. The girls' perspective offers viewpoints in which the girls state the importance of school in their lives, and especially in their future lives. Judging by the answers of the girls participating in this research, it is possible to understand what had deterred them from school. However, a major question remains about what are the things that could have kept them in school and what kind of school would have been able to satisfy their needs in those crucial moments in life when they mostly decided to skip classes and (or) to quit school.

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