Mirjana Ule

Vloga staršev v izobraževalnih potekih otrok v Sloveniji

Povzetek: V članku bomo analizirali odnos do izobraževanja, stopnjo ter oblike starševske vpletenosti v šolsko delo in izobraževalne poteke otrok v Sloveniji. Prispevek temelji na empiričnih podatkih, ki smo jih pridobili s kvantitativnimi in kvalitativnimi raziskavami s starši, otroki in učitelji v okviru projekta Upravljanje izobraževalnih potekov v Evropi (Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe). Projekt je osredotočen na izobraževalno obdobje med zaključkom primarnega in prehodom v sekundarno stopnjo izobraževanja. Ugotovili smo, da so starši v Sloveniji tudi v primerjavi z evropskim kontekstom zelo vpleteni v izobraževalne poteke ter v samo šolsko delo otrok. Imajo visoke izobraževalne aspiracije, ki so jih očitno ponotranjili tudi otroci. Ker je vpletenost staršev v šolsko delo in izobraževalne poteke tako velika, je to nov dejavnik socialne diferenciacije otrok. Prikrito sankcionira tiste starše in otroke, ki ne znajo ali ne zmorejo ustvariti podporne družinske klime.

Ključne besede: starševska vpletenost, zaščitniško starševanje, izobraževalni poteki, kulturni kapital

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Uvod

Odraščanje v sodobnih evropskih družbah usmerjajo in urejajo trije institucionalni sistemi: družinski, izobraževalni ter prostočasni. Z usklajeno udeležbo v teh treh omrežjih mladi rešujejo težave odraščanja, razvijajo stabilno identiteto in načrtujejo prihodnost. Usklajena udeležba pomeni, da vsaka od teh institucij socializacije opravlja svojo vlogo; družina daje psihofizično in čustveno oskrbo otrok, šola skrbi za njihov nadaljnji kognitivni in čustveni razvoj, vrstniška omrežja pa delujejo kot podporni in solidarnostni generacijski sistem ter skrbijo za potrebno diferenciacijo med čustveno družinsko oskrbo ter storilnostno šolsko socializacijo. Vse tri institucije pa seveda lahko dobro delujejo v primernem družbenem kontekstu, in kadar obstaja prostor, da vsaka avtonomno opravlja svojo vlogo.

Kljub spremembam v strukturi in poteku mladosti v preteklih desetletjih je mladost še vedno predvsem obdobje šolanja in osrednje težave in pritiski mladosti izhajajo iz te dejavnosti. Izobraževanje ima v sodobnih družbah izjemno pomembno vlogo v socialni integraciji posameznikov v družbo, obenem pa prispevek izobraževanja k socialni integraciji ni več samoumeven. To pomeni, da sam po sebi posamezniku ali posameznici še ne zagotavlja smiselnih življenjskih možnosti (Côté in Levine 2002). Od otrok in mladostnikov se danes pričakuje, da že zgodaj sprejemajo daljnosežne življenjske odločitve, na primer o izobrazbenih poteh. Sodobne evropske družbe zahtevajo zgodnja mentalna in vedenjska prilagajanja otrok in mladostnikov ob kontradiktornih pogojih zanje: podaljšano izobraževanje in obdobje ekonomske odvisnosti sta v ostrem nasprotju z zahtevami po zgodnjih izbirah in odločitvah ter prevzemanjem odgovornosti zanje (Ule in Kuhar 2008). Sočasno s podaljševanjem šolanja se razteza obdobje odvisnosti mladih od izvornih družin. Podaljšana odvisnost od staršev, ki nikakor ni le materialne narave, je proces, ki je opazen povsod po Evropi, le da so regionalne razlike precej velike (Chisholm idr. 1995; Walther idr. 2006).

Družbeni kontekst sodobnega odraščanja označujeta predvsem dve veliki spremembi: 1) nova negotovost in tveganja v vodenju življenja ter 2) prenos odgovornosti za načrtovanje življenjskih potekov in prehodov na posameznike (Beck

2001). Oboje vodi v vse večjo destandardizacijo in individualizacijo življenjskih potekov. Destandardizacija in individualizacija življenjskih potekov ne pomenita samo, da lahko oblikujemo in izbiramo svojo življenjsko pot, ampak da jo tudi moramo oblikovati in izbirati ter da moramo sprejeti tudi odgovornost za posledice napačnih izbir (Ule in Kuhar 2008). To ne obremenjuje samo mladostnikov, ki so na začetku oblikovanja življenjske poti, ampak tudi njihove bližnje, predvsem starše, ki so najbolj vpleteni v to dogajanje. Te spremembe niso lahke in tako od mladostnikov kot od staršev zahtevajo dodatne napore, kar povzroča, da je starševstvo vedno težja in odgovornejša naloga. Zato je eden od najpomembnejših dejavnikov socialne diferenciacije mladih danes prav obstoj starševskih podpor, torej, ali ima mlad človek starševsko podporo in kako kakovostna je ta.

V članku bomo analizirali odnos do izobraževanja, stopnjo ter oblike starševske vpletenosti v šolsko delo in izobraževalne poteke otrok v Sloveniji ob primerjavi z evropskim kontekstom. Prispevek temelji na empiričnih podatkih, ki smo jih pridobili s kvantitativnimi in kvalitativnimi raziskavami s starši, otroki in učitelji v okviru projekta Upravljanje izobraževalnih potekov v Evropi (Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe – GOETE), v katerem so poleg Slovenije sodelovale še Finska, Francija, Italija, Nemčija, Nizozemska, Poljska in Velika Britanija. V okviru projekta je bila velika pozornost namenjena prav vlogi in vpletenosti staršev v izobraževalne poteke in odločitve otrok.

Teoretski modeli starševske vpletenosti

Sodobne raziskave družinskih vzorcev in razmerij kažejo značilne premike v vzgojnih vzorcih, ki so se v sodobnih družbah zgodili v zadnjih desetletjih in ki bi jih lahko označili kot premik od modela vzgojne in etične družine k modelu čustvene družine. Družina se iz nadzorovalne spreminja v podporno skupnost (Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Žakelj in Švab 2013). Tako danes pogosto deluje kot prostor pobegov in zavetja pred zahtevami širšega sveta, ki v visokotekmovalnih družbah zanesljivo niso majhne. Vse pogosteje vsi družinski člani prav v družini iščejo prostor za vsakdanje obnavljanje svojih fizičnih in duševnih sposobnosti ter mesto za nadomeščanje identitetnih izgub v drugih družbenih dejavnostih. Zaradi družbenih pritiskov na odrasle, ki jih silijo v atomizacijo, medsebojno izolacijo in konkurenco, odrasli izgubljajo medsebojno zaupanje in se toliko bolj obračajo k svojim otrokom, misleč, da so odnosi z njimi manj ogrožajoči. Družina tako vse bolj postaja socializacijska enota za vse člane, in ne le za otroke. Tudi otroci od staršev zahtevajo določeno resocializacijo, hkrati pa so zanje eden od kompenzacijskih dejavnikov v vsakodnevni psihosocialni reprodukciji (Beck-Gernsheim 2002).

Starši postajajo zaupniki in svetovalci otrok v psihičnih ali ekonomskih težavah, pa tudi neverjetni zagovorniki v javni sferi in institucijah (Arendell 1997). Tu mislimo na organizirano lobiranje, kjer poskušajo kot skupina pritiska od zunaj delovati na kulturne in šolske institucije, da bi tako izboljšali življenjske možnosti svojih otrok. Njihove odločitve glede izobraževanja otrok so tesno povezane z njihovimi pričakovanji glede prihodnosti otrok. Raziskave kažejo, da na ta pričakovanja

pomembno vplivajo socioekonomski dejavniki – materialni, socialni in izobrazbeni kapital staršev (Munson 2009). Pričakovanja in aspiracije staršev so pomemben element starševske vpletenosti v izobraževanje otrok. Grobo rečeno, obstaja pozitivna korelacija med pričakovanji in aspiracijami staršev ter stopnjo in obsegom njihove vpletenosti v izobraževanje otrok.

Pojem »starševska vpletenost« (parental involvement) je zato v zadnjem desetletju ali dveh postal izjemno pomemben v poskusih razumevanja vloge staršev v izobraževalni karieri otrok in v pojasnjevanju razmerja med šolo in družino (Hoover-Dempsey in Sandler 1997, 2005). Ne gre le za koncept sodelovanja staršev v izobraževanju otrok v okviru družine, temveč tudi za sodelovanje staršev s šolo. Raziskave konceptov in praks starševske vpletenosti v izobraževalne poteke otrok in sodelovanja pri odločanju o prihodnosti otrok so se razširile med raziskovalci starševanja, ker so obetale preseganje socialnih, rasnih, spolnih in kulturnih neenakosti v izobraževanju ob pomoči večjega in kakovostnega sodelovanja staršev s šolo. Koncept je pomemben tudi zato, ker ponuja analizo in sintezo ključnih socialnih in psiholoških dejavnikov, ki vplivajo na odločanje staršev med šolanjem otrok.

Eden najbolj znanih modelov starševske vpletenosti je model, ki ga je razvila in raziskovalno preizkusila Joyce Epstein (2001). Gre za model s šestimi ravnmi starševske vpletenosti, ki segajo od osnovne ravni, kjer starši zadovoljujejo samo osnovne potrebe otrok, do popolne osredotočenosti staršev na otroke; tukaj so tudi vmesne stopnje, ki nadgrajujejo ena drugo. Tako druga stopnja pomeni, da starši občasno preverjajo pripravo otrok za šolo. Tretja raven je tista, kjer starši že stalno nadzirajo šolsko delo otrok. Na četrti ravni gre za neposredno pomoč staršev pri šolskem delu otrok, kot je pomoč pri pripravi gradiva, nalog, najemanje inštruktorjev itd. Na peti stopnji gre za stalno sodelovanje staršev s šolo, učitelji, nadziranje in preverjanje njihovega dela. Zadnja stopnja pa je tista, kjer so starši popolnoma osredotočeni na svoje otroke, svoje življenje podrejajo njihovi izobraževalni karieri in močno vplivajo na njihove odločitve. Te ravni vpletenosti odražajo tudi različne ravni sodelovanja staršev v odločitvah v zvezi s šolo, ki segajo od odločitev glede vsakodnevnih šolskih obveznosti otrok do odločitev, ki zadevajo vse šolske in obšolske dejavnosti otrok, izbire šol ter načina in organizacije pouka. Tu že lahko govorimo o preveč zaščitniškem starševanju.

Kathleen Hoover-Dempsey in Howard Sandler sta predlagala razširjeni model starševske vpletenosti v otrokovo izobrazbeno kariero (Hoover-Dempsey in Sandler 1997, 2005). Njun model zajema ključne dejavnike in mehanizme, ki vplivajo na starševsko vpletenost, temelji pa na treh virih starševske vpletenosti: starševskih motivih za vpletenost, starševskih ocenah učinkov njihove vpletenosti in osebnem kontekstu starševske vpletenosti (Hoover-Dempsey in Sandler 1997, str. 4). Pri tem model temelji na osnovni pozitivni odločitvi staršev, da želijo biti vpleteni v šolsko delo otrok. Ko starši sprejmejo to temeljno odločitev, se lahko odločijo za posebne oblike vpletenosti glede na svoje zmožnosti, na primer glede na spretnosti in sposobnosti, razpoložljiv čas ter povpraševanje in povabila šole. Hoover-Dempsey in Sandler (2005) precej optimistično predpostavljata, da so dejavniki, ki motivirajo starše za sodelovanje in vpletenost v šolsko delo, vzporedni z dejavniki, ki jih uporabljajo v šoli. To pomeni, da starši in šola gradijo na podobni motivaciji in prepričanjih.

Kljub veliki priljubljenosti koncepta starševske vpletenosti pa kritiki opo-
zarjajo na nekatere ključne in sistemske manke tega koncepta in nanj vezanih
izobraževalnih praks (Baker in Denessen 2007). Avtorji opozarjajo predvsem na
zanemarjanje družbenega konteksta, ki tudi pomembno pogojuje prakse in ravni
starševske vpletenosti v izobraževalno kariero otrok. Baker in Denessen sta opozar-
jala na socialno in rasno pristranskost koncepta starševske vpletenosti, na primer
obremenjenost koncepta s predstavami belih staršev in učiteljev iz srednjega sloja
o tem, kakšna je stopnja zaželene vpletenosti staršev ali kaj vpliva na otrokov
šolski uspeh in dobrobit. Obstaja mnogo načinov, kako biti vpleten, a v empiričnih
raziskavah niso prepoznani kot taki. Zato predlagata uporabo bolj kvalitativnih
metod za preučevanje starševske vpletenosti, na primer uporabo poglobljenih
intervjujev s starši, potem ko ugotovimo stopnjo njihove vpletenosti, da nam le-ti
povedo razloge za tako ali drugačno stopnjo (ne)vpletenosti (prav tam, str. 193).

Stopnjevana vpletenost staršev v življenje otrok, nenehna skrb za njihovo
blaginjo, izobraževalni proces in prihodnost – vse to vpliva tudi na spreminjanje
odnosov med starši in otroki. Proces spreminjanja tega razmerja z njegovim in-
tenziviranjem označujemo z izrazom »zaščiteno otroštvo«, ki pomeni ustvarjanje
diskurzivnega prostora, znotraj katerega so otroci zaznani kot osebe, katerih
avtonomijo je treba varovati, ohranjati. Hkrati pa vključuje tudi nasproten proces
razlikovanja otrok od odraslih in povečanega nadzora nad otroki in nad samo
zaščito le-teh (James idr. 1998, str. 6).

Pojav zaščitenega otroštva je posledica zahtev sodobnega sveta, predvsem
zahtev po individualizaciji, refleksivnosti sebstva in samoaktualizaciji. Vse te
zahteve starševanja pa pri starših krepijo protislovno mešanico teženj po kar
se da popolni zaščiti otrok pred vsakovrstnimi nevarnostmi in tveganji ter tudi
dvome, ali bodo zmogli uresničevati svojo vzgojno vlogo. To seveda povzroča, da je
starševstvo postalo zahteven, za nekatere celo komaj obvladljiv življenjski projekt.
Frank Furedi govori kar o globoki paranoidnosti staršev (Furedi 2008). »Paranoidno
starševstvo« po njegovem mnenju označuje predvsem manko zaupanja staršev v
same sebe in v institucije, ki sodelujejo pri odraščanju, predvsem v izobraževalne
institucije, učitelje, pedagoške eksperte in svetovalce, odločevalce. Ta manko
zaupanja vodi k pojavu posebne kulture starševanja v sodobnih družbah, ki se
na eni strani kaže v obliki preveč zaščitniškega starševanja in na drugi strani v
obliki starševske negotovosti in občutkov krivde. To je kultura, ki starše spodbuja,
da nenehno skrbijo in jih skrbi vsaka dimenzija otrokovega življenja. To je tudi
kultura, ki neprenehoma dvomi o starševskih kompetencah in vztraja, da starši
ne zmorejo opravljati starševske vloge brez pomoči različnih ekspertov, vzgojnih
svetovalcev, varuhov otrokovih pravic itd. (prav tam, str. 16).

Podobne zaskrbljene ocene najdemo tudi pri drugih sodobnih strokovnjakih
(Anderegg 2003; Nelson 2010). Tom Hodgkinson ugotavlja, da so starši danes
ujetniki prevladujočih splošnih predstav o starševanju, ki poudarjajo nenehno
vpletanje staršev v odraščanje otrok. Ugotavlja, da se sodobni starši preveč vple-
tajo in s tem spravljajo otroke v težave. Pri prevelikem vpletanju namreč otrokom
ne dovolimo, da bi se učili samostojno in odrasli v samostojne osebe. »Otrok, ki je
preveč zaščiten, se ne bo naučil, kako naj ščiti samega sebe.« (Hodgkinson 2010,

str. 35) Tudi vpletanje profesionalnih svetovalcev v starševanje dodatno spodkopava starševsko samozaupanje.

Sodobni analitiki starševanja kritizirajo tudi idejo o splošni ranljivosti otrok v sodobnih družbah (Gill 2007; Furedi 2008). Ta ideja, ki je dobila status neke vrste dogme, je tesno povezana z močno promovirano predstavo o odgovornem starševstvu. Ta čut odgovornosti starše vodi k stalni pozornosti in skrbi, da lahko gre kaj narobe. Tom Gill na primer ugotavlja, da se starševstvo in vzgoja preveč omejujeta na zmanjševanje možnih negativnih posledic početja otrok, vendar pa s tem potiskajo vstran očitne koristi od tega, da puščajo otrokom več svobode, raziskovanja, prevzemanja odgovornosti in doživljanj tveganja (Gill 2007, str. 60). Zaradi težnje po varovanju otrok zožujejo njihov življenjski prostor in omejujejo razvoj avtonomnih strategij otrok za soočanje z nujnimi težavami odraščanja in prehodov. Gill navaja in komentira poročilo Ameriške zdravstvene fundacije iz leta 1999, kjer so zapisali: »Obstajajo tveganja za otroke, če jih osamimo in jim ne dopustimo njihovih lastnih mehanizmov posnemanja ali počenjanja raznih stvari na njihov lasten način.« (Prav tam, str. 78) Tako so številne oblike obnašanja otrok, ki so jih nekoč imeli za »normalne«, na primer nemir, izbruhi jeze, prepiri, pretepi v igri, plahost, zaprtost vase, danes postale patologizirane kot psihološke težave. K le-tem se danes dodaja še vrsta novih, ki jih na novo odkrivajo in diagnosticirajo pedopsihiatri, psihologi in pedagogi, na primer hiperaktivnost, anksioznost, depresija, motnje avtističnega spektra itd. S tem se otroke in mladostnike še dodatno obremenjuje in celo stigmatizira.

Empirične ugotovitve o družinski podpori in vpletenosti staršev v izobraževanje otrok

Teoretska izhodišča o vpletenosti staršev v izobraževalne poteke in šolsko delo otrok preverjamo z empiričnimi podatki, ki smo jih pridobili v evropskem projektu Upravljanje izobraževalnih potekov v Evropi (GOETE), ki je potekal v okviru EU7 (2009–2012) v osmih evropskih državah: na Finskem, v Franciji, Nemčiji, Italiji, na Nizozemskem, Poljskem, v Sloveniji in Veliki Britaniji[1]. Projekt je osredotočen na izobraževalno obdobje med zaključkom primarnega in prehodom v sekundarno stopnjo izobraževanja. Glavno raziskovalno vprašanje je bilo, kakšna je vloga izobraževanja v življenjskem poteku in socialni integraciji mladih. Raziskava je vključevala zbiranje podatkov s kvantitativno in kvalitativno metodologijo (Walther 2010)[2]. Standardizirane individualne ankete so bile izvedene z učenci, ki so bili v svojem zadnjem letu obveznega izobraževanja (N = 6390) stari od 13 do 16 let (v Sloveniji so bili vključeni učenci 9. razredov), ter njihovimi starši (N = 3290). V Sloveniji je anketiranje potekalo leta 2011 na 20 osnovnih šolah v treh slovenskih regijah (Osrednjeslovenska, Obalno-kraška in Pomurska regija). V raziskavi

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[1] Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe (http://www.goete.eu/index.php), ki je potekal v okviru 7. evropskega okvirnega raziskovalnega programa.

[2] Podatki, pridobljeni v Veliki Britaniji, niso vključeni v analizo zaradi premajhnega in pristranskega vzorca staršev.

je sodelovalo 725 učencev in 419 staršev. Kvalitativna raziskava je temeljila na poglobljenih intervjujih in fokusnih skupinah z učenci in starši, učitelji in svetovalnimi delavci v istih regijah. Skupno je bilo v Sloveniji izvedenih 102 intervjuja in 12 fokusnih skupin. Tukaj prikazujemo predvsem odgovore staršev. Zanimivo je, da so tako v izpolnjevanju anket kot v intervjujih sodelovale pretežno matere, kar kaže na to, da je šolsko delo v slovenskih družinah še vedno »žensko« delo.

Vpletenost staršev v izobraževalne poteke in šolanje otrok bomo preverjali na naslednjih področjih: odnos staršev do izobraževanja, šolskega dela in poučevanja, aspiracije glede nadaljnjega šolanja, nadzorovanje šolskega dela ter sodelovanje pri odločitvah o nadaljnjih izobraževalnih poteh.

Odnos staršev do izobraževanja, šole in šolskega dela

Za Slovenijo so vsaj za zdaj še značilne precej ugodne možnosti izobraževanja – tudi v primerjavi z drugimi članicami Evropske unije. Ta ugotovitev temelji na visokem deležu otrok, vključenih v izobraževalni sistem na sekundarni in terciarni ravni. Kot kažejo raziskovalni podatki, so tudi izobrazbene želje in aspiracije tako otrok kot staršev ene najvišjih v Evropi. Kot je razvidno z grafa 1, imajo največje izobraževalne aspiracije prav starši v Sloveniji. Kar 79,6 % staršev želi, da imajo njihovi otroci visoko izobrazbo. Podobno visoke aspiracije imajo starši na Nizozemskem (79,1 %) in Poljskem (70,7 %). Sledijo starši v Italiji (63,8 %) in na Finskem (61,1 %). Zanimivo je, da imajo najnižje izobraževalne aspiracije za otroke starši v Nemčiji (47 %) in Franciji (41,1 %). Mogoče so pa ravno izobraževalne aspiracije staršev v Nemčiji in Franciji stvarnejše in starši ne vidijo možnosti življenjske promocije za svoje otroke samo v doseganju visoke izobrazbe. Lahko pa na nižje izobraževalne aspiracije vpliva tudi drugačen izobraževalni sistem, ki že zelo zgodaj diferencira izobraževalne poti otrok. V Nemčiji in Franciji se namreč otroci (in njihovi starši) za poklicne smeri izobraževanja odločijo že po štirih letih osnovnega šolanja in tako velik del devetošolcev, ki smo jih anketirali, nima več možnosti za vstop v terciarno izobraževanje.
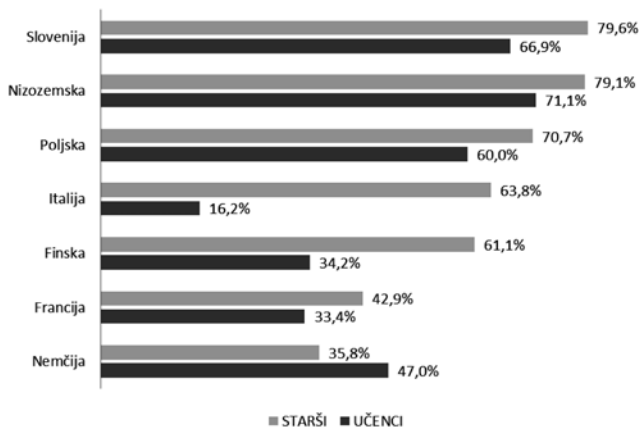
Graf 1: Odstotek učencev, ki pričakujejo, da bodo dosegli vsaj terciarno stopnjo izobrazbe, in staršev, ki želijo, da njihov otrok doseže najmanj to stopnjo izobrazbe

Pričakovanja in aspiracije so vsekakor pomemben element starševske vpletenosti v izobraževalne poteke in izbire otrok. Tudi druge raziskave so potrdile pozitivno korelacijo med aspiracijami staršev in stopnjo njihove vpletenosti v izobraževanje otrok (Munson 2009). Nasploh je raziskava opozorila na veliko pomembnost izobrazbe, in to tako za starše kot tudi za otroke v vseh državah, vključenih v projekt. Šola se namreč zdi edini način, kako si zagotoviti »potni list« v drugačno prihodnost, zato se tudi pojavlja takšna skrb staršev za otrokov uspeh. Starši navadno pričakujejo, da jih bo otrok presegel vsaj za eno stopnjo izobrazbe ali da bo dosegel najmanj njihovo, ali kot so izjavile matere v intervjujih v okviru raziskave: *»Tako gledam: za svoje otroke si želim, da dosežejo visoko izobrazbo. Če pa je še kaj več, pa toliko bolje.«* (Mati učenke 9. razreda osnovne šole, Koper)

Starši in otroci navajajo različne razloge za velik pomen izobraževanja, v ospredju pa je ideja o ohranjanju socialnega statusa v družbi, varnosti in življenjskega uspeha, ki naj bi ga omogočala predvsem izobrazba. V tem oziru so značilne naslednje izjave:

To je pomembna zadeva, ne samo zaradi nekega naslova, ampak zato, da nekako v življenju greš naprej in širiš obzorja. Da greš naprej in slišiš ljudi, ki znajo več, ter se kaj naučiš, izmenjaš svoje mnenje in to tudi deliš naprej.

(Mati učenke 9. razreda osnovne šole, Koper)

Staršem se zdi, da lahko v sodobni tekmovalni družbi največ naredijo za otroke tako, da jim omogočijo čim več izobrazbe, naslovov, diplom in da jih zgodaj vključujejo v različne oblike urjenja in izobraževanja.

Rekel sem ji: »Vzemi knjigo, uči se, nočem, da postaneš čistilka!« […] Otroci se ne zavedajo […] Dokler ne postanejo polnoletni, se ne zavedo, da bi bilo bolje, da bi se prej učili.   (Oče učenke 9. razreda osnovne šole, Ljubljana)

Zanimivo je, da se učenci v Sloveniji v šoli počutijo relativno dobro. Na vprašanje »Kakšni so tvoji občutki v zvezi s šolo?« jih je 37 % izjavilo, da jo imajo zelo radi, nadaljnjih 41 % pa, da jo imajo kar radi. Samo 5,4 % učencev je izjavilo, da šole sploh ne marajo. Spodnja tabela kaže, kakšen je odnos do šole glede na mednarodno primerjavo (primerjamo, koliko otrokom je šola zelo všeč).
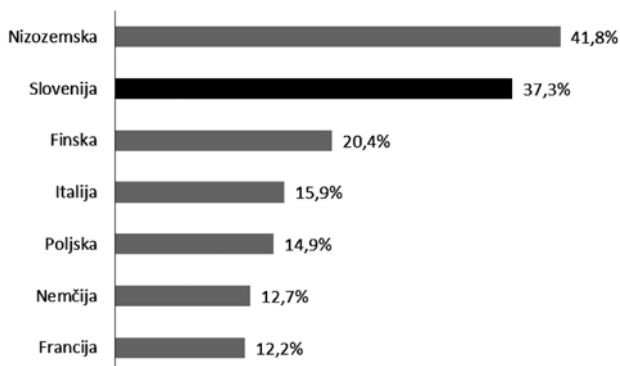
Graf 2: Odstotek učencev, ki jim je v zadnjem šolskem letu šola zelo všeč

Učenci in učenke iz Slovenije so na drugem mestu po pozitivnih občutjih do šole. Samo še več učencev iz Nizozemske je potrdilo, da jim je šola zelo všeč. Tudi starši v Sloveniji se strinjajo, da »se otrok v šoli dobro počuti«. 14 % staršev pri nas se zelo strinja s to trditvijo in 75 % se jih strinja. Mednarodna primerjava pokaže, da je v Sloveniji najmanjši odstotek staršev, ki se ne strinjajo s trditvijo, da se njihov otrok v šoli dobro počuti.

Še več o konkretnih stališčih do šole pokažejo intervjuji s starši, v katerih so ti izrazili tako zelo pozitiven odnos do šole kot tudi precej kritike, na primer:

S šolo, ki jo obiskuje zdaj, smo res kakor ena družina. Če kaj potrebuje, vpraša učitelja. Sproščena je, ker ve, da ji bodo pomagali. In ko to traja toliko let, se tega navadiš, kot da si v eni hiši. Kakor sem videla in kakor sama občutim, se tukaj otroci počutijo varneje. To želim povedati.

(Mati učenke 9. razreda osnovne šole, Koper)

Pripombe, ki jih izražajo starši, zadevajo predvsem metode dela z učenci, na primer načine motiviranja in ocenjevanja učencev:

Tako se mi včasih zdi, da je preveč iskanja napak in neznanja, in to na splošno v šolstvu. To opažam in potem tudi dejansko na neki način zatrejo še tisti kanček veselja. Preveč poudarka je na napakah in premalo je pohval. Določeni predmeti mu gredo dobro, celo izrazito dobro, na primer preteklo leto je bil drugi izmed vseh učencev osmih razredov na tekmovanju iz X. To je bilo tako mimogrede omenjeno v razredu, nobene pohvale glede tega. Saj pravim, iskanje neznanja, napak, premalo pohval in spodbujanja za naprej.

(Mati učenca 9. razreda osnovne šole, Ljubljana)

Veliko pripomb staršev je glede individualizacije dela v šoli ter glede odsotnosti skupinskega dela in sodelovanja:

Pa tudi to se mi zdi, da jih v šoli ne spodbujajo, da bi si pomagali med seboj. Težava je, če je otrok bolan in je odsoten v šoli – ne dobi zvezka za prepisati […] To je moje mnenje, nič ne delujejo kot skupina, samo kot posameznik. Na primer, ko sva šla na gimnazijo, je tam gospa povedala, da »tu nismo zaradi prijateljstva, ampak samo zaradi točk za naprej«. Tako je bilo že na predstavitvi in mislim, da je enako na osnovnih šolah in povsod.

(Mati učenca 9. razreda osnovne šole, Ljubljana)

Mislim, da je zdaj poudarek na individualnem uspehu. Tekmovalnost, kdo bo prvi. Ne ozirajo se na druge. Ja, meni se to ne zdi v redu, da je tak poudarek, torej na vsakem posamezniku, samo ti, ti in nič skupinskega, nič pomoči med sabo. (Mati učenca 9. razreda osnovne šole, Koper)

Nadalje starši opažajo odsotnost medvrstniške pomoči in solidarnosti, ki je po njihovem mnenju posledica tekmovalnega vzdušja v šoli in individualiziranega pouka:

Pogrešam stik med vrstniki, medvrstniško pomoč v razredu, recimo, da bi si sošolci pomagali. Zdaj tega vsaj v tem razredu, v katerem je moj sin, ni. Enostavno si ne pomagajo, ni tega.

(Mati učenca 9. razreda osnovne šole, Ljubljana)

Zdaj so ljubosumni, pazijo, da te premagajo. V šoli ti ne dajo za prepisati, pazijo, kako bi te vrgli čisto na tla. Mislim, da to ni kot včasih. Takrat smo bili sošolci. Takrat je sošolka recimo prišla pa te kaj vprašala. Če si bil doma bolan, ti je dala za prepisati, zdaj pa tega ni več.

(Mati učenca 9. razreda osnovne šole, Ljubljana)

Vpletenost staršev v izobraževalne poteke otrok

Ni dvoma, da imajo starši danes izjemno zahtevno delo pri spremljanju izobraževalne in poklicne kariere svojih otrok. Dajejo različno pomoč in podporo, posredujejo pomembne informacije o različnih možnostih in mladim omogočajo koristne stike, ki jim lahko pomagajo v njihovem nadaljnem šolanju in poklicni karieri. Obenem trajno vplivajo na oblikovanje stališč mladih do izobrazbe in jim dajejo prve predstave o poklicnih vlogah in možnostih. Ta podpora je dolgoročna in ima daljnosežne posledice na otrokov razvoj, celo čez okvire tega, kar lahko odkrijemo z raziskavami. Bolj podporni starši spodbujajo dobro počutje in samozavest otrok ter vplivajo na njihov psihofizični razvoj. Ti starši bolje in učinkoviteje sodelujejo s šolo in pomagajo pri reševanju učnih težav otrok. Po drugi strani pa otroci, ki nimajo dovolj podpore svojih staršev, težje prenašajo strese zaradi šolskih neuspehov, so manj samozavestni in bolj podlegajo motnjam v socialnem vedenju.
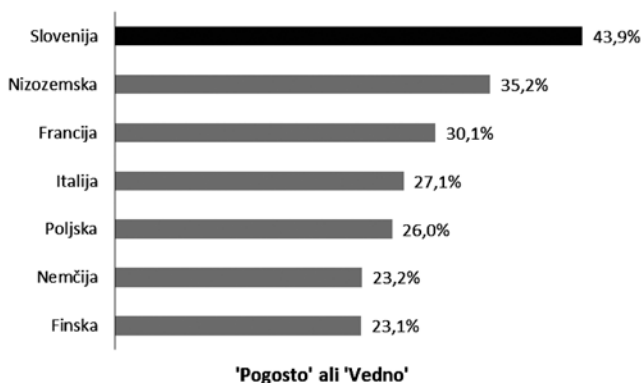
Graf 3: Kako pogosto te je mati v zadnjem letu podpirala tako, da se je udeležila tvojih aktivnosti v šoli? (Prikazani so odstotki tistih mater, ki se udeležujejo vedno in pogosto.)

Rezultati kažejo, da je odstotek tistih mater, ki so odgovorile, da podpirajo otroke tako, da se pogosto ali vedno udeležujejo aktivnosti otrok v šoli, največji prav v Sloveniji. Tudi druge raziskave kažejo, da so starši, predvsem matere v Sloveniji, tisti, ki jim mladostniki najbolj zaupajo pri odločanju, izbirah ali v težavnih situacijah. Učenci so v razgovoru v fokusni skupini, komu najbolj zaupajo oziroma na koga bi se obrnili v težavnih situacijah, izbirah in odločitvah, povedali naslednje:

Najprej bi se obrnil na starše in potem bi skupaj rešili. Lahko se zanesem nanje.   (Učenec 9. razreda osnovne šole, Ljubljana)

Samo z družino nisem imel težav, zaupam ji.
                                    (Učenec 9. razreda osnovne šole, Murska Sobota)

Tudi jaz najbolj zaupam staršem. Vedno so mi pomagali in mislim, da mi tudi vedno bodo, na vseh področjih.
                                    (Učenka 9. razreda osnovne šole, Ljubljana)

Ja, to je res, mami je zmeraj tam pa zmeraj pomaga, tudi če ji kaj ni všeč, tako da se nanjo res lahko zmeraj zanesem.
                                    (Učenec 9. razreda osnovne šole, Ljubljana)

Starši so v intervjujih omenjali velike želje po uspešnosti otrok in tudi izražali zadrego glede tega:

Tako gledam: za svoje otroke si želim, da dosežejo visoko izobrazbo. Če je pa še kaj več, pa toliko bolje. Zadnje čase ugotavljam, da se moram malo zadržati.
                                    (Mati učenke 9. razreda osnovne šole, Murska Sobota)

Tudi jaz mislim, da je osnovno šolo treba narediti z dobrim uspehom. Saj se zadržujem, čeprav se mi zdi, da sem podzavestno dajala signale, ampak sta oba tudi zelo tekmovalna in hočeta imeti petice. Tako ne vem, ali sem otroka obremenila s tem. Zdi se mi, da sem že naredila škodo.
                                    (Mati učenca 9. razreda osnovne šole, Ljubljana)

Takšna naravnanost staršev se dobro ujema s težnjo po podaljševanju odvisnosti otrok od staršev, kar zaznavamo povsod v razvitem svetu (Nelson 2010). S tem pa otrokom onemogočajo, da bi se neposredno soočili z življenjskimi problemi in razvili strategije za njihovo reševanje. Seveda takšna naravnanost staršev blokira tudi izobraževalne in karierne odločitve otrok. Starši se odločajo namesto otrok oziroma projicirajo svoje želje nanje, in to pogosto v veri, da delajo vse le »v dobro otrok«. Tako so nam tudi učitelji v okviru raziskave GOETE poročali, da so njihovi nasveti pogosto preslišani.

V šoli svetujemo, ampak po svojih izkušnjah z letošnjimi devetošolci vam povem, da ne vem, ali so pri dveh primerih starši upoštevali. Mi jim svetujemo glede

na to, kar je otrok do zdaj izkazal, glede ocen, testov, ki jih je rešil, ampak starši se potem vseeno odločijo za tisto, kar oni mislijo, da je za njihove otroke dobro. (Učiteljica 9. razreda osnovne šole, Murska Sobota)

Sicer ugotavljamo, da imamo določeno vlogo seznanjanja z različnimi situacijami, ampak tukaj ima precejšnjo vlogo družina. Tako nam tudi otroci sami povedo, kdo jim pomaga pri odločitvi, ali pa, kdo je tisti, ki odloči. Tu je res velika vloga družine. (Ravnatelj, Koper)

Kot kažejo raziskave, vplivi staršev na odločitve otrok navadno niso neposredni ali vsiljivi, temveč posredni in svetovalni (Payne 2003). Celo starši, ki imajo zelo zaščitniški vzgojni slog, skušajo na mlade vplivati tako, da bi ti imeli vtis, da so sami prišli do odločitve. Seveda pa z ustvarjanjem določene družinske klime in poudarjanjem svojih izkušenj in podobnih izkušenj drugih ljudi vendarle pripravljajo mlade k »zaželeni« ali »pričakovani« odločitvi. Otroci v takem okolju čutijo, da so nedorasli in pretirano odvisni od staršev, zato v otroštvu in mladosti ne razvijejo avtonomije, lastnih presoj in odločitev glede pomembnih življenjskih problemov. Zato le relativno malo otrok in mladih ravna proti volji staršev, na primer, da opustijo šolanje proti volji staršev ali nadaljujejo šolanje na šoli, ki jo starši odsvetujejo. Značilna je naslednja izjava učenke iz naše raziskave:

Jaz si zelo želim biti fotografinja, a starši tega ne dovolijo. Pravijo, da ta šola ni dobra, pa plača in poklic. En dan smo se o tem pogovorili, potem pa sem razmišljala in se odločila, da imajo prav.

(Učenka 9. razreda osnovne šole, Ljubljana)

Zdi se, da so tudi otroci v Sloveniji tako zelo ponotranjili željo po uspehu, da jih morajo starši včasih ustavljati. »*Zelo se trudi in tudi pravi, da bi morala biti še boljša, čeprav sem ji rekla, da sem zadovoljna.*« (Mati učenke 9. razreda osnovne šole, Murska Sobota) To kažejo tudi podatki raziskav mladih, ki smo jih opravili v zadnjih dveh desetletjih. Opozarjajo na to, da ima šola res eno od osrednjih vlog v vsakdanjem življenju mladih – tudi ali predvsem zato, ker je šolski uspeh po ocenah anketiranih tako zelo pomemben za njihove starše. Že v raziskavi leta 2000 med devetošolci v Sloveniji smo ugotovili presenetljive podatke: da je kar 62,9 % devetošolcev, vključenih v raziskavo, nezadovoljnih s svojim šolskim uspehom, čeprav jih je imelo kar 27 % v zadnjem letniku odličen in prav toliko prav dober uspeh. Torej niti odlični in prav dobri niso zadovoljni s svojim uspehom. Raziskava je razkrila tudi, da jih je od tistih, ki so nezadovoljni z uspehom, kar 70,6 % nezadovoljnih zato, ker mislijo, da bi lahko dosegli več (Ule idr. 2000).

Posledice nezadovoljstva z uspehom so pogosto strahovi pred šolskim neuspehom. Velik strah pred šolskim neuspehom je občutilo kar 38,5 % vprašanih. Nadaljnjih 45,7 % pa je ta strah doživljalo kot srednje velik osebni problem. Celo 27,9 % odličnjakov odgovarja, da je to tudi zanje zelo velik osebni problem. Strah pred neuspehom kot zelo obremenjujoč najpogosteje ocenjujejo tisti učenci iz omenjene raziskave, ki s svojim učnim uspehom niso zadovoljni zaradi pritiska

staršev (73,7 %), in tisti, ki pričakujejo, da bodo zaradi doseženega uspeha imeli težave pri vpisu v srednjo šolo (62,9 %). Hkrati po podatkih iste raziskave kar 49 % otrok kot velik problem občuti prevelika pričakovanja staršev. Odgovornost za realizacijo teh pričakovanj otroci očitno prevzemajo na svoja ramena (Mencin - Čeplak 2000). Med tistimi, ki niso zadovoljni z učnim uspehom, kar 70,6 % vseh odgovarja, da bi lahko dosegli več. Zdi se, da opozorila glede preobremenjenosti otrok, ki se opirajo le na porabo časa, zgrešijo toliko, kolikor ob tem pozabljajo na psihične obremenitve, ki izvirajo iz nenehnih prizadevanj biti uspešen (Ule 2010).

Obenem pa številni analitiki opozarjajo, da izobraženost staršev pomembno in predvsem zelo subtilno vpliva na šolski uspeh otrok. Bolj izobraženi starši otrokom bolje argumentirajo svoja pričakovanja in otroke bolje zastopajo v šoli. Raziskave so pokazale, da učitelji in učiteljice posvečajo bistveno več pozornosti otrokom, katerih starši pogosteje prihajajo v šolo in jasneje artikulirajo svojo skrb, zahteve, pričakovanja itd. Hkrati pa redkost obiskov, ki je značilnejša za manj izobražene starše, interpretirajo kot posledico zanemarjanja šolskega dela otrok (Ule 2013). Čeprav raziskave kažejo, da manj izobraženi starši v povprečju redkeje obiščejo otrokovega učitelja oziroma učiteljico, to ni izraz njihove brezbrižnosti, temveč prej občutka nekompetentnosti. Pa vendar – ali bi učitelji in učiteljice, če bi sprejeli to interpretacijo, ravnali kaj drugače? Večina verjetno ne – še vedno je namreč v pomanjkanju časa racionalneje namenjati več pozornosti tistim, ki to zahtevajo.

Diskusija in sklepi

Ugotovili smo, da so starši v Sloveniji tudi v primerjavi z evropskim kontekstom zelo vpleteni v izobraževalne poteke ter v samo šolsko delo otrok. Imajo visoke izobraževalne aspiracije, ki so jih očitno ponotranjili tudi otroci. Ti so to storili zaradi zaupanja, ki ga imajo do staršev. Rezultati kažejo, da so starši precej bolj zaupanja vredne osebe – v primerjavi z učitelji in šolskimi svetovalnimi delavci – tudi glede šolskih in izobrazbenih odločitev in izbir. Zavedajo pa se svojih ambicij in tudi svojih moči nad otroki, zato poskušajo svoj vpliv prikriti pod sintagmo *»Otrok naj se odloči sam.«* (mati učenke 9. razreda osnovne šole, Murska Sobota).

Starši so močno vpleteni v izobraževalne dejavnosti in delo svojih otrok v šolah. Narašča tudi število intervencij staršev, če njihovi otroci ne dosegajo zaželenih rezultatov. To je pokazala tudi primerjava odnosov med šolo in starši med državami, vključenimi v projekt. V preostalih evropskih državah so se učitelji praviloma pritoževali nad nesodelovanjem staršev, v Sloveniji pa so se, nasprotno, pogosto pritoževali nad vmešavanjem le-teh v delo učiteljev. Značilna je naslednja izjava učiteljice: »*Starši se radi vtikajo v strokovno delo. Ne vem, ne morejo si predstavljati, kakšen je naš poklic. Ampak vseeno mislijo, da kar vedo več in da bi se kaj dalo tu in tam narediti drugače. Nekako kar poskušajo vplivati na naše strokovno delo. Poskušajo recimo vplivati na potek pouka, zaključevanje ocen, samo spraševanje ali pa na samo delo – na vse.*« (Učiteljica 9. razreda osnovne šole, Ljubljana)

Posledično narašča tudi število konfliktov med starši in učitelji, tako da se učitelji v Sloveniji najbolj pritožujejo zaradi pritiskov staršev nanje, kar po nji-

hovem mnenju slabi učiteljsko strokovno avtoriteto in avtonomijo, ali kot je izjavila učiteljica v raziskavi: *»[K]er si starši želijo eno, sposobnosti pa so drugo. Potem se iščejo napake, kaj mi delamo slabo. Mislim, da nam je zelo težko, ker se vtikajo v učni proces tudi tam, kjer bi mi res morali imeti avtonomijo.«* (Učiteljica 9. razreda osnovne šole, Ljubljana) Komplementarna težnja k navedenim pritiskom so prav tako pogosta pričakovanja učiteljev, da bodo dosegli nekakšno vzgojno koalicijo s starši, na primer s takojšnim obveščanjem o delu otrok v šoli. Vse te težnje in pritiski skupaj krepijo potrebo tako staršev kot izobraževalnega osebja po čim učinkovitejšem nadzoru nad dosežki in početji šolarjev.

Zdi se, da se v Sloveniji uveljavlja tisti modus izobraževanja in vzgoje, ki ga je kritično osvetlil James Côté v svojih študijah o razvoju identitetnih kapitalov, namreč modus, kjer šole in starši na šolarje delujejo pretežno kot čim opaznejši »varuhi dostopa« mladih k različnim oblikam izobraževalnih dosežkov in stopenj odraslosti, ne pa kot izvori pozitivne motivacije otrok in mladih za doseganje čustvene stabilnosti in občutljivosti, odprtosti do drugih, sposobnosti za vživljanje v druge, kritično razmišljanje in zrelo moralno presojo (Côté 2007). Ravno te psihološke in značajske lastnosti pa so mladim nujno potrebne za to, da dosežejo psihološko vitalnost in sposobnost za uspešno razumevanje in obvladovanje socialnih, poklicnih ter osebnih ovir in priložnosti, s katerimi se soočajo ali se bodo soočali v svojem življenju. Côté te lastnosti imenuje »mehke« sestavine identitetnih kapitalov posameznika (prav tam). Poudarjanje vidnih, formalnih, splošno priznanih rezultatov izobraževanja pri vseh dejavnikih, ki vplivajo na izobraževalne poteke otrok, v družbeno in osebno nezavedno izrinja omenjene mehke sestavine identitetnih kapitalov, ki pa so še kako pomembne za vstop v institucije odrasle družbe, kot so zaposlitev, civilna družba, javno delovanje, starševstvo – ali povedano drugače: ekonomsko, socialno in politično državljanstvo.

Ker je vpletenost staršev v šolsko delo in izobraževalne poteke tako velika, to pomeni nov dejavnik socialne diferenciacije otrok. Navedeni trendi v vzorcih družinske socializacije in vzgoje imajo svojo prikrito normativno plat, ki tiho sankcionira tiste starše in otroke, ki ne znajo ali zmorejo ustvariti podporne družinske klime. Negativno jih sankcionira tako, da staršem nalaga »krivdo« za realne ali domnevne socializacijske manke njihovih otrok, otrokom pa pripisuje »krivdo« za njihove izobraževalne manke in neuspehe. Pri tem pa ostane prezrto realno jedro teh občutkov krivde, in sicer realne socialne delitve, ki določene skupine ljudi potiskajo v prikrajšane življenjske pogoje.

Razlike v kulturnem kapitalu družin pa se ne ujemajo povsem z razlikami v socioekonomskem kapitalu, zato so razlike med bolj in manj podpornimi starši kompleksnejše kot slojne ali razredne razlike (Côté 2007). Družine z več kulturnega kapitala svojim otrokom zagotavljajo takšno domače okolje, ki bolj podpira nadaljnje izobraževanje, in bolj cenijo doseženo znanje kot pa družine z manj kulturnega kapitala. Zato se družbena neenakost iz klasične medrazredne premika k znotrajrazredni. To seveda ne pomeni, da razredne razlike postajajo manj pomembne, temveč da se dodatno krepijo dejavniki, ki znotraj slojev krepijo diferenciacijo mladih. Znotrajrazredna diferenciacija je za mladega človeka pogosto bolj boleča in težavnejša kot medrazredna. Tako se otroci ne delijo na privilegirane in

podprivilegirane samo zaradi socialnega, ekonomskega ali drugega izvora družin, ampak je pomembno tudi, ali imajo dovolj podporne starše oziroma ali imajo ti dovolj kulturnega kapitala za ustrezno podporo otrokom doma in za ustrezno komuniciranje ter zastopanje otrok v šoli (Ule 2013).

Nekatere raziskave kažejo tudi, da je manko starševske podpore otrokom tesno povezan z zgodnjim opuščanjem nadaljnjega izobraževanja ali z izbiro manj zahtevnih smeri izobraževanja pri otrocih (Kintrea idr. 2011). Kot sta ugotavljala Nicholas Foskett in Anthony Hesketh v svoji raziskavi britanskih otrok, ki so predčasno zapustili šolanje (osipnikov), je bila odločitev (o prenehanju šolanja) večinoma opravljena ob tihem pristanku staršev oziroma v okviru priporočil, ki so jih ti definirali. Predvsem starši z družbenega roba nekatere izbire šole, smeri študija ali kariere izključujejo kot možnosti za svoje otroke, čeprav bi jih ti izbrali ali zmogli opraviti. Torej starši dajo »veto« na nekatere izbire (Foskett in Hesketh 1997, str. 308). To pomeni, da so psihosocialni dejavniki, ki omogočajo reprodukcijo prikrajšane mladosti (npr. nevpletenost staršev v šolanje otrok, nji-hovo nezanimanje za otroke, slab kulturni kapital staršev, slabe izkušnje s šolo), pogosto posledica socialne, ekonomske in kulturne prikrajšanosti predhodne gene-racije. Zato se postavlja vprašanje, kako iziti iz začaranega kroga prikrajšanosti. Očitno je, da tega ne moremo doseči le z ukrepi in posegi v mediju izobraževanja in šolske politike. Potrebni so kontinuirani, integrirani in sistematični posegi za zmanjševanje socialnih in kulturnih razlik otrok in mladostnikov. Šola bi pri tem morala imeti vlogo korektorja socialnih razlik in biti prostor socialne integracije, ne pa socialne diferenciacije otrok in mladostnikov.

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Mirjana Ule

The role of parents in children's educational trajectories in Slovenia

Abstract: The article will analyse the attitude towards education, level and forms of parental involvement in schoolwork, and educational trajectories of children in Slovenia. The article is based on empirical data, which we have obtained with the help of quantitative and qualitative research with parents, children, and teachers in the framework of the project Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe. The project is focused on the educational period between the end of the lower secondary education and transitions to the upper secondary level of education. We have found that parents in Slovenia, also in comparison with the European context, are very involved in the educational trajectories, as well as with the schoolwork of their children. They have high educational aspirations, which have apparently been internalized by their children, too. Since parental involvement in schoolwork and educational trajectories is so significant, it represents a new factor of social differentiation of children. Furthermore, it covertly sanctions those parents and children who do not know how, or are unable, to create a supportive family atmosphere.

Key words: parental involvement, overprotective parenthood, educational trajectories, educational aspirations, cultural capital

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Introduction

Growing up in contemporary European societies is directed and arranged by three institutional systems: the family system, the educational system, and the leisure system. With a balanced participation in these three types of networks, young people solve their difficulties with becoming adults, develop a stable identity, and plan their future. A balanced participation means that each of these socialization institutions performs their role: a family provides a psychophysical and emotional care of children, a school facilitates further cognitive and emotional development of children, whilst peer networks operate as a supportive and solidarity-generational system, ensuring proper differentiation between emotional care provided by the family and productivity-oriented school socialization. All three institutions can function well in an appropriate social context and when space is provided for each of them to perform their role autonomously.

Despite the changes in the structure and course of youth in the past few decades, youth continues to be predominantly a period of schooling, and the core problems and pressures of youth arise from this activity. In modern societies, education plays a crucial role in social integration of individuals into the society. At the same time, the contribution of education to social integration is no longer taken for granted. In other words, education per se does not guarantee meaningful life opportunities for an individual (Cote and Levine 2002). Children and youth are nowadays expected to make far-reaching life decisions early in their lives—for example, decisions about their educational trajectories. What is even more striking is that modern European societies demand early mental and behavioral adjustments from children and youth, whilst providing contradictory conditions for them—a prolonged education with an accompanying prolonged period of economic dependence sharply contradicts the demands for making early choices and decisions and assuming responsibility for both (Ule and Kuhar 2008). Concomitantly with the prolongment of education, the period when youth are dependent on their primary families is also prolonging. A prolonged dependence on one's parents is by no account of material nature alone—this process can be observed across the all of Europe despite significant regional differences (Chisholm et al. 1995; Walther et al. 2006).

The social context of growing up in modern times has been affected by two significant changes: the new insecurities and risks in managing one's life, as well as the shifting of responsibilities for planning life trajectories and transitions onto individuals (Beck 2001). Both of them lead to an ever-growing destandardization and individualization of life trajectories. The destandardization and individualization of life trajectories do not merely mean that we can design and choose our life path—in addition to designing and choosing it, we also have to assume responsibility for the consequences of our wrong choices (Ule and Kuhar 2008). Not only does this present an onerous burden for the youth who are just starting to design their life path, it also places a burden on those close to them, especially their parents, who are the most involved in this process. These changes are not easy and demand additional efforts from the youth and their parents, which makes parenting an ever more difficult, ever more responsible task. Therefore, one of the most important factors of social differentiation of today's youth is the availability of parental support: does a young person receive such support, and of what quality is the support?

The article will analyze attitudes towards education, level and forms of parental involvement in schoolwork, and educational trajectories of children in Slovenia in comparison with the European context. The article is based on empirical data, which we have obtained with the help of quantitative and qualitative research with parents, children, and teachers in the framework of the project Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe. In addition to Slovenia, the following countries have participated in the project: Finland, France, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, and the United Kingdom. Within the framework of the project, great attention was paid to the parental role and involvement in children's educational trajectories and decisions.

Theoretical models of parental involvement

Contemporary research of family patterns and relations shows distinct changes in the patterns of upbringing that have occurred in modern societies in the past few decades. They could be labelled as a shift from a family model providing an educational and ethical example to a family model providing emotional support. In other words, the family is changing from a controlling into a supporting community (Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Žakelj and Švab 2013). Nowadays, it frequently functions as a safe haven or a refuge from the demands of the wider world, which are becoming increasingly taxing in highly competitive societies. Within a family, its members often seek a place to daily recuperate their physical strength and mental capacities, a place where they can replenish and rebuttress their sense of identity, which is endangered in other social activities. Due to the societal pressure on adults, which pushes them into individualisation, mutual isolation, and competition, adults are losing mutual trust and are turning all the more to their children, thinking that relations with them will feel less threatening. Thus a family is increasingly becoming a socialization unit for all of its members and

not primarily for children. Children demand a certain resocialization from their parents as well, whilst also acting as one of the compensatory factors in everyday psychosocial reproduction (Beck-Gernsheim 2002).

Not only are parents becoming confidantes and counsellors of children in psychological or economic distress, they are also becoming incredibly vocal advocates of children in the public sphere and institutions (Arendell 1997). Here we have organized lobbying in mind in which parents as a group apply pressure to cultural and educational institutions from outside in order to improve opportunities for their children. Parental decisions regarding their children's education are closely linked with their expectations regarding their children's future. Research has shown that socioeconomic factors—the material, social, and educational capital of the parents—importantly influence those expectations (Munson 2009). Parental expectations and aspirations are an important element of parental involvement in the education of their children. Roughly speaking, there is a positive correlation between parental expectations and aspirations and the level and scope of parental involvement in the education of the children.

As a consequence, the term "parental involvement" has become extremely important in attempts to understand the parental role in the educational career of their children, as well as explain the relations between school and family in the last decade or two (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler 1997, 2005). This is a concept of parental cooperation not only in the process of schooling of children within the family framework, but also of cooperation of parents with school. Research of concepts and practices of parental involvement in children's education trajectories, as well as participation in decision-making regarding the future of children, has become popular with researchers of parenting, as they bring the promise of exceeding social, racial, gender, and cultural inequalities in education, whilst including greater and more quality cooperation of parents with school. The concept is also important because it provides an analysis and synthesis of key social and psychological factors, which influence parental decisions during the schooling of their children.

One of the most known models of parental involvement is the model developed and researched by Joyce Epstein (2001). She developed and presented a model with six levels of parental involvement, which span from the basic level (in which the parents satisfy only the basic needs of their children) up to the advanced level (in which parents are completely focused on their children). The model also includes intermediary levels that complement each other. The second level means that parents occasionally control their child's preparation for school. On the third level, parents constantly monitor the schoolwork of their children. On the fourth level, parents provide direct help with schoolwork for their children, for example, helping them to prepare materials, exercises, they hire instructors etc. On the fifth level, there is a constant cooperation of parents with the school and teachers, as well as controlling and monitoring that work. On the sixth level, parents are completely focused on their children and they fully adjust their lives to the education and career of their offspring, strongly influencing the decisions of their children. These levels of involvement also mirror the different levels of

parental cooperation in decisions regarding school, spanning from everyday school tasks to the decisions related to all school and after-school activities, the choice of school, as well as the manner and organization of lessons. Here we can already talk about overprotective parenting.

Kathleen Hoover-Dempsey and Howard Sandler proposed an expanded model of parental involvement in the child's educational career (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler 1997, 2005). Their model comprises key factors and mechanisms that affect parental involvement. The model is based on three sources of parental involvement: parental motives for involvement, parental assessments of the effects of their involvement, and personal context of parental involvement (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler 1997, p. 4). The model is based on the basic, positive parental decision that they want to be involved in the schoolwork of their children. Once the parents have accepted this basic decision, they can decide the special forms of involvement in accordance with their capacities, for example their skills and abilities, available time, and requests and invitations from the school. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) rather optimistically assume that the factors that motivate parents for cooperation and involvement in the schoolwork of their children are parallel to the factors used in school. This means that parents and the school carry out their actions by using the same motivations and beliefs.

Despite the great popularity of the concept of parental involvement, critics warn of some key and systemic shortcomings of this concept and related educational practices (Baker and Denessen 2007). Most of all, authors warn of neglecting the social context, which also importantly conditions the practices and levels of parental involvement in the educational career of their children. What is more, Baker and Denessen warn of the social and racial bias of the concept of parental involvement, for example, how the concept is burdened with middle-class parental and teacher conceptions about the level of the desired parental involvement or what affects the child's success at school and well-being. There are many types of involvement that have, nonetheless, not been recognized as such in empirical research. Consequently, they propose using more qualitative methods for studying parental involvement, for example, using in-depth interviews with parents after their level of involvement has been determined. This will enable parents to give their reasons for their level of (non)involvement (ibid., p. 193).

The level of parental involvement in the lives of their children, the ongoing care for their well-being, the educational process, and the future all affect and change the relations between parents and their children. The process of changing this relationship through its intensification is marked with the term "protected childhood." A protected childhood means creating a discursive space within which children are perceived as persons whose autonomy has to be protected and maintained. At the same time, it includes the contrasting processes of differentiating children from adults and an increased control and protection of children (James et al. 1998, p. 6).

The occurrence of protected childhood is a consequence of the demands of the contemporary world, but above all the demands for individualization, reflective self-identity, and self-actualization. In parents, all of these parenting demands

strengthen a contradictory mixture of wanting to protect children fully from all kinds of dangers and risks but also experiencing doubts about whether they will be able to fulfill their educational role. Consequently, parenting has become a demanding and, for certain people, barely manageable life project. Frank Furedi discusses what he calls paranoid parenting (Furedi 2008). According to Furedi, paranoid parenting marks the lack of parental trust in themselves and institutions that participate in educating their children, but especially educational institutions, teachers, pedagogy experts, advisers, and decision-makers. This lack of trust has brought about a special parenting culture in contemporary societies, which shows overprotective parenting on the one side and parental uncertainty and feelings of guilt on the other. This culture encourages parents to constantly take care and worry about every dimension of their child's life. This is also a culture that constantly doubts parental competencies and insists that parents can no longer perform the parental role without the assistance of different experts, educational advisers, guardians of children's rights, etc. (ibid, p. 16).

Similarly worrying assessments can be found with other contemporary experts (Anderegg 2003; Nelson 2010). Tom Hodgkinson finds that today's parents are prisoners of the prevailing general ideas of parenting, which emphasize constant parental involvement in the growing up their children. He also concludes that parents are becoming too involved, which causes difficulties for their children. Excessive parental involvement does not allow children to learn independently and grow up into independent persons: "An overprotected child will not learn how to protect themselves" (Hodgkinson 2010, p. 35). Involving professional advisers in parenting additionally undermines parental feelings of self-trust.

Parenting analytics also criticize the idea of a general vulnerability of children in contemporary societies (Furedi 2008; Gill 2007). This idea has gained a certain dogmatic status and is closely related to the strongly promoted idea of responsible parenting. This sense of responsibility leads the parents to pay constant attention to their child and worry all the time about what could go wrong. In a case study, Tom Gill finds that parenting and education excessively focus on reducing the possible negative consequences of children's actions, whilst pushing away the obvious benefits of allowing children more freedom to explore, assume responsibility, and experience risk (Gill 2007, p. 60). Due to the tendency to protect children, parents limit their life space but also the development of the child's autonomous strategies for facing the necessary problems of growing up and transitioning into adulthood. He refers to and comments on the report of the American Health Foundation from 1999: "There are certain risks connected with isolating children and not allowing them to develop their own mechanisms of imitation and doing different things in their own unique way." (Ibid., p. 78) Consequently, many children's behaviors that used to be considered "normal," for example, restlessness, temper tantrums, quarrels, fights while playing, shyness, or keeping oneself to oneself, have been pathologized as psychological problems. Pedopsychiatrists, psychologists, and pedagogues have added a number of new problems to these, for example, hyperactivity, anxiety, depression, Autism spectrum disorders, etc. This presents an additional burden and even stigma for children and youth.

Empirical findings on family support in parental involvement in the education of children

The theoretical starting points on parental involvement in children's educational trajectories and schoolwork of children are checked with empirical data obtained from the European project Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe (GOETE), which took place within the framework of the EU7 (2009–2012) in eight European countries: Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, and the United Kingdom.[1] The project is focused on the educational period between the end of the lower secondary education and transitions to the upper secondary level of education. The main project research question was, What is the role of education in the life and social integration of youth? The research included collecting data with quantitative and qualitative methodology (Walther 2010).[2] Standardized individual surveys were carried out with pupils from the last year of compulsory schooling (N = 6390), aged between thirteen and sixteen years (in Slovenia, pupils from the ninth grade were included) and their parents (N = 3290). In Slovenia, the surveying took place in 2011, on twenty primary schools in three Slovenian regions (Osrednjeslovenska, Obalno-kraška, and the Pomurska region). The survey included 725 pupils and 419 parents. The qualitative research was based on in-depth interviews and focus groups with pupils and parents, teachers, and advisers in the same regions. In total, 102 interviews were carried out in Slovenia and twelve focus groups were organized. For the most part, we are presenting the replies of the parents. It is interesting that the questionnaires were mostly filled out by mothers, which seems to indicate that in Slovenian families schoolwork is still predominantly considered female work.

Parental involvement in educational trajectories and schooling of children will be checked in the following fields: parental attitudes towards education, attitudes towards schoolwork and teaching, aspirations for further study, controlling schoolwork, and participating in decision-making on further education trajectories.

Parental attitudes towards education, school, and schoolwork

As of yet, rather favorable public education opportunities are available in Slovenia, especially in comparison with other member states of the European Union. This finding is based on a high percentage of children included in the educational system on the secondary and tertiary level. Research data has shown that the educational wishes and aspirations of both children and their parents are amongst the highest in Europe. As evident from Graph 1, Slovenian parents have the highest educational aspirations of all. As many as 79.6% of parents want their children to pursue higher education. Similarly high aspirations had been observed with Dutch parents (79.1%) and Polish parents (70.7%), followed

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[1] The Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe (http://www.goete.eu/index.php) took place within the framework of the EU's Seventh Framework Programme for Research.

[2] The data obtained from the United Kingdom has not been included in the analysis, because the (parental) sample was too small and biased.

by Italian parents (63.8%) and Finnish parents (61.1%). It is interesting that German parents have the lowest educational aspirations for their children (only 47% of parents want their children to pursue higher education). In France, 41.1% of parents want their children to pursue higher education. However, perhaps it is the educational aspirations of German and French parents that are more realistic, since those parents do not see achieving higher education as the sole way of promoting the lives of their children. Perhaps a different educational system, which very early on differentiates between the children's educational trajectories, is the cause for lower educational aspirations. In Germany and France, children and their parents decide for vocational education after only four years of primary schooling. As a result, a large percentage of nine-year-olds we talked to no longer had an opportunity to enter tertiary education.
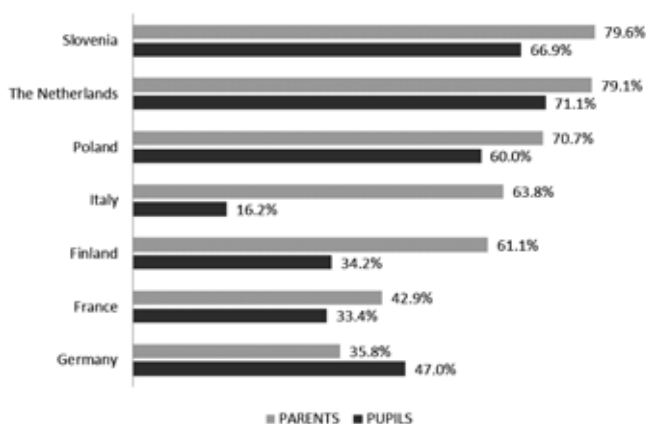
Graph 1: The percentage of pupils expecting to achieve at least tertiary education and parents wanting their child to achieve at least the tertiary level of education

Parental expectations and aspirations are an important element of parental involvement in the education of their children. Other surveys have confirmed a positive correlation between parental aspirations and level of parental involvement in the education of their children (Munson 2009). In general, the research has drawn attention to the great significance of education for children and their parents in all of the countries participating in the project. Because schools seems to be the only way to ensure a ticket to a different future, parents worry extensively about their child's success. Parents usually expect their child to achieve education one level higher than their own or at least the same level. As mothers have stated in the interviews within the framework of the survey, *"Let me put it this way, I want my children to achieve high education, alright? If they decide to pursue further education after that, even better."*

(Mother of a girl attending the ninth grade of primary school in Koper, Slovenia)

Both parents and their children state different reasons for placing such importance on education. At the forefront is the idea of preserving their social

status in the society, a feeling of security, and a feeling of being successful in life, which education is supposed to provide. The following statements are typical in this context: *"This is an important matter, not only because of some academic title, but purely because it makes you continue in life, it makes you widen your horizons. It means to go on, to hear people who know more, to learn something, to exchange opinions and share your knowledge."*

(Mother of a girl attending the ninth grade of a primary school in Koper, Slovenia)

Parents seem to believe that in today's competitive society the most they can do for their children is to provide them with opportunities to get as much education as possible, as well as academic titles and degrees. To achieve this, they enroll their children early on in various forms of training and education.

"... I have told her: "XXX, take the book and study, I do not want you to become a cleaning lady! ... Children are not aware ... until they become mature, they are not aware that it would have been better if they had been studying at school."
(Father of a girl attending the ninth grade of a primary school in Ljubljana, Slovenia)

It is interesting to note that Slovenian children feel relatively well at school. When they were asked about their feelings related to school, 37% of them replied that they like school very much, and a further 41% replied that they fairly like school. Only 5.4% of pupils said they really dislike school. The below table shows their attitudes towards school in comparison with other countries (we have compared how many children really like school).
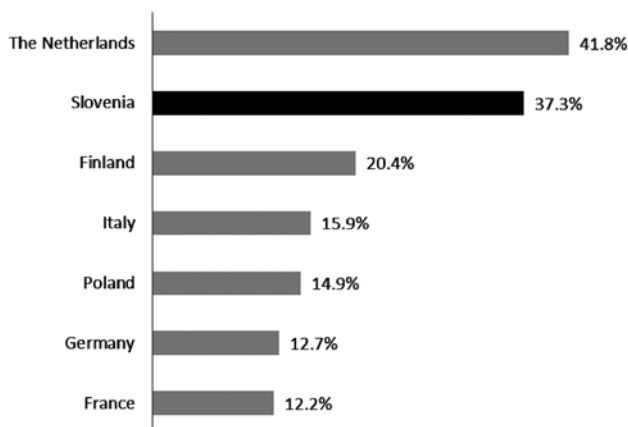
Graph 2: The percentage of pupils who really liked school in the school last year

Pupils from Slovenia are in second place on the scale of pupils who have positive feelings about school. Only more pupils from the Netherlands confirmed that they really like school. Slovenian parents agree that "their child feels well at school." Fourteen percent of Slovenian parents agree with this statement very much, and 75% of parents agree with it. An international comparison has shown

that in Slovenia there is the smallest percentage of parents who disagree with the statement that "their child feels well at school."

Interviews with parents have revealed even more concrete viewpoints regarding school. Parents have expressed very positive attitudes towards school, but also a lot of criticism about their child's school: *"Well, this school she goes to now, we are like a family. If she needs anything, she asks the teacher. She is relaxed, because she knows the teacher will help her. As this has been going on for so many years, one gets used to it, it is like living in the same house. The way I see and perceive this school, children really feel safer here. This is what I want to say."*

(Mother of a girl attending the ninth grade of a primary school in Koper, Slovenia)

The comments of parents mostly refer to methods of working with children, for example how they are being motivated and assessed: *"Sometimes I think that, in this school system, there is too much focus on finding faults, on finding a lack of knowledge. I have noticed this and I think they manage to destroy that little bit of joy ... There is too much emphasis on faults and the pupils are not praised enough ... He is good in certain subjects, even exceptionally good—for example, he was second in the competition organised for all eight graders ... However, all of this was barely mentioned in his classroom, he was not praised at all for his achievement ... As I have said, they're looking for faults and lack of knowledge, but providing too little praise and encouragement for the future."*

(Mother of a boy attending the ninth grade of a primary school in Ljubljana, Slovenia)

Many comments of parents referred to the individualization of work at school, as well as the absence of group work and cooperation between pupils:

"I think that in school children are not encouraged to help each other. It is difficult if a child becomes sick and is absent from school. When the child returns to school, no one will give them their notes to copy ... This is my opinion, nothing takes place within a group anymore, everything is done at an individual level ... For example, when we went to a grammar school, the lady there said 'we're not here for friendship, we are here only to achieve points to be able to continue education.' This was how they presented the grammar school to us, but I believe it is the same at primary schools and everywhere else."

(Mother of a boy attending the ninth grade of a primary school in Ljubljana, Slovenia)

" ... I think nowadays the emphasis is on achieving individual success. All this competition, who will win, not thinking about anybody else. Well, I do not think this is right, that so much emphasis is given to an individual. It is all about me, me, me. No helping each other."

(Mother of a boy attending the ninth grade of a primary school in Koper, Slovenia)

Furthermore, parents have noticed the absence of solidarity and peers helping each other. They believe this is the consequence of a competitive atmosphere in school and individualized lessons:

"I miss this contact between peers, peers helping each other out in the classroom, a schoolmate helping you out ... In the class my son attends, this is no longer present. They simply do not help each other, not at all."

(Mother of a boy attending the ninth grade of a primary school in Ljubljana, Slovenia)

" ... Nowadays, they are just jealous and think about how to beat one another. They will not lend you their notes—all they want to do is to crush you. I mean, things are different now than they were in the past, we were school mates back then ... For example, a schoolmate would come and ask you how you are doing. If you had been ill, she would have given you notes to copy them. Now this is not happening."
(Mother of a boy attending the ninth grade of a primary school in Ljubljana, Slovenia)

Parental involvement in children's educational trajectories

There is no doubt that today's parents have a very difficult task when it comes to monitoring the educational and professional career of their children. They provide assistance and support of all kinds, provide important information on the different options, whilst also presenting them with useful contacts that could prove beneficial for their further study and professional career. Parents permanently affect how their children form opinions about education, providing them the first glimpses into professional roles and opportunities. The support is long-term, and it affects the child's development in the long term, even exceeding the frameworks that can be explored with surveys. The more supportive parents facilitate the well-being and confidence of their children, thus affecting their psychophysical development. The more supportive parents cooperate in a better and more efficient manner with the school and help solve learning problems of their children. On the other hand, children who do not receive enough support from their parents find it more difficult to overcome the stresses caused by school failures. They are less confident and more prone to social behavioral problems.
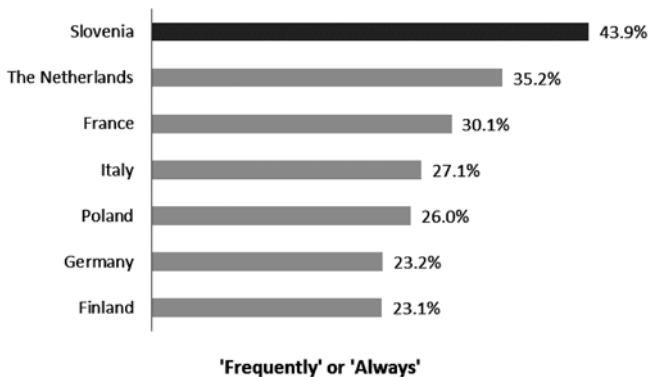
Graph 3: How frequently did your mother support you in the last year by attending your school activities? (The percentages of mothers who frequently attend school activities are shown.)

The results have shown that the percentage of mothers who replied that they support their children by frequently or always attending their school activities is the highest in Slovenia. Other surveys have shown that parents, especially Slovenian mothers, are those whom youngsters trust the most when it comes to decision-making, choosing, or difficult situations. At the discussion in the focus

group, pupils revealed whom they trust the most and from whom they would seek help in difficult situations or when they have to choose or decide something:

"If I was in trouble, I would first go to my parents and then we would find a solution together ... I can rely on them."
                    (Pupil of the ninth grade in a primary school in Ljubljana, Slovenia)

"Only with my family I have never had any problems, I can trust them."
               (Pupil of the ninth grade in a primary school in Murska Sobota, Slovenia)

"I trust my parents the most as well. They have always helped me and I think they always will, in any field."
                    (Pupil of the ninth grade in a primary school in Ljubljana, Slovenia)

"Yes, this is true, Mum is always there for me and she always helps, even if she does not like something. I can really always rely on her."
                    (Pupil of the ninth grade in a primary school in Ljubljana, Slovenia)

In their interviews, parents were expressing a great desire for their children to become successful, but they also expressed some embarrassment about this:

"Let me put it this way, I want my children to achieve high education, right. If they pursue further education after that, even better. Lately I have found that I need to hold myself back a little."
                    (Mother of a boy attending the ninth grade of a primary school in Murska Sobota, Slovenia)

"... I hold this view that a child must have good grades already in the primary school. Although I'm holding myself back, it seems to me as if I had unconsciously sent such signals to them, but both of them are very competitive and they want excellent grades ... So, I don't know if I have placed a burden on my children with this ... It seems to me that I have already done the damage ..."
     (Mother of a boy attending the ninth grade of a primary school in Ljubljana, Slovenia)

This kind of parental orientation fits well with the tendency to prolong the dependence of children on the parents, which has been observed everywhere in the developed world (Nelson 2010). Unfortunately, this prevents children from directly facing life's problems and developing their own strategies for solving them. What is more, such parental orientation blocks the educational and career choices for their children. Parents make decisions instead of children and project their own wishes onto them, often believing that "this is all for the benefit of my child." Correspondingly, teachers within the framework of the GOETE survey reported to us that their advice is often not taken into consideration:

"We provide advice in school, but according to my experience with this year's ninth graders, I can tell you that I'm not sure if parents had taken my advice in even two cases ... We advise them in respect of the achievements of their child, regarding their grades and their test results, but parents then decide for what they believe is the best for the child."
                    (Teacher, ninth grade of a primary school in Murska Sobota, Slovenia)

"... Although we realise we have a certain duty to inform them of different situations, the family plays a significant role in the whole story. Children sometimes tell us who helps them to decide. Or who is the person that makes the decisions, the family plays a big role here ..."   (Headmaster from Koper, Slovenia)

Research has shown that parental influences on the decisions of their children are usually not direct and intrusive; on the contrary, they are indirect and advisory (Payne 2003). Even parents who maintain a very protective upbringing style endeavor to influence the youngsters in such a manner that the children believe they have made the decision themselves. However, when creating a certain family atmosphere, emphasizing their own experiences and similar experiences of other people, parents nonetheless nudge the youngsters towards the "desired" or "expected" decision. In such an environment, children feel immature and excessively dependent on their parents. Consequently, they do not develop their own autonomy in childhood and youth, nor do they form their own judgements and make decisions about important life problems. Relatively few children and youngsters act against the will of their parents, for example, by dropping out of school against the will of the parents or continuing education at a school not approved by their parents. This is a typical statement of a pupil from our survey:

"I really want to become a photographer, but my parents do not allow me that. They say that school is not good, and then there is the salary and the profession itself ... We talked about this one day ... But then I thought about this and I decided my parents were right."
(Pupil of the ninth grade in a primary school in Ljubljana, Slovenia)

It seems as if the children in Slovenia have internalized the desire to succeed to such an extent that sometimes even their parents have to stop them: *"She tries really hard, but she says that she ought to be even better, even though I have told her that I am satisfied"* (mother of a girl attending the ninth grade of a primary school in Murska Sobota, Slovenia). This has been confirmed by the data from research on youth we have conducted in the last two decades. The data warn that school plays one of the central roles in the everyday lives of youngsters, especially or precisely because school grades are, according to the assessments of respondents, so very important for their parents. Already in the survey conducted in 2000 amongst the Slovenian ninth graders we obtained some surprising data: as many as 62.9% of the ninth graders included in the survey were dissatisfied with their school grades. Although as many as 27% had excellent grades in the last year and as many pupils had very good grades, even those with excellent grades and very good grades were not satisfied with their school success. From amongst those dissatisfied with their school success, as many as 70.6% were dissatisfied only because they thought they could have achieved more (Ule et al. 2000).

As a consequence of their dissatisfaction with school success, they often felt fear of school failure. As many as 38.5% of the respondents felt a great fear of school failure. A further 45.7% felt fear of school failure as a moderately big

personal problem. Even 27.9% of pupils with excellent grades responded that fear was a very big personal problem for them. In the above-mentioned survey, fear of failure was assessed as a great burden by those pupils who were dissatisfied with their school success due to the pressure of their parents (73.7%), as well as those who expect that their achieved grades would make it difficult for them to enroll in a secondary school (62.9%). According to the data from the same research, as many as 49% of children perceived the excessive expectations of their parents as a great problem. Children are obviously taking the responsibility for the realization of such expectations on their shoulders (Mencin-Čeplak 2000). From amongst those who were dissatisfied with their school success, as many as 70.6% replied that they could have achieved more. It seems that warnings about children being overworked, which are based only on time spent working, are wrong only insofar as they forget the psychological burdens that arise from constant attempts to be successful (Ule 2010).

At the same time, many of the analytics warn that the education of parents is important, as it very subtly influences the school success of their children. Parents who are better educated not only argue better about their expectations towards their children, they also better represent them in school. Research has shown that teachers provide significantly more attention to children whose parents come to school more often and who articulate more clearly their care, demands, expectations, etc. At the same time, teachers interpret the rarer visits of the less educated parents as a sign of "neglecting" the schoolwork of their children (Ule, 2013). Although research has shown that, on average, the less educated parents less frequently visit their child's teacher, this is not an indication of their negligence of the child's schoolwork but rather of their feelings of being incompetent. However, would teachers act any differently if they accepted this interpretation? The majority of them would probably not—when one does not have a lot of available time for pupils, it is more rational to dedicate more attention to those who actually demand it.

Discussion and conclusions

We have found that parents in Slovenia, especially in comparison with the European context, are very involved in the educational trajectories as well as schoolwork of their children. They have high educational aspirations, which have apparently been internalized by their children, too. They have internalized them because of the trust they feel towards their parents. The results show that parents appear to be by far more trustworthy persons, even in regards to school and educational decisions and choices, than teachers and school advisers. Furthermore, they are aware of the ambitions and the power they have over their children. Consequently, they try to mask their influence with the syntagma: *"Let the child decide for themselves"* (mother of a girl attending the ninth grade of a primary school in Murska Sobota, Slovenia).

Parents are strongly involved in the educational activities and schoolwork of their children. The number of parental interventions in schools when their children do not achieve the desired results has been on the rise for some time. This was revealed by a comparison of relations between parents and schools in the different countries participating in the project. As a rule, teachers in other European countries complained about the lack of cooperation of parents. By contrast, teachers in Slovenia often complained about parental interventions in their work. This is a typical statement of a Slovenian teacher: *"... The parents love to interfere with the professional work of teachers. I don't know, they cannot even imagine what our profession and work look like ... But despite this, they think they simply know more than us. I don't know, they would say 'oh, this here could be done differently, and that could there be done differently' and they somehow attempt to influence our professional work ... They try to influence the way lessons are conducted, they want to influence the final grades, they want to influence the oral exams, or the work itself, just about anything."*
(Teacher, ninth grade of a primary school in Ljubljana, Slovenia)

As a result, the number of conflicts between parents and teachers has been increasing. In Slovenia, teachers must often complain about parental pressures on them, which in their view degrades the teacher's professional authority and autonomy. As one of the teachers responded in the survey, *"... What parents want is one thing, but what their child is capable of is another. And then they look for faults, saying which things we do not do well ... I mean, it is very difficult for us because parents interfere with the learning process even regarding matters where teachers really ought to have autonomy."*
(Teacher, ninth grade of a primary school in Ljubljana, Slovenia)

A complementary tendency of the above-mentioned pressures are the frequent expectations of teachers that they will manage to establish some kind of an educational coalition with the parents, for example, by immediately informing them of their child's schoolwork. All these tendencies and pressures together strengthen the parents' and educational personnel's need for as efficient control of achievements and behaviors of pupils as possible.

It seems that in Slovenia the educational and upbringing model being implemented is the one that was critically presented by James Côté in his studies on the development of identity capitals, i.e., the mode in which schools and parents affect pupils—predominantly acting as the more noticeable "guardians of access" for youngsters to various forms of educational achievements and levels of adulthood, instead of acting as sources of positive motivation for children and youths to help them achieve emotional stability and sensibility, be open towards others, develop an ability to empathize with others, develop the ability to think critically, and develop the ability to use mature moral judgement (Côté 2007). However, it is precisely these psychological and characterological traits that are essential for young people to achieve psychological vitality and capacity for successful understanding and managing of social, professional, and personal obstacles and

opportunities that everyone faces, or will face, in life. Côté calls these traits the "soft" ingredients of identity capitals of an individual (ibid.). Emphasizing the demonstrative, formal, and generally acknowledged educational results in all aspects that influence the children's educational trajectories pushes into the collective and personal unconscious the above-mentioned soft ingredients of identity capitals, which are very important for approaching functions of an adult society, e.g., employment; civil society; public service; parenting; and, if you will, the new economic, social, and political citizenship.

Since parental involvement in schoolwork and children's educational trajectories is so significant, it represents a new factor of social differentiation of children. The above-mentioned trends in the patterns of family socialization and upbringing have a more covert normative side, which sanctions those parents and children who do not know how, or are unable, to create a supportive family atmosphere. The negative sanctioning instills "guilt" in parents for the real and assumed socialization shortcomings of their children. The children, on the other side, are assigned "guilt" for their educational shortcomings and failures. The real core of these guilt feelings is overlooked—the real social division that pushes certain groups of people into disadvantaged life conditions.

The differences in the cultural capital of families do not fit completely with the differences in socioeconomic capital; therefore, the differences between the more supportive and the less supportive parents are more complex than the social class or strata differences (Côté, 2007). Families with higher cultural capital provide their children with a home environment that facilitates further education, and they appreciate the achieved knowledge more than families with lesser cultural capital. As a result, social inequality is transforming from a class inequality into an interclass inequality. This of course does not mean that class inequalities are becoming less important, but that, additionally, there has been an increase in the factors that strengthen differentiation of youth within social classes. For a young person, the interclass differentiation is often even more painful and problematic than class inequality. This is how children are divided into privileged and underprivileged individuals, not only because of the social, economic, or any other reason related to their families, but also with regard to how supportive their parents are and if they have enough cultural capital to provide appropriate support to their children at home and appropriately communicate and represent them at school (Ule, 2013).

Certain surveys have shown that lack of parental support for children is closely related to early termination of schooling or children choosing less difficult education (Kintrea et al. 2011). In their research of British children who had terminated their schooling early (i.e., dropouts), Nicholas Foskett and Anthony Hesketh found that the decision to terminate schooling was mostly taken with the silent approval of their parents or within the framework of recommendations defined by their parents. Parents from the edge of the society especially exclude certain schools, subjects, or careers as possible options for their children, although the children could choose or successfully undertake them. In other words, parents exercise a veto on certain choices of their children (Foskett in Hesketh 1997, p. 308). This

means that the psychological factors that enable the reproduction of disadvantaged youth (e.g., parental noninvolvement in the schooling of their children, parental lack of interest in their children, low cultural capital of the parents, parents' poor experiences with school) are frequently a consequence of the social, economic, and cultural deprivation of the previous generation. We can ask ourselves how to escape this vicious circle of deprivation. It is obvious that we cannot achieve this merely with measures and interventions in education and school policy. What we need are ongoing, integrated, and systematic interventions to reduce social and cultural differences between children and youths. School ought to play the role of a corrector of social inequalities. It ought to present a place for social integration instead of a place of social differentiation of children and youths.

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