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THE ANALYSIS OF PROBLEM AREAS
IN PARENT-ADOLESCENT RELATIONSHIPS:
A PILOT PROBE

BACKGROUND

The society in which the today's youth has been growing up is characterised by a number of paradoxes and changes in the economic, political, geographical as well as cultural, moral and relationship area. The time span for the young to mature socially, verify their identity and assume the social liability keeps prolonging. The family and traditional educational institutions are seemingly losing their former privileged role they used to play in upbringing a person. Experts recommend distinguishing between three relatively independent adolescence stages – early, middle and late adolescence (Macek, 1999). The other add also a transitional stage between early and middle adolescence (Vágnerová, 2012). Early adolescence (10-13 years) is characterized by bodily changes and sexual maturing. Experimenting and trying out new roles, defying the authority and striving for non-conformity are typical of middle adolescence (14-16 years). The stage of late adolescence (17- about 20 years) is characterized by adolescents' effort towards role integration in line with new co-existence rules in the parental family by building up and developing close personal relationships and overcoming egocentrism in everyday interpersonal encounters.

The period of growing up is characterised by going through crises on a physical level as well as on a psychological, social and existential level. Lorenc (2002)

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classifies teenage crises as crises related to body and sexual development as well as identity, depersonalization and authority crises, self-esteem and suicidal crises. The psychological, social identity crisis is considered specific for this stage of young people's development (Erikson, 1999; Marcia, 1980). Overcoming this crisis is vital for the stability and maturity of personality. A significant psychological, social crisis occurs between the age of 12 and 19. Identity confusion arising from uncertainty, worries and fear of making important decisions is accompanied by inconsistent behaviour. This inability to solve the crisis causes the period of postponing making an important decision and undertaking commitments to prolong. On the other hand, developing a strong sense of identity leads to the assumption of personal commitments in relation to values (Hall, Lindzey, 2002). From the viewpoint of development, it concerns an individuation process which takes place in four immediately following stages (Vágnerová, 2012, pp. 462-463). In addition to considerable physical changes, a starting process of psychological differentiation in relationships is representative of a *differentiation stage* (puberty, 10-13 years). Adult-Teenager relationships change significantly, especially the adolescents' relationship to their parents with whom they do not identify themselves anymore. It results in challenging parents' opinions, values and standards, and in becoming disappointed by parents not being so ideal as they seemed to be before. The need of definite evaluation and tendency towards radicalism cause the young to tend to criticise their parents' opinions and behaviour throughout the differentiation stage. An *experimentation stage* begins at the turn of middle adolescence (14-15 years), and it is distinguished by the testing of and searching for a personal identity. The teenager compares himself with others, evaluates and thinks about himself. He experiments with his own emancipation and tries to differentiate himself from others in a style of clothing, a music choice etc. This stage is associated with naivety and uncritical thinking, rejecting advice and warnings given by parents and with increasingly stronger attachment to groups of same-age peers. Throughout this period, adolescents associate their ideas of the future mainly with the closest time period, and they reject adults' directions for taking further steps. In a certain point, some adolescents may be rejecting almost everything radically whereas it may latently be linked with their fear of returning to the position of a child. A *gradual stabilisation stage* (middle adolescence, 16-17 years) is typically characterized by the stabilisation of relationships with parents, making new friends and looking for new rules and standards in relation to other people. Even though oscillation between rejection and acceptance of links to the family may still occur in this period, adolescents do not have a need to react in a radical way demonstrating rejection anymore. They are

becoming more self-reliable and start to think and behave in a more mature way. They start to have a clearer idea of who they are and would like to become. A *stage of becoming psychologically independent* (late adolescence, 18-20 years) is a stage preceding the maturity and the last individuation stage. It is distinguished by the consolidation of relationships to one's self, a feeling of one's own autonomy and uniqueness as well as the realisation of one's own continuity. In this phase of development, the significance of personal outlooks is connected with the distinguishing between short-term and long-term goals which are associated with personal decisions and institutional requirements. A transitional period when these goals are fulfilled includes the legally anchored full age, graduation by passing a Maturita exam in a majority of adolescents and associated plans and decisions concerning a further professional background.

The interest in confronting existential issues is a remarkable attribute of adolescence. During this period, adolescents start to be aware of future outlooks leading to new directions by becoming more motivated to establish and work towards new goals and by looking for answers to existential questions and the meaning of their own life (Naništová, 2009). Searching and having doubts, inner crises and personal confrontations strongly affect the existential dimension of life, and they are connected with the so-called "phenomenon of existential awakening", i.e. the increased interest in dealing with existential questions, the growing development of cognitive functions and level of thinking (Halama, 2000, 2007). As regards values, they are selected and chosen with respect to higher values (goodness, truth, beauty, justice) in this stage. The research in values chosen by adolescents shows that happiness, family life, mutual love, friendship, freedom and wisdom are the values they prefer the most often (Klčovanská, 2005). On the other hand, the high appreciation of certain values does not necessarily mean that the values are also internalized and implemented in a specific situation.

The young person starts to distinguish between how others see him and how they understand him. He begins to understand the importance of social roles, behaviour conventions and standards accepted in the society. The assumption of new roles (Macek et al., 1999, 2002) is internally connected with the assessment of relationships, situations and the significance and function of the relationships (Tab. 1). Family relationships frequently involve an intergenerational conflict considerably affected by the style in which parents communicate with their growing child and the way they behave in relation to it. Lots of conflicts and misunderstandings arise from a type of accommodation and co-living of generations, ambivalence between autonomy, spatial dependence and relationships in co-living

of two families. A process of anchoring the social identity can be significantly strengthened by the quality of intergenerational relationships, especially by emotional closeness, meetings and visits, an express consent with values, assistance and support, family commitments and a type and structure of family (Rajmicová, 2002). The period of growing up is a phase of looking for and experimenting with various roles and relations. Adult-adolescent relationships and peer relationships start to be changed. The adolescent refuses a subordinate status and does not accept the authority's unconditional opinions and decisions.

Tab. 1. Social environment where adolescents confirm their identity

Early adolescence		Late adolescence
Strong social background. Becoming self-reliable and breaking away from the family. The change in parents' formal superiority.	FAMILY	Strong social background. Breaking away from the close connection to the family. In most cases, parent-adolescent relationships become resolved and stabilised.
It is important from the perspectiveof future specialty. The important role of studying results.	SCHOOL	It is important from the perspective of future specialty. Social differentiation. Development of personal traits and skills. Anchoring of values or the changein the values.
Having an impact on social inclusion. Development of personal traits and skills. Compensation of a negative impact exerted by the family. Compensation of school failure.	FREE TIME and HOBBIES	Expansion of the territory of free time activities. Favourite places to travel to and meet at.
An important source of emotional and social support. Relationships, friendships and first loves. Identification with the group. Hierarchized relationships in the group. Group conformity.	GROUPS OF SAME-AGE PEERS	The most important source or emotional and social support. Friendships and partnerships. A smaller emphasis put on a group identity.

In the period of growing up, the family is very important for the young person. The numerous transformations of the adolescent depend on the quality of and atmosphere in this environment. The process of becoming emancipated and autonomous may often meet with the parents' strong need to control the adolescent. It is hard for adolescents and their parents to cope with this stage of breaking away from the cognitive and emotional connectedness with the family (Vágnerová, 2012). Parents start to lose their privileged status, and they are becoming criticised more and more especially in the early adolescence – however, criticism decreases again at the end of adolescence. If parents push on the young person too intensively to maintain an existing status, the adolescent's need to break away grows and risk of mutual conflicts increases. Adolescents' approach to parents' values also start to change. What is typical is also the transformation in a relationship to siblings and quality of relationship with parents. In order to separate himself, the adolescent implements the process of his own emancipation mainly in his own family where he confronts his opinions and way of life with his parents' ones. If the separation and breaking away from the relationship connections proceeds in an optimal way, the process ends with a renewal of positive attitude towards parents and to their values (see Macek, 1999; Naništová, 2009). If the adolescent does not manage to break away and does not fulfil his need of emancipation for any reason (e.g. strong pressure exerted by the family, lack of abilities, weak competencies etc.), it may finally result in leaving home or remaining in an infantile role and regression.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Our research project aimed at mapping the behavioural areas that adolescents perceive as the problem ones in relation to their parents. We have also formulated the following research questions within a more widely defined research:

Q1: What are the problem areas that adolescents consider the most significant ones in relation to their parents?

Q2: What problem areas differ between boys and girls in assessing the problem areas in relation to parents?

Q3: How the assessment of the problem areas differ with respect to a locality and type of school?

SAMPLE

A research sample was composed of 257 students in the age of 13 to 19 at four schools (93 boys, and 164 girls). Primary schools were located in the region of Upper Orava (115 students) and grammar schools were situated in the regional city and in the Orawa Region in the south of Poland (142 students). Two schools were state schools whereas the other two were church ones (Tab. 2).

Tab. 2.   Description of basic characteristic of the research sample (n = 257)

School	Sex	n	Xn_1	Xn_2	Years			
					AM	SD	Min-Max	Medián
Primary								
Bobrov	boys	17	30					
	girls	13		115	13,78	0,646	13 - 16	14
Sihelné	boys	37	85					
	girls	48						
Grammar								
Žilina	boys	23	82					
	girls	59		142	16,11	1,462	14 - 19	16
Veľká Lipnica	boys	16	60					
	girls	44						
T o t a l	boys	93		257				
	girls	164						

The primary schools were situated in the countryside. Up to 88.7% of the students lived in family houses. As regards a type of family, 90 children (78.3%) came from two-parent families. 10 children lived only with their mother (8.7%) and 2 children with their father (1.7%). 6 children (5.2%) lived in multi-generational households. 87% (n = 100) of the students indicated they were religious.

Grammar schools offered a sample where almost 48% of the students came from the countryside, 52% from smaller or bigger towns whereas 64.8% lived in family houses and 32.4% in an apartment. Regarding a type of family, 98 students (69.0%) came from two-parent families, 10 of them lived only with their mother (7.0%), and 3 students lived with their father only (2.1%). 13 students (9.2%) lived in multi-generational households, and 18 respondents indicated other forms of family co-living (12.7%). 58.5% (n = 83) of the whole set of adolescents indicated they were religious. As far as religiousness is concerned, the significant difference was between the schools – Polish grammar school students identified themselves with formal Christianity in most cases whereas Slovak grammar school students described themselves mostly as atheists.

METHOD

FRPA (Family Relationship Problem Areas; in slovak PORV – Problémové oblasti rodinných vzťahov; Naništová, Blažová). FRPA is a 30-item questionnaire assessed based on the Likert 5-point scale, mapping the behaviour problem areas typical for adolescents in line with the Townsend concept (2009). Statistical calculations show high reliability (Cronbach Alpha = 0.888). Six factors were extracted in a factor analysis, exhausting 61% of total dispersion. In addition, other methods were used, and the results thereof are not included in this partial study (the self-assessment scale, open-ended questions: hobbies, personal crises, parental assessment, favourite idols).

RESULTS

(a) Particularities in the period of middle adolescence (middle schools, n = 115)

The primary school students perceived the following problem areas as the most significant ones in relation to their parents (FRPA): Household chores (AM = 2.77, SD = 1.351), Faith in God and afterlife (AM = 2.76, SD = 1.435), Friends and groups of friends (AM = 2.66, SD = 1.405), Computer, the internet, computer games (AM = 2.64, SD = 1.070). The topics such as Significant intervention into a face or body – piercing, tattoos (AM = 1.14, SD = 0.560) and Self-harm, cuts (AM 1.155, SD = 0.625) were considered the least problematic areas. The comparison of averages in individual items reveals the huge differences between boys and girls in the areas related to peer relationships, parties and drug abuse, relationships to people, free time "behind a steering wheel" or using a computer. Compared to girls, boys have more intensive parent-teenager problems associated with the use of computer and the internet (a = 0.055), free time with friends and groups (a = 0.051), driving (a = 0.000), discos and parties (a = 0.032) and the lack of respect towards other people (a = 0.024). The tendency toward the difference between boys and girls was also identified in the problem area of drug abuse (a = 0.062) (Tab. 3).

Tab. 3. Significant FRPA differences between boys ($n_1 = 54$) and girls ($n_2 = 61$)

	Mean	Stand. Deviat.	F	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Computer, the internet, computer games	$x_1=2,85$	$SD_1=1,211$	3,763	1,941	0,055
	$x_2=2,46$	$SD_2=0,905$			
Friends and groups of friends	$x_1=2,94$	$SD_1=1,364$	0,030	1,975	0,051
	$x_2=2,43$	$SD_2=1,408$			
Driving	$x_1=2,59$	$SD_1=1,421$	112,401	7,578	0,000
	$x_2=1,10$	$SD_2=0,300$			
Parties and discos	$x_1=2,09$	$SD_1=1,086$	0,436	2,176	0,032
	$x_2=1,69$	$SD_2=0,904$			
The lack of respect towards the people	$x_1=1,71$	$SD_1=1,045$	11,407	2,299	0,024
	$x_2=1,33$	$SD_2=0,574$			
Drug abuse	$x_1=1,28$	$SD_1=0,811$	13,763	1,893	0,062
	$x_2=1,05$	$SD_2=0,384$			
PRP (total score)	$x_1=59,00$	$SD_1=12,416$	0,023	2,626	0,010
	$x_2=52,12$	$SD_2=11,828$			

(b) Particularities in the period of late adolescence (grammar school students, n = 142)

The most significant problem areas in relation to parents include the topics associated with helping out in the household, the use of computer and the internet, conflicts with parents and adolescents' impulsive reactions. The most significant areas were the following ones mentioned in order from the most problematic ones: Household chores (AM = 2.11, SD = 1.129), Computer, the internet and computer games (AM = 2.10, SD = 1.006) and Arguments with parents (AM = 2.06, SD = 0.864). The gender variable does not discriminate the significant gross score of FRPA questionnaire in case of grammar school students. However, the results showed eight statistical important differences between boys and girls (table 12). In comparison to female grammar school students, male grammar school students have more intensive problems with parents in the areas related to the topics such as Watching the television frequently (a = 0.027), Friends and groups of friends (a = 0.008), Style of clothing (a = 0.025), Coming back home late (a = 0.029), Driving (a = 0.041), Study problems (a = 0.029), Phone calls and

SMS messages (a = 0.017). On the other hand in comparison to their schoolmates, the female grammar school students consider Heavy make-up and Extravagant hairstyle (a = 0.002) to be the most problematic areas (Tab. 4).

Tab. 4. Significant FRPA differences among grammar school students according to sex
(boys n_1 = 82, girls n_2 = 59)

	Mean	Stand. Deviat.	F	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Watching TV frequently	x_1=1,97	SD_1=0,959	0,302	2,230	0,027
	x_2=1,60	SD_2=0,849			
Friends and groups of friends	x_1=2,05	SD_1=1,317	1,776	2,751	0,008
	x_2=1,43	SD_2=0,802			
Style of clothing	x_1=1,82	SD_1=1,254	22,412	2,308	0,025
	x_2=1,33	SD_2=0,706			
Coming back home late	x_1=2,28	SD_1=1,297	2,243	2,206	0,029
	x_2=1,80	SD_2=1,096			
Heavy make-up, extravagant hairstyle	x_1=1,08	SD_1=0,270	20,414	-3,223	0,002
	x_2=1,40	SD_2=0,895			
Driving	x_1=1,62	SD_1=1,115	19,231	2,097	0,041
	x_2=1,22	SD_2=0,642			
Study problems	x_1=2,10	SD_1=0,912	0,517	2,208	0,029
	x_2=1,72	SD_2=0,937			
Phone calls and SMS messages	x_1=1,95	SD_1=1,337	13,470	2,464	0,017
	x_2=1,39	SD_2=0,800			

Concerning grammar school students, we aimed at finding out whether or not the School Locality variable discriminates the perception of problem areas in relation to parents. The results confirmed a significant difference in perceiving the problem areas. The difference amounting to 0.1% significance level was identified between the grammar school respondents coming from the Slovak regional city and the ones from a small town situated in the Orawa Region in Poland. Significant differences amounting to 5% significance level were identified in twenty FRPA questionnaire items. Polish grammar school students perceived all the problem areas as problematic more intensively. Table 5 shows detailed data.

Tab. 5. Significant FRPA differences between Slovak ($n_1 = 82$)
and Polish grammar school students ($n_2 = 59$)

	Mean	Stand. Deviat.	F	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Conflicts with and aggressive behaviour in relation to parents	$x_1=1,54$ $x_2=1,93$	$SD_1=0,670$ $SD_2=1,216$	11,590	-2,264	0,026
Alcohol abuse	$x_1=1,43$ $x_2=2,05$	$SD_1=0,956$ $SD_2=1,455$	17,099	-2,877	0,005
Watching TV frequently	$x_1=1,48$ $x_2=2,03$	$SD_1=0,741$ $SD_2=0,991$	2,246	-3,819	0,000
Smoking (nicotine, cigarettes)	$x_1=1,40$ $x_2=2,03$	$SD_1=0,873$ $SD_2=1,414$	20,725	-3,039	0,003
Computer, the internet, computer games	$x_1=1,95$ $x_2=2,30$	$SD_1=0,901$ $SD_2=1,109$	7,994	-2,000	0,048
Faith in God and spiritual life	$x_1=1,20$ $x_2=1,95$	$SD_1=0,531$ $SD_2=1,383$	55,078	-4,017	0,000
Aggressive, rash and impulsive reactions	$x_1=1,54$ $x_2=2,34$	$SD_1=0,740$ $SD_2=1,207$	16,860	-4,531	0,000
The lack of respect towards the people	$x_1=1,27$ $x_2=1,93$	$SD_1=0,738$ $SD_2=1,187$	17,654	-3,800	0,000
Cheating and lies	$x_1=1,46$ $x_2=2,12$	$SD_1=0,878$ $SD_2=1,166$	4,427	-3,649	0,000
Breach of agreements and promises	$x_1=1,51$ $x_2=1,90$	$SD_1=0,820$ $SD_2=1,054$	2,434	-2,424	0,017
Coming back home late	$x_1=1,66$ $x_2=2,33$	$SD_1=0,959$ $SD_2=1,330$	10,751	-3,277	0,001
Self-harm, cuts	$x_1=1,18$ $x_2=1,67$	$SD_1=0,669$ $SD_2=1,343$	31,714	-2,560	0,012
Significant intervention into a face or body (piercing, tattoos)	$x_1=1,22$ $x_2=1,97$	$SD_1=0,609$ $SD_2=1,248$	27,969	-2,557	0,013
Heavy make-up, extravagant hairstyle	$x_1=1,13$ $x_2=1,55$	$SD_1=0,409$ $SD_2=1,079$	38,555	-2,809	0,006
Driving	$x_1=1,11$ $x_2=1,64$	$SD_1=0,315$ $SD_2=1,150$	70,695	-3,408	0,001
Study problems	$x_1=1,54$ $x_2=2,22$	$SD_1=0,706$ $SD_2=1,084$	9,777	-4,241	0,000
Phone calls and SMS messages	$x_1=1,32$ $x_2=1,86$	$SD_1=0,701$ $SD_2=1,263$	20,641	-2,979	0,004
Running away from home	$x_1=1,16$ $x_2=1,78$	$SD_1=0,618$ $SD_2=1,377$	48,961	-3,194	0,002
Parties and discos	$x_1=1,33$ $x_2=2,02$	$SD_1=0,668$ $SD_2=1,210$	19,162	-3,953	0,000
Drug abuse	$x_1=1,24$ $x_2=1,79$	$SD_1=0,840$ $SD_2=1,576$	31,192	-2,422	0,018
Total score	$x_1=43,73$ $x_2=55,79$	$SD_1=11,972$ $SD_2=17,491$	19,258	-4,398	0,000

(c) Differences between primary school students and grammar school students

In addition to identifying significant parent-adolescent problem areas and differences with respect to gender and locality of school, we also compared the results concerning primary and grammar school respondents. The comparison revealed significant differences in a total score of FRPA questionnaire (a = 0.001) and a higher score was recorded in primary school students. Significant differences amounting to 5% significance level occurred in 17 questionnaire items (Tab. 6). What is interesting is that primary school students showed the higher score especially in 12 items whereas grammar school students achieved, the

higher score in five items (Smoking, Self-harm and cuts, Significant interference into a face and body, Running away from home, Drug abuse).

Tab. 6. Significant FRPA differences between primary school students ($n_1 = 115$)
and grammar school students ($n_2 = 141$)

	Mean	Stand. Deviat.	F	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Watching TV frequently	x_1=2,37	SD_1=1,062	2,715	5,373	0,000
	x_2=1,71	SD_2=0,894			
Smoking (nicotine, cigarettes)	x_1=1,40	SD_1=0,819	16,194	-2,147	0,033
	x_2=1,67	SD_2=1,169			
Computer, the internet, computer games	x_1=2,64	SD_1=1,070	2,378	4,130	0,000
	x_2=2,10	SD_2=1,006			
Household chores	x_1=2,77	SD_1=1,351	10,992	4,187	0,000
	x_2=2,11	SD_2=1,129			
Faith in God and spiritual life	x_1=2,76	SD_1=1,435	29,993	7,773	0,000
	x_2=1,51	SD_2=1,050			
Friends and groups of friends	x_1=2,66	SD_1=1,405	26,089	6,756	0,000
	x_2=1,60	SD_2=1,006			
Silence, reticence	x_1=1,63	SD_1=0,756	0,848	2,388	0,018
	x_2=1,40	SD_2=0,756			
Mood swings	x_1=2,36	SD_1=1,098	11,055	3,717	0,000
	x_2=1,89	SD_2=0,863			
Style of clothing	x_1=2,42	SD_1=1,412	39,246	6,203	0,000
	x_2=1,46	SD_2=0,912			
Self-harm, cuts	x_1=1,15	SD_1=0,625	19,082	-2,273	0,024
	x_2=1,39	SD_2=1,029			
Significant intervention into a face or body (piercing, tattoos)	x_1=1,14	SD_1=0,560	26,341	-2,795	0,006
	x_2=1,41	SD_2=0,951			
Heavy make-up, extravagant hairstyle	x_1=1,69	SD_1=1,065	14,805	3,219	0,001
	x_2=1,31	SD_2=0,786			
Driving	x_1=1,80	SD_1=1,224	25,606	3,492	0,001
	x_2=1,33	SD_2=0,817			
Phone calls and SMS messages	x_1=2,18	SD_1=1,314	14,738	4,287	0,000
	x_2=1,54	SD_2=1,006			
Running away from home	x_1=1,16	SD_1=0,488	25,306	-2,593	0,010
	x_2=1,41	SD_2=1,064			
Parties and discos	x_1=1,88	SD_1=1,010	0,37	2,077	0,039
	x_2=1,62	SD_2=0,990			
Drug abuse	x_1=1,16	SD_1=0,630	26,472	-2,644	0,009
	x_2=1,47	SD_2=1,226			
Total score	x_1=55,05	SD_1=12,488	4,584	3,481	0,001
	x_2=48,47	SD_2=15,502			

A specific profile of family environment was identified in students coming from two different grammar schools. The results of non-parametric tests indicate that important statistical differences in the family environment amounting to 1% significance level exist between adolescents studying at the grammar school in Žilina and the ones in Veľká Lipnica (Chi-quadrat = 17.318, sign. = 0.002, Cramer-V = 0.002, n = 142). The adolescents coming from Veľká Lipnica live in two-parent families including a mother, a father and several siblings or in multigenerational households including grandparents in more cases. In comparison to them, living in a single-parent family (only with a mother) and other forms of family life occurred in the adolescents studying at the grammar school in Žilina mostly. Significant differences amounting to 0,1% significance level were identified among groups of older adolescents as regards the number of siblings and the related overall structure of the family (Chi quadrat = 34.538, sign. = 0.000, Cramer-V = 0.000, n = 142). While adolescents being the only child or coming from two or three children families were identified in most cases among the grammar school adolescents in Žilina, the grammar school adolescents living in Veľká Lipnica came from three up to seven children families mostly.

DISCUSSION

The period of growing up is a crucial phase when the young person faces a number of issues and goes through lots of crises in relation to himself as well as other people. In this development period, the fragility of the adolescent may play a significant role in failing to solve the problems, make personal decisions, and undertake commitments and in identifying with idols and authorities that are offered by the media and in the virtual internet space. The development of close interpersonal relationships in the wider social environment and the support arising from the quality of family environment considerably foster the formation of the young person and the confirmation of his identity in adolescence. The research questions addressed in the project aimed at determining the problem areas that adolescents consider the most significant ones in relation to their parents and it was focused on identifying the variables that distinguish the evaluation of significance.

Mid-adolescent students considered the topics associated with household chores, existential and religious questions, and free time spent with friends or using a computer to be the most significant adolescent-parent problem areas.

They found self-harm (e.g. piercing, tattoos, cuts) the least problematic. Significant differences between boys and girls were identified in five items. Boys had more problems related to free time and attitude toward the others than girls. In particular, it concerned the items mapping the use of computer and the internet, free time with friends and groups, driving, having parties and going to discos and the lack of respect towards people. The tendency toward a significant difference between girls and boys (in boys the more problem one) was identified in drug abuse. As regards considerable differences in perceiving parent-adolescent problem areas according to the locality of school, the statistical differences in religiousness and spiritual life, style of clothing, attitude towards people were confirmed. Church school students had the problems in relation to their parents in these areas in more cases than state school students. On the one hand, such results may imply their ignorance. On the other hand, it may indicate that parents are more strict in bringing them up, especially in emphasising or fulfilling certain values or social rules (a style of clothing or way of behaviour).

In the next stage, the analysis also focused on the particularities in the parent-adolescent problem areas in *late adolescent* students. In this age group, the most severe problem areas included topics related to household chores, free time spent using a computer or surfing the internet and conflicts (arguments with parents, impulsivity). The least problematic topics concerned sexuality and the showing of feminity. Comparing the differences between boys and girls, we have found out that compared to female grammar school students, male grammar school student considered free time (watching the television, making phone calls, with friends and groups, coming back home late), lifestyle (clothing, cars) and studying to be the problem ones mostly. On the other hand, the female grammar school students faced the problems related to the improving of their appearance (cosmetics, make-up, hairstyles) more frequently than their male schoolmates. The locality of school also significantly discriminates the perception of parent-adolescent problem areas. A detailed analysis revealed statistically important differences in twenty FRPA questionnaire items whereas all the parent-adolescent problem areas were perceived more intensively by the student of the foreign grammar school. Like in case of primary school pupils, the result refers to a typical style of parenting focused on values and traditions and to dissimilar parents' requirements and expectations in relation to their children in the two localities.

In addition to identifying the problem areas, we were also focused on the mutual *comparison of primary and grammar school adolescents*. We ascertained that the ten most important problem areas identified by the primary school pupils

and the ten most significant problem areas indicated by the grammar school students were identical only in three items, namely Household chores, Computer and the internet and Coming back home late. Compared to the primary school pupils, the grammar school students achieved a relatively higher score in Study problems, Impulsive reactions and Coming back home late. The t-test comparison of two means revealed significant differences in an overall score of FRPA questionnaire between the primary and grammar school students and the highest score was achieved by the primary school pupils. The detailed analysis of the differences identified within individual items showed that significant dissimilarities occurred in 17 questionnaire items. The primary school pupils achieved a higher score in 12 items associated with free time (television, computer, the internet, phone calls), same-age peer groups (friends and groups, style of clothing, parties and discos, cars), mood swings (reticence, mood changes) and religiousness. As regards the grammar school students, a significantly higher score was identified in five items that implied gateway strategies of behaviour implemented in the form of addiction (Smoking, Drug abuse), Self-harm (self-harm, cuts, piercing) or Running away from home. The above-mentioned differences ascertain the typical rigours of identity confirmation taking place throughout middle and late adolescence. While the problems with the quality of free time and the influence exerted by peer groups are typical for the lower age, addictions and gateway intrapersonal and interpersonal strategies are characteristic of late adolescence.

The contemporary young, the so-called Generation Y (Kvašná, 2011) is flexible, technically advanced, focused on performance, capable of multitasking. Nevertheless, their fragility is exposed to a huge number of threats including the impact wielded by the media, consumerism and the uncontrolled power of passions. Lots of authors agree that the millennials often feel internally lonely (Lipovetsky, 2001), have weakened relationships with their fathers (Augustyn, 2002; L. Košč, M. Košč, 2006), lack social skills and are afraid to assume long-term commitments (Kvašná, 2011). In Lorenc' opinion (2002), adolescent conflicts may escalate up to extraordinary states and crises such as the crisis of physicality, sexual development, identity as well as depersonalization crisis, the crisis of authority, self-respect and suicidal crisis. Some other scientists also speak about existential awakening vs. the existential crisis (Halama, 2000; Powell, 2000; Slanika, 2008; Vindišová, 2010). In their scientific piece of work, Duda and Smelý (2013) state that more than a half of adolescents under research did not have any spiritual paragon. They interpret the finding in line with Erikson's theses (1999) that if an adolescent finds a strong authority in his environment, he will let

the authority to influence him and he will identify with him/her. Klčovanská (2010) comes to the conclusion that adolescents reduce existentially significant (noetic) values and assign a psychological content to them in a majority of cases. In this sense, she refers to a parents, carers and teachers' permanent task of discovering and practicing the parenting style that would help adolescents cultivate their existential values. In this context, we consider a dialogic relationship between a carer and a caree to be a crucial part of upbringing (Kvašná, 2010). What is important is to build up an intimate interpersonal relationship and to be able to give offers, avoid reducing upbringing expectations and to provide everybody with everything what they need here and now. It requires accepting the young the way they are, unlocking their potential and opening them for new meaningful outlooks as well as meeting them there where they are right now, paying attention to their needs and desires carefully and providing them with the environment full of life and rich in opportunities.

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ANALIZA OBSZARÓW PROBLEMOWYCH W RELACJACH RODZIC – NASTOLATEK: SONDA PILOTAŻOWA

Streszczenie

Obecne czasy stawiają nowe wyzwania i wymogi oddziałujące na kształtowanie i stabilizację tożsamości społecznej młodzieży, które wpływają w szczególności na jakość relacji rodzinnych i występują w określonych obszarach problemowych relacji rodzic–nastolatek. Niniejsze studium interpretuje wyniki sondy pilotażowej dotyczącej średniego i późnego okresu dojrzewania. Wyniki zostały wyznaczone za pomocą oryginalnego kwestionariusza Obszary Problemowe Relacji Rodzinnej (FRPA). Autorzy szczegółowo omawiają różnice, jakie można dostrzec w obszarach problemowych relacji nastolatków z rodzicami w zależności od ich płci oraz typu i lokalizacji szkoły, do której uczęszczają.

Słowa kluczowe: dorastanie; stadium rozwoju; zachowanie stwarzające trudności; relacja z rodzicami

THE ANALYSIS OF PROBLEM AREAS IN PARENT-ADOLESCENT RELATIONSHIPS: A PILOT PROBE

Summary

The current period poses novel challenges and rigours actively engaged in forming and stabilizing adolescents' social identity. Specifically, they affect the quality of family relationships and occur in specific problem areas of the parent-adolescent relationship. This study interprets results of

a pilot probe into middle and late adolescence. The results have been mapped via an original Family Relationship Problem Areas questionnaire (FRPA). The authors discuss in detail the differences identified in problem areas in relation to parents with respect to sex, type and locality of school.

Key words: adolescence; development stage; problem behaviour; relationship with parents

Appendix 1

		Problem Areas in Relation to Parents (FRPA items)
1		Conflicts with and aggressive behaviour in relation to parents
2		Alcohol abuse
3		Watching TV frequently
4		Smoking (nicotine, cigarettes)
5		Computer, the internet, computer games
6		Household chores
7		Faith in God and spiritual life
8		Arguments with parents
9		Ignorance towards parents
10		Aggressive, rash and impulsive reactions
11		Friends and groups of friends
12		Silence, reticence
13		Rebellious behaviour
14		The lack of respect towards the people
15		Style of clothing
16		Pocket money and the money
17		Cheating and lies
18		Breach of agreements and promises
19		Coming back home late
20		Self-harm, cuts
21		Significant intervention into a face or body (piercing, tattoos)
22		Heavy make-up, extravagant hairstyle
23		Driving
24		Sexual area
25		Study problems
26		Phone calls and SMS messages
27		Running away from home
28		Parties and discos
29		Mood swings
30		Drug abuse

Appendix 2

Ankieta bada najczęstsze obszary problemów, które dotyczą relacji młodych (dojrzewających) osób z ich rodzicami. Dlatego uważnie należy przeczytać każdy z przytoczonych obszarów problemowych i zakreślić kółkiem w skali od jeden do pięciu, do jakiego stopnia ten obszar jest przedmiotem nieporozumień i konfliktów w relacjach z waszymi rodzicami. W ankiecie wszystkie odpowiedzi są poprawne – nie ma odpowiedzi złych lub dobrych. Istotne są tu wasze osobiste poglądy oraz ocena każdego wymienionego obszaru problemów.

Instrukcja:

W następującym spisie przy każdym przytoczonym problemie należy **zakreślić kółkiem** taką cyfrę, która najlepiej określa, do **jakiego stopnia ten problem powoduje nieporozumienia i konflikty** w relacjach z waszymi rodzicami (**rodzicem**).

Poszczególne cyfry w skali od 1 do 5 oznaczają:

1 – ten problem **w ogóle nie powoduje** nieporozumień lub konfliktów w relacjach z rodzicami

2 – ten obszar we wzajemnych relacjach z rodzicami powoduje **trochę** problemów i konfliktów;

3 – ten obszar we wzajemnych relacjach z rodzicami powoduje **dość** problemów i konfliktów;

4 – ten obszar we wzajemnych relacjach z rodzicami powoduje **znaczne** problemy i konflikty;

5 – ten obszar we wzajemnych relacjach z rodzicami powoduje **bardzo wyraźne nieporozumienia i konflikty**.

nr	*Obszar problemów w relacjach z rodzicami (rodzicem)*	**1** wcale nie	**2** trochę	**3** całkiem	**4** dość	**5** bardzo
1	Konfliktowe oraz agresywne zachowanie w stosunku do rodziców	1	2	3	4	5
2	Alkohol	1	2	3	4	5
3	Częste oglądanie telewizji	1	2	3	4	5
4	Palenie (nikotyna, papierosy)	1	2	3	4	5
5	Komputer, internet, gry komputerowe	1	2	3	4	5
6	Prace domowe	1	2	3	4	5
7	Wiara w Boga oraz życie duchowe	1	2	3	4	5
8	Kłótnie z rodzicami	1	2	3	4	5
9	Ignorowanie rodziców	1	2	3	4	5
10	Gwałtowne, wybuchowe oraz impulsywne zachowanie	1	2	3	4	5
11	Koledzy i grupy	1	2	3	4	5
12	Milczenie, małomówność	1	2	3	4	5
13	Zmienność nastrojów w zachowaniu	1	2	3	4	5
14	Brak szacunku wobec innych osób	1	2	3	4	5
15	Styl ubierania	1	2	3	4	5

16	Kieszonkowe oraz pieniądze	1	2	3	4	5
17	Oszustwa oraz kłamstwa	1	2	3	4	5
18	Niedotrzymanie obietnic i umów	1	2	3	4	5
19	Późne powroty do domu	1	2	3	4	5
20	Samookaleczenia, rany cięte	1	2	3	4	5
21	„Ozdabianie" twarzy lub ciała (piercing, tatuaże)	1	2	3	4	5
22	Jaskrawe malowanie twarzy (makijaż), szokujące ułożenie włosów	1	2	3	4	5
23	Prowadzenie pojazdów	1	2	3	4	5
24	Sprawy związane z seksem	1	2	3	4	5
25	Problemy w nauce	1	2	3	4	5
26	Telefonowanie, wysyłanie sms-ów	1	2	3	4	5
27	Ucieczki z domu	1	2	3	4	5
28	Imprezy, dyskoteki oraz „domówki"	1	2	3	4	5
29	Krnąbrne zachowanie	1	2	3	4	5
30	Narkotyki	1	2	3	4	5