Caritas et veritas

Journal for Christian reflections in the context of social sciences and humanities
Časopis pro reflexi křesťanských souvislostí v sociálních a humanitních oborech

Contents

Obsah

Editorial

Humanita jako základní hodnota výchovy a vzdělávání (nejen) ve volném čase

Číslo Caritas et veritas 2/2025 vznikalo s vědomím, že je život v 21. století nesen napětím mezi masivní technologizací, společenskými otřesy a radikálním proměňováním lidských potřeb – a zároveň trvalou touhou po lidskosti, která navzdory přibývajícím nejistotám neztrácí na významu. Práce na většině článků byla proto vedena otázkou, která se v myšlení humanitních a sociálních věd periodicky vrací, ale v časech krize nabývá nové naléhavosti: Může současná výchova a vzdělávání ještě humanizovat člověka? A pokud ano, jakým způsobem?

Tento široký rámec otevírá úvodní rozhovor Jakuba Luksche s profesorem Jakubem Sirovátkou, který se vrací k samotnému jádru tématu: k filozofii výchovy, k pojetí humanity jako klíčového cíle vzdělávání i k její roli v dnešním světě.

Jana Karlová a Lucie Ludvíková v článku *Interim Bridges to 'Them': The Challenges of Education and Living with Diversity Raised by the Ukrainian Crisis* otevírají téma soužití a vzdělávání v diverzitě na pozadí integrace ukrajinských dětí do českých základních škol. Jejich kvalitativní studie ukazuje, jak se kategorie „my" a „oni" utvářejí v každodenní školní praxi a jak se paradoxně úspěch integrace často neopírá o systémové nastavení, ale o otevřenost, flexibilitu a improvizační dovednosti jednotlivých pedagogů. Právě tato drobná, ale účinná gesta lidskosti vytvářejí provizorní mosty mezi dětmi, rodinami i kulturami. Humanitu jako princip celostního přístupu zkoumá ve svém textu *Humanity and Spirituality in Social and Pedagogical Rehabilitation* Helena Dojčarová. Věnuje se duchovní dimenzi člověka jako opomíjené, avšak hluboce formující složce rehabilitace. Existenciální analýza, logoterapie, klientsky orientovaný přístup i ekologický model zde otevírají prostor pro pochopení člověka v jeho zranitelnosti, hodnotách a směřování. Text ukazuje, že pedagogická a sociální rehabilitace disponují nástroji, které mohou být nejen odborné, ale také lidsky integrující – a tedy skutečně humanizační.

Papež František ve své encyklice *Fratelli tutti* připomíná potřebu univerzální lásky jako předpokladu budoucnosti lidstva. Jindřich Šrajer se v článku *The Demand for Universal Love in the Globalised World And Its Curent Challenges for Social Work Based on the Social Encyclical of Pope Francis Fratelli Tutti (2020)* soustředí na to, jak toto poselství rezonuje v sociální práci. Zkoumá pojmy univerzálního bratrství a sociálního přátelství coby hodnotové rámce, které mohou dodat sociální práci motivační hloubku i etickou kotvu. Autor ukazuje, že humanita v globalizovaném světě není abstraktní ideál, ale praktický úkol, který se dotýká způsobů pomáhání, profesní identity i pohledu na druhého člověka. Do přímé konfrontace s realitou války vstupuje Lyudmyla Ivanyuk. Její text *Ethical Values of Education in Wartime: the Ukrainian Context* analyzuje, jaké etické hodnoty se stávají životně důležitými v ukrajinských vzdělávacích institucích během probíhající války. Empatie, důstojnost, spravedlnost a občanská odpovědnost vystupují jako hodnoty, které mladým lidem pomáhají orientovat se uprostřed chaosu a ztrát. Zároveň však narážejí na institucionální limity i psychologické dopady ozbrojeného konfliktu. Vzdělávání se zde ukazuje jako prostor morální rezistence a tichého zotavování – jako dílna lidskosti v časech, kdy je nejvíce ohrožena.

Od humanizující dimenze krize se přesouváme k humanizující síle volnočasových aktivit. Jiří Pospíšil a Ivana Olecká v textu *Value and Demographic Characteristics of the Czech Population Engaged in Humanities-Oriented Leisure Activities: A Challenge for Values Education and Social Security* analyzují vztah mezi účastí na humanitně orientovaných volnočasových činnostech a hodnotovými preferencemi. Jejich reprezentativní výzkum potvrzuje, že takové aktivity nejsou pouze zálibou, ale významně podporují kultivaci hodnot, jež můžeme označit za páteř pedagogické humanizace – mír, spravedlnost, odpovědnost či lidskost. Autoři ukazují, že volný čas může být mocným prostorem pro nenásilnou formaci osobnosti, pro budování hodnotového světa, který následně ovlivňuje život společnosti. Zatímco předchozí texty se věnují různým kontextům současného člověka, studie *Character Formation of Generation Z in Christian Religious Education Through Spiritual Formation* (Imanuel Herman Prawiromaruto, Kalis Stevanus, Thomas Pentury, Alvonce Poluan a Tan Lie-lie) tematizuje jednu konkrétní generaci – generaci Z. Autoři ukazují, jak digitální prostředí utváří identitu příslušníků této generace a jak duchovní formace může pomoci kultivovat jejich hodnoty a charakter. V textu rezonuje otázka, zda je možné v prostředí digitální permanentní přítomnosti vychovávat k lidskosti – a jak mohou náboženské a vzdělávací instituce nabídnout protiváhu rychlosti, fragmentaci a zahlcení.

Sekci *Varia* otevírá Silvie Ročovská studií *Etika v praxi mediátora*. Mediace je zde nahlížena jako profese pohybující se v prostoru hodnotových napětí, vyžadující citlivou etickou reflexi. Text propojuje dokumentární analýzu s autorčinou profesní zkušeností, ukazuje dilemata vznikající při rodinné mediaci a nabízí praktické orientační body pro eticky zodpovědné rozhodování. Na závěr se v recenzi Lucie Kolářové na knihu Sarah Jaquette Ray *Průvodce klimatickou úzkostí* znovu objevuje motiv lidskosti v časech globálních ohrožení – tentokrát ve vztahu k environmentálnímu strachu a možnostem resilience.

Doufáme, že toto číslo nabídne čtenářům nejen odborné podněty, ale také povzbuzení k přemýšlení o tom, co znamená být člověkem v současném světě – a jak může výchova tuto lidskost chránit, obnovovat a tvořivě rozvíjet.

Za celý redakční kolektiv Vám přejeme inspirativní čtení.

Markéta Kropíková, Michal Opatrný
(koeditoři čísla)

Editorial

2/2025 Humanity as a Fundamental Value of Education (not only) in Leisure Time

Caritas et veritas 2/2025 was created with the awareness that life in the 21st century is marked by tension between massive technological advances, social upheavals, and radical changes in human needs—and at the same time by a lasting desire for humanity, which, despite growing uncertainties, has not lost its significance. Most of the articles were therefore guided by a question that periodically recurs in the humanities and social sciences, but which takes on new urgency in times of crisis: Can contemporary education and training still humanise people? And if so, how? This broad framework opens Jakub Luksch's introductory interview with Professor Jakub Sirovátka, who returns to the very core of the topic: the philosophy of education, the concept of humanity as a key goal of education, and its role in today's world.

In their article, *Interim Bridges to 'Them': The Challenges of Education and Living with Diversity Raised by the Ukrainian Crisis*, Jana Karlová and Lucie Ludvíková explore the topic of coexistence and education in diversity against the backdrop of the integration of Ukrainian children into Czech elementary schools. Their qualitative study shows how the categories of 'us' and 'them' are formed in everyday school practice and how, paradoxically, the success of integration often depends not on systemic settings, but on the openness, flexibility, and improvisational skills of individual teachers. It is these small but effective gestures of humanity that create temporary bridges between children, families, and cultures. Helena Dojčarová explores humanity as a principle of a holistic approach in her text, *Humanity and Spirituality in Social and Pedagogical Rehabilitation*. She focuses on the spiritual dimension of the human being as a neglected but deeply formative component of rehabilitation. Existential analysis, logotherapy, a client-oriented approach, and an ecological model open up space for understanding people in their vulnerability, values, and direction. The text shows that pedagogical and social rehabilitation have tools at their disposal that can be not only professional but also humanly integrating—and thus truly humanising.

In the encyclical, *Fratelli tutti*, Pope Francis recalls the need for universal love as a prerequisite for the future of humanity. In the article, *The Demand for Universal Love in the Globalised World And its Current Challenges for Social Work Based on the Social Encyclical of Pope Francis Fratelli Tutti (2020)*, Jindřich Šrajer focuses on how this message resonates in social work. He examines the concepts of universal brotherhood and social friendship as value frameworks that can provide social work with motivational depth and an ethical anchor. The author shows that humanity in a globalised world is not an abstract ideal, but a practical task that affects ways of helping, professional identity, and views of other people. Lyudmyla Ivanyuk enters into a direct confrontation with the reality of war. Her text, *Ethical Values of Education in Wartime: the Ukrainian Context*, analyses which ethical values are becoming vital in Ukrainian educational institutions during the ongoing war. Empathy, dignity, justice, and civic responsibility emerge as values that help young people find their bearings amid chaos and loss. At the same time, however, they encounter

institutional limits and the psychological impacts of armed conflict. Education here proves to be a space for moral resistance and quiet recovery—a workshop of humanity at a time when it is most threatened.

From the humanising dimension of the crisis, we move on to the humanising power of leisure activities. In their text, *Value and Demographic Characteristics of the Czech Population Engaged in Humanities-Oriented Leisure Activities: A Challenge for Values Education and Social Security*, Jiří Pospíšil and Ivana Olecká analyse the relationship between participation in humanities-oriented leisure activities and value preferences. Their representative research confirms that such activities are not just a hobby, but significantly support the cultivation of values that can be described as the backbone of pedagogical humanisation—peace, justice, responsibility, and humanity. The authors show that leisure time can be a powerful space for non-violent personality formation, for building a world of values that subsequently influences the life of society. While the previous texts deal with various contexts of contemporary man, the study, *Character Formation of Generation Z in Christian Religious Education Through Spiritual Formation* (Imanuel Herman Prawiromaru-to, Kalis Stevanus, Thomas Pentury, Alvonce Poluan, and Tan Lie-lie) focuses on one specific generation – Generation Z. The authors show how the digital environment shapes their identity and how spiritual formation can help cultivate their values and character. The text raises the question of whether it is possible to educate for humanity in an environment of digital permanent presence – and how religious and educational institutions can offer a counterbalance to speed, fragmentation, and overload.

The *Varia* section opens with Silvie Ročovská's study, *Ethics in the Practice of Mediation*. Mediation is viewed here as a profession operating in a space of value tensions, requiring sensitive ethical reflection. The text combines documentary analysis with the author's professional experience, highlights the dilemmas that arise in family mediation, and offers practical guidelines for ethically responsible decision-making. Finally, Lucie Kolářová's review of Sarah Jaquette Ray's book, *A Guide to Climate Anxiety*, revisits the theme of humanity in times of global threat—this time in relation to environmental fear and the possibilities of resilience.

We hope that this issue will offer readers not only professional insights, but also encouragement to think about what it means to be human in today's world—and how education can protect, restore, and creatively develop this humanity.

On behalf of the entire editorial team, we wish you inspiring reading.

Markéta Kropíková, Michal Opatrný
(co-editors of this issue)

Témata dalších čísel

Pro další čísla CetV byla stanovena následující témata, ke kterým redakce uvítá příspěvky jak v podobě odborných studií, tak i popularizačních článků. O zařazení popularizačního článku rozhoduje redakce, odborná studie podléhá kromě redakčního posuzování i procesu dvojí anonymní recenze. Redakce může odmítnout texty taktéž z případných kapacitních důvodů či nesouladu s profilem časopisu a zaměřením tematického čísla.

1/2026   Umělá inteligence a transformace společnosti – zamyšlení nad současnými
               perspektivami a budoucími výzvami pro společenské a humanitní vědy
               Uzávěrka: 1. 1. 2026

Téměř všechny aspekty současného života jsou ovlivňovány novými digitálními informačními a komunikačními technologiemi. Moderní zařízení se stala běžnými a proměnila oblasti, jako je financování, doprava, výzkum, vzdělávání, zdravotní péče, zábava, a dokonce i náboženství. Tyto technologie nejsou neutrální; aktivně utvářejí a zprostředkovávají to, jak jednotlivci a komunity chápou smysl svého života, a v případě věřících i to, jak praktikují svou víru. Ovlivňují také to, jak náboženské instituce komunikují se svými stoupenci, kritiky a celou společností. Rychlý rozvoj pokročilých systémů, jako je umělá inteligence a internet věcí, přináší nejen příležitosti a vzrušení, ale také rizika a obavy. Objektivní i subjektivní rozměr těchto změn představuje významné výzvy pro jednotlivce, komunity, státy, nevládní a mezivládní organizace i tradiční náboženské instituce. Cílem tohoto čísla je prozkoumat a prohloubit naše porozumění moderním digitálním technologiím tím, že je budeme zkoumat různými optikami - pedagogickou, filozofickou, psychologickou, teologickou, historickou a sociální - v různých kontextech, včetně náboženství, etiky, filozofie vzdělávání a literatury s cílem zachovat lidský rozměr společenských a humanitních věd.

Klíčová slova: informační, mediální a digitální gramotnost; emoční a sociální inteligence; celoživotní vzdělávání; kulturní identita a rozmanitost.

2/2026   Pastorační služba a sociální vědy
               Uzávěrka: 30. 6. 2026
               Texty jsou přijímány pouze v anglickém jazyce.

Pastorace, pastýřská péče, duchovní péče – poimenika či pastorační péče je nedílnou součástí činnosti křesťanských církví od počátků jejich existence a činnosti. Je chápána jako služba věřícím i nevěřícím, víru praktikujícím i nepraktikujícím; jako služba, která se dotýká podpory zvládání náročných situací v životech jednotlivců i skupin či komunit, i mnohem šířeji jako „služba světu", skr-

ze kterou místní komunity křesťanů (farnosti, sbory, obce) podporují lidskou společnost, lidskou důstojnost a lidskou činnost v konkrétních historických, sociálních a geografických podmínkách.

Přitom však není možné označit za pastoraci jakoukoliv pomáhající či osvětovou činnost nebo občanské a komunitní angažmá. Nedílnou součástí pastorace a jejím základem je totiž komunikace evangelia, čímž ovšem není myšleno misijní působení a proselytismus. Jedná se spíše o transparentní komunikaci světonázorových a hodnotových východisek při řešení konkrétních problémů současného světa a lidí v něm. Teologicky řečeno, řešení konkrétních problémů lidí ve světě vychází z křesťanské víry, např. při identifikaci toho, co ohrožuje důstojnost člověka stvořeného k Božímu obrazu, a opírá se o křesťanskou etiku, např. při hledání řešení, které se pro daný problém jeví jako dobré a nejlepší na základě biblického étosu.

Pro identifikaci problémů dnešního světa a lidí v něm však disponují svými – často velmi přesnými – nástroji také sociální vědy. Přinášejí velmi užitečné znalosti o povaze takových potíží. Navíc dokáží také predikovat zamýšlené i neplánované dopady různých přepokládaných řešení jednotlivých problémů. V souvislosti s pastorací tak vzniká potenciálně nesnadný a možná i konfliktní prostor setkávání dvou pohledů na svět a jeho povahu, tj. dvou základních epistemologií a jejich teoretických východisek. Pastorace a její teologická východiska se následně při řešení zmíněných problémů často ocitají na „vedlejší koleji“ pro svou faktickou či údajnou analytickou nepřesnost, nižší nebo pomalou účinnost či nejednoznačný vliv a nesnadno měřitelné výsledky.

Číslo 2/2026 se chce zaměřit právě na toto pomezí teologie a sociálních věd, a to ve dvou obecných směrech uvažování: a) možnost využití sociálních věd a zejména jejich epistemologie v pastoraci a b) prezentace konkrétních výzkumů souvisejících s pastorací. Přijímány tedy budou zejména články zaměřené na:
- výzkum tzv. jednotlivin – tedy konkrétních exemplárních příkladů přístupů k pastoraci využívajících sociálněvědní zjištění či postupy zkoumání světa;
- výzkumné studie či přehledové články zaměřené na dilematické situace reflektované a řešené v kontextu pastorace: Jak se zachází s napětím mezi množstvím a kvalitou poskytovaných podpůrných postupů a intervencí? Jak různě přemýšlejí pastorační pracovníci nad neutralitou nebo favoritismem ve vztahu ke spirituální rovině klientů jejich služeb?;
- výzkumné či teoretické studie zaměřené na zacházení s konceptem pravdy v rámci pastorační péče, a to také ve vztahu k ontologicko-epistemologickým východiskům;
- výzkumné či přehledové statě zaměřené na možná napětí mezi horizontálním (společenským) a vertikálním rozměrem pastorační péče;
- výzkumné či teoretické statě zaměřené na sociálními vědami popisované a uchopitelné jevy pojímané jako znamení času;
- články reflektující princip graduality jako pastoraci sledující teologické cíle a respektující sociálněvědní poznatky o člověku, lidských vztazích a problémech lidí v současném světě;
- výzkumné či teoretické reflexe zaměřené na způsoby využívání sociálněvědních zjištění a výzkumných postupů v pastorační péči s ohledem na jejich ontologicko-epistemologická východiska;
- výzkumné či teoretické reflexe zaměřené na způsoby zacházení s právním kontextem poskytování služeb v rámci pastorace, především ve vztahu k dětem a zákonu o sociálně -právní ochraně dětí, ale také ve vztahu k profesionálnímu tajemství.

Topics of future issues

The following topics have been specified for future CetV issues and the editorial board will welcome contributions on these topics, in the form of scholarly studies and popular articles. Popular articles will be published based on the editorial board's decision, while scholarly studies are subject to the editorial board's assessment and double anonymous reviewing. The editorial board can also reject texts for capacity reasons or because they are not in accord with the journal profile and the focus of a topical issue.

1/2026   Artificial Intelligence and the Transformation of Society – reflection on current perspectives and future challenges for the social sciences and humanities
Deadline: 1st January 2026

Nearly every aspect of contemporary life is shaped by new digital information and communication technologies. Modern devices have become ubiquitous, transforming fields such as finance, transportation, research, education, healthcare, entertainment, and even religion. These technologies are not neutral; they actively shape and mediate how individuals and communities understand the meaning of their lives and, for those who are religious, how they practise their faith. They also influence how religious institutions engage with their followers, critics, and society at large. The rapid development of advanced systems like Artificial Intelligence and the Internet of Things brings not only opportunities and excitement but also risks and anxieties. Both the objective and subjective dimensions of these changes present significant challenges for individuals, communities, states, non-governmental and inter-governmental organisations, as well as traditional religious institutions. This special issue aims to explore and deepen our understanding of modern digital technologies by examining them through various lenses – pedagogical, philosophical, psychological, theological, historical, and social – across diverse contexts, including religion, ethics, philosophy of education, and literature. with the aim to maintain the human dimension of the social sciences and humanities.

Keywords: critical and creative thinking, value education, dehumanisation; information, media and digital literacy; emotional and social intelligence; life-long learning; cultural identity and diversity

2/2026   Pastoral Ministry and Social Sciences
Deadline: 30th January 2026

Pastoral care, spiritual care, and poimenics have been integral parts of Christian churches since

their inception. This ministry extends to both believers and non-believers, practitioners and non-practitioners of faith alike. It encompasses support in navigating difficult situations faced by individuals, groups, or communities and, more broadly, serves as a 'service to the world', through which local Christian communities (parishes, congregations, and fellowships) contribute to human dignity, social cohesion, and ethical action within specific historical, social, and geographical contexts. However, not every form of aid, outreach, or civic and community engagement can be labelled as pastoral care. A fundamental aspect of pastoral ministry is the communication of the Gospel, which does not equate to missionary work or proselytism. Rather, it refers to the transparent communication of worldviews and values in addressing contemporary challenges. Theologically speaking, responding to these challenges is rooted in Christian faith – for instance, in identifying what threatens the dignity of human beings created in God's image – and in Christian ethics, which seeks solutions grounded in a biblical ethos.

At the same time, the social sciences offer their own – often highly precise – methods for identifying contemporary societal problems. They provide valuable insights into the nature of these issues and can anticipate both the intended and unintended consequences of proposed solutions. Within the context of pastoral care, this creates a potentially complex and sometimes contentious intersection between two distinct epistemologies and theoretical frameworks. Consequently, pastoral approaches may be marginalised in problem-solving processes due to perceived analytical imprecision, slower effectiveness, or difficulty in demonstrating measurable results.

Issue 2/2026 will focus on this interface between theology and the social sciences, exploring two key areas: a) How can the epistemological approaches of the social sciences be applied in pastoral ministry? b) What specific research contributes to understanding and advancing pastoral care?

We welcome submissions on topics including, but not limited to:
- Research on singularities—specific pastoral care approaches that incorporate social science finding or methodologies.
- Studies or review articles examining dilemmatic situations in pastoral care: How is the balance between quantity and quality of interventions managed? How do pastoral workers navigate neutrality versus partiality in relation to the spiritual needs of those they serve?
- Research or theoretical studies on the concept of truth in pastoral care, particularly concerning its ontological and epistemological foundations.
- Analyses of tensions between the horizontal (social) and vertical (spiritual) dimensions of pastoral care.
- Research or theoretical essays addressing phenomena described by the social sciences as 'signs of the times'.
- Studies reflecting on gradualism in pastoral care, exploring how theological objectives can be pursued while integrating social science insights into human relationships and contemporary challenges.
- Research or theoretical discussions on the application of social science methods in pastoral care while respecting their ontological and epistemological assumptions.
- Reflections on the legal aspects of pastoral care, particularly in relation to child protection laws (e.g., the Children's Social Care Act) and professional confidentiality.

Rozhovor

Rozhovor s Jakubem Sirovátkou o filosofii výchovy, humanitě jako základnímu cíli výchovy člověka a její roli v dnešním světě.

Prof. Dr. Jakub Sirovátka, narozen 4. 1. 1971 v Praze, studoval filosofii a teologii v Německu a Itálii, působí od roku 2013 na Katedře filosofie a religionistiky Teologické fakulty Jihočeské univerzity v Českých Budějovicích. Zabývá se především etikou a filosofií náboženství, myšlením Immanuela Kanta, německou a francouzskou fenomenologií, obzvláště Emmanuelem Levinasem.

Na začátku bych se Tě rád zeptal na to, jaký je vlastně rozdíl v jednotlivých vědních disciplínách zabývajících se výchovou. Čím se „filosofie výchovy" liší od „pedagogiky" a jejích podoborů?

Filosofie výchovy se zamýšlí nad výchovou v obecném slova smyslu, nad otázkou vývoje a rozvoje člověka a co tento proces podmiňuje, utváří a ovlivňuje. Tou nejvlastnější otázkou filosofie výchovy je však to, co by tento proces utvářet mělo. Zdá se mi, že tento normativní rozměr je zásadní, jakkoliv jsou empirické poznatky lidské přirozenosti nutnou součástí úvah nad výchovou a vzděláváním. Jak má výchova a vzdělání vypadat? Jakým směrem se chceme rozvíjet? Jaký ideál se snažíme uskutečnit? Jedná se o širší rámec, do kterého lze pedagogickou tématiku zasadit, přičemž filosofie výchovy neřeší konkrétní pedagogické problémy a nepřináší na ně odpovědi. Filosofie výchovy vytváří perspektivy, rozvíjí teorie a pojmy, které lze v pedagogice využít. V této souvislosti od sebe můžeme odlišit výchovu v užším slova smyslu (Erziehung) a všestranný rozvoj člověka (Bildung) v pojetí širším. Měli bychom tedy rozlišit mezi výchovou dětí, mladých lidí a vzděláváním, které je celoživotním úkolem a nikdy není u konce. Filosofie výchovy a pedagogika jsou disciplíny v dialogu, kdy každá z nich má své vlastní zaměření, ale obě se zabývají společným tématem, totiž fenoménem výchovy.

Co je cílem výchovy? Poznat pravdivě skutečnost, rozeznat to, co je hodnotné, smysluplné, naučit se myslet sám za sebe a podle toho také – autonomně a autenticky – prakticky žít. Souzním s náhledem, který se vine od antiky, že filosofie je a má být vposledku životní praxe. Do filosofické reflexe výchovy by, dle mého, měla patřit i reflexe morálního zla a temné stránky člověka. I to je naléhavý úkol.

Chápu filosofii výchovy jako teoretický rámec, se kterým pedagogické disciplíny mohou pracovat a vstoupit do dialogu. Osobně nejsem „klasickým" filosofem výchovy, který publikuje články kupříkladu o tom, co je antická paideia apod. Měl jsem však nedávno projekt „autonomie a alterita", který se zamýšlel nad těmito pojmy z pozice Kantova myšlení a fenomenologických autorů (Levinas, Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty). A jistě sem patří i pojem autenticity, jejž najdeme například u Heideggera nebo v jiném modu u Charlese Taylora. Jednalo se sice o filosofickou reflexi těchto pojmů, ale zároveň jsem přesvědčen o tom, že to jsou vysoce relevantní pojmy v pedagogické sféře, i když ne na nějaké prvoplánové rovině. Tento vzájemný dialog mezi vlastní filosofickou reflexí a pedagogiky mi připadá zajímavý.

Jak definovat pojem „humanita"?

Humanita je z mého pohledu to, co dělá člověka člověkem v nejhlubším slova smyslu. Humanita označuje to, co by člověk měl být ve svém nejlepším, a ještě lepším lidství. Znamená to harmonický rozkvět člověka a všech jeho sil a schopností: rozumu, svobody, představivosti. K pojmu humanity patří neodmyslitelně vědomí, že nikdo z nás nežije sám pro sebe a výhradně pro své vlastní štěstí, jakkoliv je to naše přirozená touha. Pojem humanity vždy zahrnuje „bytí pro druhého", zájem o společné dobro, odpovědnost za své okolí, sociální či jinou angažovanost apod.

Podíváme-li se na dějiny západní filosofie, vidíme, že rozměrem výchovy se zabývali již antičtí filosofové (Platónova Ústava, Aristotelova Politika a Etika…), stejně tak i filosofové středověku (Augustin, Tomáš Akvinský…), novověku (Erasmus, Komenský…), ale i osvícenské éry (Locke, Rousseau…). Jakou roli v těchto různých epochách hrála humanita jakožto cíl výchovy?

Odpověď na tuto otázku by vydala na celou knihu, ne-li knihovnu. U každého z těchto autorů najdeme nějakou vizi toho, jaký by člověk měl být a k čemu by měl směřovat. Dovolil bych si odpovědět jen krátce a všeobecně: zásadně lze říct, že humanita byla na jedné straně zčásti určována různě, například podle toho, zda chápete člověka jako Boží stvoření, tedy že je člověk zasazen do většího metafyzicko-kosmologického rámce. Na druhé straně můžete humanitu charakterizovat čistě sekulárně. Přesto lze vycházet z toho, že v jádru se tyto různé proudy shodují v tom, že cíl výchovy je humánní člověk, který je schopen sebepoznání, empatie, lásky k bližnímu, pomoci v nouzi apod. Osobně se kloním k názoru, že ať už zdůrazníme tuto humanitu člověka teologicky nebo sekulárně humanisticky, cíl výchovy se od sebe zas tolik neliší. Cílem je zralý, po všech stránkách rozvinutý a charakterní jedinec.

Nahlédneme-li do tradice současné (po-osvícenské) filosofie, konkrétně do fenomenologie a existenciální filosofie, tedy proudů, jimž se odborně věnuješ – mají i tyto myšlenkové přístupy co říci k výchově?

Jak už jsem zmínil výše, měl jsem nedávno projekt zaměřený na pojem alterity, jinakosti tak, jak je rozvíjen ve fenomenologii a existenciální filosofii. Tento pojem je relevantní především (ale nejen) ve vztahu k druhému člověku. Přemýšlení nad tím, jak se vztahuji k Druhému, zda a popřípadě jak dokážu číst jeho emoce a to, co prožívá – to se mi jeví jako bytostně relevantní pro filosofii výchovy či pedagogickou reflexi. S tím je spojená otázka identity a autentického způsobu

života. Co utváří naši subjektivitu, kde jsou prameny našeho nejvlastnějšího Já (jak zní název knihy současného kanadského filosofa Charlese Taylora „Sources of the Self")? S fenoménem výchovy souvisí samozřejmě i tematika svobody a jednání, kterou najdeme nasvícenou především v úvahách existencialisticky orientovaných myslitelů. Bytostně relevantní je i otázka etické odpovědnosti (Jonas, Levinas). Dále lze zmínit roli tělesnosti, kdy se hovoří nejen o „obratu k jazyku", ale i o „obratu k tělu" v myšlení 20. století. V neposlední řadě lze zmínit problém uznání, kterému se věnoval už Hegel ve své „Fenomenologii ducha" ve známé pasáži „pán a rab".

Mimo výše zmíněné se rovněž do hloubky zabýváš filosofií Immanuela Kanta, pěstoval i on nějakou filosofii výchovy?

V Kantově díle nacházíme knihu o pedagogice nebo o empirické antropologii a zároveň lze najít jistý příspěvek k filosofii výchovy v celé jeho kritické filosofii. Když se podíváme do jeho spisu o pedagogice, který vydal ve svých 79 letech, tedy rok před svou smrtí, zdá se mi úsměvné, že se v ní Kant zamýšlí nad tím, zda by se měly malé děti kolíbat nebo zda se mají používat pleny. Některé Kantovy pedagogické rady jsou jistě dobově podbarvené, ale jiné jsou velmi aktuální. Člověk se stává člověkem výchovou. Děti nelze dle Kanta trénovat jako koně nebo psa – dítě se musí naučit samo myslet. Nemáme trvat jen na vnějším dobrém chování dětí, nýbrž máme jim zprostředkovávat správné motivy, aby věděly, proč se mají tak chovat. Kant odmítá kupříkladu tehdejší výchovnou metodu zlomení vůle dítěte. Dále má Kant velkou důvěru ve vlastní schopnosti dítěte, což znamená, že na ně nemusíme spěchat a máme mu dovolit postupovat dle jeho schopností a možností. Dítěti máme v jistých mezích umožnit, aby se mohlo rozhodovat samo. Poslušnost musí být svobodná, ne vynucená atd.

Z celého Kantova díla čiší důraz na vlastní kritické myšlení: *Sapere aude!* Odvaž se myslet sám za sebe! Tento apel slyšíme neustále. Brání nám v tom však naše lenost, pohodlnost a strach. Výchova k mravnosti je podle Kanta ten nejvyšší ideál, ke kterému máme mířit. Všechna technika, kultura a civilizace má mít za cíl člověka jako mravní bytost, jež je schopná konat dobro sama od sebe. Nejvyšším pojmem svobody je svoboda *pro* mravnost, to, co člověka charakterizuje v nejhlubší míře, je skutečnost, že člověk je mravní bytost. Takže „kultivování" a „civilizování" má vrcholit ve výchově k mravnosti, která se má dít na základě příkladů konkrétních lidí a jejich životů. Kant navrhuje vylíčit třeba desetiletým dětem nějakou morálně relevantní situaci a máme je nechat, ať sami posoudí, jak by se měl kdo zachovat. A k mravní povinnosti vůči sobě patří mimo jiné rozvíjení vlastních talentů, přičemž každý nějaké vlastní. Rovněž pojem autonomie v dnešním slova smyslu je Kantovým „vynálezem".

V díle „Krize evropských věd a transcendentální fenomenologie" (1936) rozpracoval Edmund Husserl jistou formu krize humanity. Ve stínu probíhajících válečných konfliktů, tendenci vzestupu politického populismu a extremismu, neméně pak dle odborníků stále naléhavějších environmentálních problémů můžeme i dnes hovořit o krizi humanity tak, jak jí vnímal Husserl?

Dnešní doba je dobou „rozvařenou" a není snadné uchovat si psychickou rovnováhu tváří v tvář problémům, jež nyní hýbou světem. Můžeme tedy mluvit o krizi humanity. Rozpínavost a agresivita diktátorských a autoritativních režimů, systematické ničení demokratických institucí v USA, volba populistických politiků v mnoha zemích, klimatická krize… není lehké nepropadat

trudnomyslnosti. Sebekriticky bychom měli říci, že se nám některé věci staly příliš samozřejmými a přestali jsme se o ně náležitě starat. Demokracie žije z jistých předpokladů, které nejsou samozřejmé a které vyžadují neustálou péči a úsilí. Zde bych chtěl zmínit knihu americké filosofky Marthy Nussbaumové „Ne pro zisk" (Praha: Filosofia, 2017), která velmi dobrým způsobem poukazuje na relevanci humanitních věd a umění pro demokratickou společnost. V době bublin a rozvířených emocí na sociálních sítích zapomínáme na Gadamerovu charakteristiku dialogu, podle níž jeho jádro spočívá v tom, že do rozhovoru musíme vstupovat s postojem, že by druhý mohl mít pravdu. Do jisté míry však lze o krizi humanity hovořit vždy, i když to třeba v dobách relativního míru a blahobytu není tolik viditelné. Ale zápas o vnitřní směřování člověka je úkolem každé dějinné epochy a musí být vybojováván stále nanovo, jakkoliv nebude nikdy zcela dovršen. V tomto ohledu na tom není naše doba jinak než jiné epochy, jen se některé problémy vyostřily nebo vyplynuly na povrch, i když třeba již delší dobu doutnaly pod povrchem. V každé krizové době však vidíme – navzdory mnohému negativnímu – i zářné příklady neskutečně statečného a humánního jednání. Když třeba vidíte, jak ukrajinský pekař a pastor Oleg Tkačenko neúnavně pomáhá přímo na válečné frontě a jezdí za cenu ohrožení vlastního života do míst, která jsou neustále ostřelována, aby dovezl chleba, tak se vám derou slzy do očí. A takovýchto příkladů lze najít mnoho.

Martin Buber ve svém díle „Řeči o výchově" píše: *„Svět, celý okolní svět, tedy příroda a společnost, člověka vychovává […] To, co nazýváme výchovou, vědomou a chtěnou, znamená výběr působícího světa skrze člověka."* **Nejsou-li faktorem při výchově pouze druzí lidé (jak by tomu v očích laika mohlo být), ale předně celý svět působící ve své komplexnosti, jak vychovávat člověka k humanitě, působí-li na něj svět, v němž není humanity dostatek?**

Existuje pěkné přísloví „it takes a village to raise a child", k výchově dítěte je potřeba celé „vesnice", celé komunity, a tedy nejen rodičů. Jistě na výchovu působí mimo rodinu další vlivy jako vlivy školy, kamarádů, společnosti atd. A je to dobře, především v dospívání, kdy si člověk hledá své místo ve světě, svou vlastní identitu a musí se odpoutat od své původní rodiny. Pro toto období je například výborný skauting, který v Čechách odvádí neskutečně skvělou práci. Přesto se zdá, že rodina má naprosto zásadní význam, a to jak v pozitivním, tak i negativním ovlivňování vývoje dítěte.

Svět není nikdy jen čistě pozitivní nebo čistě negativní. Samozřejmě je těžké vychovávat děti v totalitních režimech nebo v období války. Ale přesto je dle mého třeba říci, že zásadní je vlastní postoj a vlastní pohled na svět. Nadějeplný pohled na svět vidí zárodky naděje i v těžkých chvílích, pesimistická perspektiva všude vidí jen úpadek a zmar, i když se člověku vede dobře. Je přece s podivem, že tak strašně sužovaná země jako Ukrajina je zároveň zdrojem naděje a smysluplnosti. Ukrajinci nám ukazují, jak se lze statečně – při všech traumatizujících zkušenostech, které se samozřejmě musí brát v potaz – a s odvahou postavit k realitě, která je sama o sobě strašlivá. Jistě tedy na jedné straně ovlivňuje vývoj a výchovu člověka nejen jeho vlastní rodina nebo tzv. signifikantní druzí, ale i okolí, životní okolnosti apod. Na druhé straně je to ale vždy vnitřní perspektiva člověka, která rozhoduje o tom, jak svět pro něj vypadá a co v něm nachází.

Hraje podle Tebe v humanitně orientované výchově nějakou roli spiritualita?

Slovo spiritualita chápu jako pozitivní pojem, tzv. nezdravá spiritualita není spiritualitou ve vlastním slova smyslu. Spiritualita člověka okysličuje, inspiruje, povzbuzuje. Zvětšuje prostor vnitřní

svobody. Dobře žitá spiritualita může sehrát pozitivní roli ve vyvarování se etickému přetížení. Líbí se mi věta připisovaná předsedovi italské biskupské konference, kardinálu Zuppimu: „Bůh existuje, ale nejsi to ty. Odpočiň si." Duchovní člověk ví, že se má zasazovat ze všech sil, ale zároveň ví, že na vše sám nestačí, protože má svá omezení. To může člověku propůjčovat hlubokou naději i proti vší beznaději. Spiritualita tedy může přispívat k výchově jakousi hlubší motivací vést děti či dospívající ke stále větší vnitřní svobodě.

Může podle Tebe filosofie výchovy nějak prakticky přispět k „humanizaci světa"?

„Humanizace světa" je velké slovo, možná až příliš nadnesené. My můžeme ve svém životě většinou ovlivnit jen své vlastní okolí (pokud nejsme nějaká celoplanetární celebrita nebo papež), své známé, přátele, své studenty… ale o to právě jde! Výchova by měla vést k náhledu, že každý by měl přispět k humanizaci světa a zanechat zde nějakou stopu dobra. Každý by se měl ptát, čím chce přispět k všeobecnému dobru, jak být nějakým způsobem prospěšný pro společnost a svět, pro životní prostředí. Nedávno zemřela Dana Drábová, povoláním vysoká státní úřednice s odpovědností za atomovou energii. Suchopárná problematika a jak silnou stopu pozitivního zde zanechala, a to jen díky svému nezaměnitelnému charakteru. Filosofie výchovy by měla pěstovat vědomí, že nezáleží na tom, jakou máme sociální roli, jak jsme známí nebo na jaké pozici pracujeme – každý má působit na tom místě, kde se zrovna nachází i se všemi omezeními, kterým každý z nás podléhá. To zcela stačí. Důležité je však uvědomit si, že každý *může* a *má* něčím přispět. Psychologicky je pocit toho, že jsme aktéry svého vlastního života, nesmírně důležitý, protože nás může ochránit před ochrnujícím pocitem, že jsme pasivní obětí běhu dějin.

Na závěr něco trochu odlehčeného – v kontextu mezigeneračních dialogů lze mnohdy zaslechnout kritiku, že mladí lidé jsou dnes „nevychovanější", než tomu bývalo u předešlých generací. Jak to vidíš Ty?

Nemám moc v lásce stěžování si na mladou generaci, mimochodem povzdechy nad mladými známe již ze starého Egypta. A čím je člověk starší, tím více by si měl dávat pozor, aby neočerňoval mladou generaci jen proto, že jí a jejímu světu nerozumí. Svět se zkrátka mění a svět mládí už není svět dospělosti nebo stáří. Každá generace je jiná a každá generace má své přednosti a své problematické stránky. Minulé generace byly příliš „uťápnuté", nesmělé, každý projev individuality byl potírán, takže oproti dřívějšku je dnešní generace „nevychovanější" než předchozí. Problém dnešní generace – pokud to dokážu posoudit – vidím spíše někde jinde. Dnes má mladá generace neskutečně velkou svobodu vybrat si styl svého života, partnera, partnerku, povolání apod. Tato nebývalá svoboda však s sebou nese nesmírně vysoké nároky na vlastní rozhodování, což může člověka silně přetížit. A když se něco nepovede, nemůžete z neúspěchu vinit někoho jiného, jen sám sebe. Což vede znovu k vnitřnímu stresu. Díky tomu, že zmizely nejrůznější tlaky (společnosti, rodiny…), máme sice svobodu, ale pro mnohé to znamená, že se nemají čeho chytit, že chybí představa toho, podle čeho se rozhodovat, o co se opřít.

Děkuji za rozhovor!

<div align="right">Jakub Luksch</div>

Caritas
et veritas

Studie Tematické

Interim Bridges to 'Them': The Challenges of Education and Living with Diversity Raised by the Ukrainian Crisis

Jana Karlová, Lucie Ludvíková

Abstract

This qualitative study explores the experience of living with diversity in three lower-grade public elementary school classes in the Czech Republic, focusing on the challenges brought to light by the arrival of immigrants from Ukraine in 2022. Conducted between September 2021 and March 2023, the research is based primarily on semi-structured interviews with educators, complemented by participant observation and document analysis. Drawing on insights from sociocultural anthropology, it examines *educators' understandings of boundaries*—particularly the categories of 'normal' and 'foreign', and the distinctions between 'us' and 'them'. Paradoxically, the integration successes observed in the cases studied appear to arise less from a systemic approach to diversity and more from the relative compatibility and adaptability of certain children and families with existing structures, as well as from the commitment and improvisational efforts of individual educators.

Keywords: challenges, culture, Czech Republic, diversity, foreigner, identity, inclusive education, normality, othering, Ukrainian crisis

Introduction

In the second half of 2021, we began examining the theory and practice of living with diversity in a Czech public elementary school. However, the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 shifted our focus to the arrival of Ukrainian refugee and displaced pupils. Centred on the perspectives of educators, and based primarily on qualitative interviews supported by insights from sociocultural anthropology, this study explores the concepts, categories, and sociocultural mechanisms related to living with diversity.

Gradually, the topic of educators' understandings of boundaries emerged—particularly the categories of 'normal' and 'foreign' and the distinctions between 'us' and 'them'—alongside a mismatch between educational objectives and actual practice. While the education system officially promoted pathways toward a democratic and inclusive society, several serious shortcomings became apparent. Notably, the successful integration of Ukrainian children we observed did not

result from the education system's capacity to accommodate diversity. Instead, it was largely the result of individual initiative, educator improvisation, and the adaptability of particular children and their families to majority norms. It is important to emphasise that the study does not aim to evaluate the success of Ukrainian children's integration. Rather, through the perspective of the educators, this article explores the construction, reinforcement, and potential transcendence of the boundary between 'us' and 'others'.

Literature Review

At the beginning of 2022, the Czech Republic had a population of 10.517 million. Since then, more than 390,000 refugees from Ukraine have been recorded, though not all have stayed permanently.[1] In September 2022, 39,478 Ukrainian pupils were enrolled in primary schools nationwide, and by September 2024, the numbers remained nearly unchanged.[2] The varying proportions of immigrants in different localities, influenced by factors such as personal connections and employment opportunities, indicate an uneven burden on individual schools.[3] It is important to note that, for various reasons, these figures may not fully reflect the current number of refugee or displaced Ukrainian children in the country.[4]

Recently, studies have been published on the inclusion of refugees, both in general[5] and specifically on the integration of Ukrainians into European societies.[6] More narrowly, research has examined their inclusion in European education systems.[7] Key themes identified in the listed resources

1   Cf. UNHCR, *Ukraine refugee situation* (Operational data portal, 2025), https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine.

2   Cf. MEYS, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, *Mimořádné šetření k počtům ukrajinských uprchlíků v regionálním školství* (April 2023), https://www.msmt.cz/file/59799_1_1/; M. Spurný and P. Tabery, *Integrace ukrajinských uprchlíků: trh práce, bydlení, znalost češtiny a vzdělávání dětí. Hlas Ukrajinců* (Centrum pro výzkum veřejného mínění, 2025), https://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/images/articles/files/5935/vyzkumnazpravahlasukrajincuvlna8vlna9.pdf

3   Cf. Konsorcium nevládních organizací pracujících s migranty v ČR. *Uprchlíci z Ukrajiny v datech a analýzách* (2025), https://migracnikonsorcium.cz/cs/data-statistiky-a-analyzy/uprchlici-z-ukrajiny-v-datech/#uprchlici-cr-pocty.

4   Cf. D. Prokop et al., *Hlas Ukrajinců: vzdělávání dětí. Výzkum mezi analýzách* (PAQ Research, 2023), https://www.paqresearch.cz/post/vzdelavani-ukrajinskych-deti-v-cesku.

5   Cf. N. Cooc and G. M. Kim, 'Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Adolescent Teaching Career Expectations,' *American Educational Research Journal* 60, no. 5 (2023): 882-915, https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312231184839; M. Gesthuizen, M. Savelkoul, and P. Scheepers, 'Patterns of exclusion of ethno-religious minorities: the ethno-religious hierarchy across European countries and social categories within these countries,' *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 82, (2021): 12–24, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2021.03.001; M. L. Seeberg, E. M. Goździak et. al., *Contested Childhood: Growing Up in Migrancy: Migration, Governance, Identities* (Springer International Publishing, 2016).

6   Cf. K. Andrejuk, 'Rapid Evolution of Refugee Policy in Poland: Russian Invasion of Ukraine as a Focusing Event,' *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies* (2023): 1-14, https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2023.2260337; O. Fedyuk, M. Kindler et al., *Ukrainian Migration to the European Union* (Springer International Publishing, 2016); M. Klimešová, J. Šatava, and M. Vondruška, *Situace uprchlíků z Ukrajiny* (MoLSA. Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic, 2022), https://www.mpsv.cz/documents/20142/1248138/Situace_uprchliku_MPSV_13072022.pdf/7f85ee74-a010-fc04-d696-364b1c4e3eab; Y. Leontiyeva, R. Mikešová and B. Tollarová, *Pražané s cizím pasem. Výsledky výzkumu cizinců a cizinek ze zemí mimo EU žijících v české metropoli* (Sociologický ústav AV ČR, 2018), https://doi.org/10.13060/m.2018.69; A. D. Moise, J. Dennison and H. Kriesi, 'European attitudes to refugees after the Russian invasion of Ukraine,' *West European Politics* 47, no. 2 (2023): 356-381, https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2023.2229688; L. Jirka, 'Growing-up young adults and their social agency in migration: how Ukrainian children initiate and mediate their own migration within the family unit,' *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe* 32, no. 2 (2024): 405-421, https://doi.org/10.1080/25739638.2024.2367902; L. Jirka and Y. Leontiyeva, 'Transnacionalismus, integrace a identifikace: Diskuse o proměnlivosti a dynamice sociálních procesů na příkladu studentské migrace z Ukrajiny,' *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review* 58, no. 1 (2022): 29-51, https://doi.org/10.13060/csr.2022.009.

7   Cf. European Commission, *Supporting refugee learners from Ukraine in schools in Europe. European Education and Culture Executive Agency* (2022), https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2797/066388; M. Herbst and M. Sitek, 'Education in exile: Ukrainian refugee students in the schooling system in Poland following the Russian–Ukrainian war,' *European Journal of Education* 58, (2023): 575–594. https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12587; C. Koehler and C. J. Schneider, 'Young refugees in education: the particular challenges of school systems in Europe,' *Comparative Migration Studies* 7, no. 28 (2019), https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-019-0129-3; D. Parmigiani et al., 'Educational strategies to support the inclusion of displaced pupils from Ukraine in Italian schools,' *International Journal of Educational Research Open* 4, (2023), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2023.100255.

include the uncertainty among the current wave of Ukrainian immigrants about their future plans, temporary stays, intentions to return to their country of origin, heightened vulnerability, family separation, difficulties integrating into an unfamiliar environment while on the move, language barriers, and potential emotional strain and post-war hardship.

In the Czech context, an overview study based on findings from the Czech School Inspectorate is available.[8] Additionally, research has explored parental experiences with education,[9] parental engagement in schooling,[10] specific aspects of refugee adaptation to primary schools,[11] and peer social networks and exclusion in Czech lower secondary schools.[12]

Further, various studies examine the inclusion and exclusion of children with special needs,[13] those from marginalised groups[14] or neighbourhoods,[15] children whose first tongue is a minority one,[16] and, notably, the notions of norm and normality within the Czech education system.[17]

Diversity[18] is widely acknowledged at both the national level—through the National Priorities of Oriented Research,[19] the Framework Education Programmes by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports,[20] and recent revisions of education programmes[21]—as well as within the

8   Cf. J. Novosák et al., *Interim Report on the Integration and Education of Ukrainian Children and Pupils* (Czech School Inspectorate, 2022), https://www.csicr.cz/CSICR/media/Prilohy/2022_p%c5%99%c3%adlohy/Dokumenty/Integration-and-Education-of-Ukrainian-Children-and-Pupils_EN-Summary.pdf.

9   Cf. D. Prokop et al., *Hlas Ukrajinců*.

10   Cf. N. Dombinskaya, 'Ukrainian Parents' Engagement with Czech Public Schools: Challenges and Roles for Parents,' *Studia paedagogica* 28, no. 2 (2023), https://doi.org/10.5817/SP2023-2-5.

11   Cf. P. Hlaďo et al., *Adaptace ukrajinských žáků na vzdělávání v českých základních školách* (Masaryk University, 2023), https://www.muni.cz/vyzkum/publikace/2270518.

12   Cf. T. Lintner et al., 'Revisiting Ukrainian refugees struggling to integrate into Czech school social networks,' *Soc Psychol Educ* 28, no. 174 (2025), https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-025-10134-5; T. Lintner et al., 'Ukrainian refugees struggling to integrate into Czech school social networks,' *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 10, no. 409 (2023), https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-023-01880-y.

13   Cf. L. Hovorková, et al., 'Lived experiences with inclusive education from the perspective of a pupil with visual impairment and his mother—a case study,' *Frontiers in Education* 10, (2025), https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2025.1629428.

14   Cf. K. Hoření et al., *Analýza příčin vyššího podílu romských žáků vzdělávajících se dle RVP ZV UV ve třídách zřízených podle § 16 odst. 9, školského zákona a návrh souboru opatření pro oblast vzdělávání a další relevantní oblasti* (PAQ; STEM 2022).

15   Cf. R. Vorlíček and L. Kollerová, 'Non-Inclusive Teaching of Students with Special Educational Needs in a Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Neighbourhood,' *International Journal of Inclusive Education* (September, 2024):1-15, https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2024.2398635.

16   Cf. K. Hellerová et al., 'Legal recognition and legal awareness of children with a different mother language,' *Kontakt* 26, no. 4 (2024): 399-405, https://doi.org/10.32725/kont.2024.054.

17   Cf. R. Šíp et al., *Na cestě k inkluzivní škole: interakce a norma*, (Brno: Munipress 2022), https://munispace.muni.cz/library/catalog/book/2206.

18   Cf. C. Koppell et al., *Untapped Power: Leveraging Diversity and Inclusion for Conflict and Development* (New York: Oxford Academic, 2022); D. Maguire and Y. Keceli, 'The impact of formation and diversity on student team conflict,' *Active Learning in Higher Education* (2023), https://doi.org/10.1177/14697874221144998; N. Ratzmann, *Intercultural dialogue: a review of conceptual and empirical issues relating to social transformation* (UNESCO, 2019), https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000366825.locale=en; UNESCO, *Where do we stand on Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education: Findings of the 7th Consultation on the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms* (2022), https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381362.locale=en; L. Veer, and A. Dezentje, 'Human rights and cultural perspectives,' *UNESCO courier*, 4, (2018): 36-37, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000366391.locale=en.

19   Government of the Czech Republic, *National priorities of oriented research, experimental development and innovations* (2012), https://vyzkum.gov.cz/FrontClanek.aspx?idsekce=782681.

20   Cf. MEYS, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání* (2021), https://archiv-nuv.npi.cz/t/rvp-pro-zakladni-vzdelavani.html.

21   Cf. NPI, National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic, *Revize rámcových vzdělávacích programů* (2024), https://prohlednout.rvp.cz/.

broader European context.[22] It is evident that further progress is needed,[23] raising questions about whether the system and its practices are genuinely moving toward the ideals of a democratic civil society.[24]

Methodology

In this paper, we examine educators' perspectives on living with diversity. Our qualitative study, conducted between September 2021 and March 2023 at a Czech state elementary school in a city of 30,000 residents, focused on the first level of education (grades one to five, ages six to eleven). The core method of this research, carried out in the Czech language, was (1) semi-structured qualitative interviews with educators from the respective classes in a balanced 3:3:3 ratio (teacher, teaching assistant, aftercare teacher). This primary method was complemented by three additional approaches: (2) participant observation in three classes, with the researcher acting as a teaching assistant and/or aftercare teacher; (3) analysis of relevant documents; (4) shorter interviews and informal conversations conducted with various participants, including, among others, a school prevention specialist.

Pilot interview was conducted on May 8, 2022. The main interviews, held between December 20, 2022, and February 15, 2023, exclusively involved female educators, reflecting the typical gender distribution in Czech education.[25] [26]

Research notes and observations, recorded during interviews and in a research diary, captured interactions and self-reflections. To maintain an open approach to the topic, we adopted grounded theory[27] as the methodological foundation for data analysis. However, in this particular text, we apply it more flexibly—using it as a starting point while acknowledging its limitations, particularly its tendencies toward excessive positivism and reductionism. Consequently, in this paper, we do not attempt to construct an axial causal model.

The research, conducted from March 2022 to March 2023, included a pause during the summer holidays. The timeline below highlights key moments, particularly the waves of Ukrainian pupils' arrivals: (1) First wave (March 2022): Two Ukrainian pupils joined the first and second classes, while one entered the third class under observation. Before this increase, each class had 27–30 pupils. (2) Second wave (September 2022): Two additional Ukrainian pupils were placed in the

22   Cf. A. Duraiappah et al., *The International Science and Evidence-based Education Assessment: ISEE Assessment Working Group 2* (MGIEP, UNESCO, 2022), https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380982.locale=en; EEA and Norway Grants, *EEA-NG Strategic Report: Czech Republic: 1st September 2021—31st August 2022* (2022), https://www.eeagrants.cz/cs/zakladni-informace/strategicke-zpravy/2022/strategicka-zprava-pro-rok-2022-4082; EU Agencies Network, *EUAN Charter on Diversity and Inclusion* (2023), https://agencies-network.europa.eu/working-eu-agencies/diversity-and-inclusion_en#diversity-charter; European Commission, *Diversity management in Central and Eastern Europe: Lesson learned and potential for growth* (Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, 2017), https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2838/20528; UNESCO, *5th global report on adult learning and education: citizenship education: empowering adults for change* (2022), https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381666.locale=en.

23   Cf. Council of Europe, *ECRI Country monitoring in Czech Republic: ECRI Conclusions on The Implementation of The Recommendations in Respect of The Czech Rep. Subject to Interim Follow-Up* (ECRI, 2022), https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance/czech-republic; K. Hoření et al., 1*Analýza příčin vyššího podílu romských žáků*; N. O. Kalu and M. Kurowski, 'Culturally Responsive Teaching for Learner Diversity in Czech Schools: A Literature Review,' *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy* 2, no. 6 (2021): 106-110, https://doi.org/10.24018/ejedu.2021.2.6.202; M. Miskovic and S. Curics, 'Beyond Inclusion: Reconsidering Policies, Curriculum, and Pedagogy for Roma Students,' *International Journal of Multicultural Education* 18, no 2 (2016): 1–14, https://doi.org/10.18251/ijme.v18i2.1051 among others.

24   N. O. Kalu and M. Kurowski, *Culturally Responsive Teaching for Learner Diversity in Czech Schools*; R. Šíp et al., *Na cestě k inkluzivní škole*.

25   During the research period, the studied school's first level had sixteen female teachers and only one male teacher. Nationally, men accounted for just 5.9% of first-level teachers and 2.8% of all first-level educators.

26   Cf. MEYS, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, *Mimořádné šetření k počtům ukrajinských uprchlíků v regionálním školství*.

27   Cf. K. Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory* (London: SAGE, 2014); J. M. Corbin and A. Strauss, 'Grounded theory research: Procedures, canons, and evaluative criteria,' *Qualitative sociology* 13, no. 1 (1990): 3-21, https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00988593

third class to ensure an even distribution. The surge in Ukrainian students across many Czech schools during this period resulted from a law mandating school attendance for child refugees who had been in the Czech Republic for over 90 days. Since most Ukrainian families had arrived in March and April 2022, children who had not previously attended classes were required to enroll in school after the summer holidays (July and August).

Figure: The Timeline of the Research
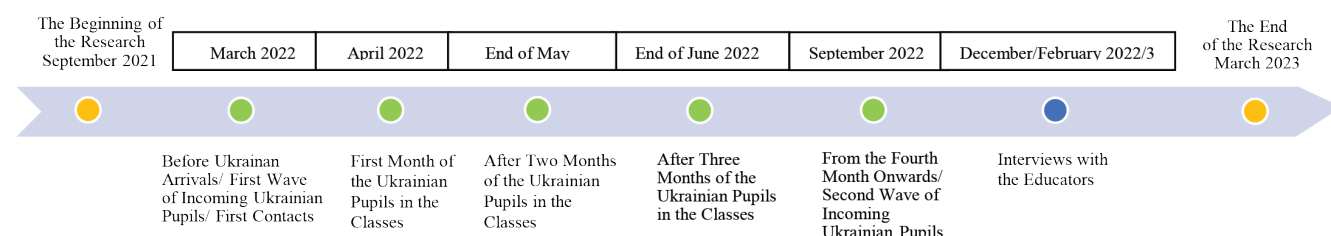
Ethical Concerns

The project adheres to the Code of Ethics of the Czech Association for Social Anthropology. A distinctive feature of this study is the dual role of Lucie Ludvíková as both a researcher and educator, enabling a natural and prolonged immersion in the classroom. However, this dual position also presents challenges in maintaining balance, underscoring the importance of the researcher's positionality and self-reflection. We prioritise empathy, minimise interference in personal matters, and uphold confidentiality. The presence of underage pupils further heightened the complexity of the study, requiring careful ethical considerations. The research design was presented to the school head, staff, and parents/legal guardians, all of whom provided consent. Children were informed about the study in a manner appropriate to their level of understanding. To ensure anonymity, all data were pseudonymised.

Interview Metadata Table 1: Educators on Diversity and Classroom Climate

	Class No. 1: 2nd Grade, Two pupils joined the class in March 2022		
Educator	Natálie; class teacher	Kateřina; teaching assistant	Leona; aftercare teacher
Length of Work Experience	16 years	1.5 years	30 years
First Language and Other Languages Spoken (A2-B1)	Czech English; German	Czech English; German	Czech German; Russian
Diversity Categories Noted in the Class Before Ukrainian Arrivals	Cognitive Abilities; Motivation; Language Skills (bilingualism)	Attention/Focus; Cognitive; Physical Abilities; Emotional Intelligence; Social Skills; Work Pace	Adaptability; Cognitive Abilities; Creativity; Neurodevelopmental Disorders; Social Skills; Physical Abilities
Diversity Categories Associated with Ukrainian Arrivals	Language Skills, National Belonging	Motivation, Work Pace, (National) Mentality, Language Skills	No Major Change, Language Skills

Perceptions of the New Classmates	Varied Motivation/Cooperation; Varied Language Skills; Resistance Traits (certain level of arrogance)	Varied Motivation/Cooperation; Varied Language Skills	National Pride
Challenges Associated with Ukrainian Arrivals	Language Barrier as Obstacle and Motivation to Learn Languages; Need to Manage Classroom Cohesion (fragmentation tendencies)	Language Barrier as Obstacle and Motivation; Need for Empathy; Need to Manage Classroom Cohesion (balance between diversity and equality)	Language Barrier as Obstacle and Motivation; Need to Manage Classroom Cohesion (fragmentation tendencies)
Areas for Improvement	Need for Earlier and More Intensive Inclusion and Communication Efforts—Including Czech Language Instruction	Insufficient Preparedness; Need for Earlier Teaching Assistants Involvement	Insufficient Preparedness; Need for Proactive rather than Reactive Response; Need for Earlier and More Intensive Inclusion and Communication Efforts
	Class No. 2: 3rd Grade, Two pupils joined the class in March 2022		
Educator	Věra, class teacher	Eliška, teaching assistant	Simona, aftercare teacher
Length of Work Experience	18 years	2 years	32 years
First Language and Other Languages Spoken (A2-B1)	Czech / English; German	Czech / English; Russian	Czech / Russian, German
Diversity Categories Noted in the Class Before Ukrainian Arrivals	Cognitive Abilities, Emotional Intelligence, Individual Development, Parental Cooperation, Social Skills, Work Pace	Creativity, Handicap/Dependency, Hidden and Obvious Peculiarities, Self-awareness	Creativity, Language Skills (speech impediments), Psychological Handicap
Diversity Categories Associated with Ukrainian Arrivals	Language Skills, Motivation	Enrichment with a New Culture, Language Skills	No Major Change, Language Skills, Reflecting on Our Lives
Perceptions of the New Classmates	Varied Motivation/Cooperation, Confusion, Emotional Instability (Fear), National Pride, Resistance Traits (strong charisma, stubbornness)	Different Background, Emotional Instability (Fear, Spontaneity), Resistance Traits (strong charisma, superiority attitudes, stubbornness)	Confusion
Challenges Associated with Ukrainian Arrivals	Language Barrier as Obstacle and Motivation, Varied Willingness to Cooperate	Language Barrier as Obstacle and Motivation; Need to Manage Classroom Cohesion (fragmentation tendencies)	Language Barrier as Obstacle and Motivation, Need to Manage Classroom Cohesion (occasionally escalated situations)
Areas for Improvement	Insufficient Preparedness; Need for Earlier and More Intensive Inclusion and Communication Efforts; Need for Respect	Need for Earlier and More Intensive Inclusion and Communication Efforts-Including Czech Language Instruction	Insufficient Preparedness; Better Coordination Between Teaching Assistants and Teachers; Need for Earlier and Better Inclusion Efforts
	Class No. 3: 5th Grade, One pupil joined the class in March, two in September 2022		

Educator	Marie, class teacher	Zuzana, teaching assistant	Eva, aftercare teacher
Length of Work Experience	36 years, bilingual and of Ukrainian origin	3 years	38 years
First Language and Other Languages Spoken (A2-B1)	Ukrainian / Russian Czech C2	Czech English; German	Czech Russian
Diversity Categories Noted in the Class Before Ukrainian Arrivals	Attention/Focus; Cognitive Abilities; Creativity; Family Background; Psychological and Physical Characteristics	Cognitive Abilities; Different Background (newcomers, weak social/family background); Social Skills	Adaptability; Creativity; Dependency; Psychological/ Physical Handicap; Language/Communication Handicap (foreign language)
Diversity Categories Associated with Ukrainian Arrivals	No Major Change; Language Skills	No Major Change; Language Skills; Foreign Culture	No Major Change; Language Skills
Perceptions of the New Classmates	Varied Motivation/Cooperation, Confusion, Fear of Unknown	Resistance Traits (stubbornness), Discipline	Emotional Instability (volatility), Resistance Traits (reluctance to contact others)
Challenges Associated with Ukrainian Arrivals	Language Barrier as Obstacle and Motivation; Need to Manage Classroom Cohesion (class dynamics)	Need for Respect Toward a Different Culture; Addressing Sensitive Topics (esp., the war)	Language Barrier; Addressing Sensitive Topics (esp., the War); Need to Manage Classroom Cohesion (balance between diversity and equality); Reflecting on Our Lives
Areas for Improvement	Need for Earlier Inclusion Efforts; Establishing Cooperation Between School and Parents of Ukrainian Children	Insufficient Preparedness; Need for Earlier and More Intensive Inclusion and Communication Efforts-Including Czech Language Instruction; Establishing Cooperation Between Schools and Parents of Ukrainian Children	Establishing Cooperation Between Schools and (All) Parents; Need for Earlier and More Flexible Inclusion and Communication Efforts

Communication Barriers

Before the Ukrainian crisis, diversity was primarily perceived as individual cases of 'otherness' or deviations from what was considered 'normal'. Various factors were recognised, including cognitive, physical, psychological, and social abilities; language and communication skills; attitudes toward challenges; emotional responses; weak family backgrounds; and difficulties in collaborating with certain families. Multilingualism (often referred to as 'foreign-lingualism' [*cizojazyčnost*] to emphasise its deviation from the Czech-language norm) and foreign nationality (commonly equated with ethnicity in everyday practice) were seen as exceptional and had little impact on institutional functioning.

In 2022, some schools faced immense pressure to accommodate the large influx of Ukrainian pupils. However, the observed school had relatively low enrolment of newcomers. Despite this, all research participants agreed that the arrival of Ukrainian children significantly altered the situation, introducing new challenges for the institution, educators, classes, and individual pupils

while also disrupting daily routines. This shift brought certain aspects of diversity to the forefront, temporarily shifting attention away from other characteristics.[28]

During the initial encounters with the Ukrainian children, the mutual language barrier—their inability to speak Czech and the often mutual difficulty in communicating in other languages—became immediately apparent. Individuals, schools, nonprofit organisations, and the National Pedagogical Institute responded to this challenge in various ways.[29] Given the decentralised nature of the Czech education system, individual schools developed their own solutions.[30]

At the observed school, overcoming communication barriers was initially left to individual actors. 'If I could change a few things, I would start intensive language courses from day one and encourage more interaction between Czech and Ukrainian children. Some of the children were very withdrawn, and we didn't know how to naturally draw them into the group' (Eliška, teaching assistant, 19th January 2023). During this stage, educators and classmates made great efforts to establish contact, even if only through pictures and gestures. There was a clear sense of curiosity and fascination with the 'exoticism' of the newcomers. Unlike the Syrian refugee crisis (ongoing since 2011), which had little impact on the Czech Republic, the arrival of Ukrainian refugees evoked both a sense of exoticism and a strong feeling of cultural and historical closeness, leading to a considerable degree of empathy toward them.

The Czech education system has not yet systematically addressed the needs of children who can communicate satisfactorily in Czech but do not speak it as their first language. This issue can exacerbate the challenges faced by marginalised minorities, particularly some groups identified with the Roma ethnic minority. More broadly, it is likely to impact the academic success of children who, for various reasons, have grown up outside the Czech linguistic environment—once the initial wave of attention has subsided, this may also include Ukrainian children.

Addressing communication difficulties, as with most other specific needs, depends not only on the child but also on the cooperation and skills of individual educators and families. This, in turn, reinforces the reproduction of social inequalities.[31] The education system more readily recognises communication barriers among children officially classified as 'foreigners' or those with a professionally confirmed diagnosis. However, such barriers and special needs also affect children who do not carry a clear label of 'otherness' or 'disability'.

Although Czech and Ukrainian are linguistically close, they are not mutually intelligible. The same applies to Russian, which is also commonly spoken among Ukrainians. The need to communicate in an unfamiliar language, combined with shared experiences of migration and displacement, led the Ukrainian children we observed to form close alliances with one another.[32] The fact that these 'Ukrainian' groups did not become significantly isolated required educators' attention.

Educators' competence in handling linguistic diversity varied. While some were fluent only in Czech and lacked experience in multicultural or multilingual classrooms, Maria—a teacher of Ukrainian origin—was bilingual in Ukrainian and Russian, and communicated in Czech with ease.[33] Our

28   Refer to the *Interview Metadata Table 1*.

29   Cf. META, *Inkluzivní škola* (2023), https://inkluzivniskola.cz/; NPI, National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic, *Portál podpory pedagogických pracovníků vzdělávajících děti/žáky cizince* (2023), https://cizinci.npi.cz/; NPI, National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic, *Ukrajina: rozcestník podpory* (2023), https://ukrajina.npi.cz/.

30   Cf. D. Greger and E. Walterová, 'In pursuit of educational change: Transformation of education in the Czech Republic,' *Orbis scholae* 1, no. 2 (2007): 20-21,41,42, https://doi.org/10.14712/23363177.2018.165; P. Hlaďo et al., *Adaptace ukrajinských žáků na vzdělávání v českých základních školách*.

31   Cf. D. Prokop, *Slepé skvrny: o chudobě, vzdělávání, populismu a dalších výzvách české společnosti* (Host: 2020): 67–83.

32   Cf. T. Lintner et al., *Ukrainian refugees struggling to integrate into Czech school social networks*.

33   Refer to the *Interview Metadata Table 1*.

observations suggest that educators without broader experience in second-language communication tend to be less sensitive to language barriers.[34] Notably, none of the educators interviewed reported relying on their professional training to navigate this situation. 'I think we just weren't prepared enough. Personally, I learned a lot as I went along. More training and better information on how to work with children who have experienced trauma—or how to encourage them to engage without fear—would definitely help' (Kateřina, teaching assistant, 26th January 2023).

In May 2022—approximately two months after Ukrainian children joined the school—several Ukrainian-speaking teaching assistants[35] were introduced, and beginner Czech classes were established specifically for Ukrainian students. These lessons took place during regular school hours but separately from their peers. While this arrangement helped the children develop their Czech language skills, it also made it more difficult for them to fully integrate into their classes, as they spent less time with their classmates. Ukrainian-Czech-speaking assistants played a crucial role in bridging communication gaps, even during breaks.

National Belonging and Reification of Culture and Identity

With the arrival of Ukrainian children, the themes of national identity and pride became un-avoidable. National belonging is deeply intertwined with the motives for migration, shaping expressions of solidarity while also surfacing in protests and resistance. Previously, the Czech social environment had approached national identity with distinct moderation. Public displays of national pride were typically confined to specific and strictly defined contexts—such as national holidays at public buildings or sporting events in stadiums. Beyond these settings, individuals displaying symbols like the national flag were often perceived as expressing radical views.

During our research, the contrast towards Ukrainian perceptions of what is considered 'normal' be-came evident. We observed children actively testing the boundaries of what was considered appro-priate and acceptable. The current pupils, mostly Czech,[36] noticed that national pride is particularly important to their Ukrainian peers. This difference often sparked curiosity, which at times resulted in uncomfortable provocations. For Ukrainian children, national belonging became especially im-portant, particularly in the context of being refugees or displaced abroad. It manifested on multiple levels—from the broader reality of war to smaller, everyday challenges—often overlapping in unex-pected ways. For example, a boy hesitant to climb down from a gymnasium pole defiantly chants, 'To the glory of Ukraine!' From the Czech children's perspective, such behaviour felt unusual.

'Previously, we had experience with bilingual pupils from different parts of the world, but they were individuals—not groups of children from the same nationality' (Věra, teacher, 8th May 2022). The increased focus on nationality and the fact that the newcomers identified as Ukrainian led to widespread misunderstandings. The new pupils' expressions of confusion, fear, discomfort, and varying levels of willingness to cooperate quickly raised the question of whether these traits were inherent to 'Ukrainian culture'. Unfamiliar and difficult-to-interpret situations—such as a group of Ukrainian children singing their national anthem during a class break—seemed to reinforce the perception of mutual 'cultural' otherness.

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34   Cf. J. A. Premier and J. Miller, 'Preparing pre-service teachers for multicultural classrooms,' *Australian Journal of Teacher Education* 35, no. 2 (2010), https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2010v35n2.3.

35   Teaching assistants are not a standard feature in Czech classrooms; they are typically assigned through a complex process and only to children with officially confirmed special educational needs. While their formal role is to support the particular child during daily activities, in practice, their responsibilities often extend beyond this.

36   Unless otherwise specified, 'Czech' refers to attachment to the state; in everyday life, the term can denote both citizenship and ethnicity, and it is common to conceptualise one's own identity as an ethnically based 'either/or' binary opposition.

A notion of distinct, inherently unique, and unchanging 'islands' of culture tied to national or ethnic identity[37] was evident both in interviews and in practice. Within this framework, it would be difficult to question the misconception that Ukrainian identity was directly linked to a shared lifestyle or a specific set of character traits. Educators frequently referred to traits such as 'Ukrainian' discipline, pride, arrogance, stubbornness, and volatility[38]—often supporting their claims with specific anecdotes.

> 'Ukrainian children have a unique mix of pride and defiance. One pupil had a pronunciation issue, but when I corrected her, she looked at me and replied dryly, "But I understand, don't I? So what does it matter?" Then she went on to say it her own way' (Marie, teacher, 17th January 2023).
> 'One Ukrainian boy argued with me during math class that his way of counting was better. It wasn't about who was right—he just didn't want to be taught. In the end, he admitted he was wrong, but still added that his solution made more sense' (Eliška, teaching assistant, 19th January 2023).
> 'When they can't do something, they rarely admit it. One girlie had trouble with Czech inflection, but when I offered to help her, she shot back that it's not like that in her language and that only we Czechs make it so complicated. It's like the problem is more with the Czech language than with her' (Eva, aftercare teacher, 2nd February 2023).

However, Ukrainian children, like other children, are very different in terms of their temperament, interests, outlook on life, socio-economic background of their families, degree of willingness to cooperate, perception of the Czech Republic as a temporary refuge or a long-term place of residence, and so on. This is not to question certain shared symbols, norms and communication strategies among Ukrainian immigrants. Rather, to highlight that the impressions they convey also reflect a particular migrant experience, a limited ability to communicate in Czech, mutual misunderstandings. Many feel confused, traumatised, and dissatisfied with their current situation, which they did not choose and cannot change. It would be inaccurate to attribute everything solely to a shared 'culture' and link it directly to 'nationality'.

The effort to understand the complex notions of identity and culture, as well as the specific situation of the newcomers, was also highlighted in an interview with Marie, a previously mentioned teacher of Ukrainian origin who has long been established in the Czech Republic. On one hand, she speaks about the Ukrainian 'mentality', stating, 'I grew up in Ukraine, and I know the behaviour and mindset of this nation'. At the same time, she acknowledges the challenges of adaptation, adding, 'I see how these children struggle with adapting to Czech norms, but I also understand their pride in maintaining their identity. It's a delicate balance' (Marie, teacher, 17th January 2023).

The Norms

In its broadest sense, diversity should encompass the uniqueness of each child. However, the educational system typically acknowledges only certain student characteristics, primarily those directly tied to educational goals. To our knowledge, these categories vary across different segments and levels of the system. The categories reflected in (1) official documents such as the Framework Education Programmes[39] do not necessarily align with those found in (2) methodological templates or textbooks, nor with (3) the practical understanding of diversity in schools

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37   Cf. T. H. Eriksen, 'From culture via multiculturalism to diversity,' *Culturologia: the journal of culture* 1, no. 1 (2012): 20-25.
38   Refer to the *Interview Metadata Table 1.*
39   Cf. MEYS, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání.*

and institutions, or (4) the perspectives of educators. Furthermore, individual teachers, teaching assistants, and aftercare providers do not always share the same views. This variation arises because the characteristics they observe in children are shaped by the specific focus of their pedagogical roles—whether fulfilling educational objectives, managing group dynamics, overseeing leisure activities, or other aspects of schooling.

The education system appears to favour a standardised notion of the 'normal, unproblematic pupil'. For students who deviate from this norm due to their needs, abilities, or characteristics, the primary approach is often to compensate for and minimise their 'deviation'.[40] Children typically fall outside the 'normal' category due to pronounced cognitive, psychological, physical, or communication limitations, problematic family backgrounds, significant distractibility, slow learning, or lack of independence.[41] At this point, it is important to address the issue of intersectionality.[42] For example, while Ukrainian refugee mothers with children received widespread solidarity from the Czech population, those identified as Roman-Ukrainian often faced longer wait times for assistance or were overlooked entirely.[43]

Educators we interviewed noted a permeability between disadvantages and advantages. Characteristics typically seen as strengths can sometimes be obstacles, while so-called weaknesses may, in certain contexts, serve as advantages. For example, Věra (teacher, 3rd January 2023) described how a Ukrainian pupil's reluctance to ask for help—typically seen as a barrier to learning—eventually led to the development of independent problem-solving skills. Eva (aftercare teacher, 2nd February 2023) noted that the language barrier, while problematic, sometimes functioned as a challenge that encouraged the use of extra-linguistic, non-verbal means of communication, at least temporarily enhancing cooperation among classmates.

However, their perspectives remain grounded in a normative integration model. This means they focus on fitting children into the existing institutional framework rather than advocating for a more inclusive system.[44] Given large class sizes, staffing shortages due to limited funding, and the lack of diversity training in Czech teacher education, redefining norms within state education remains a distant prospect. While inclusive education is officially promoted, in practice, the system often leans toward integrationist or assimilationist approaches.[45]

In the Czech context, current trends and methods in education are primarily driven by NGOs. While the topic is gaining traction in public discourse, educators face challenges in managing the overwhelming amount of information available. Accessing reliable, up-to-date knowledge is becoming increasingly difficult for some, which exacerbates existing disparities.

Some Czech authors conflate inclusion with integration.[46] Certain terms, such as 'intact children',[47] imply a dichotomy between 'normal' non-disabled children and 'non-normal' disabled ones under the guise of inclusion. It is important to note that these examples do not represent all actors in the decentralised system, where strategies among schools and educators vary. However,

40   Cf. R. Šíp et al., *Na cestě k inkluzivní škole: interakce a norma*.
41   Refer to the *Interview Metadata Table 1*.
42   Cf. M. Coote et al., 'Intersectionality in Education Research,' in *Encyclopedia of Social Justice in Education, Gender and Sexuality* (Bloomsbury: 2022).
43   Cf. L. Gulová, and R. Šíp, *Sociální pedagogika: časopis pro vědu a praxi: Inkluze jako výzva doby*, 7, no. 2 (2019): 10, https://soced.cz/cs/2019/11/socialni-pedagogika-2019-72/; J. Ort, J., R. Berkyová, and P. zewlakk Vrabec, 'Situace Romů v České republice v kontextu ruské invaze na Ukrajině, Fotografie Petra zewlakka Vrabce,' *Romano džaniben* 30, no. 2 (2023): 129–141, https://www.dzaniben.cz/files/e649e0919f41213fa71c6257364239eb.pdf.
44   Cf. R. Šíp et al., *Na cestě k inkluzivní škole: interakce a norma*.
45   Cf. K. Hoření et al., *Analýza příčin vyššího podílu romských žáků*; R. Šíp et al., *Na cestě k inkluzivní škole: interakce a norma*.
46   Cf. B. Lazarová et al., *Řízení inkluze ve škole* (Masaryk University, 2016): 13.
47   Cf. M. Tannenbergerová, *Průvodce školní inkluzí aneb Jak vypadá kvalitní základní škola současnosti?* (Wolters Kluwer: 2016).

instead of fostering a safe environment for the development of all individuals,[48] the Czech state education system tends to focus on 'fixing' children who are perceived as 'abnormal'.[49]

The arrival of Ukrainian children presents challenges that prompt institutions and educators to reconsider notions of 'norm' and 'normality'. This re-evaluation could benefit other children who have long struggled to participate in the Czech educational system, even before the Ukrainian crisis. However, our observations suggest that there is little questioning of the existing normative system. For instance, foreign-speaking Ukrainian children learning to read were provided with materials designed for dyslexics, to help them practice at a slower pace. This is not a critique of individual educators' dedication—nevertheless, the lack of established tools for addressing this situation appears symptomatic. Given educators' professional training, experience, and the absence of readily available resources for multilingual children, it was natural for them to resort to familiar analogies and sources: 'I found the worksheet on a popular platform, but later realised it wasn't culturally relevant and was hard for my students to understand' (school prevention specialist, 18th January 2023).

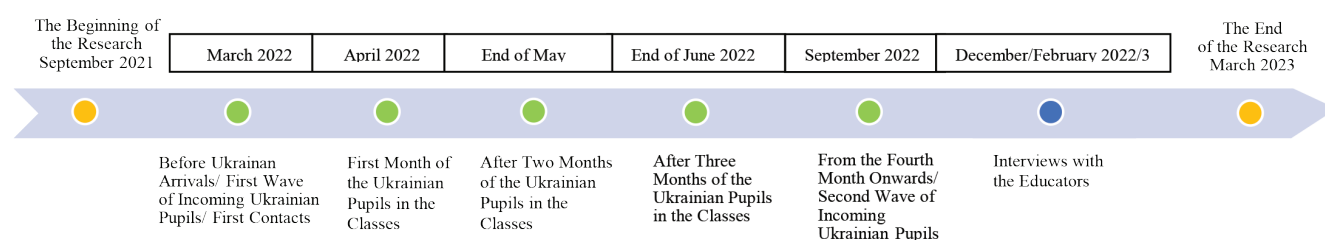*Interview Metadata Table 2: Educators on the Meaning of 'Foreigner'*

	Class No. 1: 2nd Grade, Two pupils joined the class in March 2022		
Educator	Natálie, class teacher	Kateřina, teaching assistant	Leona, aftercare teacher
How Has the Meaning of 'Foreigner' Shifted	'I used to think of the word "foreigner" almost as a label for someone from another world. But now I see that even people who come from other countries are just like us—they have the same dreams, fears and joys.'	'At the beginning I thought that a "stranger" was just someone who came here and then disappears again. But now that I work with children, I see that a stranger can be any of us when we find ourselves in a new situation. And the kids I work with are really great—they learn quickly and do everything they can to fit in.'	'When I started, "foreigner" meant someone else, someone different. But after all these years of working with children from different parts of the world, I've come to understand that it's all about where a child starts from. Every child, no matter where they are from, needs the same thing—to be understood and accepted.'
Expressions the Educator Uses about Ukrainian Pupils	New Classmates [*noví spolužáci*]	Newcomers form Ukraine [*nováčci z Ukrajiny*]	Ukrainians [*Ukrajinci*]
	Class No. 2: 3rd Grade, two pupils joined the class in March 2022		
Educator	Věra, class teacher	Eliška, teaching assistant	Simona, aftercare teacher

48   Cf. M. Kaleja, and E. Zezulková, *Školská inkluze versus exkluze: vybrané kontexty vzdělávání sociálně vyloučených dětí a žáků s potřebou podpůrných opatření* (University of Ostrava: 2016); V. Lechta et al., *Základy inkluzivní pedagogiky: dítě s postižením, narušením a ohrožením ve škole* (Portál: 2010); A. Petrová, E. Souralová, and E, Šmelová, *Společenské aspekty inkluze* (Palacký University Olomouc: 2017).

49   Cf. D. Denglerová and R. Šíp, 'Optimalizací inkluze k prohlubování nerovností ve vzdělávání,' *Pedagogika* 71, no. 1 (2021): 126-130, https://doi.org/10.14712/23362189.2020.1917; A. Hanáková et al., *Přístupnost v kontextu osob se zdravotním postižením* (Palacký University Olomouc, 2021); Z. Svoboda et al., *Koordinátor inkluze ve škole* (Jan Evangelista Purkyně University, 2020).

How Has the Meaning of 'Foreigner' Shifted	'I used to think of the word "foreigner" as something that divided people. I tended to see a foreigner as someone who don't quite belong here. But after years of working with children from different parts of the world, I realised that a foreigner is actually just someone we don't know yet. And that they have just as much right to be part of our community as anyone else.'	'I used to think "foreigner" meant someone who was simply from a different background. Now I see them more as someone with a different story, but with a lot of things in common. We feel that way in class now, too.'	'The word "foreigner" no longer has a negative connotation for me, as perhaps it once did. Now, in our school, it means opportunity—the opportunity to learn, to grow and to understand others better. To me, a foreigner is just someone who needs extra attention to become part of the team.'
Expressions the Educator Uses about Ukrainian Pupils	Ukrainians [*Ukrajinci*] + Individual Names and Surnames of Pupils	Refugees [*Uprchlíci*] + Individual Names of Pupils	Ukrainian Pupils [*Ukrajinští žáci*]
	Class No. 3: 5th Grade, one pupil joined the class in March, two in September 2022		
Educator	Marie, class teacher 36 years, bilingual and of Ukrainian origin	Zuzana, teaching assistant	Eva, aftercare teacher
How Has the Meaning of 'Foreigner' Shifted	'Before, "foreigner" meant someone who was completely different from me. When I came here in my twenties, I wanted to fit in as quickly as possible and become part of Czech society. Ukraine remained in my heart, but I felt more like a Czech. It was only when Ukrainian children started coming to our school that I realised how much I still shared with them. Often, we have much more in common than we would think at first glance.'	'At the beginning, the "foreigner" seemed like someone from somewhere else. The kids are amazing, smart and have a huge desire to learn. Plus, the ones who came from Ukraine showed incredible strength and courage.'	'Over the years, I have come to realise that "foreigner" is just a label that tells us nothing about who the person really is. Every child who comes to us has a story, and it's up to us to try to understand it, instead of labeling them right away. For me, "strangers" are more like "new friends" that we have the opportunity to get to know.'
Expressions the Educator Uses about Ukrainian Pupils	Our Ukrainians; My Children; My Countrymen; My Blood [*naši Ukrajinci; moje děti; domovští; moje krev*]	Individual Names of Pupils	Newcomers [*nováčci*]

The Timeline and Interview Metadata Table 3: Class Climate and Language Used about Ukrainian Pupils

The Beginning of the Research September 2021	March 2022	April 2022	End of May	End of June 2022	September 2022	December/February 2022/3	The End of the Research March 2023
	Before Ukrainan Arrivals/ First Wave of Incoming Ukrainian Pupils/ First Contacts	First Month of the Ukrainian Pupils in the Classes	After Two Months of the Ukrainian Pupils in the Classes	After Three Months of the Ukrainian Pupils in the Classes	From the Fourth Month Onwards/ Second Wave of Incoming Ukrainian Pupils	Interviews with the Educators	

The Timeline	March 2022	March 2022	April 2022	End of May 2022	End of June 2022	September 2022 Onwards
Phases	Before Ukrainian Arrivals	First Contacts; First Wave of Incoming Ukrainian Pupils	First Month of the Ukrainian Pupils in the Classes	After Two months of the Ukrainian Pupils in the Classes	After Three Months of the Ukrainian Pupils in the Classes	From the Fourth Month Onwards; Second Wave of Incoming Ukrainian Pupils
Class Climate	Exoticism, expectation, curiosity, compassion	Increased engagement, an atmosphere of acceptance, and at the same time an emphasis on the us-them boundary	Us-them boundaries, misunderstandings, and occasional escalated situations	Intensified us-them boundary, use of simplistic and derogatory labels, alongside a gradual shift to individual names	Relationships are redefined and language becomes more neutral; simplified terms persist but are less negative, **'Ukrainian' no longer typically signifies 'foreigner'**	Individualisation and a noticeable atmosphere of 'we share this class', the situation became easier for newcomers, though stances from previous phases remain present
Expressions the Children Use about Ukrainian Pupils	Refugees; Poor People without a Home; New Classmates [*uprchlíci; chudáci bez domova; noví spolužáci*]	Those from Elsewhere; Newcomers; Ukrainians [*ti odjinud; nováčci; Ukrajinci*]	Ukrainians; Refugees; Those Who Came from the War [*Ukrajinci; uprchlíci; ti z války*]	Refugees; Those with different humor [*uprchlíci; ti s jiným humorem*]; Ukrainians and pejorative terms for Ukrainians [*Ukrajouni; Ukáčka*]; shift toward using individual names	The New Ones; Refugees [*ti noví; uprchlíci*]; Ukrainians; Our Ukrainians [*naši Ukrajinci*] and pejorative terms for Ukrainians [*Ukáčka*]; individual names and surnames of pupils	Individual names and surnames of pupils; expressions from previous phases remain present

Discussion: Building Provisional Bridges

Approaches to diversity vary among individuals and institutions, influenced by differences in competencies, experiences, recognition of the topic's importance, and willingness to engage with it. Analysing the support educators receive from the education system reveals difficulties in managing the wide range of available tools and strategies. In response to the Ukrainian crisis, the National Pedagogical Institute and various NGOs have worked to equip schools with relevant resources.[50] However, like individuals, schools faced immense pressure, struggled with excessive workloads, and were often forced to improvise when addressing this complex—and for some,

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50 Cf. META, *Inkluzivní škola*; NPI, National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic, *Portál podpory pedagogických pracovníků vzdělávajících děti/žáky cizince*; NPI, National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic, *Ukrajina: rozcestník podpory*.

entirely new—situation.

The recent revision of the Framework Education Programmes reflects an effort to update outdated concepts of pluralistic multiculturalism, which have historically framed groups as being 'characterised by a unified culture and a specific collective identity'.[51] While aiming to 'respect the particularities of different ethnic groups' and 'cultivate positive attitudes towards difference and cultural diversity',[52] past approaches have sometimes exaggerated or even created contrasts between groups. Many believe that the arrival of Ukrainian children has 'enriched diversity with a new culture' (Kateřina, teaching assistant, 10th January 2023). However, this notion of 'culture' often extends beyond norms, perspectives, and strategies, incorrectly encompassing aspects such as character and mentality.

The perception of cultures as distinct and separate entities can lead to assumptions of fundamental differences between 'us' and 'immigrants'. Misunderstandings arising from differing norms, values, and perspectives often serve as a significant source of tension. However, such difficulties also occur within established resident groups—not only between people of different national identities or between newcomers and locals.

This can be illustrated through various perspectives that emerged among the children at the observed school (and their families) as they experienced the initial stages of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022—even before the arrival of the first Ukrainian refugee and displaced pupils. The unexpected 'disruption of the usual order' was understood in diverse ways: (1) Some families viewed media reports as abstract and distant. (2) Others drew parallels with family memories, particularly from the Second World War, forming 'popular prognoses'. (3) Some engaged in conspiratorial or imaginative interpretations. (4) Several pupils were genuinely terrified by the blurred boundaries between their digital and physical worlds, where computer video games seemed to merge with reality. (5) Families with direct ties to Ukraine experienced the conflict firsthand, with parents getting involved and as first refugee relatives and friends were about to arrive in the Czech Republic. Thus, reaching a consensus on the unfolding events became challenging even within established communities. The school and individual teachers did not appear to address this multiperspectivity in any structured way.

Among the Ukrainian children integrated into the studied classes—one girl and four boys in March 2022, and two boys in September 2022—many aspects aligned closely with the norms of the Czech majority society. Factors such as their families' socio-economic backgrounds, cognitive and physical abilities, social skills, health, hobbies, and even physical appearance did not distinguish them from the majority. Also, the absence of direct war experience positioned these children closer to what might be considered the societal 'norm'.

Mutual misunderstandings often stemmed from narrow, one-sided perceptions of the situation rather than genuine 'international' differences. For example, some Czech families felt disappointed after organising humanitarian collections, expecting a more enthusiastic response from Ukrainian families. However, this expectation was based on a stereotypical view of refugees as inherently grateful and humble, overlooking their current hardships and sense of helplessness. Still, it is understandable that families who were forced to leave their homes may not feel comfortable in an unfamiliar place and situation they did not choose—nor in accepting worn-out clothes.

In interviews and classroom observations, varying levels of willingness to cooperate and learn

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51   Cf. MEYS, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání*, 133; D. Moree et al., *Než začneme s multikulturní výchovou: od skupinových konceptů k osobnostnímu přístupu* (Člověk v tísni, 2008): 18.

52   Cf. MEYS, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání*.

Czech were frequently noted.

> 'We have kids who, even after six months in the Czech Republic, still refuse to speak Czech because they believe they'll go back home one day. We try to encourage them, but sometimes they just don't feel like it' (Eliška, teaching assistant, 19th January 2023).
> *Sometimes I feel like some Ukrainian pupils keep to themselves and don't try to get involved. It might be shyness, but sometimes it also seems like a lack of interest in fitting in* (Kateřina, teaching assistant, 26th January 2023).

These behaviours may be more closely linked to the uncertainty and distress of displacement than to intrinsic attitudes. Similarly, traits such as arrogance, stubbornness, or a perceived sense of superiority—often attributed to Ukrainian culture or 'national character'[53]—likely arise from the pressures of migration and the refugee experience.

The search for 'Czech-Ukrainian' differences often fixated on symbolically emphasised yet relatively superficial aspects of coexistence. One example was the attention given to Ukrainian pupils wearing embroidered national 'Vyshyvanka' shirts on the first day of school—celebrated as 'Knowledge Day' in Ukraine. In the context of displacement, national identity understandably becomes a central part of one's self-perception. However, despite differences in nationality and attire, the choice of clothing on the first day of school is often guided by a shared logic: marking an important occasion by wearing something beautiful.

Even well-intentioned assumptions of fundamental differences between Ukrainians and 'us' contribute to the processes of essentialisation,[54] marginalisation,[55] and othering.[56] When addressing diversity, it is crucial to recognise that it encompasses far more than just national or ethnic identity.[57] Furthermore, visible markers like embroidered shirts can sometimes obscure deeper cultural differences in norms, values, and underlying assumptions—factors that are far more significant in shaping shared coexistence. These aspects are more complex and important to understand, and they do not align with identity boundaries.[58]

The externally attributed 'stranger' category can be uncomfortable, and breaking out of it can be challenging—sometimes even impossible. Ukrainians in Czech society are frequently stereotyped as low-status, precarious workers.[59] Interactions during the Ukrainian crisis offer an opportunity to challenge and revise these perceptions. However, personal contact, such as sharing a school or class, does not automatically ensure positive relationships. Stereotypes and misunderstandings can persist, along with new challenges like balancing diversity, supporting those in need, and en-

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53   Refer to the *Interview Metadata Table 1*.

54   Cf. H. Zilliacus, B. A. Paulsrud, and G. Holm, 'Essentializing vs. non-essentializing students' cultural identities: curricular discourses in Finland and Sweden,' *Journal of Multicultural Discourses* 12, no. 2 (2017): 166-180, https://doi.org/10.1080/17447143.2017.1311335.

55   Cf. E. Abdelhadi, E., and J. O'Brien, 'Perceived Group Deprivation and Intergroup Solidarity: Muslims' Attitudes towards Other Minorities in the United States,' *Religions* 11, no. 11 (2020): 604, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11110604

56   Cf. W. Belabas, and B. George, 'Do inclusive city branding and political othering affect migrants' identification? Experimental evidence,' *Cities* 133, (2023), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2022.104119; F. Dervin, *Interculturality in Fragments: A Reflexive Approach* (Springer, 2022): 97–108, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-5383-5.

57   Cf. J. A. Christodoulou et al., 'Diversity and social justice in education,' in *Reimagining Education: The International Science and Evidence Based Assessment* (MGIEP, UNESCO, 2022): 256-327, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380985; S. Vertovec, 'Super-Diversity and Its Implications, in *Superdiversity: Migration and Social Complexity* (Routledge, 2023): 18-42.

58   Cf. L. Abu-Er-Rub et al., *Engaging Transculturality: Concepts, Key Terms, Case Studies* (Routledge, 2019), https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429430060; I. Klyukanov, *Principles of Intercultural Communication* (Rouletge, 2020), https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429353475.

59   Cf. Y. Leontiyeva, 'Ukrainians in the Czech Republic: On the Pathway from Temporary Foreign Workers to One of the Largest Minority Groups,' in *Ukrainian Migration to the European Union* (Springer, Cham, 2016), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-41776-9_8

suring equality. In our case, after an initial focus on supporting Ukrainian pupils, other children understandably began seeking attention as well.

Both interviews and observation reveal an ethos of openness, good intentions, and a commitment to personalised approaches, albeit with integration leaning towards assimilative undertones: 'When foreigners become similar, for example visually, in lifestyle, or hobbies, the boundaries of exoticism gradually disappear' (Marie, teacher, 17th January 2023). In the observed school environment, Ukrainian classmates who were initially perceived as 'foreigners' were reclassified into a new category—'closer than a foreigner'—within three to six months. During this period, the term 'Ukrainian' no longer typically signified 'foreigner'. This transition fostered a sense of mutual closeness, expressed as 'we are here together' (Zuzka, assistant, 10th January 2023). This motto was deliberately used at the school level in parallel with what happens in the individual classes.[60] The possibility of seeing the individual 'other' and what connects us to them opens up,[61] yet it is important to note that the actual foreigners in consideration were already extremely similar to 'ourselves' at the very beginning.

In the collectives, longer-term, yet somewhat fluid hierarchies, along with lingering antipathies and animosities, were observable. There were also discernible alliances of interest, some extending across international borders. While Ukrainian children shared certain experiences that bound them together, they did not confine themselves solely to their own national group. Instead, they explored themes that connected them with others. International contacts and friendships were slowly being formed, though, for the time being, they remained quite dynamic.

As more Ukrainian children arrived, they were perceived less as exotic. It became more apparent that particular Ukrainian children differed from one another. This shift increased the tendency to see them as individuals rather than representatives of a group. At the same time, the generalising category 'Ukrainian' was used more frequently, as it offered a convenient way to quickly label newcomers—albeit with a meaning shifted towards 'Our Ukrainians' [naši Ukrajinci], as noted above. Nonetheless, simplistic and derogatory labels [Ukrajouni; Ukáčka] were also present. In summary, both processes of othering and individual encounters could be observed, gradually altering the meaning of the term Ukrainian. The category itself did not vanish; rather, individual Ukrainians came to be seen as ordinary. We identify this shift—when Ukrainian no longer typically signified 'foreigner'—as a turning point in the dynamics of the class climate.

It appears that we should discuss the improvised integration of a (small) number of Ukrainian children who—thanks to their 'compatibility'—have fortunately adapted to the existing school system with minor difficulties, rather than that we could speak about systematic effective management of diversity.[62]

'The biggest problem was that, at the start, we weren't really prepared for what Ukrainian children needed. We should have focused more on supporting them individually and understanding their cultural background better. This made the first few months with us harder than they needed to be' (Věra, teacher, 9th February 2023).

The challenge of integrating Ukrainian children parallels that of other minorities in its haphazard

60   Refer to the *Interview Metadata Table 2; The Timeline and Interview Metadata Table 3*.
61   Cf. M. Buber, *I and Thou* (Howard Books, 2008): 35; F. Burda et al., *Člověk jako východisko dialogu kultur: Konceptuální předpoklady transkulturní komunikace* (Ústí nad Orlicí, Oftis, 2013).
62   Cf. P. Hlaďo et al., *Adaptace ukrajinských žáků na vzdělávání v českých základních školách*.

nature and the lack of broader structural changes in society. Concerning Roma people—a long-term marginalised minority in the Czech Republic[63]—the situation can still be summarised by an older statement: 'Individual schools and teachers are expected to perform "heroic acts", while the larger system remains unchanged'.[64] Systematic work with diversity and effective cooperation among all relevant institutions and actors remain major challenges for the future of Czech education:

> 'Looking back, we could have worked better with the parents of the Ukrainian children. We didn't involve them much in school life, and we probably sometimes overlooked how important it is for kids to feel supported not just at school, but at home too' (Marie, teacher, 17th January 2023).
>
> 'I'd definitely try to work more closely with teachers and parents. We needed to regularly talk about how the kids were doing, what they were learning, and what was bothering them' (Zuzana, teaching assistant, 15th February 2023).

The integration/inclusion of Ukrainian children are often shaped by factors such as the longing to return 'home', incomplete family structures, uncertain socio-economic conditions, and the need to cope with difficult life experiences. These circumstances frequently lead to a reluctance or inability on the part of families to support their children's education or to plan for the long term. Furthermore, the integration process is hindered by the uneven distribution of arrivals, insufficient resources and experience within the Czech education system, limited cooperation between individuals and institutions—including leisure-time pedagogy—and the complexity of prevailing attitudes toward immigrants.[65]

The journey toward diversity is undeniably complex, marked by uncertainty and the continuous effort required from all involved.[66] The de/construction of the boundary between 'us' and 'them' may not be the most immediate priority in times of crisis management, but it is essential for the long-term success of the integration and inclusion process.

Limitations

This text offers a partial contribution, outlining the internal dynamics observed within a specific institution through interactions with individuals and focused on perspectives of educators. Different studies may offer alternative perspectives on the issue.[67] Due to the limited scope of our article, we highlight the most pertinent observations, recognising that our analysis is not exhaustive. The institution under study did not experience a large influx of new pupils; however, the Ukrainian crisis presented significant challenges. While our study primarily focuses on edu-

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63   Cf. K. Hoření, et al., *Analýza příčin vyššího podílu romských žáků*; V. Messing, 'Differentiation in the making: Consequences of school segregation of Roma in the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia,' *European Education* 49, no. 1 (2017): 89–103. https://doi.org/10.1080/10564934.2017.1280336; J. Obrovská et al., 'Predictors of educational aspirations of Roma mothers in Czech Republic, Greece, and Portugal,' *Social Psychology of Education* 26, (2023): 1063–1088, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-023-09780-4.

64   M. Miskovic and S. Curics, *Beyond Inclusion*, 3.

65   Cf. N. Dombinskaya, *Ukrainian Parents' Engagement with Czech Public Schools*; P. Hlaďo, et al., *Adaptace ukrajinských žáků na vzdělávání v českých základních školách*; D. Parmigiani et al., *Educational strategies to support the inclusion of displaced pupils from Ukraine in Italian schools*; D. Prokop et al., *Hlas Ukrajinců*.

66   Cf. F. Burda, *Za hranice kultur: transkulturní perspektiva* (Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2016); J. Karlová, 'Naděje v našich krizích: jak neminout setkání s druhým,' *Studia Aloisiana* 15, no. 2 (2024): 43-53. https://www.tftu.sk/sites/default/files/sa2024-2.pdf; J. Karlová and P. Nalevanková, 'Blízcí neznámí: transkulturní analýza individuálního humanitárního darování,' *Caritas et Veritas* 13, no. 1 (2023): 81-97. https://doi.org/10.32725/cetv.2023.008.

67   Cf. T. Lintner et al., *Ukrainian refugees struggling to integrate into Czech school social networks*; J. Novosák et al., *Interim Report on the Integration and Education of Ukrainian Children and Pupils*; D. Prokop et al., *Hlas Ukrajinců*.

cational environment of younger children, older age groups may present different dynamics and issues.[68]

Conclusions

This article has explored the complexities surrounding the integration of Ukrainian refugee children into the Czech educational system. Drawing primarily on qualitative interviews with educators, our analysis highlights the construction, reinforcement, and—at times—the transcendence of the boundary between 'us' and 'others'. Importantly, the aim was not to evaluate the success of integration, but to focus on the underlying concepts, categories, and sociocultural mechanisms that shape this process.

The concept of boundaries emerged as central, particularly in relation to several interconnected issues. One such boundary lies between notions of the 'normal' and the 'abnormal'—a dichotomy deeply embedded in a system that, while diverse in particular implementation, often expects children with special or different needs to conform to existing norms rather than adapting schools to accommodate all learners.[69]

Language barriers and national identity distinctions, which have been especially pronounced during the Ukrainian crisis, are also focal points. However, the common assumption that people sharing the same nationality also share a uniform culture oversimplifies the reality. In practice, internal diversity within groups has been underacknowledged, inadvertently amplifying perceived international differences that may be insignificant or irrelevant in everyday interactions.

Educators' approaches to diversity varied significantly, shaped by their individual competencies, experiences, and personal engagement with the topic. Despite a widespread ethos of goodwill, many found themselves operating within an unpredictable landscape marked by limited systemic support, resource constraints, and emotional strain—resulting in extensive improvisation. The integration successes observed in the cases studied cannot be attributed to a well-functioning educational system but rather to the relative compatibility of certain children and families with existing structures, along with the dedication of particular children, educators, and parents.

Although proximity and daily contact may facilitate familiarity, they do not guarantee empathy nor genuine inclusion. The emergence of categories such as 'closer than a foreigner' and 'our Ukrainian' demonstrates that shifts in perception are possible—but they tend to reflect how similar the newcomer appears to be, rather than deeper changes in how diversity is engaged with structurally.

The Ukrainian crisis has exposed assumptions previously taken for granted and could serve as a catalyst for rethinking education in context of diversity. While much has been said about how Ukrainian pupils have enriched Czech classrooms, the simplified discourse on 'culture' often extends into assumptions about national 'personality' or 'mentality'—enabling cultural essentialism to influence perception and practice. Misunderstandings and tension often stem not from genuine intercultural differences, but rather from narrow, one-dimensional interpretations of the other, with a focus on the most visible symbols and group characteristics. The point is that these mechanisms divert attention away from where the key issues of living in diversity lie.

This case shows that what we have observed is not a systematic, effective management of diversity, but rather the improvised integration of a relatively small number of children who, due to specific

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68   Cf. T. Lintner et al., *Ukrainian refugees struggling to integrate into Czech school social networks*.
69   Cf. J. White, *Pitfalls and bias: Entry testing and the overrepresentation of Romani children in special education* (Roma Education Fund, 2012), https://roma.education/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/pitfalls-and-bias-screen_singlepages.pdf.

circumstances, were able to adapt with limited friction. The Ukrainian crisis could prompt a review of education system with a focus on diversity, potentially bringing us closer to an inclusive civil society. What lies ahead is not simply a 'challenge', but a transformative task: developing coherent, collaborative, and sustainable approaches to diversity across institutions. This includes better support for educators, meaningful involvement of families, and recognition of pupils' individual backgrounds and experiences.

With gratitude to those who continue to build everyday bridges across the boundaries of apparent or real 'otherness', we underline the need to critically reflect on—and improve—the structures that shape how we live, learn, and grow together.

Acknowledgments / Funding Information

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Humanity and Spirituality in Social and Pedagogical Rehabilitation: on the Way to Human Integration and Education for Humanity

Helena Dojčarová

Abstract

Rehabilitation in contemporary understanding encompasses a holistic approach to the individual, taking into account their psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions. Within this broader perspective, the values of humanity and spirituality come to the forefront. Respecting the client's spirituality and the values of humanity emerging from it leads to a truly effective rehabilitation care. Focusing on social and pedagogical rehabilitation, this article presents selected social work theories that reflect the themes of humanity and spirituality and are applicable within the field of social rehabilitation – namely, existential analysis and logotherapy, client-centred therapy, and the social ecological model. Furthermore, it offers practical strategies that support spiritual development and education for humanity in the context of pedagogical rehabilitation for clients with disabilities, including, among others, bibliotherapy and service-learning method. Methodologically, the article is based on a content analysis of relevant academic literature. Based on this analysis, we can state that both social and pedagogical rehabilitation provide an appropriate context in which the aspiration of a holistic approach can be fulfilled and, as demonstrated and substantiated in the text, they are also equipped with suitable methods and strategies that can be effectively applied in practice.

Keywords: social rehabilitation, pedagogical rehabilitation, humanity, spirituality, logotherapy, client-centred therapy, social ecological model, bibliotherapy

Introduction

Social and pedagogical rehabilitation are essential domains within the framework of coordinated rehabilitation for individuals with disabilities. Social rehabilitation is defined as a set of specific activities aimed at promoting autonomy, independence, and self-sufficiency. These goals are pursued through the development of specific skills, the reinforcement of functional habits, and the training of essential daily activities using alternative methods that make use of the client's remaining abilities and capacities.[1] Main objective of social rehabilitation is to support the client's integration

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1   Petra Sládková, *Sociální a pracovní rehabilitace* (Praha: Karolinum, 2021), 35.

into society.[2] Closely related to social rehabilitation is pedagogical (or educational) rehabilitation, which consists of specific pedagogical interventions focused on personal development and educational support for children, adolescents, and adults with disabilities.[3]

Rehabilitation today no longer represents merely the physical restoration of bodily functions – in contemporary understanding, it encompasses a holistic approach to the individual, taking into account their psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions.[4] Within this broader perspective, the values of humanity and spirituality come to the forefront, significantly influencing both the quality of care and the rehabilitation process itself. Spirituality is probably the only mental and behavioural trait which is exclusively associated with human beings.[5] It is a process of human life and development that focuses on the search for meaning, purpose, and morality in relation to oneself, other people, other beings, and ultimate reality. This process is centred around core values and includes a sense of transcendence.[6] With a greater emphasis on a humanistic perspective, spirituality can also be understood as a way of viewing life through new and improved lenses, embracing certain ideas of transcendence or higher values, and defining oneself and one's relation to others in a way that goes beyond materialism to express authentic concerns about others.[7]

Spirituality thus offers inner resources of strength, hope, and meaning that can support the client not only in facing challenging physical difficulties but also in existential coping with illness, loss, or changes of identity.[8] At the same time, the spiritual dimension inherently facilitates the integration of the client as a human being within the rehabilitation process, enabling them to live a fulfilling and responsible life in relation to themselves and others, and reinforcing awareness of their own dignity.

It is, however, important to note that disability should not be understood solely as a 'problem' or a limitation to be overcome. While for some individuals disability may indeed be experienced as a handicap, for others it constitutes an integral aspect of their identity and lived experience, not necessarily associated with deficit or suffering. Contemporary disability studies emphasise the plurality of perspectives, where disability can be understood not only through medical or functional restrictions, but also as a form of human diversity, embedded within social and cultural contexts rather than reducible to individual pathology.[9] [10] In line with inclusive frameworks and the human rights paradigm, disability can therefore also be approached as a dimension of identity, self-determination, and belonging.[11] Such perspectives resonate with the values of dignity and spirituality highlighted in rehabilitation, encouraging professionals to recognise both the vulnerabilities and the strengths of persons with disabilities. Respecting the client's spirituality and the values of humanity emerging from it provides a deeper

2   Ladislav Novosad, *Poradenství pro osoby se zdravotním a sociálním znevýhodněním* (Praha: Portál, 2009), 20-26.

3   Sládková, *Sociální a pracovní rehabilitace*, 52.

4   Radana Poděbradská, *Komplexní kineziologický rozbor: funkční poruchy pohybového systému* (Praha: Grada, 2018), 23-24.

5   Richard M. Lerner et al., 'On Making Human: Spirituality and the Promotion of Positive Youth Development', in *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence*, eds. Eugene C. Roehlkepartain et al. (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2005), 60.

6   Edward R. Canda, Leola Dyrud Furman, and Hwi-Ja Canda, *Spiritual Diversity in Social Work Practice: The Heart of Helping* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 96-98.

7   K. Helmut Reich, Fritz K. Oser, and W. George Scarlett, 'Spiritual and Religious Development: Transcendence and Transformations of the Self', in *Being Human: The Case of Religion, Vol. 2. Psychological Studies on Spiritual and Religious Development*, eds. K. Helmut Reich, Fritz K. Oser, and W. George Scarlett (Lengerich: Pabst Scientific Publishers, 1999), 12-14.

8   Cf. Kenneth I. Pargament et al., 'God Help Me: Religious Coping Efforts as Predictors of the Outcomes to Significant Negative Life Events', *American Journal of Community Psychology* 18, no. 6 (1990): 814, https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00938065

9   Tom Shakespeare, *Disability Rights and Wrongs Revisited, 2nd ed* (London: Routledge, 2014), 48-57.

10 Mary Wickenden, 'Disability and Other Identities? - How Do They Intersect?', *Frontiers in Rehabilitation Sciences* vol. 4:1200386 (2023): 2-3, https://doi.org/10.3389/fresc.2023.1200386

11 Theresia Degener, 'Disability in a Human Rights Context', *Laws* 5, no. 3 (2016): 19, https://doi.org/10.3390/laws5030035

understanding of the client's situation and forms the foundation of holistic and truly effective rehabilitation care. For this reason, this article presents selected social work theories applicable within the framework of social rehabilitation with this specific focus. The second part of this article further reflects the role of pedagogical rehabilitation in relation to spiritual development and the education for humanity.

Social Rehabilitation: Selected Theoretical Approaches in Social Work Promoting Humanity and Spirituality

Existential Analysis and Logotherapy

The existential analysis and logotherapy of the Viennese psychiatrist and neurologist Viktor Emil Frankl appears to be a suitable perspective for social work with clients of coordinated rehabilitation that reflects the spiritual dimension and humanistic values. According to Frankl, existential analysis is based on an anthropological focus on the image of the human being: What constitutes human existence? What is human in human existence? How can a person live a fulfilled life? Its fundamental premise is the freedom of the human being as a decision-making entity, while this freedom simultaneously entails responsibility for one's own life.[12] The foundation of the logotherapeutic perspective is the suffering man who seeks help and needs support in order to orient themselves and gain energy for further self-determination.[13] Logotherapy guides the client towards searching for and discovering the meaning that is hidden in their current situation and within themselves. The basic premise of the logotherapist is that every situation in which a person finds themselves, even an unpleasant one, has its meaning and helps the individual find that meaning.[14] Situations in which a person experiences a threat to the existing order of things and is confronted with something extraordinary and inexplicable act as a challenge to search for meaning, and it is especially in these moments when the importance of spirituality becomes evident. The spiritual need to ascribe meaning to this world is something fundamentally human.[15] 'Being human always points, and is directed, to something, or someone, other than oneself – be it meaning to fulfil or another human being to encounter. The more one forgets himself – by giving himself to a cause to serve or another person to love – the more human he is and the more he actualises himself.'[16] Meaning is primarily found through the realisation of values.[17] Frankl categorises values into three types: creative (i.e., related to work), experiential, and attitudinal. It is precisely attitudinal values that can be realised even in situations where, due to injury or illness, an individual loses the ability to pursue creative or experiential values.[18] The acceptance of one's suffering may itself be an expression of attitudinal value. According to Frankl, we mature and grow through suffering; as long as it persists, we remain mentally and spiritually alive.[19]

The essence of logotherapy does not lie in providing information about what the meaning of life 'is', but rather in guiding the client to open up to a formative experience through which they

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12   Martina Kosová, 'Logoterapie a existenciální analýza', in *Logoterapie: Existenciální analýza jako hledání cest*, ed. Martina Kosová (Praha: Grada Publishing, 2014), 14-15.

13   Pavel Navrátil, *Teorie a metody sociální práce* (Brno: Marek Zeman, 2001), 62.

14   Hana Jedličková, Eva Floriánová and Jiří Kolář, *Humanistické a existenciální teorie v sociální práci* (Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 2005), 4.

15   Zdeněk Vojtíšek, Pavel Dušek and Jan Motl, *Spiritualita v pomáhajících profesích* (Praha: Portál, 2012), 14.

16   Viktor E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2017), 109.

17   Viktor E. Frankl, *Psychoterapie pro laiky*, translation Vladimír Smékal (Brno: Cesta, 1998), 47.

18   Viktor E. Frankl, *Lékařská péče o duši*, translation Vladimír Jochmann (Brno: Cesta, 1996), 61-63.

19   Pavel Navrátil, 'Humanistické a existenciální teorie', in *Základy sociální práce*, ed. Oldřich Matoušek (Praha: Portál, 2001), 213.

can discover the individual meaning of their own life.[20] In relation to religion, it is important to acknowledge that existential analysis does not define the 'meaning of life' as an a priori 'higher meaning of the world'. Frankl refers such questions to the realm of religious faith, as Navrátil[21] points out. Nevertheless, religion is, according to Frankl, one of the possible ways through which a person may discover personal meaning in their life.[22] The search for meaning is, in itself, an integral component of spirituality. For instance, Dudley defines spirituality as 'a search for meaning in life, a sense of connection to oneself, others, and the world, and the ability to transcend our immediate experience toward something greater, which many refer to as a "higher power" beyond the human'.[23]

According to existentialism, human beings are characterised by their unrepeatability (the aspect of time) and uniqueness (the social aspect), with the meaning of personal uniqueness lying in their significance for the community.[24] Within the framework of social rehabilitation, this aspect may be particularly crucial for the inclusion of clients with disabilities (limited participation, i.e., restricted functional abilities of the individual at the societal level) in everyday life, and thus for reinforcing their sense of personal worth and dignity.

In relation to coordinated rehabilitation, Frankl's concept of fate is also of particular interest. Frankl understands fate as encompassing all that a person cannot influence – such as biological and psychological predispositions or social conditions. It is precisely this fate that should be perceived as a challenge to responsible action. 'The spiritual attitude of a person has a free scope not only in relation to their physical domain, but also in relation to their psychological sphere – towards their "psychological fate" – as well as to their social sphere – towards their 'sociological fate'. A person can freely choose their stance toward their sociological, psychological, and biological fate.'[25] An example can be found in a client with a disability resulting from a developmental disorder, injury, or illness, whose situation (i.e., 'fate') is inherently disadvantageous. However, the client retains the freedom to choose how to respond to this situation – whether to engage in rehabilitation and strive for the highest possible level of functional ability and social integration, or to resign themselves and yield to the adversity of their 'fate'. For clients who lack sufficient determination or psychological strength to opt for the first path, logotherapy may offer valuable support.

The functionality of applying logotherapy in real-life practice of comprehensive care for disabled clients is supported, for instance, by the study of Julom and Guzmán, which examined the effectiveness of logotherapy in reducing the sense of meaninglessness among patients with paraplegia and tetraplegia.[26] After completing a logotherapy programme, all members of the experimental group reported a reduction in meaninglessness (measured by using the Purpose in Life [PIL] and the Life Regard Index [LRI] tests) in contrast to the members of the control group. As the authors emphasise, this sense of meaninglessness, which Victor Frankl termed the existential vacuum, has been interfering with the rehabilitation process.[27] Thus, mitigating the sense of meaninglessness through logotherapy may facilitate better cooperation and lead to improved outcomes within

20   Pavel Říčan, *Psychologie náboženství a spirituality* (Praha: Portál, 2007), 61.
21   Navrátil, *Teorie a metody sociální práce*, 68.
22   Říčan, *Psychologie náboženství a spirituality*, 91.
23   James R. Dudley, *Spirituality Matters in Social Work: Connecting Spirituality, Religion, and Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 4.
24   Adéla Mojžíšová, *Teorie a metody sociální práce* (České Budějovice: Jihočeská univerzita, 2005), 21.
25   Navrátil, *Teorie a metody sociální práce*, 67.
26   Angelina M. Julom and Rosalito de Guzmán, 'The Effectiveness of Logotherapy Program in Alleviating the Sense of Meaninglessness of Paralyzed In-Patients', *International Journal of Psychology & Psychological Therapy* 13, no. 3 (2013): 357–71. https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=9eed2508-a743-37a6-99b5-499f45c802ae.
27   Julom, Guzmán, 'The Effectiveness of Logotherapy Program', 357.

coordinated rehabilitation.

The effectiveness of logotherapy within coordinated care for disabled or chronically ill clients has furthermore been evidenced in patients with diabetes, where logotherapeutic training led to reductions in death anxiety and depression, as well as increases in hope and adherence to glucose-control medication.[28] The latter outcome – proper use of glucose-control medication - provides a clear illustration of logotherapy's emphasis on the principle of 'responsible action' discussed above.

Client-centred Therapy

While considering humanistic values within social rehabilitation, the theoretical framework of the humanistic tradition in social work must not be overlooked. According to Carkhuff and Berenson,[29] one of the common features of humanistic therapeutic schools of the 1960s and 1970s is that therapy promotes the client's acceptance of personal freedom and responsibility. Autonomy and independence – understood as the ability to function freely in everyday life – are among the major goals of social rehabilitation. Achieving these goals, however, always requires the active participation and co-responsibility of the client.

The client-centred therapy developed by Carl R. Rogers belongs to the stream of humanistic psychology. In his psychotherapeutic method, Rogers emphasises the uniqueness and freedom of the individual. According to Rogers, human beings are not predetermined in their decision-making; rather, they are free and bear responsibility for their actions.[30] With its focus on the client as an individual human-being and its emphasis on human worth, Rogers's approach is distinctly humanistic. His understanding of the human personality is based on the assumption that every person has the right to dignity and personal development and is capable of recognising and adhering to his personal values, of being responsible to oneself and others, and of cultivating and shaping one's positive qualities while 'releasing undreamed-of potentialities'.[31] [32] In order to fulfil these assumptions, a therapeutic relationship must be grounded in several essential conditions on the part of the helping professional: 'empathic understanding', 'unconditional positive regard', and 'genuineness'.[33] These principles of the helping relationship should be applied across all areas of coordinated rehabilitation to the benefit of the client. Another important condition for the effective implementation of client-centred therapy with persons with disabilities is the attainment of 'psychological contact' between two individuals—a prerequisite which, according to Rogers, constitutes the very foundation of meaningful dialogue between therapist and client.[34] Establishing such contact can be particularly challenging for certain groups of patients with disabilities, for example, individuals with learning disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), who are generally at risk of social isolation. As highlighted by Brooks and Peterson, the work on psychological contact within client-centred therapy is therefore especially significant for these

28   Adele Bahar, Mobina Shahriary, and Mohsen Fazlali, 'Effectiveness of Logotherapy on Death Anxiety, Hope, Depression, and Proper Use of Glucose Control Drugs in Diabetic Patients with Depression', *International Journal of Preventive Medicine* 12, no. 1 (2021): 3-5. https://doi.org/10.4103/ijpvm.IJPVM_553_18

29   Robert R. Carkhuff and Bernard G. Berenson, *Beyond Counseling and Therapy* (New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1977), 54.

30   Jedličková, Floriánová and Kolář, *Humanistické a existenciální teorie v sociální práci*, 3.

31   Navrátil, *Teorie a metody sociální práce, 51.*

32   Carl R. Rogers, *A Way of Being* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1980), 59, 174-175, 182-183, 201.

33   Rogers, *A Way of Being,* 115-117.

34   Sharon Brooks and Gail Paterson, 'Using Contact Work in Interactions with Adults with Learning Disabilities and Autistic Spectrum Disorders', *British Journal of Learning Disabilities* 39, no. 2 (2011): 161-162. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-3156.2010.00643.x

clients.[35]According to the authors, the client-centred approach should not be restricted to the therapeutic encounter alone but should be cultivated as a broader 'way of being', shaping the interpersonal competencies and care practices of support staff.[36]

Another particularly pertinent idea, especially within the context of coordinated rehabilitation, is Rogers's conviction that all individuals have an inherent tendency toward self-actualisation. Self-actualisation is fundamentally the striving to preserve and enhance one's own existence, and this tendency constitutes the core of human motivation.[37] Motivation plays a key role in rehabilitation as a process of restoring functional capabilities and facilitating social integration. In the absence of adequate motivation, the rehabilitation process is likely to be unsuccessful. Therefore, it is essential to actively engage with clients to foster and develop their motivation, alongside their positive attributes, interests, and talents.[38] The client-centred therapy framework may offer a theoretical basis for supporting this motivational work. For instance, according to Richard Bryant-Jefferies, the client-centred therapist can play a vital role in supporting and enabling individuals affected by disability to gradually develop a new way of being.[39] Persons with progressive disabilities - who might be confronted with pain and loss of mobility, fear of the future, anger, or grief for unfulfilled aspirations - can particularly benefit from the person-centred theoretical approach, which 'has the power of the therapeutic relationship, offering the client an experience through which greater potential for authentic living may emerge'.[40] The person-centred counsellor seeks to understand the client as they experience themselves, with all the fears and uncertainties that progressive disability may entail. The primary focus is on the personhood of the individual with whom the therapeutic relationship is being established, while the disabling condition is regarded as only one among several factors influencing and shaping the client's sense of self.[41]

Social Ecological Model

Given human integration as the ultimate goal of social rehabilitation, the social–ecological model of social work, developed by American psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner, appears to be an inspiring and relevant approach. This model highlights the importance of the relationship between the client and their environment, emphasising that individuals develop within a network of relationships, such as family, friends, and broader societal influences.[42] It is understood that the client is influenced by the environment in which they function and by the community in which they live, and this ongoing process is mutual and reciprocal.[43] The ecological perspective points to the interconnectedness between the individual and the environment, and to the fact that many life stresses and problems arise at their shared interface.[44] The perspective of the 'person-in-environment' framework[45] is closely related to the issue of barriers in rehabilitation. Barriers can

35   Brooks, Paterson, 'Using Contact Work', 163.
36   Brooks, Paterson, 'Using Contact Work', 166.
37   Carl C. Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy* (London: Constable, 2003), 404-406.
38   Sládková, *Sociální a pracovní rehabilitace*, 54.
39   Richard Bryant-Jefferies, *Counselling for Progressive Disability: Person-centred Dialogues* (Abingdon: Radcliffe Medical Press, 2004), vii.
40   Bryant-Jefferies, *Counselling for Progressive Disability: Person-centred Dialogues*, 2.
41   Bryant-Jefferies, *Counselling for Progressive Disability: Person-centred Dialogues*, 7.
42   Campbell, Josephine, 'Social Ecological Model', *Salem Press Encyclopedia* (2025), https://research.ebsco.com/c/bk3kn7/viewer/html/erfdk5kj2f
43   Alex Gitterman, Carolyn Knight, and Carel B. Germain, *The Life Model of Social Work Practice: Advances in Theory and Practice, 4th edition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020), 56-57. Jan Kovařík, 'Sociálněekologický model a fenomenologická tradice', in *Základy sociální práce*, ed. Oldřich Matoušek (Praha: Portál, 2001), 249.
44   Navrátil, *Teorie a metody sociální práce, 152.*
45   Beulah Roberts Compton, and Burt Galaway, *Social Work Processes* (Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole Publishing, 1999), 45-46.

be defined as a complex of architectural, communicational, technical, as well as social and psychological obstacles that delineate the territory of people with disabilities both horizontally and vertically. These barriers hinder communication with the world, limit the ability to perform basic activities of self-care and independent functioning, and ultimately restrict the possibilities for human integration. According to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, disability is defined as a limitation of functional capacity at the level of the organism, arising in the interaction between a health condition and environmental barriers.[46] [47] Thus, a person with a disability is not understood as an isolated individual with a specific diagnosis, but rather as someone whose difficulties are shaped by the interaction between the individual and their living environment.[48] This corresponds with the principles of the social-ecological model.

Just as barriers are not understood merely as physical obstacles but also as (often even more harmful) mental, social, and communicational ones, the concept of the environment in the social-ecological framework likewise encompasses a broad range of social, interpersonal, cultural, political, and other contextual dimensions. The ecological perspective also works with the concept of relatedness, which refers to the capacity to form and maintain relationships (friendship, partnership, kinship) and to experience a sense of belonging to a supportive social network.[49] Such a human environment is, among many other factors, co-shaped by the client's spiritual dimension – especially when that spirituality is shared within the environment – since spirituality fosters the development of richer social connections and a higher-quality support network, whether through family or through broader religious community.[50]

Building on this emphasis on relatedness and supportive social networks, the social–ecological model also directs attention to the role of caregiving networks, which further illustrates how the environment shapes the everyday lives of persons with disabilities. As evidenced in the study by Goldner and Drentea, care is rarely limited to the direct interaction between caregiver and recipient; rather, it encompasses both personal and social caregiving. Personal caregiving acknowledges that family members often share responsibility and that informal care may be supplemented by formal services, while social caregiving stresses that the caregiving role has consequences for other social relationships, such as marriage or extended kinship ties.[51] These insights complement the ecological perspective outlined above, showing that barriers and resources are embedded not only in the physical and communicational environment but also in the social and cultural contexts in which rehabilitation takes place.

Findings by Yun, Sur, and Shapiro (2021) further reinforce the functionality of the social–ecological model for individuals with disabilities by demonstrating how the interplay of individual, micro-, and macro-level environmental factors shapes the participation of school-age children with disabilities in physical activity.[52] Their study shows that barriers are not limited to physical

46   World Health Organization, *International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health: ICF* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2001), 8.

47   World Health Organization, *Mezinárodní klasifikace funkčních schopností, disability a zdraví: MKF,* translation Jan Pfeiffer and Olga Švestková (Praha: Grada Publishing, 2008), 9.

48   Olga Švestková, Yvona Angerová, and Petra Sládková, 'Mezinárodní klasifikace funkčních schopností, disability a zdraví (ICF): kvantitativní měření kapacity a výkonu', *Česká a slovenská neurologie a neurochirurgie* 72, no. 6 (2009): 581–582.

49   Gitterman, Knight and Germain, *The Life Model of Social Work Practice: Advances in Theory and Practice*, 311-316.

50   Harold G. Koenig, Tyler J. VanderWeele and John R. Peteet, *Handbook of Religion and Health, 3rd ed.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2024), 309-310.

51   Melinda Goldner and Patricia Drentea, 'Caring for the Disabled: Applying Different Theoretical Perspectives to Understand Racial and Ethnic Variations Among Families', *Marriage & Family Review* 45, no. 5 (2009): 504-507. doi:10.1080/01494920903050805.

52   Joonkoo Yun, Myung Ha Sur, and Deborah R. Shapiro, 'Physical Activity Promotion for School-Age Children With Disabilities', *Teaching Exceptional Children* 54, no. 1 (2021): 45. doi:10.1177/00400599211041687.

conditions but also involve the social climate of classrooms, the quality of peer interactions, and the availability of culturally relevant activities. At the same time, the research highlights the potential of inclusive practices – such as small-group cooperation, peer support, and disability sport integration – to strengthen children's sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness.[53] These insights illustrate how the environment, when structured with sensitivity to both individual and social dimensions, can become a decisive factor not only in overcoming barriers but also in fostering adaptation, resilience, and meaningful integration into everyday social life.

This example further supports the view that from the transactions between the individual and their environment – central to the social ecological model – not only challenges emerge, but also strengths, virtues, personal qualities, and resilience.[54] According to Kirst-Ashman and Hull,[55] communication and interaction, as inherently active and dynamic processes, give rise to mechanisms such as adaptation and interdependence. These elements reflect the positive potential embedded in human–environment exchanges. Adaptation – that is, the ability to adjust to surrounding conditions – represents one of the fundamental mechanisms of rehabilitation. The process of adaptation inherently implies change and therefore requires a certain degree of effort. A social worker can assist the client in channelling their energy in a way that makes the adaptation process in a specific life situation more effective. The second phenomenon, interdependence, refers to the mutual support that one person provides to another, to their reciprocal reliance on each other.[56] This concept points to the fundamental humanistic values that may arise through the individual's interaction with their environment and which are particularly valuable and beneficial within the process of social rehabilitation.

Pedagogical Rehabilitation: Practical Strategies Supporting Spiritual Development and Education for Humanity

Education extends beyond the mere accumulation of information or the acquisition of knowledge and skills; it is fundamentally concerned with the personal development in its broadest sense. According to Zhang,[57] the spiritual dimension has the power to support the holistic development of individuals with disabilities and to provide them with a sense of personal identity, as its core aspects include beliefs that facilitate the search for meaning in life and promote the acceptance of persons with disabilities as whole human beings. Therefore, it is essential that individuals with disabilities are given the opportunity to develop their spirituality within the framework of pedagogical rehabilitation. This goal can be pursued, for example, through group discussions about what truly matters to the students in life, their personal values, the meaning of life, or important people in their lives. Another appropriate approach may involve the use of creative arts (such as art therapy, music therapy, or dance-movement therapy), which enable children to express their inner world, their reverence for creation, and are essential for the development of their spirituality. [58] [59]

Spiritual development entails fostering deeper connections between the self, other people, and the surrounding world, primarily through meaningful relationships and a sense of belonging within

53 Yun, Sur, Shapiro, 'Physical Activity Promotion', 46-47.
54 Kovařík, 'Sociálněekologický model a fenomenologická tradice', 249.
55 Karen Kay Kirst-Ashman and Grafton H. Hull Jr., *Understanding Generalist Practice* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers, 1999), 12-14.
56 Kovařík, 'Sociálněekologický model a fenomenologická tradice', 249-250.
57 Kevin C. Zhang, 'Spirituality and Disabilities: Implications for Special Education', *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities* 48, no. 4 (2010): 299, https://doi.org/10.1352/1934-9556-48.4.299
58 Aline D. Wolf, 'How to Nurture the Spirit in Nonsectarian Environments', *Young Children* 55, no. 1 (2000): 34–36.
59 Aline D. Wolf, *Nurturing the Spirit: in Non-Sectarian Classrooms* (Hollidaysburg: Parent Child Press, 2009), 143-149.

a community. Through these connections, the autonomy and humanity – both essential values of holistic development – can be further cultivated within the educational process. One possible way to strengthen the humanity and positive human qualities of students with disabilities within pedagogical rehabilitation is through the method of service-learning – an educational approach that combines academic learning with practical service to the community.[60] Individuals with disabilities are often positioned as recipients of other people's generosity and they are not typically perceived as those who can, in turn, provide service to others. However, people with disabilities also have strengths that they can share with others while developing social, communication, and academic competencies in real-world settings.[61] Service-learning programmes can foster a sense of empowerment rather than helplessness, promote feelings of self-worth instead of worthlessness, and offer meaningful opportunities to contribute rather than fostering dependency.[62] Beyond transferring learning into authentic experiences, service-learning plays a significant role in cultivating social responsibility, a sense of caring and connection with the community. Consequently, it transforms possible pessimistic attitudes regarding the societal worth and potential of children with disabilities, emphasising their value and ability to make meaningful contributions to society.[63]

Another sensitive way to cultivate values of humanity in clients of pedagogical rehabilitation – with respect to the character of the client's impairment – is bibliotherapy. Bibliotherapy is defined as the use of literature to address personal difficulties by encouraging identification with a character in the story.[64] The use of bibliotherapy can, on the one hand, help students understand and cope with their specific condition; on the other hand, it can encourage greater acceptance of individual differences and challenges. It may offer a constructive social problem-solving strategy for students with disabilities, particularly those who face challenges in multiple environments and who may benefit from learning to solve problems similar to those discussed in children's literature.[65] A well-chosen book, selected and recommended by the teacher, can enhance students' self-esteem, support their emotional and spiritual development, and foster the cultivation and acceptance of human values such as empathy, respect, and compassion – through positive literary characters who may serve as moral role models.[66] The therapeutic effects of bibliotherapy can be further enhanced through group sessions and shared discussions.[67]

In addition to various practical strategies through which education for humanity can be cultivated, it is essential not to overlook a key element of the entire pedagogical-rehabilitation process: the client's family. The family is an integral part of the rehabilitation team and plays a crucial role in the individual's development.[68] It serves as a primary model for behaviour and morality and is fundamental in instilling not only humanistic principles but also broader ethical and social values.

60 Howard Muscott, 'An Introduction to Service-Learning for Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions', *Beyond Behavior* 10, no. 3 (2001): 8.

61 Muscott, 'An Introduction to Service-Learning for Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions', 10-11.

62 Marianne Ioele and Ann Dolan, 'Teaching Courage: Service Learning at Pathway School', *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Problems* 1 (1993): 21–23.

63 Zhang, 'Spirituality and Disabilities: Implications for Special Education', 301.

64 John T. Pardeck and Jean A. Pardeck, *Bibliotherapy: A Clinical Approach for Helping Children* (Yverdon, Switzerland: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1994), 14.

65 Anita Iaquinta and Shellie Hipsky, 'Practical Bibliotherapy Strategies for the Inclusive Elementary Classroom', *Early Childhood Education Journal* 34 (2006): 210–211, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-006-0122-2

66 Zhang, 'Spirituality and Disabilities: Implications for Special Education', 301.

67 Frankl, *Psychoterapie pro laiky, 147.*

68 Pavel Kolář, ed., *Rehabilitace v klinické praxi* (Praha: Galén, 2009), 400.

Conclusion

The aim of this article was not to provide an exhaustive overview of theories and methods in social work, nor of all educational approaches applicable within the pedagogical rehabilitation of clients with disabilities. The intention was rather to offer inspiration—to recall or suggest selected relevant directions and practically applicable strategies that can help expand cooperation with clients in social and pedagogical rehabilitation to include the dimensions of humanity and spirituality, and to support these considerations through references to relevant academic literature. If we strive for comprehensive rehabilitation that addresses all aspects of human existence, it is necessary to adopt a holistic and non-reductive view of the Human Being – the ultimate focus of our efforts – encompassing not only the human essence but also the spiritual dimension. Social and pedagogical rehabilitation provide an appropriate context in which these aspirations may be fulfilled and, as demonstrated in the preceding text, they are also equipped with suitable methods and strategies that can be effectively applied in practice.

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The Demand for Universal Love in the Globalised World and Its Current Challenges for Social Work Based on the Initiatives of the Social Encyclical of Pope Francis *Fratelli tutti* (2020)

Jindřich Šrajer

Abstract

The article reflects the call for universal love in our globalised world and the resulting challenges for social work, drawing on Pope Francis' social encyclical *Fratelli tutti* (2020), and relevant scholarly literature. This theoretically grounded article examines and documents universal fraternity and social friendship as contemporary demand for universal love, which Pope Francis presents as essential for the future perspectives of our globalised world. His perspectives also offer a deeper understanding of social reality and the core mission of social work. The text affirms the relevance of Pope Francis' concept and the specific role of social work in its implementation. The article offers concrete suggestions relevant to the quality of social work, particularly regarding applicable motivations and approaches.

Keywords

Love, universal fraternity, social friendship, globalisation, Pope Francis, social encyclicals, social work.

Introduction

In today's interconnected global world, marked by ongoing geopolitical tension (war in Ukraine and the Middle East, rising tensions between China and Taiwan, waves of migration, natural disasters, persistent consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, terrorism, etc.), the field of social work faces specific challenges. These challenges highlight the urgent need for foundational motivations and approaches. The growing physical and psychological burden on social workers – driven by the pressing need to address diverse life stories of clients within complex social, political, cultural and religious contexts – makes it increasingly clear that the scope and mission of social work today cannot be understood without reference to the global interconnectedness of our time. A narrow, culture-bound or region-bound perspectives is no longer sufficient. A global outlook is necessary to understand the root causes and specific consequences of today's challenges for individuals, societies, social workers, and the practice of social work itself. In this

context, reflecting on the spiritual foundations of human life and society is not only justified but essential. It provides insight into the fundamental motivations and purpose of contemporary social work practice. This dimension is explored in scholarly discussions on the relevance of religion and spirituality in social work. This study aims to contribute to that discussion by reflecting on the ideas presented in Pope Francis's social encyclical *Fratelli tutti* (2020), which articulates the premises of a globally oriented perspective. The encyclical proposes the concepts of fraternity and social friendship, rooted in the biblical tradition of monotheism and the belief in one personal God the Father. In this sense, the Pope presents a reflection on the interrelation between monotheism and humanism, and their practical implications.

Religion and Spirituality: Biblical Monotheism and Humanism

The concepts of religion and spirituality have become increasingly prominent in the field of social work in recent years. They reflect the urgent questions we face today – both within and beyond social work – about the meaning and significance of everyday realities. Religion and spirituality inherently engage with such questions. They invite exploration and reflection, and they seek relevant answers with concrete implications for life. In the case of religion, these questions are addressed primarily on the institutional level – within churches and religious communities. Spirituality, by contrast, tends to reflect a more personal understanding and experience of these existential issues. It also includes individual life attitudes and ways of living that may be rooted in religious beliefs. Thus, the concepts of religion and spirituality are not completely overlapping in their content and meaning, but neither are they exclusive. We are talking about religious as well as non-religious (secular) spirituality. The former can take different forms and shapes within a given religion. In Catholic Christianity, there is also a specific monastic spirituality linked to the gift of vocation and consecration. On a general level, within a given religious community, however, the degree to which spirituality is developed may vary widely among individuals. Secular spirituality, as the name suggests, involves life practices, values, and attitudes that generally do not include an explicit religious dimension, such as a relationship with God. What matters for social work is that a social worker's and client's understanding and personal experience of religion or spirituality can significantly influence the quality of social work. These dimensions can support or hinder the achievement of the core goal of social work: the reintegration of the client into society and the restoration of client's social interaction.[1]

Pope Francis' suggestions formulated in his *Fratelli tutti* encyclical represent the social doctrine of the Catholic Church. They are grounded in this religious and spiritual dimension of man, as understood within the context of social work. In particular, they are rooted in biblical monotheism. The Pope expresses hope that the ideas in the encyclical will resonate with all people who care about human fraternity, which he presents as a fundamental anthropological call.

This intention is evident in the origins and purpose of the encyclical, as articulated by Pope Francis himself. He seeks to present a new vision of universal fraternal love and social friendship, one that is open to everyone and demands a concrete response in everyday practice. As he writes: '*Although I wrote it from the perspective of my Christian convictions, I sought to present*

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1   Cf. Böckle 2020; Möllenbeck/Schulter 2017; Canda 2015; Vojtíšek, Dušek, Motl, 2012; Crisp, 2016: 3-28; Kaňák, 2015; Nauer, 2015, 49-54; Dhiman/Rettig, 2017; Gehrig, Opatrný, Birther, Baumann, 2021. French philosopher André Compte-Sponvill (*1952) addresses the fundamental question of the significance of religion in its diversity for human life and society. Cf. Sponville, André Comte. The Spirit of Atheism. Introduction to Spirituality Without God. (Prague: Filosofia, 2020), 22–37.

these reflections as an invitation to dialogue with all people of good will.[2] The authenticity of this invitation is underscored by the process that preceded the encyclical, it was shaped by dialogue and shared efforts, especially with non-Christian faith traditions. The encyclical builds on and deepens the *Document on Human Fraternity*, signed in Abu Dhabi in 2019 by Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Sunni Islam, Ahmed al-Tayeb. Its preamble states: '*It was sincerely and seriously developed as a joint declaration of our honest and good will, to invite all people who carry in their hearts faith in God and faith in human fraternity to unite and work together, and to serve as a guide for future generations toward a culture of mutual respect, in recognition of the divine grace that binds all human beings together*'. This message is further reinforced by the declaration that God '*created all human beings equal in rights, duties, and dignity, and called them to live together as brothers*'.[3]

Religion in the Service of Fraternity in the World – the Position of the Post-conciliar Church

The positions articulated by Pope Francis in *Fratelli tutti* cannot be fully understood without considering the legacy of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). In line with the renewed self-conception of the Church, the Council sought to reflect on the Church's role in the modern world. The Church opens itself to the needs of contemporary humanity and the challenges of a globalised world. It declares the need to respect freedom of conscience and religion, and advocates for the development of ecumenical and interfaith dialogue, while reflecting on its own responsibilities and mission in this world and its perspectives.[4]

The post-conciliar reflection on these themes did not occur solely in official Church documents. Individual theologians also made significant contributions. One notable figure is Hans Küng (1928–2021), who in the 1990s introduced the *Global Ethic Project* based on the necessity of interfaith dialogue as a foundation for a peaceful global future in the globalised world.[5]

A consistent theme throughout post-conciliar papal documents is the understanding of the world as one God's creation, as a community of all people who are fundamentally equal. It is based on the conviction that every human being is created in the image of God (cf. Gen 1:27). In this view, religious affiliation, ethnicity, or nationality are secondary to human dignity. Every person possesses an inherent and inalienable dignity, and is a bearer of human rights, which excludes any form of racism or xenophobia.[6]

Pope Francis's reflections align with the broader theological framework of the post-conciliar Church. In particular, he draws on the social encyclical *Caritas in veritate* (2009) by his predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI.

At the heart of both documents lies the conviction that everything originates in God – in Truth (Logos) and Love (Agape). As Benedict XVI expresses it, '*everything finds its form in God's love, and everything is directed towards it*'.[7] This divine reality, fully revealed in the person of Jesus Christ, is recognised as the ultimate source and driving force behind '*the authentic development*

2   Francis, Pope, *Fratelli tutti.* Encyclical on Fraternity and Social Friendship. (Prague: KNA, 2020), 6. (Hereinafter referred to as FT.)

3   *Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together*, (Abu Dhabi, 4 February 2019), in L'Osservatore Romano, 4-5 February 2019, 1. In the Czech version available at https://www.radiovaticana.cz/clanek.php?id=28926

4   Cf. *Documents of the Second Vatican Council* (Prague: Zvon, 1995).

5   Hans Küng, Hans Kuschel, K.-J., *Declaration on the World Ethos.* Declaration of the Parliament of World Religions. (Brno: CDK,1997).

6   Cf. Papežská rada pro spravedlnost a mír. *Kompendium sociální nauky církve.* (Kostelní Vydří: KNA, 2008), especially, 11-142.

7   Benedict XVI, Pope, *Caritas in veritate.* Love of Truth. Encyclical on Integral Development in Love and Truth. (Kostelní Vydří: KNA, 2009), 2, 3. Hereinafter (CV).

of every human person and of all humanity'.[8] Essentially, both Popes emphasise the necessity of realising the commandment of love. A love fulfilled in truth, understood through both faith and reason. This love becomes the basis not only for personal relationships but also for social and global interactions. It is the foundation for dialogue, communication, and community. Behind this emphasis lies the belief that truth, when not reduced to relativism, '*enables people to rise above their subjective opinions and impressions; it allows them to transcend cultural and historical limits, encounter one another, and recognise the true essence and value of things*'.[9] In other words, '*without truth, without trust, and without a love for truth, there can be no social conscience or sense of responsibility*'.[10] Otherwise, '*social action … becomes subject to private interests and power struggles, leading to the erosion of society*'.[11] This danger is particularly pressing in our globalised world.[12]

In both papal documents mentioned above, a fundamental conviction of Christian faith is clearly articulated: without openness to the Father of all people, there can be no enduring and solid foundation for a genuine call to fraternity. As the documents emphasise, '*reason alone is capable of recognising human equality and supporting peaceful civil coexistence but it cannot create fraternity*'.[13] True human connectedness and solidarity are thus grounded in the potential of love – the universally redemptive dimension of human existence. It is this capacity for love that '*makes people, in their conscience and freedom … open to mutuality*'.[14] In practical terms, this means that '*human community does not flourish solely through relationships based on rights and duties, but above all through relationships marked by generosity, mercy and a sense of communion*'.[15]

The prerequisite for integral development is a lived experience of fraternity and social friendship. As outlined above, such a vision requires a transcendent understanding of the human person, one that acknowledges the need for God. Only an encounter with God enables a man '*not to see "in the other only the other", but to recognise in him/her as the image of God, and thus truly discover the other, and grow into a love that becomes care and concern*'.[16] In other words, the central concepts of the *Fratelli tutti*, fraternity and social friendship, are not just abstract concepts, but a practical challenge that place human relationships at the centre of social reflection and action. These values must be embodied in daily attitudes that are grounded in the simple truth of our universal interdependence, regardless of origin or social status. They are a challenge to recognise in every person a fellow human being who possesses the same value and dignity as ourselves.

The two Popes mentioned above, along with the broader tradition of post-conciliar theology, help to clarify the fundamental theological and anthropological starting point: the human vocation to love and thus to reciprocity, openness, and service to others, especially to those who are most vulnerable. In this regard, Christian faith is meant to be a source of light. It invites Christians to embody this calling through personal witness, even though, as we know, such witness is not always consistently lived out. This expectation, however, is not limited to Christianity, as *Fratelli tutti* affirms, other religions also contribute to this vision of solidarity and mutual care. Paradoxically, those who do not share biblical faith may sometimes bear more credible witness to love and

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8   CV, 1.
9   CV, 4.
10   CV, 5.
11   CV, 5.
12   Cf. CV, 5.; FT, 273.
13   CV, 19; FT, 272.
14   CV, 9.
15   CV, 6.
16   CV, 11.

solidarity than believers themselves.[17] This only serves to reinforce the universal intelligibility and accessibility of the call for love and lived mutuality, and genuine solidarity.[18]

Realised Fraternity and Social Friendship as a Response to the Exclusion and Neglect of Others

To affirm the tangible nature of the vision of universal fraternity and social friendship, Pope Francis draws on the Gospel parable of the Good Samaritan, emphasising its universality. According to him, this story '*speaks in such a way that everyone can be touched by it*'.[19] The accessibility or 'low threshold' nature of the parable lies in its central call to extend love to all people, not only to those who are close to us but also to strangers. This inclusivity aligns with the principle of the 'Golden Rule' – a moral imperative common to all cultures and religious traditions: '*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you*'.[20] Reflecting on this parable, the Pope offers concrete suggestions that, on the one hand, hold up a critical mirror to both individual and societal attitudes, and on the other hand, aim to motivate renewed action. As previously indicated, our objective is to consider these suggestions particularly in relation to the field of social work.

At the heart of the Gospel story reflected upon by Pope Francis in the encyclical (Luke 10:25–37) are four characters: the wounded, half-dead Jew lying on the road between Jerusalem and Jericho; a priest and a Levite, both religious figures, who are passing by without offering assistance; and finally, a foreigner, a Samaritan, a member of a group traditionally despised by the Jews. It is the Samaritan who treats the injured man's wounds and ensures his continued care. The typology of these characters and the structure of the parable offer valuable insights that can inform the everyday responsibilities of social work. They speak to the motivations and attitudes expected of social workers in their professional and ethical commitments. One may argue that, when stripped of prejudice toward individuals or ethnic and religious groups, the example of the Good Samaritan – especially his profound compassion for the poor, the vulnerable, and the marginalised – can continually reaffirm the essential role of such practice in shaping a more humane and just contemporary world. Moreover, the practice of social work may be further enriched by various dimensions the Pope elaborates on in the continuation of the encyclical.

In the field of social work, as in everyday life, what matters most is the willingness to '*waste time*' with a person in need, to engage with their problems with genuine presence and attention. It is the readiness to pause, to lean in, to listen, and to be fully present for someone in distress. Pope Francis highlights a related dimension that may be of fundamental significance for the motivation of a social worker. He speaks of the openness to be transformed, out of respect for human dignity, through encounters with human suffering. This transformation, which requires a certain spiritual sensitivity, can contribute not only to the personal development of the social worker, but also to the deepening of their motivation: a renewed willingness to lift up the wounded and the fallen, and to restore their sense of dignity and honour.[21] As the Pope also reminds us, the message of the Good Samaritan is not merely social or ethical. It also recalls a frequently overlooked aspect

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17 Srov. FT, 74.
18 Cf. CV, 34. Cf. also Joseph Ratzinger, *The Europe of Benedict of Nursia in the Crisis of Cultures* (Kostelní Vydří: KNA, 2006), 41. Pope Benedict XVI reminds us that '*love is, in a certain sense, imposed on the human being*'. It has been received as a gift by all. Cf. CV, 34.
19 FT, 56.
20 FT, 60.
21 Cf. FT, 67n.

of our shared humanity – the vocation to a fullness of life – a calling that can only be fulfilled through love. [22]

The Pope also notes the difficulties that may hinder efforts to help those in need, obstacles that naturally confront social workers as well. These include confronting one's own fears and feelings of inadequacy, as well as the danger of falling into sadness or resignation. Pope Francis literally says: '*Let us seek out others and engage with the world as it is, without fear of pain or feelings of inadequacy, because it is there that we discover all the goodness that God has planted in human hearts. Difficulties that seem overwhelming are opportunities for growth, not reasons for sad resignation, which can only lead to passive acceptance of the way things are*'.[23]

The daily confrontation with the often '*unhealthy*' realities inherent in social work places significant demands on social workers. It calls for a firm grounding in values, sustained by a continuously renewed motivation to serve others and to maintain a genuine affection for them. Pope Francis specifies this affection, noting that '*it causes us to yearn selflessly for the good of others. All of this stems from an attitude of respect, from valuing the worth of the other*'.[24] He further reminds us that '*love is more than a series of charitable acts. These acts arise from a sense of unity with others – from being increasingly oriented toward the other, because I regard them as valuable, endowed with dignity, lovable and beautiful, regardless of their physical or moral condition*'.[25] It is precisely this kind of love, love that forms the basis of meaningful human relationships and motivates one to genuinely seek the good of the other, that, according to the Pope, affirms its universal character by '*contributing to the possibility of a social friendship that excludes no one, and a fraternity that is open to all*'.[26]

The dimension of universal fraternity and social friendship presupposes a form of love that honours the uniqueness and originality of each human being, and thus embraces human diversity. It deliberately avoids the kind of uniformity characteristic of certain forms of globalisation, particularly those that promote a false universalism. As Pope Francis warns, such globalisation '*destroys the uniqueness of every person and every nation*'.[27] He continues: '*Social friendship and universal fraternity necessarily, always, and under all circumstances call for the recognition of the inherent value of every human person*'.[28] Closely tied to this is the demand for reliability, which, according to the Pope, '*is born of the awareness that we are responsible for the fragility of others as we seek to build a shared future*'. Solidarity becomes concrete through acts of service, which may take many forms of care for others. In this context, the Pope emphasises that …true service involves the capacity to '*set aside personal desires and aspirations for power when faced with the concrete gaze of those who are most vulnerable... Service always recognises the face of brother, touches his body, senses his closeness, and, at times, even "endures" that closeness in an effort to help. Service, then, is never ideological, because we do not serve ideas, we serve people*'.[29]

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22   Cf. FT, 68.
23   FT, 78
24   FT, 93.
25   FT, 94.
26   FT, 94.
27   FT, 94.
28   FT, 106.
29   FT, 115.

Conclusion

The events of recent years, particularly the migration crisis (2015), the global Covid-19 pandemic (2020), and the outbreak of war in Ukraine (2022), have vividly demonstrated the deep interconnectedness of our globalised world. These crises have shown that the suffering, hardship, and distress experienced in one part of the world inevitably affect, to varying degrees, the lives of people elsewhere. This is an experience of fundamental human interdependence, which calls urgently for solidarity.

In all of these circumstances, the field of social work – and the services it provides – functions as a critical 'first buffer zone', tasked with identifying those in need and facilitating an appropriate assistance. This role extends beyond assistance to individuals; it also serves a broader societal function by helping to mitigate the risks of potential social unrest. In many cases, social workers are often exposed to considerable physical and psychological strain. Confronted with their own human limitations, fears, and uncertainties, they may naturally begin to question the meaning of unfolding events and the deeper significance of their service. In the process of seeking or reinforcing motivation for their service to others, they may find themselves grappling with profound spiritual questions concerning the purpose and direction of their own lives.

Pope Francis' social encyclical *Fratelli tutti* offers valuable guidance for social workers in this regard. It clarifies the fundamental characteristics of the globalised world, its challenges, risks, and possibilities, and articulates a vision rooted in core ethical values. By emphasising universal love, the call to universal fraternity, and the ideal of social friendship, the encyclical establishes a value-based framework that can support social workers in discerning meaningful motivations and cultivating the courage necessary for selfless service and closeness to those in need. Grounded in these principles, social work can serve as a vital, daily testimony to the relevance and necessity of these values – both within society and global world.

Without a proper consideration of the global world's close interconnectedness and its immediate impacts on individual and societal life, the meaning and significance of social work can hardly be adequately understood or articulated today. Social work is thus challenged to continuously reflect on this context and its essential value foundations in order to enhance the quality of its services, services that aim to realise the full dimension of human dignity and compassion. It is a form of social work that makes no distinctions among people, honouring their uniqueness and dignity. At the same time, it is a form of practice that appropriately considers the needs of social workers themselves – so that they may continue to carry out their tasks over the long term, professionally, kindly, conscientiously, and responsibly. Above all, this is possible when they find deep meaning in their vocation.

Social work is directly confronted with the consequences of the close global interconnectedness of today's world, most notably through its work with migrants and refugees. However, these consequences may also manifest in other areas of practice, particularly where the global context impacts the self-perception of clients, undermines their life stability, sense of security, or the meaningfulness of their existence.

An important question that deserves due attention, and which has not yet been addressed in our reflection, concerns how to practically support a deeper understanding of the anthropological and religious foundations mentioned above, particularly in relation to the broader context of the globalised world, within social work education. How can we foster greater awareness of the importance of personal motivation among social workers for the demanding work they do, in light of their understanding of the overall meaning of life? These reflections must also take into account

the role of politics and economy – fields that, as the social encyclical under discussion likewise highlights, are not only contributors to many of the problems faced, but also bear responsibility and capacity for offering solutions.

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Ethical Values of Education in Wartime: the Ukrainian Context

Lyudmyla Ivanyuk

Abstract

During wartime, education is confronted with both institutional disruptions and deep ethical dilemmas, as it seeks to uphold and transmit moral values in the midst of instability, trauma, and social disintegration. This study explores the ethical values of education during the war in Ukraine, aiming to understand how educational spaces can foster dignity, responsibility, and solidarity under crisis conditions. Using a three-stage hermeneutical approach – normative theorisation, qualitative analysis through student questionnaires, and critical reflection – the study examines both the ideals and lived realities of ethical education in wartime. The findings highlight a deepened ethical consciousness among students, with values such as empathy, justice, and civic responsibility becoming central to their educational experience; however, structural and psychological barriers often impede ethical integration. The results suggest that education in wartime transforms into a moral practice of resistance and recovery, offering not only stability and social cohesion, but also laying a foundation for post-crisis democratic renewal.

Keywords: ethical values, wartime education, moral resilience, civic responsibility, solidarity, empathy, human dignity, critical pedagogy

Introduction

Contemporary global society is experiencing a period of profound transformation, precipitated by large-scale wars and accompanied by significant political, social, economic and humanitarian challenges. War poses a threat not only to the physical existence of people, but also has a significant impact on the values of citizens, thereby challenging the established notions of justice, dignity, solidarity, freedom and responsibility. In this context, education,[1] as one of the key social institutions, finds itself at the centre of value turbulence, as it is called upon not only to transmit knowledge but also to form the ethical capacity of the individual to act in the face of uncertainty, threat and social disruption.

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1   In this article, the focus is placed on the university context, as higher education represents both a formative environment for civic and ethical development and a space where the challenges of wartime are acutely experienced by young adults.

The erosion of trust in institutions, intensifying social fragmentation, growing polarisation,[2] the devaluation of human life and the breakdown of basic forms of coexistence, all underscore the urgent need to reconsider the role of education as a space for ethical communication. In the context of pan-European discussions about the crisis of democracy,[3] it is expected that the field of education will not only maintain functionality, but also actively participate in the creation of a sustainable social order through the cultivation of values that can unite even in times of war. This standpoint renders democracy not as an entrenched system of governance, but rather as a malleable and pragmatic modus vivendi, one that is in constant need of reevaluation and dissemination in order to be effectively implemented within the shifting historical and cultural contexts.[4] In this sense, the study of the ethical values of education[5] in wartime is of particular pertinence, as it enables not only the documentation of moral challenges, but also the exploration of methodologies for the cultivation of ethically conscious citizenship – a cornerstone of sustainable democracy.

Research on education in contexts of armed conflict and crisis has demonstrated that schools and universities often serve as crucial spaces for resilience, moral orientation, and the preservation of social cohesion (e.g., studies on the former Yugoslavia and Syria).[6] Against this background, the local study of the educational process in the context of war in Ukraine is an important contribution to the global understanding of the role of ethical values of education during crisis transformations. The Ukrainian experience[7] reveals not only the specifics of the educational environment's response to extreme challenges, but also highlights universal mechanisms for preserving humanity and democratic guidelines. This context demonstrates that even amid war, education can remain a space of moral reflection and consolidation, forming value models relevant to the broader international ethical and educational discourse.

Methodology

The proposed study offers a comprehensive approach to the analysis of the issue, encompassing three primary stages of consideration. Thus, theoretical, empirical and reflective parts ensure the integrity, depth and validity of the data analysis. The suggested hermeneutical framework aligns with the principle of 'understanding through interpretation,'[8] which involves the interpretation of

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2   'Do Ukrainians Trust Democratic Institutions? Institutional Confidence and Democracy Amid the War in Ukraine,' VoxUkraine, accessed 27th June 2025, https://voxukraine.org/en/do-ukrainians-trust-democratic-institutions-institutional-confidence-and-democracy-amid-the-war-in-ukraine.

3   'Building Trust in a Complex Policy Environment,' OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions – 2024 Results, accessed 27th June 2025, https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/oecd-survey-on-drivers-of-trust-in-public-institutions-2024-results_9a20554b-en.html.

4   Cf. Arno Widmann, 'Philosoph Oskar Negt gestorben: Mut und Eigensinn,' *Frankfurter Rundschau*, accessed 27th June 2025, https://www.fr.de/kultur/gesellschaft/philosoph-oskar-negt-gestorben-mut-und-eigensinn-92811886.html.

5   In this article, 'ethical values in education' are understood as a broad category that includes universal principles (dignity, justice, respect), civic virtues (responsibility, solidarity, empathy), as well as values shaped by Ukraine's specific cultural and wartime context.

6   Cf. Lynn Davies, *Education and Conflict: Complexity and Chaos* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004); Julia Paulson, ed., *Education and Reconciliation: Exploring Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011); Sarah Dryden-Peterson, 'Refugee Education: The Crossroads of Globalization,' *Educational Researcher* 45, no. 9 (2016): 473–482; James Meernik et al., 'Truth, Justice, and Education: Towards Reconciliation in the Former Yugoslavia,' *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 16, no. 3 (2016): 413–43; Ahmed Tlili et al., 'How to Maintain Education during Wars? An Integrative Approach to Ensure the Right to Education,' *Open Praxis* 16, no. 2 (2024): 160–179.

7   The armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which began in 2014 and escalated into a full-scale invasion in 2022, has engendered unprecedented challenges for the education sector, obliging it to adapt, demonstrate flexibility, and cultivate humanistic meanings.

8   Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, 2nd rev. ed. (London: Continuum, 2004), 295. Originally published 1960.

theoretical concepts through the lens of personal experience. The feedback loop between theory and practice serves to refine and enrich the understanding of these theories.

The first part ('to-be state') sets an ethical horizon, i.e., an imaginary ideal of an educational environment built on universal, philosophical values, thereby creating a normative basis for understanding the 'ethical quality' of education. This segment establishes the conceptual foundation upon which the subsequent sections of the study are to be built.

The second part ('as-is state') focuses on the local reality, on the experience of Ukrainian students studying in the context of war. The responses given by the subjects are indicative of their subjective vision, whilst also demonstrating specific areas of tension between the values and challenges of the present. This section presents a qualitative study based on a questionnaire survey of students at Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University, one of the leading universities in Western Ukraine and reflects the diverse experiences of students in wartime conditions (volunteering, forced displacement, studying in dangerous conditions, etc.). This ensures the depth and diversity of the data obtained. The results can be partially generalised for the broader Ukrainian educational context, although the study is qualitative in nature and does not claim to be fully representative.

The questionnaire consisted of nine open-ended questions structured across three content areas: personal (educational experience and attitudes), socio-cultural (the role of education in society), and prognostic (visions of future changes and needs in the education system). This format was chosen to enable participants to articulate their perspectives in depth and to elicit meaningful, personally infused responses that would help recreate a 'live' social reality.[9] To ensure content validity, the questions were preliminarily discussed in a small focus group of students and reviewed by academic colleagues. The Grounded Theory approach[10] was employed, a method that involves the formulation of theoretical conclusions based on the analysis of data. The collected material was analysed using the method of categorical analysis with the use of MaxQDA software, according to the 10-stage data analysis model.[11] The respondents' anonymity was preserved throughout the study. The answers were coded according to the themes that naturally emerged in the students' responses.

The survey was conducted using the online tool Google Forms[12] and was anonymous, which ensured the protection of personal data. Participation was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents. The sample comprised 50 students of Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University, representing different years of study and academic fields, with an age range of 18-23.[13] The sample size was deliberately limited in accordance with the methodology of value analysis, which emphasises the depth and interpretative richness of responses rather than quantitative representativeness. Particular attention was paid to ethical considerations: anonymity and confidentiality were fully guaranteed, and the questions were carefully formulated to minimise psychological distress and avoid retraumatisation in the wartime context.

The third part of the study ('on-going state') presents an analytical summary, which, by critically comparing the normative ethical ideal of education ('to-be state') with its empirical reality ('as-is

9   Siegfried Lamnek, *Qualitative Sozialforschung*, 5th ed. (Weinheim: Beltz, 2010), 272, 318-319.
10   Werner Meineheld, 'Hypothesen und Vorwissen in der qualitativen Sozialforschung,' in *Qualitative Forschung. Ein Handbuch*, 10th ed., ed. Uwe Flick, Ernst von Kardorff, and Ines Steinke (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 2013), 268.
11   Udo Kuckartz, *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse: Methoden, Praxis, Computerunterstützung*, 2nd rev. ed. (Weinheim and Basel: Beltz Juventa, 2014), 79.
12   Link to the survey: https://forms.gle/TPjbAUJXF52hZCCP8.
13   Participants were recruited among students of Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University through internal university communication channels and class group announcements. The selection was not limited to a single faculty, but included students from different academic fields and years of study in order to reflect a diversity of wartime experiences.

state'), reveals key contradictions, ethical tensions and value dilemmas that have been exacerbated by the war. Such a reflective approach not only identifies structural gaps, but also outlines vectors for the transformation of educational practice, reveals the potential for the formation of an ethical space of education, and lays the foundation for further interdisciplinary research in the field of peace education and educational policy.

Results

To-be-state

Education as a Practice of Freedom. In times of social upheaval, education inevitably faces the question of whether it should adapt to external pressures or preserve its emancipatory role. Global thinkers have different answers to the question of what education means in times of severe social upheaval. However, they are united by the conviction that in wartime education becomes not less but more of a moral act. Back in the 1970s, Paulo Freire, one of the founders of critical pedagogy, described a key dilemma that becomes particularly acute in times of crisis. According to him, education either functions as a tool for integrating young people into the existing system, fostering conformity, or it becomes a practice of freedom – a means by which people critically and creatively comprehend reality.[14] In the context of war, this alternative is particularly evident: education either adapts to the logic of trauma, discipline and survival, or resists dehumanisation, opening up space for ethical thinking, dialogue and moral self-assertion.

Human Dignity. War profoundly affects an individual's ability to feel emotionally secure, develop imagination, express themselves freely and trust the world. Therefore, education can play the role of a mechanism of ethical recovery. It is able not only to compensate for violations in the educational process, but also to build internal resilience and enhance dignity. Martha Nussbaum, in her theory of basic human capacities, proposes to consider the ethical basis of society not through rights or resources as such, but through the real possibilities of a person to be a human being in the full sense of the word.[15] Education, according to Nussbaum, should support fundamental 'capabilities': critical thinking, empathy, imagination, and the ability to interact socially. During a military conflict, these capacities are narrowed or blocked, so their support and restoration become a key moral task of education.

Right to Education and Equality of Access. The right to education in wartime becomes both a legal guarantee and a moral responsibility of society. As stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26),[16] everyone has the right to education, and this right is a cornerstone of an open and democratic society that recognises the dignity of all. The right to access education becomes an indicator of the quality of a democratic system, especially in the context of armed conflict when traditional educational institutions are destroyed. New innovative technologies not only ensure the educational process, but also contribute to the institutionalisation of a new ethical culture based on equality of access, learner autonomy and protection of the right to intellectual development even in extraordinary circumstances. This also represents the basic human need for learning as a condition of freedom. In the globalised world, there is an unprecedented level of

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14   Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 2005), 48.

15   Martha C. Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 17–23.

16   'Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,' accessed 27th June 2025, https://www.humanrights.com/course/lesson/articles-26-30/read-article-26.html.

access to educational resources: open online courses, digital libraries, and interactive platforms provide information support for the academic environment. However, the number of available materials does not guarantee their meaningful assimilation, let alone the development of ethical reflection. That is why the key question remains: how to preserve humanity in the context of intellectual growth under the pressure of destructive circumstances?

Moral Autonomy and Responsibility. In wartime, information aggression is actively developed. When the academic space becomes vulnerable to ideological influence, it becomes especially important to understand education as a sphere that should foster moral autonomy. Hannah Arendt, in her work *The Crisis in Education* (1954), insists that education cannot be reduced to a tool for political mobilisation or the training of loyal subordinates.[17] Education is, first and foremost, the responsibility of the adult generation to present the world in its multidimensionality and truth, rather than simplifying it to a certain ideological formula. In the context of the plural and often conflicting moral practices of modern society, this vision allows education to act as a stabiliser: not by unifying opinions, but by creating a space for thinking, judgement and ethical dialogue. In Hannah Arendt's philosophy, education is not a mechanism of socialisation or mobilisation, but a space in which the capacity for freedom, initiative, action and responsibility in a common world is born. Gert Biesta takes a similar position, warning against the reduction of education to the functions of control through 'measurement'. He emphasises that true learning always involves the risk of forming a responsible subject through an encounter with the other.[18] Of practical importance is the concept of autonomy, formed in the educational space not as a formal freedom, but as the ability to moral self-management based on reasonable judgement and not on obedience to authority or the rhetoric of national unity.[19]

The Ethics of Empathy in Education. The obligation to foster respect for human dignity remains paramount. Otfried Höffe emphasises this commitment as a binding principle.[20] The student is not an object of influence, but a subject of thinking and transformation.[21] Otherwise, disrespect for the dignity of the learner becomes a form of violence – even when it has 'good' goals. The ethical task of education in time of war is to preserve the subjectivity, respect, and moral equality of all participants in the educational process. The main message of Kant's deontological ethics *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (1785) is: 'Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means'.[22] This means that every human being is a value in itself, not a tool. Here, according to Kant's principle of ethical universalism, empathy plays a key role as the ethical ability to recognise the other as an equal, free and dignified subject. Education should develop the ability to be open, vulnerable and ready to coexist.[23] This point of view is also developed by Martha Nussbaum, who argues that empathy is not an emotional option, but a necessary component of

17   Hannah Arendt, 'The Crisis in Education,' in *Between Past and Future* (New York: Viking Press, 1961), 173–96. Originally published 1954**.**

18   Cf. Gert J. J. Biesta, 'Good Education in an Age of Measurement: On the Need to Reconnect with the Question of Purpose in Education,' *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability* 21, no. 1 (2009): 35–37. Cf. Gert J. J. Biesta, *The Beautiful Risk of Education* (London: Routledge, 2013), 1–10.

19   Cf. Christopher Winch, 'Strong Autonomy and Education,' *Educational Theory* 52, no. 1 (2002): 27–41. Cf. Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 27–50.

20   Bettina Reichmann, 'Die Würde des Menschen – christlich gelesen, religionspädagogisch buchstabiert,' in *Humanität als religionspädagogisches und didaktisches Leitmotiv*, ed. Christian Hild, Sandra Anusiewicz Baer, and Abdel Hafiez Massud, Religion und Kommunikation in Bildung und Gesellschaft, vol. 3 (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2023), 201–213. Otfried Goeffe, *Demokratie im Zeitalter der Globalisierung* (München: C.H. Beck, 1999), 65.

21   Cf. Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 2005), 17-18.

22   Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. and ed. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 38.

23   Cf. Sharon Todd, *Toward an Imperfect Education: Facing Humanity, Rethinking Cosmopolitanism* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2009), chap. 3, 'Not Just for Myself: Questioning the Subject of Human Rights,' 51–65.

the moral development of the individual and the citizen. Education, as Nussbaum sees it, should cultivate the ability to 'see the world through the eyes of another' as a basic condition for ethical thinking.[24] A similar idea is expressed by Lynn Hunt, who argues that the modern idea of human rights arose from the expansion of the ability to empathise with 'others as an equal', in particular through literature, art and education.[25]

Critical Thinking and Moral Judgement. A further aspect is the development of critical judgement. Hannah Arendt, comprehending the nature of evil in her work *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (1963), introduces the concept of 'banality of evil' – evil that does not arise from radical intent but from the absence of thinking, from the willingness to obey without reflection.[26] Later, in her work *The Life of the Mind* (1978), she interprets thinking as an internal moral dialogue through which a person forms the internal boundaries of what is acceptable.[27] Education also opens up space for the ability to make independent ethical judgements that do not dissolve into collective ideologies. Technical rationality without moral reflection leads to disaster.[28]

Dialogue and Communicative Action. However, education remains a space of rational, non-violent communication that promotes trust and the ability to make ethical decisions. Therefore, communicative action, proposed by Habermas in his work *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns* (1981), can also be the basis of educational ethics.[29] Communicative action is interaction not primarily focused on success, but on mutual understanding. Ethical education should create a space where learners, teachers and society engage in an open, honest dialogue aimed at understanding rather than control. According to Hans-Richard Reuter, it is important for young people to learn not only to express their opinions, but also to listen carefully, reflect and consider the world from the other's perspective. Mutual understanding is possible on the basis of sincerity, equality and recognition of the other as a rational subject. This means creating conditions for an ethical dialogue in which participants have the opportunity to openly formulate positions, ask questions and reflect on complex social phenomena, including injustice or violence. This is especially important when public communication is polarised or reduced to propaganda.

Education for the Common Good. The moral component is not about giving answers, but about learning to ask the right questions.[30] The formation of ethical thinking through the discussion of morally complex situations where there are no easy answers becomes a part of authentic discourse. Habermas argues that moral norms are legitimate only when all those concerned can agree on them in an honest discourse.[31] After all, ethical values are not imposed from above by a 'top-down principle',[32] but are formed in the process of open discussion.

In the field of education, a collective ethical practice is formed, which is expressed in the ability to act in solidarity and responsibility. It initiates (perhaps secondary to the family institution) the reflection on moral dilemmas, in which individual virtues are transformed into common

24 Martha C. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 401.Martha C. Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 178.

25 Cf. Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007), 38–40, 58.

26 Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 287–289. Originally published 1963.

27 Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind. Volume I: Thinking* (New York: Harcourt, 1978), 185.

28 Cf. Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989).

29 Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, trans. Thomas McCarthy, vol. 1 (John Wiley & Sons, 2015).

30 Michael J. Sandel, *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009).

31 Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, trans. William Rehg (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), 9.

32 Beate Hofmann, *Diakonische Unternehmenskultur: Handbuch für Führungskräfte*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2010), 135.

values. The idea of responsibility emerges as the basis of civic ethics – a duty to the community.[33] Education, therefore, not only promotes personal development, but also forms citizens capable of thinking in terms of the common good. Accordingly, education cannot be viewed as a private service only, but is a public ethical good,[34] for the preservation and development of which all civil society is responsible. This is especially important in times of war, when young people are asking fundamental moral questions: What is just? What does it mean to serve the common good? Michael Sandel rejects the idea of liberal neutrality in education, stressing that it should be an active response to polarisation and moral disorientation.[35]

Justice and Inclusion. The very ethical core of the educational space is formed by civic responsibility. From an initially individual concept, it gradually acquires a public, social and global dimension. In the process of learning, a person develops the ability to see the connection between their own choices and their social, economic and environmental consequences. Responsibility becomes not only a moral category, but also a practice that regulates participation in public life. Hans Jonas in his work *Das Prinzip Verantwortung* (1979) adds that in the modern world, ethics should be future-oriented, when an action should be evaluated in terms of its potential impact on the lives of future generations. The author introduces the concept of 'evolutionary responsibility'.[36] On the one side, equal access to education is already a prerequisite for justice as a social principle. But on the other side, this is not enough without ensuring equal opportunities to participate in the educational process, especially in the form of dialogue, discussion and joint decision-making. Justice, as Sandel points out in *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* (2009) is not reduced to the observance of neutral rules, but is a moral virtue that is revealed in the active participation of citizens in public life.[37] It is in engaging in moral discussion that values are formed, which become the basis for the ethical development of society. In this context, the educational space should be not only structurally inclusive, but also communicatively open. Creating conditions in which every participant in the educational space has the opportunity to be heard, develop their own opinions and participate in the shaping of collective knowledge is the basis of an ethical approach to justice. According to Nussbaum, participation in dialogue becomes learning about justice through practice.[38]

Cultural Specificity and Eastern European Perspectives. While the theoretical foundations of this study predominantly refer to Western philosophers and educational theorists, it is equally important to recognise the contributions of Eastern European intellectuals, whose reflections on education in times of crisis provide a locally grounded dimension. Ukrainian philosopher Myroslav Popovych stressed that in wartime true resilience cannot be imposed externally but must be cultivated through education as a space of reflection and dialogue, fostering moral fortitude rather than conformity.[39] Myroslav Marynovych, Ukrainian human rights activist, former Soviet dissident, stresses, the war in Ukraine is above all a struggle for freedom, and in this context education

33   Otfried Höffe, 'Verantwortung: Begriff und Prinzip,' in *Verantwortung. Ein Begriff in seiner Aktualität*, ed. Reinhard Kahle and Niels Weidtmann (Paderborn: Brill, 2021), 3–13.

34   Cf. John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1916), 14–15.

35   Michael J. Sandel, *Public Philosophy: Essays on Morality in Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 145–148.

36   Hans Jonas, *Das Prinzip Verantwortung: Versuch einer Ethik für die technologische Zivilisation* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1979), 35–42. A similar idea is expressed by Martha Nussbaum in her concept of 'education for democratic citizenship': Martha C. Nussbaum, *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*, updated ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), 4–14.

37   Michael J. Sandel, *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009), 244–270.

38   Martha C. Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 35–37.

39   Cf. Myroslav Popovych, *Narys istorii kultury Ukrainy* (Kyiv: ArtEk, 1998), 237–249, accessed 22th August 2025, http://litopys.org.ua/popovych/narys.htm.

must nurture moral resilience, solidarity, and responsibility as the foundations for democratic renewal.[40] The Czech philosopher Jan Patočka, in his *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History* (1975), introduced the idea of the 'solidarity of the shaken', highlighting how moments of existential crisis generate authentic ethical community.[41] Similarly, the Polish Nobel laureate Czesław Miłosz, in *The Captive Mind* (1953), warned that education in the 'people's democracies' had become an instrument of indoctrination, where 'from his first day in school, the young citizen receives an education based on this truth' and every subject was reduced to a rigid materialistic outlook. He cautioned that such a system risks producing 'a new and irretrievable species of mankind', formed by decades of ideological schooling at the expense of moral imagination and intellectual freedom.[42] Thus, although the normative framework of this study is shaped by widely recognised Western theories, the Eastern European tradition enriches it with unique perspectives on education as a source of freedom, dignity, and moral resilience in times of crisis.

As-is-state

At the next stage of the study, a qualitative questionnaire survey with open-ended questions was conducted to identify value orientations, individual experience and perceptions of the prospects for the development of education. The normative framework directly shaped the questionnaire. Key categories such as dignity, responsibility, empathy, solidarity, and justice were translated into specific questions: for example, how education contributes to humanity and solidarity during war, how moral principles have changed since the conflict began, which ethical values should be embedded in the educational process, or what forms of civic responsibility and volunteering are most relevant today. These categories also guided the coding scheme, ensuring coherence between theory and empirical analysis.

1. The first question of the study was aimed at clarifying the respondents' perceptions of the basic ethical values that, in their opinion, should be integrated into the modern educational process. The answers are dominated by the idea that the formation of such values takes place primarily in the student-teacher-student communication triangle, where mutual ethical modelling of behaviour is key. In particular, fairness is mentioned as a transparent assessment that reflects academic honesty. It is emphasised that education functions as an institution of socialisation and civic formation, and ethical guidelines are its structural element.

This is underlined by a number of illustrative statements: students emphasised that '*respect – for teachers, for oneself, for others – is the foundation without which other values do not work*', while '*honesty in learning – not cheating, not looking for shortcuts – shapes responsibility and prepares you for life*'. Others highlighted that '*tolerance is about accepting different views, even if they are not like yours – that's how real dialogue in education begins*'.

The analysis of the responses reveals a core set of values centred around key concepts as respect, honesty, responsibility, justice and tolerance. Respect is seen as a multifaceted notion that encompasses recognition of dignity, acceptance of diverse viewpoints, ethics of interaction and interpersonal tolerance. Honesty is interpreted as the basis of academic integrity, which implies independent work, moral consistency and sincerity. Responsibility and justice are associated with objectivity, fulfilment of obligations and avoidance of favouritism. Some respondents also

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40   Cf. 'Myroslav Marynovych: War in Ukraine is 'a fight for freedom', accessed 22th August 2025, https://www.vaticannews.va/en/world/news/2023-12/ukraine-war-myroslav-marynovych-catholic-university-lviv.html.

41   Jan Patočka, *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*, edited by James Dodd (illustrated ed.; Chicago: Open Court Publishing, 1996).

42   Czesław Miłosz, *The Captive Mind* (New York: Vintage International, 1990), 77, 199.

emphasise mutual respect in difficult organisational situations between students and teachers, such as coordinating the learning process in the face of external challenges.

The importance of such values as empathy, mutual support, humanistic orientation, freedom of thought, objectivity and the development of socio-emotional competences (soft skills) was also noted, which testifies to a deep awareness of the role of the personal dimension in the educational process.

2. The purpose of the second question is to find out how, in the respondents' opinion, education contributes to the development of ethical categories of humanity and solidarity in wartime. The analysis of the answers shows that respondents assign education a significant social and humanitarian mission, seeing it as a tool for maintaining social unity and restoring trust. Respondents' answers demonstrate a high level of ethical reflection on the role of education in shaping the moral qualities of the individual.

Several student statements illustrate this point: '*Education helps people understand each other better in wartime, when circumstances differ – some fight, some volunteer, others simply survive. It teaches why support is important and how to help responsibly*'. The thought continues thereafter: '*Education teaches critical thinking, helping to resist panic and propaganda, while uniting people through shared learning and support even in wartime. Most importantly, it reminds us why we fight – for a future with knowledge, development, and normal life*'.

Students emphasised that education helps them endure hardship and '*not lose themselves*', as even lessons in basements or online signal care and support. It was described as a space to calm down, recognise others' pain, and find strength for rebuilding both homes and human connections. Education was also seen as a source of unity and resilience, providing a '*peaceful routine*' amid chaos, a branch that still bears the '*flower of humanity*', and a means of nurturing knowledgeable youth capable of supporting solidarity and strengthening national defence.

The key mechanisms through which education implements these functions are mentioned by respondents: group projects, volunteer activities, open discussions of moral and social issues, charitable initiatives, formal and informal psychological support within the learning environment, educational events, lectures and trainings on humanitarian topics.

3. The purpose of the third question was to find out what role, in the respondents' opinion, spiritual and religious values play in shaping the ethical norms of young people. The analysis of attitudes towards these issues allows to better understand the ethical sensitivity of modern youth, as well as to outline the potential of the spiritual dimension in the educational process as a resource for moral development, particularly in times of war and moral instability.

The majority of responses emphasise the positive impact of spiritual and religious guidelines on '*the formation of a moral core of the individual*'. Respondents acknowledge that spiritual values can serve as an '*ethical compass*' for young people, helping them to distinguish between right and wrong, develop empathy, respect for the dignity of others and the capacity for self-sacrifice. Universal moral principles common to different traditions are often mentioned, such as forgiveness, mercy, love of neighbour and non-violence.

This question reveals a deep reflection on life itself: '*Moral values have changed towards the study of religion and the understanding that every day can be the last. And that it is not the number of days we have lived that matters, but what we were like in them*'.

At the same time, some of the responses show a critical attitude to the direct implementation of a religious component in the educational process. Some respondents emphasise the danger of dogmatisation or imposition of faith, especially in a pluralistic society. Instead, it is proposed to

maintain the ideological neutrality of education, leaving spiritual values in the realm of personal choice or general cultural discussion.

There are also critical positions: '*In my opinion, religious and spiritual values should not be allowed to develop ethical norms. After all, any religion is a collection of outdated dogmatic rules and can influence the development of isolation and self-restraint, which leads to moral discomfort*'. This vision is obviously aimed at criticising traditionalist forms of religiosity that do not meet the expectations of young people who are focused on development, autonomy and openness.

4. The purpose of the next question was to find out how the personal perception of moral and humanistic principles in the educational process has changed since the outbreak of a full-scale war in Ukraine. It allows to trace the transformation of ethical sensitivity of young people. Students testify to '*a turning point in their lives and studies*' and that '*humanistic principles have acquired a deeper meaning*'. An analysis of the responses shows that most respondents began to perceive moral and humanistic principles not as theoretical constructs, but as vital guidelines: '*Since the beginning of the war, respect, solidarity, compassion, and responsibility no longer feel abstract but vital. These values now unite even strangers and help me remain human in the face of war*'.

Many responses show a growing ethical awareness, with education seen not just as an academic process but as a space for moral growth, mutual support, and the preservation of humanity. Values once viewed as abstract have become concrete actions – helping others, honesty, and responsibility – demonstrating a shift from theory to practice in students' ethical outlook.

Some respondents emphasised specific examples of humane treatment by teachers and students, which was especially important in the context of personal losses, psychological stress or family circumstances related to the war. In addition, the responses also reflected that the war has highlighted the need for the ability to accept another person with their pain.

It is worth paying attention to a single but meaningful response that represents a nationally oriented approach: '*The importance of forming a national identity among young people has been reinforced*'.

5. The next question was dedicated to the attitude to the educational process in the context of war. The analysis shows that there is a growing awareness of the leading role of education not only as a tool for knowledge transfer, but also as a space for support, stability and personal development. The respondents note the transformation of their own attitude to learning – from a formal obligation to intrinsically motivated participation based on emotional involvement, solidarity and mutual support in the educational environment. Knowledge begins to be perceived as a value, and the educational process as a factor of ethical and psychological strengthening: '*My attitude to learning has changed. With the war, education became something more — not just knowledge, but the feeling that you are not alone*'.

Education in wartime is increasingly seen as therapeutic and stabilising, providing continuity in an unstable world: '*Every lesson, even online, was a sign that life goes on*'. Beyond this, students highlight its role in personal growth, intercultural communication, and the development of ethical motivation. Teachers, in particular, are recognised not only as transmitters of knowledge but also as moral guides and sources of support: '*I began to perceive learning as a space of safety. During times of anxiety, education helped me to hold on*'.

6. The next question identifies the significant role of participation in socially oriented activities and to explore how this activity in the educational context influences ethical beliefs. The majority of respondents indicated that they had participated in a variety of initiatives, ranging from charity fairs, collecting aid for the Ukrainian armed forces and IDPs, to organising intercultural

seminars, weaving nets, volunteering as translators, helping refugees, and participating in educational events on stress resistance. For many, this participation was not only a way to contribute to a common cause, but also a powerful moral experience that contributed to a deeper understanding of responsibility, the power of collective action and the need to help others. Volunteering was seen as a form of practical implementation of humanistic principles that enhances empathy, tolerance and a sense of community. Some people, while not formally involved, still contributed through donations or assistance outside the university.

The following answers illustrate this point. As one student noted, '*Volunteering has shown me that even a small action can make a big impact on others*'. Another emphasised that such initiatives create a sense of belonging to a greater cause: '*Volunteering makes you feel like you are part of a bigger cause*'.

7. An analysis of the answers to the question 'What ethical guidelines do you think are the most important for young people in Ukraine today?' reveals a wide range of values that young people consider to be a priority in the face of current challenges. Despite the diversity of formulations, there is a clear dominance of a number of key ethical categories that also appeared in the answers to the previous questions, including respect, responsibility, dignity, justice and honesty. These categories reflect stable moral guidelines, while the emergence of new ones, actualised by the context of war, is also emphasised.

A significant number of responses (18 out of 50) mention patriotism, civic consciousness, responsibility for the country, love for the homeland, commitment to the national values and the idea of building a strong state. These guidelines are of particular importance in the context of military aggression, becoming an ethical response to the challenges of the times. The notion of independence is interpreted in this context not only as a state category, but also as a personal attitude that promotes independent thinking and action. Some answers point to the need to restore the balance between collective responsibility and the right to personal fulfilment: '*I think we need to listen to our "I want", especially in Ukraine. After all, many young people feel guilty for not doing enough, ignoring their own aspirations*'. This indicates a tendency to rethink the personal contribution to the public good and a desire to harmonise individual and social values.

8. An analysis of the answers to the question 'What barriers does the educational environment face in implementing ethical values during a military conflict?' reveals a significant range of difficulties that hinder the realisation of moral upbringing in the context of war. The answers most often mention psychological factors: stress, emotional exhaustion, anxiety and general instability that affect both students and teachers. These conditions complicate not only the educational process in general, but also the possibility of addressing deeper ethical topics ('*lack of time for deep conversations*'), which require internal resources and emotional openness.

Significant barriers include the destruction of a safe environment, unequal access to education, including displacement, loss of homes, power outages and the threat of shelling. Under these conditions, even the best educational initiatives may not achieve their goals due to external circumstances that absorb the attention and energy of the participants in the educational process. The respondents also noted polarisation in views, language disputes and gaps between the experiences of IDPs and those who stayed home, which can lead to the conflicts in groups, reducing tolerance and trust.

Many point to a lack of time, resources and support from the system, which reduces moral education to declarations rather than lived experience. At the same time, some of the responses also indicate social fatigue, indifference and burnout, which are a reaction to the ongoing crisis, and

this is what poses the greatest threat to the implementation of democratic ethical values: '*Similarly, all the values that we would like to see are at risk of disappearing due to anxiety, disappointing news from the frontline and world politics*'.

9. An analysis of the answers to the question 'What do you think education should change or improve to better meet the needs of young people in times of crisis?' shows a clear demand for the transformation of education towards flexibility, emotional support, practicality and humanity. Most often, respondents point to the need for flexibility – both in learning formats (including online and offline) and in approaches to students: individualisation, adaptation to personal circumstances, reduction of bureaucracy and excessive pressure of deadlines. At the same time, rigidity and formalism are perceived as an inadequate response to real challenges in a crisis: '*Education should be more flexible. Sometimes deadlines and bureaucracy only increase stress instead of helping us learn*'. Another noted, '*We need teachers to understand our personal circumstances during the war and not demand everything as if life were normal*'.

Emotional support is another key request. Young people expect educational institutions to provide psychological protection, a safe space where they can not only gain knowledge but also share their experiences and receive support from teachers and groupmates. In this context, there are proposals to strengthen the role of school and university psychologists, create a dialogue, and teach emotional intelligence and stress-resistance skills.

In addition, there is a requirement for teachers to demonstrate a clear value position, including avoiding rhetoric that could be perceived as loyal to the aggressor: '*Avoid loyal mention of the enemy*'. At the same time, expectations for civic education, including the formation of national and cultural identity, are growing.

In particular, it identifies a new professional task for teachers – mastering the skills of recognising and responding appropriately to the manifestations of stress, anxiety or the consequences of students' traumatic experiences. The educational environment, therefore, should not be stable and centralised, but dynamic, capable of responding to the changing challenges of war and the individual needs of participants in the educational process. There is a growing demand for the integration of psychological support into education, which involves deepening interpersonal relationships between teachers and students based on trust, while respecting the limits of personal autonomy. At the same time, there is a need to increase teachers' psychological awareness of the specific context of each student's life.

The overview below summarises the key thematic categories identified through Grounded Theory and coded in MaxQDA. The table brings together the normative framework and the empirical categories derived from student responses, thereby illustrating the continuity between theoretical values and the lived educational experiences during wartime.

Table: Value Categories: Theoretical and Empirical Dimensions

Value Categories	Responses	Key Aspects
Theoretical Categories		
Autonomy & Freedom	R2, R5, R6, R16, R24, R33, R36, R45	freedom of thought, self-respect and independence, freedom linked with equality, autonomy through equality, freedom in diversity

Human Dignity	R6, R10, R13, R27, R29...	respect for human dignity, dignity linked with respect and honesty, universal dignity of every person, dignity as universal value, dignity and solidarity, dignity in education, dignity and justice
Right to Education and Equality of Access	R19, R33, R36, R41, R46	universal right to education, equal access to education, equality of opportunity, digital access as equality tool, justice and equality in education
Responsibility	R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R10, R13, R15...	personal responsibility, shared responsibility, responsibility linked with justice and freedom, responsibility for the future, responsibility in education, civic responsibility, national responsibility
Empathy & Solidarity	R1, R2, R5, R6, R10, R13, R15, R18...	education fostering empathy, mutual help through empathy, solidarity through education, empathy as personal growth, empathy linked with respect and unity, solidarity as survival value
Justice & Fairness	R2, R5, R6, R10, R11, R13, R19...	responsibility and freedom, fairness through dignity, honesty and respect, youth value, human dignity, fundamental principle
Critical Thinking	R1, R6, R10, R13, R21, R27...	education fostering critical thinking, critical thinking in education, analytical skill, discernment, linked with empathy and responsibility, youth value
Dialogue and Communicative Action	R6, R10, R21, R25, R33, R42, R47, R49, R50	group work, strengthening bonds, fostering empathy, mutual understanding, openness
Education for the Common Good	R20, R36, R49	orientation toward common good, education serving society, responsibility for common good
Inclusion	R42, R49	tolerance and respect, equality and dignity
Cultural Specificity	R4, R6, R10, R13, R32, R33, R45	respect for cultural diversity, culture as community building, cultural pluralism, recognition of cultural diversity
Empirical Categories		
Spiritual & Religious Values	R4, R10, R12, R19, R24, R41, R43, R45, R47, R48, R50...	religion as moral foundation, spiritual values as moral framework, religious teachings as ethical guidelines, faith as source of resilience, religion as source of responsibility and solidarity, faith preserving humanity, tolerance towards different faiths
Volunteering & Civic Engagement	R1, R3, R4, R5, R6, R10, R12, R14...	social support, joy and meaning, humanitarian aid, support for refugees, solidarity building, resilience practice, patriotic action
Education as Support	R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6...	emotional support, safe space, sense of security, anchor in crisis, hope through education
Patriotism & National Identity	R1, R3, R4, R5, R6, R9...	patriotism as core value, love of homeland, unity through patriotism, responsibility for the nation's future, civic consciousness, active national identity
Tolerance & Pluralism	R35, R36, R42, R43, R49...	tolerance as key value, pluralism and equality, respect for other opinions, cooperation through tolerance, tolerance in education

Honesty & Integrity	R29, R30, R31, R33, R35, R36...	honesty as moral base, academic integrity, honesty and respect combined, integrity as unifying value, honesty and openness
Peace & Non-violence	R4, R19, R24	peace as supreme value, importance of peace in wartime, peace as ethical guideline, non-violence principle
Psychological Resilience	R1, R2, R4, R6, R9, R10...	psychological support systems, inner strength, support in crisis, resilience in education, confidence under pressure, hope-based resilience
Community & Belonging	R4, R6, R9, R13, R19, R20, R22	sense of community, shared belonging, education fostering unity, anchor of belonging, unity through patriotism
Future-oriented Responsibility	R5, R21, R37	responsibility for future generations, responsibility for nation's future, responsibility in decision-making
Hope & Meaning	R1, R12, R13, R19, R21, R29, R36, R37, R41	search for meaning in morality, meaning through humanistic values, hope through solidarity, education preserving meaning, anchor of meaning, hope through education
Additional Values		
Humour & Optimism	R9	optimism in adversity, positive change through challenges, resilience and hope, positivity through volunteering, psychological support
Gratitude	R22, R36	personal gratitude, appreciation for learning opportunities, gratitude as ethical guideline, gratitude within community
Forgiveness & Reconciliation	R9, R13, R22, R31, R36, R43	tolerance and respect, mutual understanding, conflict resolution, reconciliation through cooperation, respect for other opinions
Sacrifice / Selflessness	R29, R37	sacrifice through volunteering, altruistic help, empathy-driven selflessness, sacrifice in crisis
Patience & Endurance	R4, R21, R31, R33, R36, R45	resilience, moral steadfastness, psychological endurance, commitment and perseverance
Adaptability & Flexibility	R1, R2, R19, R22, R24, R16	flexible learning formats (online/offline), individualised approaches, avoidance of formalism, dynamic response to wartime challenges, psychological adaptability
Faith in the Future	R5, R21, R34, R36, R37, R47	belief in the future, hope for a better tomorrow, education as source of hope, responsibility for generations, resilience through hope
Trust	R4, R25, R45, R47, R49	fundamental value, mutual respect, justice in community, freedom of thought, basis for cooperation
Joy / Happiness	R2, R3	joy of supportive learning, happiness through family and love, joy as relief from anxiety, happiness as life orientation
Hope in Adversity	R5, R6, R18, R22, R41, R47	hope through education, hope despite crisis, hope as coping strategy, hope rooted in dignity, hope in adversity as youth value

Empowerment	R4, R23, R28, R33, R41, R42, R46	empowerment through responsibility and commitment, active engagement, community support, resilience, national identity, self-realisation
Friendship	R2, R25, R28	mutual help, emotional support, community bonds, anchor in crisis

The comparison of theoretical categories with empirical findings demonstrates a strong continuity between normative ideals and students' lived experiences. Core values such as dignity, responsibility, empathy, solidarity, justice, and civic responsibility were not only affirmed in principle but vividly reflected in practice through fairness in assessment, mutual support, and engagement in volunteering and community initiatives. At the same time, additional values identified in the responses – adaptability, psychological resilience, hope, and patriotism – extend the theoretical framework by capturing the specific conditions of wartime education. Certain categories, including autonomy, cultural specificity, and critical thinking, appeared less explicitly, indicating that while they remain relevant as ideals, their practical realisation is limited. This alignment, enrichment, and partial tension together illustrate how education in crisis functions simultaneously as a moral framework and an existential practice.

On-going-state

The forward-looking dimension of ethical education in wartime is inseparable from the concrete needs voiced by students. Their responses reveal a demand for flexibility, care, and psychological support, as well as for a stronger ethical and civic orientation of education. These lived experiences underscore that moral norms and values are not stable and fixed categories, but are in a continuous process of interpretation and rethinking, especially in times of social instability and crises.[43] This dynamic nature of moral concepts places new demands on the educational space, which is also a complex and changing social phenomenon. During these periods of crisis, education needs to respond adequately to rapidly changing socio-cultural and political challenges, while supporting critical thinking and moral reflection among participants in the educational process.[44] At the same time, it is important to highlight the key risks that are present both globally and locally, including insufficient attention to the ethical component in the formation of civic consciousness.

The first issue concerns the philosophy of education in a post-traumatic society. Education in times of war should not be limited to survival or patriotic issues, but should serve as a foundation for building sustainable peace and responsible citizenship. Immanuel Kant, in his work *Zum ewigen Frieden* (1795), emphasises the need for humanity's moral progress, considering education as a key preparation for citizenship and peace, where respect for the rights of others is a central value of the political and educational system.[45] In post-traumatic societies, philosophical reflection acquires a new role: it supports the processing of collective trauma and lays the groundwork for an educational paradigm aimed at social recovery and responsible citizenship.[46]

A second major concern is the marginalisation of humanitarian education in times of crisis. War often fosters nationalistic narratives, which leads to reductionism and the erosion of plural moral

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43   Cf. Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Times: Living in an Age of Uncertainty* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 27–31.

44   Cf. Michalinos Zembylas, 'Mobilizing 'Implicit Activisms' in Schools through Practices of Critical Emotional Reflexivity,' *Teaching Education* 24, no. 1 (2013): 84–96.

45   Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Essay*, trans. Mary Campbell Smith (London: G. Allen & Unwin; New York: Macmillan, 1917), 161–172.

46   Cf. Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (London/New York: Routledge, 1992), 1–5.

perspectives.[47] In this context, Martha Nussbaum emphasises the critical role of humanitarian education (philosophy, literature, art) as a space for the formation of civic virtues, including empathy for the 'other', ethical reflection, responsibility, and civic courage.[48] According to Nusbaum, humanitarian education is an indispensable means of upholding democratic values and preventing the simplification of moral concepts in times of crisis.

A serious mistake of the modern educational process in times of war is the marginalisation of peace as a sustainable dimension, not just as a temporary cessation of violence. Education in times of crisis should not be limited to the functional support of the system, but should become a space for fostering a culture of peace, dignity and non-violent communication. Wolfgang Reuter and Johan Galtung emphasise that peace must be understood not merely as the absence of war ('negative peace'), but as an internal task of education directed toward 'positive peace' – the cultivation of fair relations, dignity, empathy, and non-violent dialogue.[49] The educational process in the context of war should develop emotional competence and a culture of non-violent expression, which is a prerequisite for long-term humane coexistence.

The fourth critical challenge is the delayed focus on the post-crisis period and the related lack of understanding of the ethical aspects of education in post-crisis contexts. The concepts of 'post-crisis ethics in education' and 'ethical sustainability' are relevant, focusing on the need for value-based rehabilitation of communities through education. Such education becomes crucial to restoring trust, overcoming trauma and countering social aggression.[50] Trauma is emerging as a new educational context that raises numerous challenges: How to learn and teach in a state of loss, pain and uncertainty? What should be the 'ethics of caring' in post-traumatic educational spaces?[51] Questions of memory and forgiveness remain central for overcoming the psychological consequences of conflict.[52]

Conclusion

The results of the study demonstrate that in times of war, education is especially transformed from a tool for transmitting knowledge to a space for ethical affirmation. It performs the functions of maintaining psychological stability, shaping moral orientation and developing solidarity among young people, as well as stabilisation in the context of collective traumatic experience. Students perceive the educational process not only as an academic activity, but also as a sphere in which they make daily moral choices. The educational space, especially in crisis contexts, proves to be an important prerequisite for social recovery, as it allows not only to reflect on losses but also to re-build value orientations.

The analysis of respondents' answers indicates that in times of war, young people perceive education as a space of moral self-determination and responsibility. The key values for students are dignity,

47   Cf. Harris Mylonas and Maya Tudor, 'Nationalism: What We Know and What We Still Need to Know,' *Annual Review of Political Science* 24 (2021): 109–32, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-041719-101841.

48   Martha C. Nussbaum, *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*, updated ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), 62.

49   Cf. Werner Wintersteiner, 'Friedenspädagogik als transformative Bildung,' *Friedenspädagogik* 85, no. 3 (2010): 11–28; Johan Galtung, *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996), 3, 30–31, 105.

50   Cf. Hilary Cremin, Hogai Aryoubi, Basma Hajir, Nomisha Kurian, and Hiba Salem, 'Post-Abyssal Ethics in Education Research in Settings of Conflict and Crisis: Stories from the Field,' *British Educational Research Journal* 47, no. 4 (August 2021): 1102–19, https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3712.

51   Cf. Nel Noddings, *Caring: A Relational Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 79–90.

52   Cf. Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009).

honesty, justice, responsibility, respect and empathy, not as abstract concepts, but as internal regulators of behaviour in a situation of uncertainty, fear and loss. The educational process, in their view, should not only provide access to knowledge, but also develop the capacity for moral judgement, mutual understanding and cooperation. Students' expectations point toward an education based on engagement, dialogue, and the practical implementation of ethical principles through social initiatives. Participation in volunteer work and social initiatives emerges as especially meaningful, providing a way for students to embody moral principles through action. In this context, education acquires a performative dimension: it not only transmits values but also creates conditions for their implementation in the real experience of communities, becoming a tool for civic formation and strengthening ethical responsibility in society. Practical implications also emerge: educational policy should embed ethical reflection in curricula, integrate trauma-informed approaches into teacher training, and support hybrid models that combine formal learning with informal and supportive practices such as volunteering, peer dialogue, and community initiatives.

The study also highlights a number of obstacles to the realisation of the ethical potential of education: emotional exhaustion, the loss of safe spaces, restrictions on access to resources, and formalisation of discussions of moral issues. Under conditions of martial law, educational initiatives often fail to achieve full implementation due to external circumstances. At the same time, a significant number of young people express a demand for flexible educational practices, inclusive education that can respond to individual needs while also maintaining ethical cohesion in communities. According to the approaches of socio-ethical analysis and the concept of bottom-up models, it is local initiatives that can identify the specific needs of communities and transform universal ethical principles into practical, viable forms of coexistence.

In a situation of general destruction, it is education that can support critical thinking, communicative openness and solidarity. The theoretical foundations of humanistic pedagogy (Freire, Nussbaum, Arendt, Habermas, Höffe) confirm that education is a space for the formation of a morally autonomous subject capable of resisting dehumanisation. The ability of young people to ask moral questions, listen to others, and recognise the value of human life more deeply indicates that the internal potential of democratic development is preserved, even in the most acute historical moments. At the same time, education in wartime appears as a meeting point of universal and local dimensions of ethics. Values such as dignity, justice, and respect retain their normative force, yet are interpreted through specific socio-cultural realities. The findings of this study therefore carry relevance beyond Ukraine: in other crisis and post-conflict contexts (such as the Balkans, the Middle East, or Sub-Saharan Africa) similar dynamics may be observed. Local testimonies, when compared across different societies, can not only affirm universal ethical categories but also generate new, globally significant ones. In this sense, the Ukrainian case provides a framework that may inspire further comparative research and guide educational practices in other regions facing conflict and recovery.

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Value and Demographic Characteristics of the Czech Population Engaged in Humanities-Oriented Leisure Activities: A Challenge for Values Education and Social Security

Jiří Pospíšil, Ivana Olecká

Abstract

In the context of current global crises (migratory, and military) as well as the growing phenomenon of child brutality (manifesting, for example, in violent incidents in schools), it is becoming increasingly evident that education has diverged from one of its fundamental purposes: the cultivation of humanity. This article contributes to the ongoing debate by analysing the relationship between participation in humanities-oriented leisure activities and individual value preferences, based on data from a 2024 survey conducted on a representative sample of 1,873 respondents in the Czech Republic. The analysis showed no statistically significant gender or age differences in participation when using a narrow definition of humanities-related leisure activities, whereas a broader definition revealed a strong gender imbalance favouring women. Significant differences were also found by educational attainment, with higher education levels associated with greater participation in both core and expanded humanities activities. The study also identified marked differences in value preferences between respondents who engage in humanities-oriented leisure activities (in both narrow and broad definitions) and those who do not. The findings suggest that engagement in such activities can meaningfully support the development of personal values and, in doing so, foster a renewed pedagogical humanisation with the potential to shape individuals toward humanity, peace, justice, and responsibility within a democratic society of the 21st century.

Keywords: humanities-oriented activities, values formation, pedagogical humanisation, personal values, leisure, human development, civic responsibility, security

Introduction

In recent years, we have witnessed a growing incidence of aggression and violence among children and adolescents, including extreme cases such as school attacks.[1] These alarming phenomena point

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1   Traci L. Wike and Mark W. Fraser, 'School Shootings: Making Sense of the Senseless,' *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 14, no. 3

to deeper changes in the ways contemporary society educates and shapes the younger generation.[2] The brutalisation of children—once considered a marginal issue—has become a serious societal challenge, raising urgent questions about its underlying causes: is it a failure of families, schools, or the broader value framework that shapes young people's identities and moral compasses? In this context, it is also necessary to critically reflect on how society interprets the behavioural expressions of youth, particularly in relation to alternative cultures and identity formation. Some youth subcultures are frequently viewed through a lens of risk and deviance, often being associated with delinquency, extremism, or violence.[3] Such interpretations may oversimplify complex social dynamics and obscure opportunities for constructive engagement and value development. In light of these challenges, it is essential to reconceptualise the role of education not merely as the transmission of knowledge, but as a means of cultivating humanity, inner stability, and the capacity to live peacefully with oneself and others.[4] The question of how to foster the development of personal values and humanity through educational processes has thus become more pressing than ever.

More than ever before, the significance of leisure time is increasing as a spatiotemporal context in which the aforementioned cultivation can take place freely and in a highly natural manner. As demonstrated in our previous research, leisure activities are closely intertwined with personal values, and conversely, value preferences significantly influence the ways in which leisure time is spent.[5] Within the realm of the humanities, this interconnection is particularly pronounced in relation to values often associated with the ideals of humanity (e.g., national welfare, world peace, mature love, wisdom, salvation, inner harmony, honesty and truthfulness, self-discipline, faith, moral integrity, and so forth). This linkage proved to be stable between 2009 and 2021, and in the present study, we aim to demonstrate the enduring nature of this relationship.[6]

Humanities-oriented leisure activities represent a distinct category, primarily due to their transcendent character. Our previously conducted research indicates that the values associated with humanities-oriented leisure activities suggest a certain detachment of their practitioners from the realities of the everyday world.[7] This is rooted in the very nature of their content: in the narrower sense, such activities are directed toward philosophical or historical reflection, care for the soul or society, or religious theory and practice. In a broader sense, this category may also include the study and teaching of languages, reading and literary creation, and the wide domain of the arts.

From a philosophical point of view, the category of humanities-oriented leisure is very close to the understanding of leisure in classical philosophy,[8] as found in Plato or Aristotle, and hence to the

(2009): 162–69, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2009.01.005; Joseph Bellal et al., 'Defining the Problem: 53 Years of Firearm Violence Afflicting America's Schools,' *Journal of the American College of Surgeons* 238, no. 4 (April 2024): 671–78, https://doi.org/10.1097/xcs.0000000000000955; Josef Smolík and Tomáš Šmíd, *Vybrané bezpečnostní hrozby a rizika 21. století*, 1st ed. (Brno: Masarykova univerzita, Mezinárodní politologický ústav, 2010).

2   Lisa Hellström, 'Definitions of Bullying,' in *The Wiley Blackwell Handbook of Bullying*, by Robert Thornberg and Dorothy L. Espelage, 1st ed. (Wiley, 2021), 2–21, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118482650.ch1.

3   Ivana Olecká, Jiří Pospíšil, and Josef Smolík, 'Subkultury Mládeže: Analýza Způsobů Identifikace Adolescentů a Mladých Dospělých s Vybranými Hudebními Subkulturami,' *Sociológia - Slovak Sociological Review* 57, no. 3 (16 June 2025): 211–40, https://doi.org/10.31577/sociologia.2025.57.3.8.

4   S.R. Healy et al., 'Worldwide School-Based Psychosocial Interventions and Their Effect on Aggression among Elementary School Children: A Systematic Review 2010–2019,' *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 55 (2020): 101486, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2020.101486; Conrad Hughes, 'Addressing Violence in Education: From Policy to Practice,' *Prospects* 48, no. 1–2 (2020): 23–38, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-019-09445-1.

5   Jiří Pospíšil, *Hodnoty a volný čas: Nové výzvy pro sociální pedagogiku a pedagogiku volného času*, 1st ed. (Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci, 2023).

6   Ibid., 133–53.

7   Daniel Dubuisson, *The Western Construction of Religion: Myths, Knowledge, and Ideology* (Baltimore, London: JHU Press, 2003).

8   Sebastian De Grazia, *Of Time, Work, and Leisure* 1962 Reprint (New York: Vintage Books, 1994); Alexander Sager, 'Philosophy of Leisure,' in *Routledge Handbook of Leisure Studies*, ed. Tony Blackshaw (London: Routledge, 2013), 5–14.

original Greek concept of leisure — σχολή. In his Laws, Plato refers to leisure as a time suitable for contemplating matters of the state,[9] while in *Critias* he presents it as both an opportunity and a necessary condition for reflecting on history and myths—an activity that becomes possible only when one is distanced from the demands of labour.[10] In its most elevated sense, Plato conceives of leisure as the foundation of the philosophical life — as a means of liberation from the pressure of duties, tasks, and haste.[11] In this regard, humanities-based leisure activities truly belong to the very core of what was originally understood as the purpose of leisure: reflection upon noble matters made possible by freedom from daily routine and any form of servitude. Although leisure has undergone significant transformations throughout history and has gradually become an increasingly important aspect of human life—culminating in its prominent role within modern society—the activities through which people engage in leisure have likewise evolved and expanded. Despite these changes, leisure filled with humanities-oriented activities appears to remain closely aligned with the Greek ideal of leisure, which has always aimed at the realisation of free choice in the pursuit of higher and nobler ends.[12]

A humanities orientation is important not only for the study of the experience of leisure, but the broader humanistic context is equally essential for understanding the very identity and meaning of leisure itself. There will always exist a polarity between leisure as a product of culture[13] and leisure as a foundation from which culture is created.[14] Both poles represent the boundaries of a space within which the relationship between leisure and culture is realised, as the embeddedness of leisure in culture cannot be separated.[15] Humanities-oriented activities thus serve as a kind of bridge between the cultural foundation and the broader, more complex domain of leisure. Over time, it has become evident that without the humanities, even the study of leisure itself would not be possible. In a review marking the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of Sebastian De Grazia's *Of Time, Work and Leisure*—a seminal work in humanistically oriented leisure studies— Charles Sylvester expressed the essence of the issue unequivocally: 'Sadly, without the humanities, leisure studies, consisting as it does of human beings, will be unable to hear its collective soul talking to itself, or assist other individuals to listen their own. It would be ironic, as well, because that was one of the purposes of classical leisure'.[16]

In our previous work,[17] we have already explored, in the context of leisure studies, the role that values play in relation to culture—values which crucially shape our attitudes towards ourselves, others, and the world around us.[18] A central question is whether these values are part of culture—

9   Plato, *Plato Laws* (Cambridge, United Kingdom; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), paras 763d, 828d, 832d.

10   Plato, *Timaeus and Critias*, Rev. translation and new introd. (London: Penguin, 2008), para. 110a.

11   Plato, *Theaetetus* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987), para. 172; Plato, *The Republic*, Second edition (London, England: Penguin Books, 2007), paras 500c, 619c; Plato, *Plato Laws*, paras 813c, 820c, 961b.

12   John L. Hemingway, 'Lesiure and Civility: Reflections on a Greek Ideal,' *Leisure Sciences* 10, no. 3 (January 1988): 179–91, https://doi.org/10.1080/01490408809512188; Kostas Kalimtzis, *An Inquiry into the Philosophical Concept of Scholê: Leisure as a Political End* (London; New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2017).

13   Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society, 1780-1950* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books in association with Chatto & Windus, 1971).

14   Josef Pieper, *Muße und Kult* (München: Kösel, 2007).

15   John R. Kelly, *Freedom to Be: A New Sociology of Leisure* (London: Collier Macmillan, 1987).

16   Charles Sylvester, 'Fiftieth Anniversary Of Time, Work, and Leisure,' *Journal of Leisure Research* 45, no. 2 (April 2013): 253–58, https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2013.11950285.

17   Pospíšil, *Hodnoty a volný čas*, 57.

18   In this paper we follow the definition of value and value orientation by Clyde Kluckhohn: 'A conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or char- acteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action. ... A value orientation may be defined as a generalized and organized conception, influencing behavior, of nature, of man's place in it, of man's relation to man, and of the desirable and nondesirable as they may relate to man-environment and interhuman relations' Clyde Kluckhohn, 'Values and Value Orientations in the Theory of Action,' in *Toward a General Theory of Action*, ed. Talcott Parsons and Edward A. Shils (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1951), 395, 411.

if we understand culture in line with Pierre Bourdieu's conception[19]—or whether they, in some way, transcend it. We are inclined to support the latter assumption: that values, in a specific way, go beyond the boundaries of any particular culture.

This view was philosophically upheld by Max Scheler[20] and similarly endorsed by cultural anthropologist and sociologist Clyde Kluckhohn.[21] Empirical support for this claim was provided by the research on universal value types conducted by Shalom Schwartz and Wolfgang Bilsky,[22] which demonstrated the existence of such universal value structures. It is clear that not all values transcend culture; however, the universal value types—though emphasised differently across cultures—undoubtedly represent convincing evidence that values, and their organisation within a hierarchy (value orientation), are related to the very essence of the human being and of humanity itself.

The specific form of transcendence exhibited by these universal values in relation to culture becomes particularly apparent in situations where culture plays a mediating role in the process of personal identification with particular values. If culture acts as a mediator in the sharing of values, and if the experience of leisure likewise takes place within a cultural framework, then it is reasonable to assume that deeper connections exist between values and leisure.[23] Specific forms of leisure experience may thus serve as a means for the sharing and internalisation of values. Therefore, we argue that leisure can be conceived as a sphere of values—one in which leisure is not only culturally or habitually conditioned, but also, through its link to values that often transcend culture, becomes a shaping force of culture itself.

If we accept the thesis that certain values transcend the boundaries of culture, and acknowledge their significant connection to leisure, its experience, and the choice of activities, while also recognising humanities-oriented activities as bearers of the original meaning of leisure in the history of European culture, then we must also concede that such activities occupy an exclusive position among other forms of leisure. Their link to value preferences may serve as an indicator of the current shape of European cultural identity.

For this reason, our research focused not only on the demographic characteristics of individuals who engage in humanities-oriented leisure activities, but above all on their value preferences. For the purposes of the research presented in this article, two research questions were formulated:

Q1 – Is the choice of humanities-oriented leisure activities influenced by the demographic factors of generation, gender, and education?
Q2 – What is the specific value profile of respondents who engage in humanities-oriented leisure activities?

19   Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* Dotisk 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
20   Max Scheler, *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik*, 2nd ed. (Halle: Verlag von M. Niemeyer, 1921).
21   Kluckhohn, 'Values and Value Orientations in the Theory of Action'.
22   Shalom H. Schwartz and Wolfgang Bilsky, 'Toward a Universal Psychological Structure of Human Values,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 53, no. 3 (1987): 550–62, https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.53.3.550; Shalom H. Schwartz and Wolfgang Bilsky, 'Toward a Theory of the Universal Content and Structure of Values: Extensions and Cross-Cultural Replications,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 58, no. 5 (1990): 878–91, https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.58.5.878; Shalom H. Schwartz, 'Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theoretical Advances and Empirical Tests in 20 Countries,' in *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, ed. Mark P. Zanna, vol. 25 (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1992), 1–65, https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60281-6.
23   This theoretical assumption was first put forward by Max Kaplan in his remarkable work *Leisure: Theory and Policy*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 1975).

Methodology

The research, partial results of which are presented in this article, was designed as a cross-section-al ex post facto study[24] and was representative in terms of age and gender for the population of the Czech Republic aged 15 and above. Sampling was conducted using proportional stratified random selection, resulting in a final representative sample of 1,873 respondents. The data were collected between March and June 2024 using an online questionnaire, with the predominant data collection method being CAWI (Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing). In cases where respondents were unable to complete the questionnaire independently, the CAPI method (Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing) was employed, with completion assisted by a trained field researcher.

The variable of gender was measured on a binary scale: male (907; 48.4%) and female (966; 51.6%). Due to the extremely low validity and frequency of self-reported identification with other genders in previous research, we were compelled to exclude the measurement of other gender identities from this study.

The variable age generation groups was created by categorising the originally measured metric variable age, which respondents provided as a numeric value. Stratification by generation was employed based on the theoretical assumption that different generational cohorts would exhibit distinct reflections on humanities-oriented leisure activities. For the purpose of analysis and interpretation, a derived variable was constructed, grouping respondents according to their generational affiliation: Generation Y, Z, and Alpha (15–35 years), Generation X (36–55 years), and the War Generation together with the so-called Baby Boomers (56+ years). The final respondent sample was distributed as follows: 397 individuals from Generations Y, Z, and Alpha (born between 1989 and 2009; aged 15–35 at the time of data collection; 21.2%), 1,049 individuals from Generation X (born between 1969 and 1988; aged 36–55; 56%), and 427 individuals from the War and Baby Boomer generations (born between 1927 and 1968; aged 56 and above; 22.8%).

The last of the measured independent demographic variables was the respondents' level of education, which was categorised into four groups: individuals with elementary education (129; 6.9%), individuals with vocational/apprenticeship training (302; 16.1%), individuals with secondary education (784; 41.9%), and individuals with higher (tertiary) education (658; 35.1%).

The leisure activities of the respondents were measured using the Catalogue of Leisure Activities, version 4.3.0.[25] The core principle of the catalogue lies in its hierarchical structure: activities are organised into categories (coded by values divisible by 100), further subdivided into subcategories (divisible by 10), and finally into individual activities. This structure enables both the identification of cumulative frequencies within broader categories or subcategories and the retention of detailed information regarding the specific structure of respondents' leisure activities.

The current version of the catalogue includes 304 activities grouped into 89 subcategories and 9 main categories. A detailed description of the catalogue is available in its published version and methodological manual,[26] the specifics of its development and revisions are outlined in the validation study.[27]

24   Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, 5th ed. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

25   Jiří Pospíšil, Helena Pospíšilová, and Ludmila Siarda Trochtová, 'Catalogue of Leisure Activities,' 19 January 2021, https://www.leisureresearch.eu/.

26   Jiří Pospíšil, Helena Pospíšilová, and Ludmila Trochtová, *Katalog volnočasových aktivit verze 4.0.0: nástroj pro výzkum volného času* (Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého, 2018).

27   Jiří Pospíšil, Helena Pospíšilová, and Ludmila Trochtová, 'The Catalogue of Leisure Activities: A New Structured Values and Content Based Instrument for Leisure Research Usable for Social Development and Community Planning,' Sustainability 14, no. 5, #2657 (24 February 2022), https://doi.org/10.3390/su14052657.

The Catalogue of Leisure Activities includes a specific category titled Humanities (code 200), from which at least one activity was selected by 154 respondents (8.2%).

This category encompasses humanities-related activities in the narrower sense, including, for example: Western philosophy, psychology and social sciences, history, general religion and sacred texts, Christianity and Christian social and religious practices, Judaism (e.g., visiting synagogues, prayer, and spiritual life), Islam (e.g., visiting mosques, praying, and spiritual life), other world religions, mythology, Eastern philosophy, religious studies and comparative religion, public worship and related practices, as well as magic, parapsychology and occultism, and astrology. For the purposes of this study, these activities will be referred to as *core humanities*.

If we were to define humanities-based activities according to the classical conception of the humanities,[28] we would have to extend their scope beyond the traditional focus on understanding the human being and society, to also include the study of human self-expression through language, literature, and the arts — including visual, musical, and dramatic forms. This broader conceptualisation of humanities-related activities is referred to as *expanded humanities*. In addition to the catalogue category Humanities, it also includes the categories Literature and Languages and Arts. A total of 538 (28.7%) out of 1,873 respondents reported engagement in activities within the expanded humanities category. Given the broader scope and greater representation, it is reasonable to expect both distinct value preferences among those who engage in these activities, as well as differences in their demographic structure.

To measure values, an extended version of Rokeach's inventories[29] of terminal and instrumental values was employed. According to Rokeach's framework, terminal values are further divided into intrapersonal and prosocial categories, while instrumental values are classified as either moral or competence-based. Attitudes towards values were measured in the form of self-reported value preferences, using a continuous visual analogue scale ranging from 1 to 10, with a sensitivity of 0.1 points. Respondents indicated the degree of personal importance they attributed to each value, allowing for fine-grained differentiation in individual preferences. This method enables the capture of nuanced attitudes and supports the use of parametric statistical analyses in subsequent data interpretation. Our approach to measuring value preferences differs from Rokeach's original methodology, in which respondents were required to rank values in order of personal importance. Instead, we adopted a scale-based measurement technique, allowing respondents to evaluate each value independently on a continuous scale. This method was also employed in the aforementioned studies on value preferences conducted by S. Schwartz and W. Bilsky, and it is particularly suitable for capturing the relative strength of value orientations without forcing a strict hierarchical ranking.

For the purposes of this research, a set of hypotheses was established, assuming a dependence of both core humanities-oriented leisure activities and extended humanities-oriented leisure activities on the factors of gender ($H1_{CORE}$, $H1_{EXTENDED}$), generation ($H2_{CORE}$, $H2_{EXTENDED}$), and education ($H3_{CORE}$, $H3_{EXTENDED}$). Hypotheses H1–H3 were tested using Pearson's chi-squared test of independence for contingency tables, supplemented by the calculation of adjusted residuals (z-score),[30] which enabled a more detailed analysis of the results in cases where the null hypothesis

28   Willem B. Drees, 'What Are the Humanities?,' in *What Are the Humanities For?*, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2021), 7–120, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108974615.002.

29   Milton Rokeach, *The Nature of Human Values* (New York, NY: Free Press, 1973); Milton Rokeach, *The Rokeach Value Survey* (Sunnyvale, CA: Halgren Tests, 1967).

30   David Sheskin, *Handbook of Parametric and Nonparametric Statistical Procedures*, 5th ed. (Boca Raton: Chapman & Hall/CRC, 2011); Razia Azen and Cindy M. Walker, *Categorical Data Analysis for the Behavioral and Social Sciences*, 2nd ed. (New York; London: Routledge, 2021).

was rejected. The statistical significance of the z-scores was evaluated using a z-test, with critical values of ±1.96 indicating significance at the 0.05 level (marked *), ±2.52 indicating significance at the 0.01 level (marked **), and ±3.3 indicating significance at the 0.001 level (marked *).

For the purpose of testing differences in value preferences between those engaged in core humanities-oriented leisure activities and those involved in extended humanities-oriented leisure activities, we do not formulate hypotheses individually for each specific value. Instead, we establish general hypothesis patterns as follows:

$H4_{CORE}V_n$: There is a statistically significant difference in the preference for the value V_n between those who engage in core humanities-oriented leisure activities and those who do not.

$H4_{EXTENDED}V_n$: There is a statistically significant difference in the preference for the value V_n between those who engage in extended humanities-oriented leisure activities and those who do not.

The testing of the set of hypotheses for individual values was conducted using a One-Way ANOVA test.[31] All statistically significant results are marked using the conventional asterisk notation (* = significant at the 0.05 level, ** = significant at the 0.01 level, *** = significant at the 0.001 level).

Results

An analysis of the relationship between gender and participation in humanities-oriented leisure activities (Table 1) yielded divergent results depending on the definition of such activities. When applying the narrower concept of core humanities-related activities no statistically significant difference was found between men and women ($H1_{CORE}$ is rejected). The chi-square test results ($\chi^2_{(df = 1)}$ = 0.3324, p = 0.564, n = 1873) suggest that gender does not play a significant role in this context. This interpretation is supported by the adjusted residuals (z-scores), all of which fall within the range of statistical insignificance (e.g., among men: z = −0.58 for 'no activity' and z = 0.58 for 'at least one activity'; similarly for women: z = 0.58 and z = −0.58).

A markedly different pattern emerged when applying the broader definition of expanded humanities-related activities ($H1_{EXTENDED}$ is confirmed). In this case, a highly statistically significant difference was observed ($\chi^2_{(df = 1)}$ = 27.7220, p < 0.001, n = 1873), indicating a strong association between gender and participation. Men were substantially more likely to report no participation in these activities—698 out of 907 men fell into this category (z = 5.27***), while only 209 reported engaging in at least one activity (z = −5.27***). In contrast, women were more likely to report participation—329 out of 966 women engaged in at least one activity (z = 5.27***), while 637 reported none (z = −5.27***).

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31 Sheskin, *Handbook of Parametric and Nonparametric Statistical Procedures.*

Table 1. The relationship between gender and participation in humanities-oriented leisure activities

		No core humanities-related leisure activities	At least one leisure activity related to the core humanities	No expanded humanities-related leisure activities	At least one leisure activity related to the expanded humanities	Total
Gender	Men	829 z: -0,58	78 z: 0,58	698 z: 5,27***	209 z: -5,27***	907
	Women	890 z: 0,58	76 z: -0,58	637 z: -5,27***	329 z: 5,27***	966
	Total	1719	154	1335	538	1873

Chi Square test results: $\chi^2_{(df = 1)} = 0,3324$, p = 0,564241, n = 1873

Chi Square test results: $\chi^2(df = 1) = 27,7220$, p = 0,000000, n = 1873

The analysis of the relationship between age generational groups and participation in humanities-oriented leisure activities (Table 2) yielded no statistically significant results. For the narrower category of core humanities-related activities, the chi-square test value was $\chi^2_{(df = 2)} = 0.1005$ with a p-value of 0.951, clearly indicating the absence of a significant association between age generation and engagement in these activities (H2$_{CORE}$ is rejected). Similarly, for the broader category of expanded humanities-related activities—which includes activities related to literature, languages, and the arts—the test yielded $\chi^2_{(df = 2)} = 2.7497$ with a p-value of 0.253, also indicating no statistically significant relationship (H2$_{EXTENDED}$ is rejected).

Table 2. The relationship between age generational groups and participation in humanities-oriented leisure activities

		No core humanities-related leisure activities	At least one leisure activity related to the core humanities	No expanded humanities-related leisure activities	At least one leisure activity related to the expanded humanities	Total
Age generation groups	1 Generations Z and Alfa (15-25)	363 z: -0,28	34 z: 0,28	293 z: 1,25	104 z: -1,25	397
	2 Generations X a Y (26-55)	963 z: 0,04	86 z: -0,04	732 z: -1,61	317 z: 1,61	1049
	3 War and baby boomers generations (56+)	393 z: 0,22	34 z: -0,22	310 z: 0,69	117 z: -0,69	427
	Total	1719	154	1335	538	1873

Chi Square test results: $\chi^2_{(df = 2)} = 0,1005$, p = 0,950995, n = 1873

Chi Square test results: $\chi^2(df = 2) = 2,7497$, p = 0,252878, n = 1873

The analysis of the relationship between highest educational attainment and participation in humanities-oriented leisure activities revealed (Table 3) statistically significant differences for both the narrower category of core humanities-related activities and the broader category of expanded humanities-related activities. For core humanities activities, the chi-square test yielded $\chi^2_{(df = 3)} = 9.4515$, p = 0.024, indicating a statistically significant (H3$_{CORE}$ is confirmed), though moderate,

association between education level and participation. The association was stronger for expanded humanities activities, with $\chi^2_{(df = 3)} = 31.0691$, p < 0.001, demonstrating a more robust and reliable relationship (H3$_{EXTENDED}$ is rejected).

A detailed examination of the adjusted residuals (z-scores) shows that respondents with only elementary education were more likely to participate in core humanities activities (z = 1.79), but underrepresented in expanded humanities activities (z = –1.02). Apprenticeship holders were significantly less likely to engage in expanded humanities activities (z = –3.85***) and overrepresented in the 'no expanded activity' category (z = 3.85***). Individuals with a high school education were more frequently involved in core humanities activities (z = 2.64**) and less likely to report no participation in these activities (z = –2.64**), while their participation in expanded humanities activities did not differ significantly. The most pronounced effect was observed among respondents with tertiary (university-level) education, who were substantially more likely to participate in both core humanities activities (z = 1.92) and especially expanded humanities activities (z = 5.03***), while being significantly underrepresented in the 'no expanded activity' group (z = –5.03***).

Table 3. The relationship between highest educational attainment and participation in humanities-oriented leisure activities

		No core humanities-related leisure activities	At least one leisure activity related to the core humanities	No expanded humanities-related leisure activities	At least one leisure activity related to the expanded humanities	Total
Highest achieved education	Elementary	113 *z: -1,79*	16 *z: 1,79*	97 *z: 1,02*	32 *z: -1,02*	129
	Apprenticeship	278 *z: 0,19*	24 *z: -0,19*	243 *z: 3,85****	59 *z: -3,85****	302
	High school	735 *z: 2,64***	49 *z: -2,64***	573 *z: 1,47*	211 *z: -1,47*	784
	Tertiary education (university level)	593 *z: -1,92*	65 *z: 1,92*	422 *z: -5,03****	236 *z: 5,03****	658
	Total	1719	154	1335	538	1873

Chi Square test results: $\chi^2_{(df = 3)} = 9,4515$, p = 0,023853, n = 1873

Chi Square test results: $\chi2(df = 3) = 31,0691$, p = 0,000001, n = 1873

The Table 4 presents a comparison of mean preferences for various terminal values between two groups of respondents: those not engaged in core humanities-related leisure activities and those participating in at least one such activity. The overall mean includes data from both groups. The results indicate statistically significant differences for several values, suggesting that engagement in humanities activities is associated with distinct value preferences. Among intrapersonal values, respondents involved in humanities activities place significantly greater emphasis on **salvation (eternal life)** (mean 6.77 vs. 4.27; *p* < 0.001), **self-respect** (8.62 vs. 7.93; *p* < 0.001), and **wisdom** (8.62 vs. 8.12; *p* = 0.0016). They also show higher preference for **inner harmony** (8.41 vs. 8.04; *p* = 0.0349). Conversely, values such as a **comfortable life** and an **exciting active life** are significantly more preferred by those not engaged in humanities activities (6.53 vs. 5.71; *p* < 0.001 and 6.44 vs. 5.99; *p* = 0.0283, respectively).

Within prosocial values, significant differences were found for **economic prosperity**, which was more highly valued by respondents not participating in humanities activities (8.18 vs. 7.70; $p = 0.0015$), whereas **mature love** was more highly valued by those engaged in humanities activities (8.76 vs. 8.27; $p = 0.0061$). The preference for a **world of beauty (natural and artificial)** was markedly higher among participants in humanities activities (8.27 vs. 7.35; $p < 0.001$). Similarly, **solidarity** was significantly more valued by those engaged in humanities activities (7.77 vs. 7.25; $p = 0.0052$). Some values, such as **happiness**, **equal opportunity for all**, **family security**, **freedom**, **national security**, and **true friendship**, did not show significant differences between the two groups.

Table 4. Comparison of Mean Terminal Value Preferences by Participation in Core Humanities-Oriented Leisure Activities

Terminal values	Mean of value preference (μ)			F	p
	No core humanities-related leisure activities	At least one leisure activity related to the core humanities	Overall mean		
Intrapersonal values					
A comfortable life	6,53	5,71	6,46	15,2733	0,0001***
Exciting active life	6,44	5,99	6,41	4,8201	0,0283*
Happiness	7,89	7,63	7,87	2,1972	0,1384
Inner harmony	8,04	8,41	8,07	4,4581	0,0349*
Pleasure	8,23	8,06	8,21	1,1305	0,2878
Salvation (eternal life)	4,27	6,77	4,48	90,178	0,0000***
Self-respect, self-esteem	7,93	8,62	7,99	16,7182	0,0000***
Wisdom	8,12	8,62	8,16	9,9671	0,0016**
Acceptance	7,24	7,45	7,26	1,3483	0,2457
Health	9,24	9,02	9,22	2,9287	0,0872
Prosocial values					
Economic prosperity	8,18	7,7	8,14	10,0524	0,0015**
Equal opportunity of all	7,03	7,14	7,04	0,352	0,5531
Family security	9,16	9,26	9,17	0,6545	0,4186
Freedom	8,8	8,88	8,81	0,3044	0,5812
Mature love	8,27	8,76	8,31	7,5444	0,0061**
National security	8,13	7,92	8,11	1,3591	0,2438
Social recognition	6,49	6,14	6,46	3,1545	0,0759
True friendship	8,67	8,77	8,68	0,4388	0,5078
World of beauty (natural, artificial)	7,35	8,27	7,43	21,1439	0,0000***
Respect for parents and the elderly	8,57	8,72	8,58	0,9088	0,3405
Solidarity	7,25	7,77	7,29	7,8129	0,0052**

Next table (Table 5) compares the mean preferences for various terminal values between respondents who do not participate in any expanded humanities-related leisure activities and those who engage in at least one such activity. The expanded category includes not only core humanities activities but also those related to literature, languages, and the arts. The results reveal several statistically significant differences, indicating that participation in expanded humanities activities correlates with distinct value orientations. Among intrapersonal values, participants in expanded humanities activities show significantly higher preferences for **inner harmony** (mean 8.39 vs. 7.94; p < 0.001), **salvation (eternal life)** (4.87 vs. 4.32; p = 0.0008), **self-respect** (8.43 vs. 7.81; p < 0.001), **wisdom** (8.45 vs. 8.05; p < 0.001), **acceptance** (7.42 vs. 7.20; p = 0.0396), and **health** (9.35 vs. 9.16; p = 0.0111).

In the domain of prosocial values, participants display significantly greater preference for **equal opportunity for all** (7.22 vs. 6.97; p = 0.0317), **family security** (9.27 vs. 9.12; p = 0.0496), **freedom** (8.98 vs. 8.74; p = 0.0068), **mature love** (8.59 vs. 8.20; p = 0.0003), and a **world of beauty** (natural and artificial) (7.85 vs. 7.26; p < 0.001). Values such as a comfortable life, exciting active life, happiness, economic prosperity, national security, social recognition, true friendship, respect for parents and the elderly, and solidarity did not show statistically significant differences between the two groups.

Table 5. Comparison of Mean Terminal Value Preferences by Participation in Expanded Humanities-Oriented Leisure Activities

Terminal values	Mean of value preference (μ)			F	p
	No expanded humanities-related leisure activities	At least one leisure activity related to the expanded humanities	Overall mean		
Intrapersonal values					
A comfortable life	6,46	6,47	6,46	0,0029	0,9570
Exciting active life	6,42	6,36	6,41	0,2738	0,6008
Happiness	7,89	7,83	7,87	0,3032	0,5820
Inner harmony	7,94	8,39	8,07	16,9298	0,0000***
Pleasure	8,17	8,33	8,21	3,1169	0,0776
Salvation (eternal life)	4,32	4,87	4,48	11,3003	0,0008***
Self-respect, self-esteem	7,81	8,43	7,99	36,9862	0,0000***
Wisdom	8,05	8,45	8,16	17,1998	0,0000***
Acceptance	7,2	7,42	7,26	4,2398	0,0396*
Health	9,16	9,35	9,22	6,464	0,0111*
Prosocial values					
Economic prosperity	8,14	8,16	8,14	0,0668	0,7961
Equal opportunity of all	6,97	7,22	7,04	4,6197	0,0317*
Family security	9,12	9,27	9,17	3,8602	0,0496*
Freedom	8,74	8,98	8,81	7,3323	0,0068**

Mature love	8,2	8,59	8,31	13,4299	0,0003***
National security	8,1	8,15	8,11	0,2482	0,6184
Social recognition	6,48	6,39	6,46	0,5673	0,4514
True friendship	8,64	8,77	8,68	2,2298	0,1355
World of beauty (natural, artificial)	7,26	7,85	7,43	23,9024	0,0000***
Respect for parents and the elderly	8,57	8,63	8,58	0,4087	0,5227
Solidarity	7,23	7,42	7,29	2,7568	0,0970

The Table 6 compares the mean preferences for instrumental values (personal characteristics) between two groups of respondents: those not engaged in core humanities-related leisure activities and those participating in at least one such activity.

The results show statistically significant differences primarily in the domain of moral values. Respondents involved in humanities activities have higher preferences for being **broad, open minded** (mean 8.29 vs. 7.81; p = 0.0035), **clean (in moral sense)** (8.23 vs. 7.66; p = 0.0013), **forgiving** (8.02 vs. 7.37; p = 0.0002), **empathic** (8.48 vs. 8.10; p = 0.0212), and **faithful, trusty** (7.87 vs. 6.62; p < 0.001).

Other moral values such as **helpful**, **polite**, **responsible**, **loving**, and **obedient** did not differ significantly between groups, although **helpful** showed a marginal trend towards higher preference among participants (p = 0.053).

Regarding competency values, the only significant difference was found for **cooperative**, which was more preferred by participants in humanities activities (8.01 vs. 7.62; p = 0.0112). Other competency-related values, including **capable, competent**, **ambitious**, **assertive**, **courageous**, **imaginative**, **independent**, **intellectual**, and **self-controlled**, showed no significant differences.

The value **authoritative, socially powered** was generally rated lower by both groups without significant difference.

Table 6. Comparison of Mean Preferences for Instrumental Personal Values by Participation in Core Humanities-Oriented Leisure Activities

Instrumental values (personal characteristics)	Mean of value preference (μ)			F	p
	No core humanities-related leisure activities	At least one leisure activity related to the core humanities	Overall mean		
Moral					
Broad, open minded	7,81	8,29	7,85	8,534	0,0035**
Clean (in moral sense)	7,66	8,23	7,71	10,3465	0,0013**
Forgiving	7,37	8,02	7,43	13,6217	0,0002***
Helpful	8,12	8,42	8,15	3,7471	0,0531
Polite	7,73	7,86	7,74	0,6548	0,4185

Empathic	8,1	8,48	8,13	5,3171	0,0212*
Responsible	8,42	8,57	8,44	0,9653	0,3260
Loving	8,35	8,54	8,36	1,5657	0,2110
Obedient	6,29	6,44	6,3	0,4909	0,4836
Faithful, Trusty	6,62	7,87	6,72	38,5036	0,0000***
Competency					
Capable, Competent	7,8	7,95	7,81	0,9683	0,3252
Ambitious	6,9	6,54	6,87	3,4335	0,0640
Assertive	6,98	6,88	6,98	0,2848	0,5936
Courageous	7,07	7,41	7,09	3,6516	0,0562
Imaginative	6,78	6,99	6,8	1,0406	0,3078
Independent	7,74	7,67	7,74	0,2024	0,6528
Intellectual	7,4	7,43	7,4	0,0259	0,8721
Cooperative	7,62	8,01	7,65	6,4459	0,0112*
Self-controlled	7,4	7,31	7,39	0,2427	0,6223
Authoritative, Socially Powered	4,86	4,52	4,83	2,5661	0,1093

Table 7 compares the mean preferences for instrumental values, focusing on personal character-istics, between respondents who do not participate in any expanded humanities-related leisure activities and those who engage in at least one such activity. The expanded category encompasses a broader range of humanities activities, including literature, languages, and the arts.

The results reveal multiple statistically significant differences, particularly among moral values. Respondents participating in expanded humanities activities show significantly higher prefer-ences for being **broad, open minded** (mean 8.14 vs. 7.73; $p < 0.001$), **forgiving** (7.60 vs. 7.36; $p = 0.0236$), **helpful** (8.28 vs. 8.09; $p = 0.0450$), **empathic** (8.47 vs. 8.00; $p < 0.001$), **responsible** (8.64 vs. 8.35; $p = 0.0009$), **loving** (8.53 vs. 8.30; $p = 0.0111$), and **faithful, trusty** (7.06 vs. 6.59; $p = 0.0001$). Values such as **clean (in moral sense)**, **polite**, and **obedient** do not differ significant-ly between groups.

Regarding competency-related values, significant differences were observed for **imaginative** (6.99 vs. 6.72; $p = 0.0303$), **intellectual** (7.69 vs. 7.28; $p = 0.0001$), and **cooperative** (7.85 vs. 7.57; $p = 0.0030$), with higher preferences among those engaged in expanded humanities activities. No significant differences were found for **capable, competent**, **ambitious**, **assertive**, **courageous**, **independent**, or **self-controlled**. The value **authoritative, socially powered** was significantly less preferred by participants in expanded humanities activities (4.49 vs. 4.97; $p = 0.0002$).

Table 7. Comparison of Mean Preferences for Instrumental Personal Values by Participation in Expanded Humanities-Oriented Leisure Activities

Instrumental values (personal characteristics)	Mean of value preference (μ)			F	p
	No expanded humanities-related leisure activities	At least one leisure activity related to the expanded humanities	Overall mean		
Moral					
Broad, open minded	7,73	8,14	7,85	16,842	0,0000***
Clean (in moral sense)	7,66	7,82	7,71	2,1264	0,1449
Forgiving	7,36	7,6	7,43	5,1334	0,0236*
Helpful	8,09	8,28	8,15	4,0258	0,0450*
Polite	7,72	7,79	7,74	0,5679	0,4512
Empathic	8	8,47	8,13	22,7724	0,0000***
Responsible	8,35	8,64	8,44	11,0435	0,0009***
Loving	8,3	8,53	8,36	6,4677	0,0111*
Obedient	6,34	6,23	6,3	0,8056	0,3696
Faithful, Trusty	6,59	7,06	6,72	14,5189	0,0001***
Competency					
Capable, Competent	7,78	7,89	7,81	1,5776	0,2093
Ambitious	6,93	6,73	6,87	2,9038	0,0885
Assertive	6,92	7,1	6,98	2,3725	0,1237
Courageous	7,11	7,05	7,09	0,3309	0,5652
Imaginative	6,72	6,99	6,8	4,6985	0,0303*
Independent	7,73	7,76	7,74	0,0892	0,7653
Intellectual	7,28	7,69	7,4	14,7434	0,0001***
Cooperative	7,57	7,85	7,65	8,8537	0,0030**
Self-controlled	7,4	7,36	7,39	0,221	0,6383
Authoritative, Socially Powered	4,97	4,49	4,83	14,016	0,0002***

Discussion

The research presented in this study demonstrates that core humanities-oriented leisure activities represent a rather exclusive group of activities. They are engaged in by only 8.2% of respondents, and in terms of their share among all reported leisure activities, they account for merely 4.64%. However, their exclusivity does not lie solely in their low prevalence. It stems primarily from the intellectual and personal demands inherently associated with these activities. A critical question

for further discussion is whether it is even possible for them to become more widely represented. It seems more plausible that their broader prevalence is unlikely. Nevertheless, this does not mean that core humanities-oriented leisure activities should be excluded from pedagogical interest or concern. This also means that renewed attention must be given to research and publishing in this area. A study by Paul Heintzman (2018) demonstrated that, in the ten years preceding the publication of his article, there had been a marked decline in humanities-oriented topics within the journal *Leisure Sciences*.[32]

While core humanities activities are not gender-selective, expanded humanities activities tend to attract significantly more women than men. In the case of core humanities, this represents a long-term trend that has been observable since 2009.[33] This suggests that broader cultural and artistic engagement is currently gendered, potentially reflecting differences in value orientations, socialisation, or availability of leisure time. The causes of this discrepancy may lie in gendered cultural patterns, differing value orientations, or unequal perceptions of and access to leisure.[34] From an educational perspective, these results raise important questions about how to effectively encourage greater male engagement in cultural and humanities-related activities, which—as the research indicates—can play a key role in the development of personal values and attitudes essential for life in a democratic, peaceful, and humane society. From the perspective of core humanities, gender balance is a positive finding. It shows that key questions of humanistic formation in leisure time are pursued equally by both men and women.

No statistically significant differences were observed across age cohorts in relation to participation in either core or expanded humanities-oriented activities. This indicates a transgenerational potential of humanities engagement, underscoring its relevance and accessibility across the life course. This finding implies that interest in humanities activities is not constrained by age or generational affiliation, which may be a positive indication of the enduring value of these activities across generations. From an educational policy perspective, this suggests that support programmes and initiatives aimed at fostering humanistic values should be accessible to all age groups, as their appeal and relevance span the entire population spectrum.[35]

Educational attainment is a key factor influencing engagement in humanities-oriented leisure activities, with higher education levels associated with greater likelihood of participation, particularly in the broader range of activities involving literature, arts, and languages. Conversely, individuals with lower educational qualifications tend to participate less, which may reflect differences in cultural capital, access, or interests.[36] From a policy and practice perspective, it is therefore important to consider interventions aimed at expanding access to and motivation for humanities activities among lower-educated groups, to foster broader cultural and value integration within society.[37]

32   Paul Heintzman, 'Leisure Sciences and the Humanities,' *Leisure Sciences* 40, no. 1–2 (9 February 2018): 36–42, https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2017.1376018.

33   Pospíšil, *Hodnoty a volný čas*, 137.

34   Susan Lagaert and Henk Roose, 'Gender and Highbrow Cultural Participation in Europe: The Effect of Societal Gender Equality and Development,' *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 59, no. 1 (February 2018): 44–68, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020715217753271; Angèle Christin, 'Gender and Highbrow Cultural Participation in the United States,' *Poetics* 40, no. 5 (2012): 423–43, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2012.07.003.

35   M. Ardelt, 'The Benefits of the Humanities and Arts for Older Adults,' *Innovation in Aging* 1, no. suppl_1 (2017): 72–72, https://doi.org/10.1093/geroni/igx004.297.

36   Pierre Bourdieu, *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

37   Lisse Van Nieuwenhove and Bram De Wever, 'Why Are Low-Educated Adults Underrepresented in Adult Education? Studying the Role of Educational Background in Expressing Learning Needs and Barriers,' *Studies in Continuing Education* 44, no. 1 (2022): 189–206, https://doi.org/10.1080/0158037x.2020.1865299.

It is evident that, in addition to educational attainment, individual differences—such as personality traits, affective style, and motivational orientation—significantly influence leisure preferences, suggesting that efforts to broaden participation in humanities-oriented activities must consider both structural and psychological factors affecting engagement.[38] Our findings suggest that participation in humanities-oriented leisure activities is associated with a deeper orientation toward values related to personal growth, transcendence, and social solidarity, whereas those not engaged tend to prioritise more materialistic and active life values. This profile supports the notion that humanities activities may play a meaningful role in value socialisation and in shaping personal values that promote a more complex and less materialistic worldview.[39] Engagement in expanded humanities-related leisure activities is associated with a stronger orientation toward values related to inner development, transcendence, social equality, and aesthetic appreciation. This pattern reinforces the role of humanities engagement in fostering a richer, more socially conscious and introspective value system, which may contribute to personal growth and a broader societal awareness.[40]

Involvement in expanded humanities-related leisure activities is associated with a greater emphasis on moral personal characteristics such as openness, empathy, responsibility, and loyalty, as well as cognitive and social competencies including imagination, intellect, and cooperation. Conversely, those engaged in these activities tend to de-emphasise authority and social power. This suggests that expanded humanities engagement promotes a value orientation centred on ethical interpersonal qualities and intellectual openness, which may support the development of socially aware and reflective individuals.

By fostering empathy, critical thinking, and emotional literacy, such engagement can serve as a protective factor against the rise of aggression, desensitisation, and behavioural brutalisation among children and adolescents.[41] Cultivating humanistic sensibilities from an early age thus contributes not only to individual moral development but also to the prevention of socially harmful behaviours and the reinforcement of peaceful and cooperative social norms.

Educational and pedagogical interventions play a crucial role in mitigating radicalisation by fostering critical thinking, open dialogue, and informed understanding of extremist movements. A coordinated approach involving schools, families, and peer groups, alongside targeted prevention strategies, supports the development of tolerant and socially responsible individuals. Such comprehensive efforts address the underlying social and psychological factors driving youth toward extremism, promoting inclusion and resilience against radical ideologies.[42]

The findings of this study call for a renewed understanding of education's civic and humanising mission in a time of social fragmentation and value erosion. Beyond the policy focus on innovation or digital skills, education must also cultivate ethical and emotional capacities that foster peaceful coexistence and moral responsibility. Engagement in humanities-oriented activities appears to support this goal by reinforcing personal values and connecting individuals to enduring cultural and moral traditions. As Nussbaum[43] explains, the humanities have historically played a key role

38   Miroslav Mareš and Josef Smolík, 'Školní výuka a politický extremismus,' *Pedagogická orientace* 20, no. 2 (2010): 40-54-40–54.

39   Pospíšil, *Hodnoty a volný čas*.

40   Don Habibi, 'The Indispensability of the Humanities for the 21st Century,' *Humanities* 5, no. 1 (2016): 11, https://doi.org/10.3390/h5010011.

41   Ruth Castillo-Gualda et al., 'A Three-Year Emotional Intelligence Intervention to Reduce Adolescent Aggression: The Mediating Role of Unpleasant Affectivity,' *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 28, no. 1 (2018): 186–98, https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12325.

42   Mareš and Smolík, 'Školní výuka a politický extremismus.'

43   Martha Craven Nussbaum, *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*, Online-Ausg, The Public Square Book Series (Princeton, N.J Woodstock: Princeton University Press, 2012).

in education by preparing individuals to be thoughtful and engaged democratic citizens. However, she warns that recent trends emphasise economic productivity over critical thinking and empathy, which weakens our ability to question authority and understand diverse perspectives. Similarly, Biesta[44] argues that education should be world-centred rather than child-centred or curriculum-centred. He emphasises that teaching should not be seen merely as the transfer of knowledge and skills, but as the process of guiding students' attention towards the demands of the world, encouraging them to respond responsibly as moral agents. Maxine Greene[45] emphasises that engagement with the arts and humanities expands individuals' sensitivity and moral awareness, advocating for schools to become spaces where students actively seek meaning and where marginalised voices are heard; she calls for educational practices that cultivate imagination as a means to develop personal visions and deeper understanding. Elliot Eisner[46] argues that the arts play a crucial role in education by cultivating complex cognitive and moral capacities that enable individuals to navigate ambiguity, nuance, and the uncertainties of everyday life—capacities often overlooked in standardised, outcome-driven curricula. We could name many others; nevertheless, it is evident that together, these perspectives highlight the need for education that goes beyond performance metrics and embraces human development in its full ethical and cultural depth.

Conclusions

The data presented in this study invite a broader reflection on the civic and humanising mission of education in an era marked by fragmentation, insecurity, and the erosion of shared value foundations. While policy debates often prioritise innovation, competitiveness, or digital competencies, the findings suggest that educational strategies must also respond to a more fundamental challenge: how to nurture the ethical and emotional capacities that enable individuals to coexist peacefully and act with responsibility towards others. Engagement in humanities-related activities appears to support this capacity—not only by reinforcing personal values but also by connecting individuals to deeper cultural and moral traditions that transcend the immediacy of crisis. Reimagining education in this light means shifting the focus from performance-driven models to those that regard the human being as a complex, value-forming subject, requiring cultivation in a holistic, interdisciplinary sense.

Cultivating humanity as a fundamental value in education represents a key interdisciplinary approach to understanding the 21st century individual as a bio-psycho-social-transcendent whole striving for a responsible and meaningful life. Educational processes should aim to orient individuals around the constitutive values of humanity, fostering their existence in the sense of 'being human' and co-shaping their development towards justice, reason, kindness, and truth. In doing so, education can ensure the functioning of societies grounded in humaneness and service to others, which is essential for social stability and security.

Our research data confirm that engagement in humanities-oriented leisure activities is associated with the development of moral values and personal characteristics such as openness, empathy, responsibility, and loyalty, as well as cognitive and social competencies. This humanistic orientation also correlates with lower preferences for authoritarianism and social dominance. These value profiles are crucial in the context of contemporary societal challenges, particularly the rising

44   Gert Biesta, *World-Centred Education: A View for the Present* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2022).
45   Maxine Greene, *Releasing the Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts, and Social Change* (San Francisco: Wiley [u.a.], 2011).
46   Elliot W. Eisner, 'The Arts and the Creation of Mind,' *Language Arts* 80, no. 5 (1 May 2003): 340–44, https://doi.org/10.58680/la2003322; Elliot W. Eisner, *The Arts and the Creation of Mind* (Yale University Press, 2017), https://doi.org/10.12987/9780300133578.

brutalisation of children and youth, which poses a serious threat to security and social cohesion. Overall, the findings support the concept of pedagogical humanisation as a means of shaping individuals who embody values of inner development, social equality, and aesthetic appreciation. Such an approach can significantly contribute to building democratic and secure societies capable of addressing current global crises and social challenges.

Motivating individuals who have never shown interest especially in core humanities-oriented activities and whose perception has not been sensitised to them represents a significant pedagogical challenge. Modern leisure time is often conceptualised primarily in contrast to paid work, leading to a detachment from academic discourse and intellectual engagement.[47] Nevertheless, we maintain that within the wide spectrum of available activities—some of which are thematically broad, ranging from philosophy (e.g., philosophy for children[48]), psychology,[49] and the social sciences,[50] to active participation in religious communities and congregations[51] – it is possible to identify topics that may spark interest and capture the attention of such individuals.

In this way, it would be possible, at least in part, to cultivate an environment that approximates the ideal of leisure as a time for the free choice of better and nobler pursuits[52] – an ideal contemplated by the ancient Greeks, whose legacy continues to serve as a lasting source of inspiration.

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47 David Harris, 'Leisure and Higher Education', in *Routledge Handbook of Leisure Studies*, ed. Tony Blackshaw (London: Routledge, 2013), 413–21.
48 Matthew Lipman, 'Teaching Students to Think Reasonably: Some Findings of the Philosophy for Children Program', *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas* 71, no. 5 (May 1998): 277–80, https://doi.org/10.1080/00098659809602723.
49 Paul Smeyers and Marc Depaepe, eds., *Educational Research: The Attraction of Psychology* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2013).
50 Toby Huff, 'Popularizing the Social Sciences', *AmeriQuests* 3, no. 2 (15 May 2006), https://doi.org/10.15695/amqst.v3i2.71.
51 Pamela Ebstyne King and James L. Furrow, 'Religion as a Resource for Positive Youth Development: Religion, Social Capital, and Moral Outcomes.', *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality* S, no. 1 (August 2008): 34–49, https://doi.org/10.1037/1941-1022.S.1.34.
52 Hemingway, 'Lesiure and Civility'.

Character Formation of Generation Z in Christian Religious Education Through Spiritual Formation

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Abstract

Generation Z, often characterised as digital natives, has grown up in an environment where technology particularly smartphones—is a constant presence. This pervasive exposure to digital devices has significantly shaped their daily lives, cognitive development, and moral reasoning. The omnipresence of technology presents both opportunities and challenges in the formation of their character and social behaviours. Empirical studies indicate that approximately 95% of individuals within this generation possess access to a smartphone, employing it for a variety of functions including communication, education, and entertainment. Notably, around 77% report using these devices for at least three hours per day, frequently engaging in multitasking across multiple digital platforms. Such continual connectivity has not only become a defining characteristic of their lifestyle but also exerts a considerable influence on their worldview, identity construction, and interpersonal dynamics.

Keywords: building character, generation Z, Christian Religious Education, spiritual formation

Introduction

Character is a reflection of moral values that regulate human behaviour in a social context, while character formation is the process of cultivating moral values that are the core of human values.[1] Character is linked to ethical behaviour. Fleeson mentions that ethical behaviour is a primary goal in society, and unethical behaviour is a major source of social problems. If society can enhance ethical behaviour, it can also improve human relationships, create a stable foundation for investment and growth, and propel human advancement.[2] Interpersonal relationships are a necessity for human survival. Humans are created not only to relate to God but also to fellow humans. Therefore, in building relationships with others, humans are required to behave ethically.

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1   Darcia Narvaez and Daniel K. Lapsley, 'Teaching Moral Character: Two Alternatives for Teacher Education,' *The Teacher Educator* 43, no. 2 (2008): 156–72, https://doi.org/10.1080/08878730701838983.

2   William Fleeson et al., 'Personality Science and the Foundations of Character,' *Character: New Directions from Philosophy, Psychology, and Theology*, Oxford University Press New York, 2015, 41–71.

Character plays a role in bringing out the best in individuals. Character provides positive benefits in life such as self-acceptance, autonomy, physical health, and resilience. One way to achieve this is through spiritual formation. Alex Tang explains that spiritual formation is a process based on theological concepts of restoration, relationship, and shalom.[3] These fundamental concepts can be explained as follows: first, restoring the imago Dei. The concept of imago Dei is an epistemological dimension of spiritual formation. This concept expands understanding of spiritual formation, including its processes and means. God created a perfect world which He declared good (Genesis 1:1–2:1). He made man and woman in His own image (*imago Dei*) as stated in Genesis 1:26-27. Alvin approaches the concept of imago Dei from an epistemological perspective, that imago Dei is the basis of theological epistemology, namely that human knowledge of God comes from participation in His image. Thus, knowledge of God is rooted in the imago Dei as the epistemological structure of humankind, which originates from a relationship with God through the divine image within humans.[4] Second, according to Hoekema, the imago Dei also has a functional aspect, involving humanity in its relationships with God, others, and nature. The image of God (imago Dei) is ultimately renewed in His redemptive work through the death of Christ. Hoekema mentions from a functional perspective that humans are created to relate to God (cf. Genesis 3:8-9). However, humans failed to obey God and distorted His perfect creation by falling into sin. From a structural perspective, God sent His Son to redeem fallen humanity through the death of Christ on the cross and His resurrection. Those who accept Jesus are restored in unity and justified. God sends the Holy Spirit to empower them to be restored to the image of Christ as His special people. God the Father desires to work in partnership with restored humanity to redeem His entire creation. The ultimate result is the 'perfect image' of God in human beings. Hoekema summarises the goal of redemption as restoring the image of God in humanity. Restoring the image of God means restoring the entire personal potential. The process of restoring the fallen imago Dei in every individual results in them becoming more like God. Hoekema notes that because Jesus is the perfect image of the Father, becoming like the Father also means becoming like Jesus. [5]

Prawiromaruto and Stevanus said that spiritual formation focuses on personal knowledge of Jesus Christ and obedience to His word as the core of the process towards Christlikeness.[6] Knowing and obeying Jesus as the inspirer of Christians, besides experiencing relational healing with God, humans also discover themselves and see themselves from the true perspective as the image of God.[7] In other words, the essence of Christian spiritual formation is the restoration of the image of God, which is the restoration of human relations with God. This will change the paradigm of human understanding of their true selves. The restoration of imago Dei provides a theological foundation for Christian spiritual formation.

Generation Z is growing up amidst advanced technological developments and rapidly evolving environments. In this digital era, they exhibit high proficiency in utilising technology, especially social media, earning them the label 'digital natives'. Most members of this generation are constantly connected to the internet.[8] However, alongside these technological advantages,

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3   Alex Tang, Till We Are Fully Formed: Christian Spiritual Formation Paradigms in the English-Speaking Presbyterian Churches in Malaysia (Malaysia Bible Seminary: Kluang, 2014), 1.

4   Alvin Plantinga and The Society of Christian Philosophers, 'Advice to Christian Philosophers,' *Faith and Philosophy* 1, no. 3 (1984): 253–71, https://doi.org/10.5840/faithphil19841317.

5   Anthony A. Hoekema, *Manusia: Ciptaan Menurut Gambar Allah* (Momentum, 2010), 27.

6   Imanuel Herman Prawiromaruto and Kalis Stevanus, 'Pendidikan Karakter Kristen Melalui Pengutamaan Formasi Rohani,' *Dunamis: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Kristiani* 7, no. 2 (2022): 543–56, https://sttintheos.ac.id/e-journal/index.php/dunamis/article/view/926.

7   K Boa, *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation,* (Zondervan, 2001),.19-20.

8   Qingqing Hu et al., 'One Social Media, Distinct Habitus: Generation Z's Social Media Uses and Gratifications and the Moderation Effect

Generation Z also grapples with significant challenges, including a tendency to focus excessively on contemporary issues while neglecting their mental and spiritual growth. There is a noticeable disinterest in spiritual matters among many of them.

Given these issues, it is evident that a contextual and relevant approach is needed to address the character development of Generation Z in light of ongoing technological advancements. This paper proposes a spiritual formation model through Christian Religious Education (CRE) as a strategy to shape Christian character in Generation Z by integrating Christian values with the realities of the digital world. The study aims to explore how CRE can serve as an effective instrument in cultivating Christian character among Generation Z students.

Generation Z represents a crucial asset for the future of both the nation and the church. Developing a generation with resilient minds and noble character requires approaches that are both appropriate and contextually relevant. The current reality shows that Generation Z is strongly influenced by moral and cultural shifts, leading to mental degradation and weakened character. This concern is supported by various findings and observations, including among Christian youth who increasingly deviate from Christian values. As noted by Malau, these trends indicate a widespread moral decline and spiritual crisis among today's youth, underscoring the low level of spiritual vitality within Generation Z.[9]

Spiritual formation through CRE, implemented in both public and private educational institutions, must commit to fostering Christian character in every student. It should empower students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to become future leaders of both the nation and the church. The central calling of CRE is to produce individuals with Christian character who can contribute meaningfully to societal transformation. This mission undergirds the motivation to nurture Christian identity through spiritual formation, with the ultimate goal of internalising Christian values that are reflected in students' behaviour as children of light.

Moreover, spiritual formation through CRE responds not only to the rapid technological shifts but also to the divine mandate found in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19–20), which commands discipleship. As Herman observes, God's original design for humanity was to reflect His likeness.[10] God, being perfect, created humans in His own perfect image: 'So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them' (Genesis 1:27). This imago Dei endows humans with moral and spiritual capacities, enabling communion with God. The human likeness to God includes intellect (for reasoning), emotions (for love and empathy), and will (for making ethical choices). Furthermore, humans are created with an eternal purpose and moral nature designed to emulate the character of Christ.

The church today faces profound challenges amid the disruptions of the digital age, particularly in addressing the moral degradation and spiritual vulnerability of Generation Z. The spiritual damage brought by the digital culture demands immediate and effective solutions.[11] Christian Religious Education presents itself as a vital instrument to nurture holistic development in Generation Z, aiming to cultivate individuals of integrity—strong in intellect, emotional maturity, and especially in spirituality. Building spiritual capacity is essential for shaping a generation that

of Economic Capital,' *Frontiers in Psychology* 13 (2022): 939128, https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.939128/full.

9   Oloria Malau, 'Christian Private Ethics According To 1 Corinthians 15:33 And Its Implications For Christian Youth In Indonesia,' paper presented at Proceedings of the 1st International Conference of Global Education and Society Science, ICOGESS 2019,14 March, Medan, North Sumatera, Indonesia, EAI, (2020), https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.14-3-2019.2292024.

10   Prawiromaruto and Stevanus, '*Pendidikan Karakter Kristen Melalui Pengutamaan Formasi Rohani*.'

11   Meike Irmawati Tompira et al., 'Integration of Christian Strategy and Innovative Learning in Christian Religious Education in the Digital Age,' *International Journal of Christian Education and Philosophical Inquiry* 2, no. 3 (2025): 01–04, https://doi.org/10.61132/ijcep.v2i3.327.

reveres God. Thus, integrating spiritual formation into the CRE curriculum becomes imperative for forming Christian character.

Considering Generation Z's active engagement with social media and digital technology, this paper also emphasises the importance of incorporating such platforms into CRE. To make CRE more relevant and engaging, its methods must align with the learning habits of Generation Z. While the use of technology can enhance the learning experience, the primary goal remains the moral and spiritual formation of students, helping them resist the negative influences of digital media.

In light of this, CRE holds a strategic role in national character development. This underlines the importance of improving the professionalism of CRE teachers, as Susilo asserts, not merely as a profession for earning a livelihood but as a key pillar in the nation's human resource development.

Therefore, the central question arises: How can the CRE approach be adapted to meet the characteristics and needs of Generation Z in the digital age? Since this generation prefers technologically enriched learning environments, it is highly likely that they will respond positively to CRE approaches that incorporate digital tools. Such adaptation not only facilitates access to knowledge but also strengthens the role of CRE in moral and character formation. This study seeks to offer an alternative approach that aligns CRE with the needs of Generation Z through spiritual formation, aiming to internalise Christian values and establish a foundation for enduring, excellent character.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a **literature review approach** as its primary research method. The author conducted an in-depth examination of a wide range of scholarly sources related to spiritual formation, Generation Z, character education, and Christian Religious Education. The literature review served as a means to address the research problem by systematically collecting, evaluating, and synthesising data from peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and other relevant publications.

Through a critical and comprehensive analysis of the selected literature, the author aimed to identify key themes, theoretical frameworks, and empirical findings that support the study's objectives. This approach enabled the researcher to draw valid and reliable insights, offering a coherent synthesis of various scholarly perspectives. As a result, the literature review not only facilitated a deeper understanding of the topic but also provided a robust foundation for articulating the role of spiritual formation within Christian Religious Education in shaping the character of Generation Z.

The Essence of Christian Religious Education

Christian Religious Education (CRE) is a commandment from the Lord Jesus Christ, known as the Great Commission as mentioned in Matthew 28:19-20: 'Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age'. Based on this truth, teaching is one of the important commands given by the Lord Jesus Himself. This is the essence of CRE.

In the Bible, the work of teaching can explicitly be identified from the fact that the Lord Jesus is known as a Teacher, as expressed by Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader, 'He came to Jesus at

night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God…'" (John 3:2) and the Lord Jesus Himself also referred to Himself as a Teacher, 'You call me "Teacher" and "Lord", and rightly so, for that is what I am' (John 13:13).

CRE can not be separated from the Supreme Teacher, Jesus Christ. Besides His role as the Redeemer, Jesus Christ is highly esteemed as the Supreme Teacher, noted for His expertise by the Jewish people, hence they referred to Him as Rabbi or Teacher.[12] As a Teacher, Jesus taught with divine authority, leaving those who heard His teachings amazed and astounded, eliciting a positive response: 'And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes' (Matthew 7:28-29).

God Jesus is a Great Teacher for us. Every educator who wants to succeed in teaching the truth of God's word must always learn from Him. He does not invite anyone to follow Him without a clear purpose. The ultimate goal of His teaching is repentance (attitude change) and renewal of life (behaviour) and being able to practise it in daily life. Iovan's opinion that the highest goal of Christian education is to produce religious individuals,[13] centred on values and faith in Christ. The goal of teaching Christian Religious Education becomes the direction of learning activities and the main benchmark in determining the success of learning. The objectives or goals in CRE learning are a very influential and most important factor in lesson planning. Without clear objectives, a teacher will not be able to teach effectively.[14] The purpose of CRE learning is specifically prioritising not only to point to changes in terms of a student's knowledge and understanding, but to changes in attitudes, emotions, and desires of a student that impact behaviour according to the word of God as the basis of Christian faith and life. Itulua and Abumere assert that the purpose of CRE learning is not only to develop knowledge and understanding of the Christian religion, but to produce mature individuals personally and socially in the midst of secular society.[15] Therefore, the Lord Jesus is a good choice as an ideal role model for CRE teachers.

Given the importance of CRE learning for students, CRE teachers should diligently prepare the material they will teach before class and choose the method to be used in its delivery to achieve the learning objectives.[16] One crucial aspect of lesson preparation is to plan the ultimate goal to be achieved for the students, which is how a student can come to know God as revealed in Jesus Christ, 'And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent' (John 17:3). Therefore, it can be concluded that the ultimate goal and primary objective of every CRE teaching and learning activity should lead students to learn more about God.

The recognition of God through the work of the Holy Spirit will renew attitudes. Therefore, CRE learning objectives should be directed towards this end. Macarau and Stevanus state that the ultimate target or highest goal of every CRE teaching and learning activity should encourage or lead learners to learn more about God. Knowing God involves having a personal, deep, and dynamic relationship with God in Jesus Christ.[17] Certainly, this recognition is not only cognitive but also

12   Swandriyani Hudianto et al., 'Mengajar Secara Profesional Disertai Otoritas Ilahi Dengan Bercermin Pada Yesus Dan Implementasinya Bagi Guru PAK Masa Kini,' *BONAFIDE: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Kristen* 4, no. 2 (2023): 275–94, http://jurnal.sttissiau.ac.id/index.php/jbs/article/view/139.

13   Martian Iovan, 'Characteristics Of The Ideal Of Christian Education,' *European Journal of Science and Theology* 6, no. 4 (2010): 5–10.

14   Ian Griffin Prawiromaruto and Kalis Stevanus, 'Pengembangan Perangkat Pembelajaran Dosen Berbasis TPACK Terhadap Kinerja Dosen PAK,' *Jurnal Teologi Berita Hidup* 6, no. 1 (2023): 66–78, https://www.e-journal.sttberitahidup.ac.id/index.php/jbh/article/view/523.

15   Flourish Itulua-Abumere, 'The Significance of Religious Education in Local Primary Schools (Specific Reference to Christianity),' *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 6, no. 6 (2013): 69–94, https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-0666994.

16   Ruthnawaty Setiawan et al., 'Christian Religious Education Strategies for Early Childhood in Fostering Knowledge of God in Schools,' *Journal of Religious and Socio-Cultural* 4, no. 2 (2023): 146–60, https://doi.org/10.46362/jrsc.v4i2.209.

17   Kalis Stevanus and Vivilia Vivone Vriska Macarau, 'Peran Pendidikan Agama Kristen Dalam Keluarga Terhadap Pembentukan Karakter

emphasises the affective aspect, namely, a change in life attitude. This is the essence of CRE.

The CRE has a calling to guide students to have a correct, deep, and personal understanding and relationship with Jesus Christ. This is the mandate given by Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20. In other words, CRE is part of the effort to disciple.[18] Keener states that there is a close relationship between the Great Commission and CRE (Matthew 28:19-20). The task of discipling is done by going, baptising, and teaching.[19] Added by Vos, actually CRE is continuing the work mandated by Jesus Himself, which is to command His disciples to go to all nations and make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20). This ministry should receive attention and top priority from all Christian ministries, which is to make disciples and grow disciples of Jesus.[20]

So, it is clear that the focus of CRE is not only to convey Christian doctrines, but also includes the task of shaping the character of Christian students, one of the approaches is through spiritual formation activities, as part of discipling Christian students towards likeness with Christ. Discipling tasks should be upheld as a divine calling that should also be accompanied by professionalism and integrity to be an example and witness for Christ who has called them. CRE has the responsibility to impart Christian character to their students, and one of the approaches that can be used is spiritual formation activities.

Christian Spirituality

Robert A. Emmons mentions that the components of spirituality include: (a) the capacity for transcendence, (b) the ability to enter into states of heightened spiritual awareness, (c) the ability to invest daily activities, events, and relationships with a sense of sacredness, (d) the ability to draw upon spiritual resources to solve problems in life, (e) the ability to engage in virtuous behaviour to demonstrate forgiveness, express gratitude, be humble, and show compassion.[21] Westgate also proposed, as cited by Raftopoulos and Glen Bates, four dimensions of spirituality, namely (a) the meaning of life purpose, (b) transcendence related to a higher power, awareness of existence beyond the worldly, (c) intrinsic values referring to internal value systems that shape one's behaviour, and (d) communal values and mutual support. All dimensions framing spiritual intelligence work together or process to form a transcendent ability, which then gives birth to attitudes or behaviors that go beyond ordinary qualities.[22]

The description above leads to the conclusion that spirituality is the response of human existence to sense (whether consciously or unconsciously) that there is something beyond oneself, a higher reality responsible for all life. Spirituality is needed to understand and integrate the inner life of mind and soul with the outer work life in the world. Spirituality can be developed through seeking, inquiry, and practice. Spiritual maturity is expressed through wisdom and compassionate actions. Spiritual intelligence is necessary for affirmation in making spiritual choices that contribute to psychological well-being and the holistic development of humans. Spirituality is a set of capacities

Remaja Di Era 4.0,' *Jurnal Dinamika Pendidikan* 14, no. 2 (2021): 117–30, http://ejournal.fkipuki.org/index.php/jdp/article/view/56.

18 Fransiskus Irwan Widjaja et al., 'The Role of Christian Religious Education as a Mission Development in 4.0 Era,' *International Conference on Theology, Humanities, and Christian Education (ICONTHCE 2021)*, Atlantis Press, 2022, 187–91, https://www.atlantis-press.com/proceedings/iconthce-21/125975637.

19 Craig S. Keener, 'Matthew's Missiology: Making Disciples of the Nations (Matthew 28: 19-20),' *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 12, no. 1 (2009): 3–20.

20 Beverly Vos, 'The Spiritual Disciplines and Christian Ministry,' *Evangelical Review of Theology* 36, no. 2 (2012), 100-114.

21 Robert A. Emmons, 'Is Spirituality an Intelligence? Motivation, Cognition, and the Psychology of Ultimate Concern,' *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 10, no. 1 (2000): 3–26, https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327582IJPR1001_2.

22 Mary Raftolpoulos and Glen Bates, "It's That Knowing That You Are Not Alone': The Role of Spirituality in Adolescent Resilience,' *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 16, no. 2 (2011): 151–67, https://doi.org/10.1080/1364436X.2011.580729.

and abilities that enable individuals to solve problems and achieve goals in daily life.
Zohar and Marshall detail the characteristics of high spirituality, including (a) being able to adapt spontaneously and actively, or in other words, being flexible, (b) having high awareness, (c) having the ability to face pain, (d) having a vision and mission in life, (e) always seeking fundamental answers to something, (f) being independent, (g) being able to face suffering and find wisdom behind it.[23] In short, it can be said simply that individuals with high spirituality have steadfastness, enabling them to control themselves and any external influences in their lives. In the context of Christianity, Christian spirituality is grounding life in Christ, which can be seen in lifestyle, thought patterns, and decision-making processes.

Essentially, Christian spirituality is the power of relationship with the Lord Jesus, which is always manifested in real life that a relationship with God produces various conditions such as patience, loyalty, self-control, peace, goodness, generosity, joy, and love (Galatians 5:22-23). Christian spirituality is the life of Christians who are in a true relationship with God. Such a life is manifested in everyday life that actualises Christian values.

Spiritual Formation in Christian Religious Education

The approach of Christian Religious Education (CRE) presents a vital option in the effort of discipleship to shape Christian character through spiritual formation for Generation Z. This strategy emphasises delivering the Gospel message in accordance with the cultural reality and current needs of Generation Z. Discipleship can be aligned with the daily lives of Generation Z, so that the Gospel message through spiritual formation in CRE is not just a theoretical concept, but also practical guidance in their lives. The CRE learning approach needs to leverage the sophistication of this technological era, realising that effectively delivering the Gospel message requires consideration of the needs and relevant thoughts for individuals and communities targeted by the Gospel outreach. In this digital era marked by strong connectivity with technology and social media, CRE needs to integrate Gospel messages into the daily lives of Generation Z. This approach creates a relevant framework for understanding cultural changes and the demands of the times that influence Generation Z, while still holding fast to the truth of Gospel teachings. This makes discipleship calling relevant and significant for Generation Z in their unique reality. Building strong character and morality based on Christian teachings, so that Generation Z can become positive agents of change in society.

Considering the characteristics and needs of Generation Z, the CRE approach through spiritual formation is expected to help them grow in faith and become good examples in the midst of modern society and ultimately understand their missiological calling for their generation. The spiritual formation approach must be actualised in real and continuous activities within CRE learning activities. These spiritual formation activities must be implemented and developed according to the needs and developmental stages of Generation Z. The following are forms of spiritual formation activities in CRE to build the Christian character of Generation Z:

Morning Devotion

Teachers can conduct morning devotions as a contemplation of God's word, which is done every morning for about 10-15 minutes before classes or lessons begin. Reflecting on the word of God

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23   Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall, SQ-Kecerdasan Spiritual (Mizan Pustaka, 2007), 19-20.

is a unique and necessary spiritual discipline. How can believers know God's will for their lives? How can believers understand God's longing for them? All this knowledge is found in the word of God. The way to unlock all these mysteries is to study the word of God.

Through morning devotions, students are taught to make reflecting on the word of God a permanent habit. Reflecting on the word of God affects one's relationship with God. Students are challenged to internalise the verses of God's word: Is your life in accordance with the word of God? What does it mean to have a life in harmony with the word of God? The principle of following God, loving others, and all that is taught in the Bible becomes the character of a Christian, the way of life of a Christian. Students are challenged with the need to repeatedly ponder the verses of God's word in their minds. Setting aside time to read and remember the word of God is important. Christians need a system to guard themselves from sinful actions. The key to avoiding sin is to keep the word of God in the heart and obey it. When Christians fail and do not know how to restore their relationship with God, His word guides them back to Him.

Through morning devotion, it is emphasised that students should act in obedience to the word of God by reflecting on themselves:

- How does meditating on the word of God help you grow closer to God?
- Can you fully know God without studying His word?
- Why is memorising the word of God important?

The theme of reflection in morning devotion is the characters of Christ that should be emulated, including: loving, holy, wise, just, merciful, gracious, good, kind, forgiving. The hope is that the knowledge taught by the CRE teacher in morning devotion enables students to understand the image of God and how they should emulate Him. Being taught repeatedly helps them remember this knowledge and encourages them to apply it. Morning devotion, as part of spiritual activities, aims to provide understanding and guidance about the character of Christ intensively, allowing students to emulate Him and ultimately have His character resemblance.

Retreat

Following Christian Religious Education (CRE) learning in class, one example is to hold a retreat. A retreat is an activity conducted outside of school, ideally once a year with a changing theme each year, and can last for several days (2-3 days) requiring students to stay overnight.

Retreat activities have become a favourite in spiritual activity because the events are enjoyable, and the delivery of material about dynamic Christian life can be more profound. Retreat activities become moments for self-reflection, alone time to become more aware of God's presence. A quiet and peaceful place just to be with God can be an opportunity to learn how to distinguish His gentle presence amidst the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

Through the retreat activities, individuals are enabled to grow spiritually because the experiences formed from these activities have a stronger impact than mere information taught through theoretical teachings in the classroom. In other words, spiritual formation through retreat creates opportunities not only to learn about aspects of Christian life but to directly experiment with them. Students are taught through retreats about the necessity of setting aside quality time with God. Individual changes occur continuously, encompassing both knowledge and attitudes. Changes in the affective domain of students can be demonstrated through attitudes. For example, being brave to speak in public, being independent in learning, and being mature in behaviour, well as enjoying prayer and reading the Bible.

Counseling Guidance

One important element of spiritual formation implementation is counseling. Counseling does not just involve physical issues or external matters alone, but also concerns internal and spiritual matters. Counseling guidance provided by Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers aims to provide students with support in dealing with emotional issues, anxiety, depression, or trauma that can affect their mental well-being. Spiritual warfare often involves internal battles against fear, anxiety, or feelings of worthlessness.

Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers not only act as educators transferring knowledge but also as counselors. Ideally, counseling guidance programmes should be conducted once a week regularly and routinely with a primary focus on shaping students' characters. Counseling guidance provides services to students experiencing problems or needing special assistance.

Students' learning activities are not free from learning difficulties. The learning process of each student does not always run smoothly. Sometimes students are highly motivated, and sometimes they experience stress and have difficulty concentrating on lessons in class. Sometimes they can learn smoothly, quickly, and with high spirits, but sometimes it is also difficult to focus and concentrate on absorbing the material. As a result of experiencing learning difficulties, students fail to achieve the scholarly competence required in that subject.

Learning difficulties mean that individuals are disrupted in their learning activities. Individuals who experience learning difficulties have a negative impact and do not achieve optimal learning activities. Learning difficulties are not only seen from the results of report cards but also evident in various negative behaviours. Therefore, learning difficulties must be immediately addressed by the students themselves because it can have a negative impact on their learning achievements and behaviour. Because learning difficulties that are not immediately addressed will cause students to not be able to develop optimally according to their potential. This is where the important role of CRE teachers comes in as a counselor called upon to help students overcome the problems they face through guidance and solutions based on biblical values. Therefore, CRE teachers are also required to learn independently, whether through training, seminars, reading books that can support knowledge and skills in counseling. It is hoped that with counseling actions, it can help overcome students' learning difficulties with various useful tips to foster active learning abilities in students and tap into their potential for optimal development in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and experiences.

Counseling guidance can help individuals explore the spiritual dimensions of their lives, find deeper meaning and purpose, and seek strength from their beliefs and spiritual practices. In this context, spiritual warfare can be seen as a struggle to strengthen spiritual relationships and overcome obstacles in spiritual growth.

In carrying out spiritual formation, there needs to be support in spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:10-18) through counseling guidance. Does the spiritual world exist? Does the devil have a significant influence on our world? Do they affect us? There is a relationship between the 'spiritual world' and the 'physical world'. The Apostle Paul stated it and experienced it in Ephesus, which is why he wrote about the importance of spiritual warfare and the spiritual armour to His people in Ephesus. This forms the basis of spiritual warfare, that the devil intends to divert our focus from God and drown us in self-love, doubt, and rebellion. Paul encourages us to fight back. Adewuya says theologically, the spiritual world exists and also influences our world. It was Paul who stated

it in Ephesians 6:10-18.[24]

CRE teachers need to be aware of spiritual warfare to realise that the spiritual world exists and to be vigilant. We can learn how Jesus won in spiritual warfare against the temptations of the devil (Luke 4:1-14). The Bible declares the reality of spiritual warfare, and the spiritual weapons to face it are prayer and the word of God. 1) Jesus knew the word of God. Knowing the word of God is the protection of Christians. When the devil tempted Jesus, He had the ability to remember the word of God as a shield to protect Himself from the devil. Jesus knew the word of God and practised it so well that when the devil tempted Him, Jesus was ready. 2) Jesus was not anxious. Jesus was not anxious but stood firm against the devil. Jesus could have become emotional and started blaming others for what was happening. However, He remained calm and was able to defeat the devil with clarity of mind and not get trapped when the devil tried other tactics to bring Him down. As Jesus triumphed over temptation, so should Christians face temptation in the same way.

Mentoring

Mentoring or personal guidance becomes a spiritual necessity for students. Students require personal, intimate, intense, and continuous guidance in dealing with life's challenges, and this is the essence of mentoring. This mentoring activity leads students into spiritual formation, requiring walking alongside them through guidance rather than just teaching them to cope with pressures.[25] A CRE teacher must have communication skills as a basic skill. The communication process in learning activities involves two parties: the teacher and the students. The teacher plays a primary role as a communicator and the students play a role as communicators, resulting in the sharing of knowledge in learner communication both inside and outside the classroom. This clearly implies that learning activities are not just about sharing or transferring knowledge/cognition to students, but rather a process of building interaction between teachers and students. Additionally, CRE teachers also have a role as motivators for their students, even though they do not have specific training to be counselors. Students will always face decision-making needs and in this process, they need the assistance of teachers.

Prayer Group

The CRE teacher can organise prayer group activities regularly every week, for example, every Friday outside of class hours. Mutak said there is a positive correlation between the intensity of spiritual discipline and the ability to control one's bodily desires. Spiritual discipline is a path to subduing bodily desires and placing God at the center of one's life.[26] God calls His people to draw near to Him in various ways. Some believers become more intimate with God through honest, deep, and regular prayer. Others may become intimate with God through memorising Bible verses. Yet others through regular fasting. Varieties of spiritual disciplines can foster intimacy with God and assist His people in journeying together with Him. Curran reminds us of the importance

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24   J. Ayodeji Adewuya, 'The Spiritual Powers of Ephesians 6: 10–18 in the Light of African Pentecostal Spirituality,' *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 22, no. 2 (2012): 251–58.

25   Jatmiko, B., Mtukwa, G., & Kawengian, S.E.E. 'Embracing Psychology for Theology: The Role of Developmental Theories in Christian Spiritual Formation,' *Evangelikal: Jurnal Teologi Injili Dan Pembinaan Warga Jemaat* 8, no. 1 (2024): 49-63, DOI: Https://Doi. Org/10.46445/Ejti.V8i1.737.63.63.

26   Alfius Areng Mutak, 'Disiplin Rohani Sebagai Praktek Ibadah Pribadi,' *SOLA GRATIA: Jurnal Teologi Biblika dan Praktika* 4, no. 1 (2016), https://doi.org/10.47596/solagratia.v4i1.45.

of studying theology but not neglecting spiritual development, walking alongside Him.[27]
Spiritual discipline in the prayer group can include the following activities:

- Prayer: communicating with God regularly.
- Fasting: abstaining from food and drink, using time for prayer.
- Memorising Scripture: training the mind to meditate on the Word of God.
- Silence: being still to listen to the voice of God.

In the prayer group, each student is asked to consider the list above. The CRE teacher will pose questions to each student: which one resonates with you? Are you more suited to prayer? Does fasting assist you on your journey with Allah? Is your strength in memorising verses? Mentors will guide students to focus on spiritual discipline and realign their journey with Allah. Spiritual discipline enables them to draw closer to Him and transform distant relationships into more intimate ones.

Within the prayer group, the CRE teacher can engage students in reflection and initiate proactive action.

- Why do you think spiritual discipline is important?
- What challenges do you face in implementing one of the discipline lists above?
- What changes can you make in your life to train yourself in one of those disciplines?

Spiritual formation represents a vital component within Christian Religious Education (CRE) and serves as a formative approach to cultivating Christian character among Generation Z. By engaging in spiritual disciplines—such as Bible study, prayer, fasting, and participation in communal religious activities like retreats, morning devotions, and prayer groups—students are provided with experiential pathways to encounter the divine. These practices help internalise Christian values and reinforce identity formation that aligns with the life and teachings of Christ. Furthermore, the inclusion of mentorship facilitates personalised spiritual guidance, which is especially critical in navigating the complexities of digital-age challenges. Given the increasing secular influence marked by individualism, consumerism, and hedonism, particularly through social media platforms, spiritual formation offers a counter-cultural alternative grounded in scriptural ethics. In terms of pedagogical integration, the use of social media within CRE can enhance engagement among Generation Z by leveraging familiar platforms—such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook—for educational purposes. These digital tools can serve as extensions of the classroom, enabling asynchronous discussions, content sharing, and collaborative learning. However, such integration must be approached with critical pedagogy, ensuring that technological use does not merely replicate traditional instruction but instead encourages reflective and dialogical engagement with Christian teachings. Current research indicates that digital natives are more responsive to interactive and multimedia-based instruction[28], underscoring the necessity for educators to adapt CRE methodologies accordingly.

Conclusion

Spiritual formation can serve as a pivotal approach within Christian Religious Education (CRE) to foster Christian character among members of Generation Z. This formation process enables Generation Z to internalise the teachings and values of Christianity, which serve as the founda-

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27   Ian Curran, 'Theology as a Spiritual Discipline,' *Liturgy* 26, no. 1 (2010): 3–10, https://doi.org/10.1080/0458063X.2010.519610.

28   Ruhut Parningotan Tambunan and Reni Triposa, 'Digitalisasi Terhadap Pendidikan Kristen Dan Praktik Spiritualitas,' *Journal of Christian Religious Education and Theology (JCRET)* 1, no. 1 (2025): 33–47, https://journal.sncopublishing.com/index.php/jcret/article/view/103.

tional principles for character development. Through spiritual disciplines such as Bible study, prayer, fasting, and participation in spiritual activities—including retreats, morning devotions, and prayer groups—students are offered meaningful opportunities to encounter the presence of God personally. These experiences not only nurture their spiritual awareness but also contribute to strengthening their faith and cultivating Christ-like character.

Moreover, the role of mentoring within the context of spiritual formation is vital. Through mentoring relationships, Generation Z receives guidance, support, and accountability necessary for spiritual and character growth. In an era marked by rapid technological advancement, which often contributes to the erosion of Christian values, spiritual formation stands as an essential and relevant strategy. It offers a means for Generation Z to respond to the pervasive challenges of secularisation—characterised by individualism, consumerism, and hedonism—often propagated through digital and social media, with responses that are grounded in Biblical truth.

In relation to the integration of social media into CRE, educators can utilise digital platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram as effective tools for Christian learning. These platforms may function as virtual classrooms, discussion forums, and channels for disseminating educational content. They can be employed to share teaching materials, inspirational videos, theological reflections, scripture-based imagery, and relevant links connected to CRE subjects. When used strategically and responsibly, social media not only enhances engagement and accessibility but also presents a contextually relevant medium for communicating Christian values to Generation Z.

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Studie Varia

Etika v praxi mediátora
Silvie Ročovská

Abstrakt
Mediace je způsob řešení konfliktu, který považuje názorové odlišnosti ve společnosti za legitimní a hodnotově neutrální. Mediátor se při výkonu svého povolání ocitá v hodnotově nabitém poli, což ukazuje na důležitost etické reflexe. Mediace je realizována mnoha odbornými profesemi a uplatňována je také jako metoda sociální práce, proto se text inspiruje etikou v sociální práci.

Cílem teoretické studie je představit etický kodex mediátora jako výraz étosu povolání, přiblížit jeho základní principy a hodnoty. Text reflektuje problematické situace, které vznikají při poskytování rodinné mediace v kontextu sociální služby v neziskových organizacích, a hledá jejich řešení.

K dosažení cíle je využita kvalitativní strategie, analýza dokumentů týkajících se mediace, etiky a sociální práce. Konkrétní etické problémy jsou ilustrovány na základě osobní zkušenosti autorky a umožňují vidět profesní principy z perspektivy sociálního pracovníka a mediátora a propojovat teorii s praxí. Etická reflexe hodnot a principů pomáhá k lepší orientaci a větší jistotě při řešení etických problémů. Výsledky zjištění slouží ke zvyšování kompetence při výkonu povolání.

Klíčová slova: mediace, etika, sociální práce, etický problém a dilema, principy

ÚVOD

V postmoderní pluralitní společnosti je aktuální téma sociálních konfliktů. Setkáváme se s širokou paletou názorů, které nemají obecnou platnost. Názorové odlišnosti jsou však legitimní a mohou být prospěšné. Mediace je právě způsob, jak se vypořádávat s konflikty ve společnosti konstruktivním způsobem. Je hledáním nových cest k vzájemnému pochopení rozdílnosti myšlení, jednání a hodnotových systémů.[1] Jejím výsledkem může být zmírnění napětí, změna vnímání stran sporu a řešení složité situace. Mediace je stále více uznávanou profesí s vlastní teoretickou základnou a profesní kulturou, kterou je třeba kriticky promýšlet, protože ve hře jsou zájmy, potřeby a hodnoty stran sporu i zájmy a hodnoty mediátora. Lze říci, že všechny pozice zaujímané v mediaci jsou ovlivněny hodnotami a mediátor by si jich měl být vědom, aby nepoškodil klienta,

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1 Srov. Lenka Holá, Martina Urbanová a kol., *Právní a sociální aspekty mediace v ČR* (Praha: Wolters Kluwer, 2020), 34.

svoji profesi, ani sebe samého.[2] Často se ocitá ve sporných situacích, které mají morální rozměr. Jak má mediátor jednat? Podle čeho se má řídit? Text propojuje téma etiky v mediaci s oborem sociální práce z důvodu osobní zkušenosti autorky s realizací mediace v neziskových organizacích a také z důvodu, že zpracování tématu se jeví jako nedostatečné v rámci odborného výcviku mediátorů i v dosud publikovaných zdrojích.

METODOLOGIE

Cílem teoretické studie je hlubší porozumění etickému kodexu mediátora jako regulativu morálního jednání. K dosažení cíle textu byly stanoveny tři dílčí výzkumné otázky (VO) a cíle:

VO1: Zjistit, jaké jsou přínosy (VO1a) a úskalí (VO1b) etického kodexu zapsaných mediátorů.

VO2: Zjistit, jaké jsou hlavní explicitně vyjádřené principy a hodnoty etického kodexu zapsaných mediátorů.

VO3: Ukázat konkrétní příklady etických problémů z pohledu etického kodexu mediátorů.

Z metodologického hlediska byla zvolena kvalitativní strategie. Použitou metodou byla analýza dokumentů. K vyhodnocení byly shromážděny české odborné publikace zabývající se mediací, které jsou stěžejní pro vzdělávání mediátorů v ČR. Protože je mediace realizována mj. sociálními pracovníky a je metodou sociální práce, byly shromážděny další teoretické podklady propojující mediaci, etiku a sociální práci. Úskalí etického kodexu je ilustrováno na konkrétních příkladech z praxe autorky, která vykonávala mediaci v rodinných sporech v kontextu sociálních služeb. Důvěrnost byla zachována anonymizací údajů a změnou určitých skutečností o klientech a organizaci, kde byla mediace realizována.

Text se zabývá „Etickým kodexem zapsaných mediátorů". Pro srozumitelnost textu je používán zkrácený výraz „etický kodex" nebo „etický kodex mediátorů".

Limity textu

Rozsah tohoto textu neumožnil zabývat se hlouběji některými souvisejícími tématy, jako je dobro, rovnost, lidská práva, která jsou v etickém kodexu rovněž obsažená, ale nejsou explicitně vyjádřená. Text nepřináší systematický výčet etických problémů a dilemat, které v praxi vznikají. K dalšímu zkoumání by bylo vhodné se věnovat například dilematům mezi pomocí a kontrolou, tématu dobrovolnosti mediace v sociálních službách a motivací klientů, kultuře organizace, kde je mediace realizována, autonomií pracovníka a ochranou jeho vlastních hranic. Dalším limitem textu je jeho zaměření převážně na odborné zdroje v českém jazyce.

TEORETICKÁ VÝCHODISKA

Pro porozumění textu je třeba vysvětlit stěžejní pojmy a teoretická východiska. Následující část se věnuje pojmu mediace, etika a etická reflexe.

Mediace

Konflikty často považujeme za něco nepříjemného a mnozí se jim chtějí vyhýbat, přesto jsou součástí našeho života a mohou být impulzem ke změně a spolupráci. Slovo „konflikt" (z lat. confligó,

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2   Srov. Lenka Holá, *Mediace v teorii a praxi* (Praha: Grada, 2011), 26.

conflictum) znamená střet protichůdných sil, potřeb, zájmů, hodnot a tendencí.

Holá rozlišuje několik oblastí teoretických východisek mediace – filozofické, psychologické, sociologické a právní, které jsou značně obsáhlé a vzájemně se prolínají. Společnými tématy těchto teorií je teorie systémů, teorie konfliktu a komunikační teorie, ze kterých vyplývá, že konflikt je přirozeným jevem v každé společnosti a společnost by měla vytvořit podmínky pro jeho regulaci. Holá shrnuje, že konflikt je specifický způsob interakce mezi lidmi a jeho řešení je možné opět prostřednictvím určitých způsobů komunikace.[3]

V literatuře se můžeme setkat s mnoha definicemi mediace podle toho, v jakých vztazích se odehrává a zda klade důraz na proces vyjednávání, nebo na roli mediátora. V rámci zákona je mediace definována jako: „*… strukturovaný postup při řešení konfliktu za účasti jednoho nebo více mediátorů, kteří podporují komunikaci mezi osobami na konfliktu zúčastněnými tak, aby jim pomohli dosáhnout smírného řešení jejich konfliktu uzavřením mediační dohody.*"[4]

Pro vysvětlení pojmu mediace je podstatné, že se jedná o způsob řešení konfliktu pomocí nestranného prostředníka, který pomáhá znesvářeným stranám vyřešit spor a dospět k dohodě, která bude přijatelná pro všechny.[5] Z historického hlediska mediace jako specifická metoda řešení konfliktů (osobních, pracovních, obchodních aj.) vznikla v USA a Kanadě v první polovině 20. století a do České republiky se dostala v 90. letech minulého století. Mediace není jen doménou právních služeb, ale stává se nástrojem pomáhání mnoha profesí.[6] Pro svoji dostupnost je rovněž poskytována sociálními pracovníky v sociálních službách. Nejčastěji se uplatňuje v oblasti sociální prevence v rámci odborného poradenství, bývá realizována např. krizovými centry nebo sociálně aktivizačními službami pro rodiny s dětmi.[7] Typickým příkladem situace pro její uplatnění je rozvod v rodině, kdy bývá fungování rodičů vlivem konfliktu významně oslabeno a vzniká riziko pro celý rodinný systém, především pro děti.

Etika

Činnost mediátora začíná vždy konfliktní situací mezi lidmi. Ti hledají východisko ze své situace a přicházejí pro pomoc se svoji představou o sobě, druhých lidech i o světě. Mediátor musí respektovat rozdílnost jejich názorů, přitom i on vstupuje do kontaktu s lidmi s určitým systémem osobních hodnot, hodnot profese i požadavků společnosti. Aby nepoškodil své klienty a nezneužil svého postavení, je pro něj nezbytné zabývat se etickými tématy v této oblasti.

Podle Anzenbachera rozumíme etikou: „*vědeckou disciplínu, jejímž předmětem jsou správná pravidla (normy) lidského jednání neboli lidské praxe*".[8] Etika se zabývá tím, co je správné a nesprávné, dobré a špatné v lidském chování, charakteru, vztazích a systémech.[9] Tento text se zaměřuje na individuální etiku mediátora, pouze okrajově se zabývá etikou stran sporu. Čím se má mediátor řídit, čím je povinován, aby byl věrný své profesi, byl prospěšný klientům a také chránil sám sebe v konfliktních situacích, které tato problematika s sebou přináší?

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3   Srov. Holá, *Mediace v teorii a praxi*, 44–45.

4   Zákon 202/2012 Sb., § 2. Pozn.: Mediátor je v širším pojetí kdokoliv, kdo zprostředkovává urovnání konfliktu mezi lidmi. Mediátor v užším pojetí je osoba s patřičným vzděláním, která složila zkoušku z mediace a byla zapsána do seznamu mediátorů Ministerstva spravedlnosti ČR (tzv. zapsaný mediátor). Mediátor může vykonávat činnost jako zaměstnanec nebo na základě živnostenského oprávnění.

5   Srov. Holá, *Mediace v teorii a praxi*, 50.

6   Srov. Tatjana Šišková, *Facilitativní mediace. Řešení konfliktu prostřednictvím mediátora* (Praha: Portál, 2012), 40–41.

7   Srov. Zákon č. 108/2006 Sb., § 65; Holá, *Mediace a možnosti využití v praxi*, 142; Lenka Dvořáková, Miroslava Nečasová, 'Mediace jako metoda sociální práce nebo samostatný vzor jednání?' *Sociální práce / Sociálna práca* 19, č. 5 (2019): 70–86, 78; Oldřich Matoušek a kol., *Encyklopedie sociální práce* (Praha: Portál, 2013), 299–301.

8   Arno Anzenbacher, *Křesťanská sociální etika* (Brno: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2004), 9.

9   Srov. Richard Hugman, Manohar Pawar, A.W. (Bill) Anscombe, *Virtue Ethics in Social Work Practise* (New York: Routledge, 2021), 14–16.

Etická reflexe

Uvažování pomáhajícího v souvislostech a jeho sebereflexe je důležitým nástrojem pomáhajících profesí, je to dynamický proces, který prohlubuje orientaci v situaci klienta i v sobě samém. Pojem reflexe pochází z latinského slova „reflexio" a znamená odraz, obrácení se k sobě, zkoumání vnitřních procesů.[10] Pomáhající může reflektovat svoje jednání, kdy sleduje svoje myšlenky a pocity během svého jednání a následně po něm, kdy zkoumá, proč a jak jednal, a zvažuje další postup. Reflektování vlastní zkušenosti umožňuje lépe propojit teoretické poznatky s praxí a zlepšovat svoje dovednosti. Reflexe probíhá v několika dimenzích: reflexe sebe sama, interpersonálních vztahů mezi klienty a pomáhajícím a reflexe konkrétních metod a používaných postupů.[11]

Vycházíme z předpokladu, že mediátor se řídí svým nejlepším vědomím a svědomím. Před jednáním v určité situaci se bude rozhodovat o tom, co má dělat, po jednání si bude klást otázku, zda jednal správně. Svědomí je tedy prvním regulativem jednání, které dává člověku schopnost rozlišit, zda je jeho jednání dobré či nikoliv. Naše svědomí ale nemusí mít vždy pravdu, a proto je třeba ho usilovně vzdělávat a kultivovat. Nemůže se stát měřítkem k posouzení pohnutek a činů někoho jiného, je naším vlastním požadavkem na sebe samé.[12] Všichni lidé nepovažují za dobré a zlé totéž, proto je nutná etická mravní argumentace, tedy normy mající obecnou platnost.

ETICKÝ KODEX MEDIÁTORŮ

Vyjádřením takových norem, postojů, hodnot a přesvědčení je étos povolání. Je to souhrn zvyklostí a přesvědčení o tom, co je a není morální nebo mravné. Milfait uvádí, že étos jsou objektivně dané mravní normy, které jsou uznávané ve spojení s určitou rolí ve společnosti. Jde o postoje, smýšlení a charakter určitého člověka či skupiny lidí, které uznávají jako závazné. Takovým výrazem étosu povolání jsou etické kodexy.[13] Etické kodexy obecně jsou formálním standardem pro správnou profesionální praxi. Jsou chápány jako ideální model obsahující obecné etické principy a hodnoty, ze kterých daná profese vychází a o které usiluje.

Mediátoři u nás se řídí především etickým kodexem zformulovaným Ministerstvem spravedlnosti ČR a Asociací mediátorů ČR, který koresponduje s Evropským kodexem pro mediátory z roku 2004 (European Code of Conduct for Mediators). Tyto kodexy mají dobrovolný a doporučující charakter a slouží jako podpůrná metodika k požadavkům profese, kromě toho podporují důvěru veřejnosti v samotný proces mediace a chrání klienty před zneužitím.[14] Přínosem etického kodexu jsou etické zásady a pravidla chování ke klientovi, kolegům i celé společnosti, které udávají mediátorovi orientaci při výkonu jeho profese.

PRINCIPY A HODNOTY ETICKÉHO KODEXU

Tato část textu hledá odpověď na otázku: Jaké jsou hlavní principy a hodnoty mediace, které jsou explicitně vyjádřené v etickém kodexu? Aby mohl mediátor vykonávat svoji profesi odpovědně, je třeba těmto hodnotám a principům porozumět. Jejich porozumění také napomáhá při řešení

10 Srov. Gérard Durozoi, André Roussel, *Filozofický slovník* (Praha: Ewa, 1994), 252.
11 Srov. Kateřina Glumbíková, *Reflexivita v sociální práci s rodinami* (Praha: Grada, 1989), 23, 24, 28.
12 Srov. Anzenbacher, *Úvod do filozofie*, 237–239; Jiří Jankovský, *Etika pro pomáhající profese* (Praha: Triton, 2003), 31–37.
13 Srov. René Milfait, *Teologická etika* (Vimperk: Akcent, 2012), 45–47.
14 Etické kodexy jsou dostupné na https://www.amcr.cz/dokumenty/kodex.pdf, https://justice.cz/web/msp/vykladova-stanoviska-a-cinnost-pracovni-skupiny-k-mediaci1?clanek=eticky-kodex-zapsanych-mediatoru), http://www.euromed-justice-iii.eu/document/eu-european-code-conduct-mediators

různých etických problémů a dilemat, které se v praxi vyskytují. Principy a hodnoty se vzájemně prolínají, přitom hodnoty se mění v principy a principy jsou konkrétním vyjádřením obecných hodnot.[15]

Definice hodnot nejsou jednoznačné. Hodnota je vše, čeho si vážíme, co považujeme za důležité a významné a co určuje naši volbu. (Slovo *axios* znamená v řeč. cenný, stojící za něco.) Nečasová definuje hodnoty jako: „*… normativní standardy, které mají vliv na naše rozhodnutí pro některou z alternativ jednání*".[16] Podle těchto standardů potom hodnotíme konkrétní čin jako dobrý nebo zlý, správný nebo nesprávný. Hodnoty je možné charakterizovat podle různých hledisek. Z hlediska hierarchie lze rozlišit hodnoty nejnižší, ve smyslu motivace libosti a nelibosti, podmíněné vkusem nebo rozpoložením člověka. Vyšší hodnoty jsou hodnotami morálními a mají povahu povinnosti. K takovým hodnotám patří např. spravedlnost nebo svoboda. Za nejvyšší hodnotu je považována lidská důstojnost.[17]

Hierarchie hodnot souvisí také s určitými okruhy hodnot. Pro analýzu etických problematických situací je vhodné Fischerovo rozlišení jednotlivých hodnotových systémů – osobních, společenských, legislativních, profesních, hodnot organizace a klienta.[18] Tyto okruhy mohou být sobě navzájem blízké, ale také neslučitelné a vytvářet v pomáhajícím napětí. V sociální práci se jedná především o konflikt hodnot profesních a osobních.[19]

Následující část se zabývá explicitně vyjádřenými hodnotami v etickém kodexu a výkladem čtyř stěžejních principů mediace, které jsou zákonně ustanoveny a souvisejí s rolí mediátora i procesní stránkou mediace – nestrannost, dobrovolnost, důvěrnost a princip hájit zájem dítěte. Přehled hodnot a principů je uveden v Tabulce č. 1.

Etický kodex obsahuje řadu požadavků, které jsou směrované jak k osobě mediátora, tak k samotnému procesu mediace. První část se se obrací k **odbornosti** mediátora ve smyslu vzdělávání a procvičování dovedností a k požadavku na jeho morální kvality, především k **odpovědnosti** za poskytovanou službu, k charakterovým vlastnostem, jako je **pravdivost**, **otevřenost v komunikaci**, k **čestnému** propagování služeb, což znamená být transparentní a neslibovat pozitivní výsledek své práce. Kodex dále zmiňuje vztahy k ostatním mediátorům – **respekt a kolegialitu** k jejich osobě i činnosti (Tabulka č. 1, část A: hodnoty/mediátor).[20] Tyto žádané vlastnosti jsou hodnotami samy o sobě.

Druhá část kodexu přibližuje princip nezávislosti a nestrannosti a nastiňuje situace, kdy se může mediátor dostat do střetu zájmů a tyto principy porušit. Třetí část se věnuje samotnému procesu mediace, který má být veden tak, aby došlo k efektivnímu urovnání sporu. Kodex ukazuje také postup při účasti dítěte v rodinné mediaci. Poslední odstavec zmiňuje princip důvěrnosti procesu mediace a s tím spojený požadavek mlčenlivosti mediátora. Mediátor musí se všemi informacemi zacházet diskrétně a bez souhlasu klientů je nesmí poskytovat dalším stranám (Tabulka č. 1, část C: principy/mediace).

Princip nestrannosti obsahuje požadavek, aby se mediátor angažoval ve prospěch všech stran sporu, dával jim přibližně stejný prostor k vyjádření a žádnou z nich neznevýhodňoval. Mediátor

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15   Srov. Michal Opatrný, *Sociální práce a teologie* (Praha: Vyšehrad, 2013), 225.

16   Miroslava Nečasová, Zdeňka Dohnalová, Robert Trbola a kol., *Výzkum etických dilemat hodnot a principů sociální práce* (Praha: Výzkumný ústav práce a sociálních věcí, 2020), 11, dostupné na https://www.mpsv.cz/documents/20142/4517500/V%C3%BDzkum%20 etick%C3%BDch%20dilemat%20hodnot.pdf/03203e21-fa39-b3d1-9887-02000a8e0b4c; Sarah Banks, *Ethics and values in social work* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 7–8.

17   Srov. Ondřej Fischer, René Milfait a kol., *Etika pro sociální práci* (Praha: Jabok, 2010), 60–61; Anzenbacher, *Úvod do etiky*, 213.

18   Srov. Fischer, Milfait a kol., *Etika pro sociální práci*, 64.

19   Srov. Fischer, Milfait a kol., *Etika pro sociální práci*, 68; Andrej Mátel, *Etika sociálnej práce* (Bratislava: VŠZ a SP sv. Alžběty, 2010), 75.

20   *Etický kodex zapsaných mediátorů* (Praha: Ministerstvo spravedlnosti ČR, 2021), 1.

tak rovnoměrně rozděluje svůj čas i pozornost, protože všechny strany sporu jsou postaveny na stejnou úroveň. Podle Brzobohatého je nestrannost *„nepřítomnost zvýhodňování či zaujatosti ve slovech, činech nebo názorových náznacích mediátora".*[21] Vést mediaci nestranným způsobem také znamená, že mediátor otevřeně hovoří o potencionálních důvodech podjatosti nebo střetu zájmů. Do střetu zájmů se může dostat kvůli osobním, obchodním, pracovním či jiným vztahům, které se pro něj stávají obohacením. Porušení tohoto principu se nejčastěji projevuje tím, že mediátor hodnotí návrhy klientů na řešení sporu a vnáší do procesu svoje stanoviska.[22] Snaha o dodržování principu nestrannosti klade velké nároky na jeho morální kvality. Princip nestrannosti ukazuje na hodnotu **spravedlnosti**, která je zároveň i principem v pomáhajících profesích. Podle spravedlnosti mají *„… všichni lidé nárok na rovné zacházení, protože jsou si rovni v lidské důstojnosti. To je pojistka k tomu, aby o zacházení nerozhodovaly sympatie nebo antipatie."*[23] Mediátor má tedy zodpovědnost za to, aby zajistil klientům rovný přístup k informacím, službám a účasti v procesu rozhodování, a to bez ohledu na jejich postavení, chování, názory apod.[24]

Mediace by měla být vždy dobrovolným procesem, protože nikdo nemůže být nucen k tomu, aby se s někým dohodl. Je povinností mediátora, aby **princip dobrovolnosti** respektoval a vysvětlil klientům již před zahájením mediace.[25] Klienti mohou dobrovolně volit témata, kterými se budou zabývat, rovněž je jejich zodpovědností, zda uzavřou dohodu a jakou bude mít podobu. Také mají **svobodnou volbu** mediační setkání kdykoliv ukončit, dokonce přerušit i v průběhu setkání, pokud nebudou spokojeni a zjistí, že pro ně není vhodným řešením.[26] Princip dobrovolnosti by mediátor porušil tehdy, pokud by na klienty vyvíjel nátlak na setrvání v mediaci nebo na uzavření dohody z potřeby vlastního sebeprosazení a pocitu úspěšnosti. Princip dobrovolnosti je odkazem na respekt ke klientovi a jeho právu na sebeurčení.

Dalším deklarovaným principem v mediaci je **princip důvěrnosti**. Jedná se o zachování mlčenlivosti, která přispívá k pocitu bezpečí zúčastněných stran a k jejich otevřenosti. Pocit bezpečí a jistoty je důležitou potřebou člověka a zároveň podmínkou k tomu, aby byly naplněny jeho další potřeby. Mediátor si už během přípravy mediace i v jejím průběhu zjišťuje citlivé a osobní údaje, které nesmí zveřejnit. Tohoto závazku mohou mediátora zprostit pouze strany sporu. Mlčenlivost se vztahuje na smlouvu o mediaci uzavřenou na začátku mediace i na dohodu, která je jejím výsledkem. Důvěrnost je důležitým faktorem, který usnadňuje vzájemnou komunikaci klientů, a je motivačním prvkem při volbě mediace oproti řešení sporu soudní cestou.[27]

K procesu mediace je třeba uvést hledisko osobní účasti dítěte v rodinné mediaci. Kodex stanovuje, že jeho účast je možná pouze tehdy, pokud s ní souhlasí jeho zákonní zástupci, všechny strany konfliktu a zároveň i samotné dítě, jehož názor je také zjišťován.[28] **Princip hájit zájem dítěte** je dalším důležitým principem při řešení sporů a vychází přímo ze zákona o mediaci. Platí nejen pro rodinnou mediaci, ale pro všechny situace, které se týkají nezletilých dětí.[29] Především dítě, ale

21 Robin Brzobohatý, Lenka Poláková, Tomáš Horáček, *Rukověť mediátora* (Praha: Wolters Kluwer, 2016), 16–17; srov. Jiří Plamínek, *Mediace, nejúčinnější lék na konflikty* (Praha: Grada, 2013), 83.
22 Srov. Tatjana Šišková, *Průvodce rodinnou mediací* (Praha: Portál, 2016), 206.
23 Srov. Jan-Olav Henriksen, Arne Johan Veltesen, *Blízké a vzdálené* (Brno: Sdružení podané ruce, Boskovice, Nakladatelství Albert, 2000), 169.
24 Srov. Mátel, *Etika sociálnej práce*, 65, 77.
25 Srov. *Etický kodex zapsaných mediátorů*, 4.
26 Srov. Brzobohatý, Poláková, Horáček, *Rukověť mediátora*, 14.
27 Srov. *Etický kodex zapsaných mediátorů*, 5; Holá, *Mediace v teorii a praxi*, 53–55; Stanovisko Ministerstva spravedlnosti ČR k otázce mlčenlivosti ve smyslu Zákona 202/2012 Sb., o mediaci, § 9, dostupné na https://justice.cz/web/msp/vykladova-stanoviska-a-cinnost-pracovni-skupiny-k-mediaci1.
28 Srov. *Etický kodex zapsaných mediátorů*, 3.
29 Srov. Šišková, *Průvodce rodinnou mediací*, 174; Zákon 202/2012 Sb., § 8, b; Úmluva o právech dítěte; Sdělení č. 104/1991 Sb., čl. 3; Občanský zákoník 89/2012 Sb., § 867, 875.

také jeho rodiče jsou tak chráněni před nevhodným zasahováním do výchovy a péče tím, že by se dítě nedobrovolně účastnilo řešení projednávaných problémů. Před takovým rozhodnutím je třeba dítěti sdělit potřebné informace, aby si mohlo vytvořit svůj vlastní názor, a k tomuto názoru je nutno přihlížet. Tento princip stojí na **právu** jedince **na sebeurčení** jak rodičů, tak i dítěte, právu rozhodovat o svém životě a být chráněn před manipulací.[30]

Kromě explicitně popsaných principů kodex zdůrazňuje hodnoty vztahující se k samotnému procesu mediace (Tabulka č. 1, část B: hodnoty/proces). **Respekt** ke klientovi a jeho potřebám je hodnota společná všem pomáhajícím profesím a je natolik důležitá, že se od ní odvíjí všechna pravidla mediace. Vyjadřování respektu a úcty je podstatné nejen ve vztahu ke konkrétnímu klientovi, ale je také základem toho, aby se i strany sporu začaly respektovat navzájem.[31] Mediátor projevuje respekt verbálním i neverbálním způsobem, když zajišťuje bezpečnou atmosféru procesu, protože lidé, kteří vyhledají jeho pomoc, pociťují bezmoc a bezvýchodnost situace a stydí se, že jejich spor došel tak daleko. Respekt se projevuje v mnoha dalších aspektech. Mediátor je povinen sdělovat klientům všechny podstatné informace a ověřovat si, zda jim rozumí, klienty nehodnotí, zda jednají správně nebo špatně, spíše oceňuje jejich odvahu řešit spor touto cestou, ujišťuje je o tom, že s podobnou situací se potýká mnoho lidí, a vyjadřuje pochopení pro jejich nepříjemné pocity, které jsou vzhledem ke konfliktu přirozené. Projevením respektu ke klientovi jsou také komunikační techniky, jako je aktivní naslouchání, kdy je mediátor pozorný k oběma stranám sporu a svoje porozumění dává najevo. Mediátor rovněž akceptuje rozbouřené emoce klientů, čímž potvrzuje jejich identitu.[32] Respekt ke klientovi je hodnotou, která se prolíná všemi výše zmíněnými principy – nestranností, dobrovolností, důvěrností i principem hájit zájmy dítěte.

V kodexu je dále zmíněná **podpora sebeurčení** stran a posilování jejich **zodpovědnosti** za řešení sporu. Podobný význam, jako je právo klienta na sebeurčení, má pojem **autonomie**. Mediátor se snaží od počátku procesu podporovat rozhodování klientů, jejich silné stránky a samostatnost v řešení sporu, proto konečná dohoda je vyjádřením jejich **svobodné vůle**, nikoliv vůle mediátora nebo jiného odborníka.[33] Právo na sebeurčení podporuje důstojnost člověka, dává mu zažít pocit kontroly nad svým životem a zabraňuje tomu, aby zůstával v závislém a nerovném postavení vůči pomáhajícímu.[34]

Respektem a podporou sebeurčení člověku vyjadřujeme, že si ho vážíme a uznáváme jeho hodnotu bez ohledu na jeho chování. Tyto postoje ukazují na Kantovo pojetí člověka jako rozumové bytosti, která se svobodně rozhoduje. Text se dosud nezabýval hodnotami a principy, které jsou v etickém kodexu explicitně vyjádřené. Nejdůležitější hodnotou, jakýmsi svorníkem těchto hodnot, je **lidská důstojnost**, která je spolu s **autonomií** klíčovou hodnotou ve všech pomáhajících profesích.[35] V některých situacích může být autonomie omezena, ale lidská důstojnost je hodnotou absolutní za všech okolností.

30 Srov. Henriksen, Veltesen, *Blízké a vzdálené*, 26; Šišková, *Průvodce rodinnou mediací*, 174.
31 Srov. *Etický kodex zapsaných mediátorů*, 4.
32 Srov. Henriksen, Veltesen, *Blízké a vzdálené*, 85.
33 Srov. *Etický kodex zapsaných mediátorů*, 4.
34 Srov. Ivan Úlehla, *Umění pomáhat* (Praha: Sociologické nakladatelství Slon, 2007), 89–90; srov. Michal Opatrný, *Sociální práce a teologie* (Praha: Vyšehrad, 2013), 229.
35 Srov. Henriksen, Veltesen, *Blízké a vzdálené*, 127.

Tabulka č. 1 – hodnoty a principy

A) Hodnoty/mediátor	B) Hodnoty/proces	C) Principy/mediace
odbornost, profesionalita	spravedlnost	nestrannost
odpovědnost	respekt	dobrovolnost
otevřenost v komunikaci	důvěra	důvěrnost
pravdivost	sebeurčení, autonomie	zájem dítěte
čestnost	svobodná vůle	
kolegialita, respekt	odpovědnost stran	

Doposud se text věnoval etickému kodexu jako regulativu jednání mediátora. Byly popsány deklarované principy, které se vztahují k procesní stránce mediace a jsou zákonně ustanoveny, a také popsány hodnoty, na kterých tyto principy stojí. Následující část ukazuje příklady etických problémů, které mohou v praxi nastat.

ETICKÉ PROBLÉMY V PRAXI

Cílem této části je ukázat konkrétní příklady etických problémů, které umožňují vidět profesní principy z různých perspektiv a propojovat teorii s praxí. Reflexe příkladů probíhá v dimenzi sebereflexe pomáhajícího, konkrétních metod a postupů, které využívá, a jejich důsledků na interpersonální vztahy.[36]

Mediátor se ve své praxi dostává do situací, při kterých mohou být jednotlivé profesní principy a hodnoty ve vzájemném rozporu. Příkladem je situace, kdy je mediátor vázán mlčenlivostí o proběhlé kauze v rozvodovém sporu, záhy poté je telefonicky kontaktován soudkyní s žádostí o informaci, který z rodičů se více zajímá o potřeby dítěte než o svoje vlastní, aby mohla spravedlivě rozhodnout o způsobu péče o dítě. Mediátor mnohdy ví, jak v situaci jednat, ale tento postup se mu vnitřně příčí. Takové situace vyvolávají v pomáhajících pracovnících napětí, stres, pocity bezmoci, případně i pocity viny z učiněného rozhodnutí.

Oblast mediace je poměrně mladým oborem, proto autoři zabývající se etikou v mediaci čerpají z etiky jiných pomáhajících profesí, zejména z etiky sociální práce. Shodně definují morální problémy a dilemata.[37] Etická dilemata jsou situace, kdy pracovník stojí před dvěma i více možnostmi představujícími konflikt morálních principů.[38] Typickým znakem takových situací je jejich neslučitelnost nebo obtíže s jejich výběrem. Etický problém má sice horší a lepší řešení, ale pomáhající zažívá při rozhodování nejistotu a rozhodnutí se mu vnitřně příčí.[39]

Šišková uvádí, že v praxi se nejčastěji objevují etické problémy v souvislosti s principem nestrannosti, konfliktem zájmů, ztráty důvěryhodnosti, poskytování odborných rad, výší poplatků a reklam.[40] Jeřábková potvrzuje etické problémy především v oblasti nestrannosti, v posuzování, zda není účast klienta na mediaci účelová, a v souvislosti s problémem časové tísně pracovníků, který

36 Srov. Kateřina Glumbíková, *Reflexivita v sociální práci s rodinami* (Praha: Grada, 1989), 23, 24, 28.
37 Srov. Šišková, *Průvodce rodinnou mediací*, 217; Holá, *Mediace v teorii a praxi*, 150; Jana Jeřábková, 'Etické problémy mediace', (Mgr., Masarykova univerzita v Brně, 2005), 15.
38 Srov. Oldřich Matoušek, *Metody a řízení sociální práce* (Praha: Portál, 2003), 24.
39 Srov. Henriksen, Veltesen, *Blízké a vzdálené*, 207.
40 Srov. Šišková, *Průvodce rodinnou mediací*, 219–224.

má vliv na efektivitu práce.[41] Pružinská uvádí nejčastější dilemata v oblasti nestrannosti, dále rolí mediátora, autonomií stran sporu, poskytování poradenství, zneužívání mediace apod.[42]

Reamer navrhl postupy řešení dilemat sociální práce, které mohou být užitečné i pro praxi mediátora.[43] K řešení etických problémů by měl mediátor dospět rozborem dané situace.

Za prvé, identifikovat etický problém, rozpoznat a pojmenovat hodnoty, principy a fakta, kterých se dotýká. Za druhé, zjistit, koho se situace dotýká – jednotlivců, skupin, organizace. Za třetí, promyslet pozitivní i negativní důsledky řešení, vzít v úvahu etické principy, profesní postupy, právní normy a osobní hodnoty mediátora, případně k rozhodování přizvat další kolegy a jiné odborníky. Měl by umět vyjádřit, na základě jakých argumentů je jeho řešení postaveno.[44]

Uvedení do problematiky

Ilustrativní situace pocházejí z kontextu sociálních služeb v neziskové organizaci, kde je nabízena bezplatná pomoc a podpora rodičům v porozvodovém období za účelem řešení sporů prostřednictvím facilitativní mediace.[45] V rámci sociálně-právní ochrany dětí (dále SPOD) je mediace vhodným nástrojem pomoci dítěti k ochraně jeho zdravého vývoje a k obnovení narušených funkcí rodiny. Rodiče v těchto případech nepřicházejí zpravidla z vlastní vůle, ale na podnět SPOD, a jejich motivace k řešení sporu tedy může být nízká. Propojení mediace a sociální práce vyvolává mezi odborníky diskuze a rozdílná stanoviska. Nabízení mediace v rámci sociální služby je sice pro klienty bezplatné, zároveň oproti realizaci mediace za přímou platbu přináší některé nevýhody, jak popisuje následující část textu.[46] I když zná mediátor metodické postupy řešení sporů, může dojít ke konfliktu očekávání samotné profese a organizace, kde je mediace vykonávána. Jak bylo řečeno, podobné situace jsou pro některého pracovníka běžnou záležitostí, pro jiného představují etický problém. Postup reflexe příkladů je inspirován postupem podle Reamera.

Příklad 1: Mlčenlivost a spolupráce se SPOD
Mediátor poskytoval mediaci rodičům v porozvodovém sporu v rámci organizace, která realizuje sociální služby na základě pověření SPOD. Po ukončení mediace se na organizaci obrátila sociální pracovnice SPOD s žádostí o zaslání zprávy o průběhu poskytnuté mediace, ve které se zajímá o to, zda rodiče svoji situaci aktivně řeší a jsou pozorní k zájmům dítěte.

V jakém rozsahu má mediátor podat ve zprávě informace o probíhající spolupráci? Mediátor si uvědomuje, že zachování důvěry a neutrality s oběma rodiči je základem další spolupráce a princip mlčenlivosti je jedním z hlavních principů mediace. Zároveň si je vědom toho, že organizace, kde kontakt s rodiči probíhá, má pověření k výkonu od SPOD (úzce s ním spolupracuje) a její podstatou je hájit zájmy dítěte a posuzovat rodinu jako celek. Mediátor chce být rovněž loajální vůči organizaci, ve které pracuje, i vůči dalším odborníkům v multidisciplinárním týmu.

Identifikace etického problému: V této situaci dochází ke střetu několika okruhů hodnot, principů a osob, kterých se situace týká:

41   Srov. Jeřábková, 'Etické problémy mediace', 59, 64, 67.
42   Srov Jana Pružinská, 'Etické aspekty mediácie', in *Mediace dnes – realita a perspektivy*, ed. Michal Malacka, (Praha: Leges, 2016), 185.
43   Frederic G. Reamer, *Social Work Values and Ethics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 73.
44   Srov. Miroslava Nečasová, 'Profesní etika', in *Metody a řízení sociální práce*, ed. Oldřich Matoušek (Praha: Portál, 2003), 48; Holá, *Mediace v teorii a praxi*, 151.
45   Poznámka: Facilitativní mediace je nejrozšířenější směr v mediaci. Mediátor nehodnotí postoje stran, soustředí se na jejich potřeby a zájmy a pomáhá nalézt různé formy řešení. Srov. Šišková, *Facilitativní mediace. Řešení konfliktu prostřednictvím mediátora*, 42.
46   Srov. Holá, *Mediace a možnosti využití v praxi*, 139.

- principu důvěrnosti samotné profese mediátora;
- zájmů rodičů zachovat v dané věci soukromí a jejich práva na sebeurčení;
- hodnot a zájmů organizace, kde je mediace realizována, tj. zaměřit se na celou rodinu, spolupracovat se SPOD;
- zájmů SPOD získat informace k posouzení situace v rodině;
- zájmů mediátora mít dobré profesní vztahy na pracovišti i v rámci spolupráce se SPOD;
- zájmu dítěte co možná nejdříve ukončit spor rodičů a obnovit rovnováhu rodiny.

Bilance přínosů a rizik: Zachování důvěrnosti bude znamenat posilování vztahu s rodiči, jejich větší otevřenost a důvěru v osobu mediátora. Mlčenlivost mediátora také posiluje respekt ke klientům a podporuje jejich právo na sebeurčení, tedy možnost řešit své spory v soukromí. Nevýhodou zachování důvěrnosti by byla ztráta loajality k organizaci a pracovníkům SPOD. Pozitivem pro sdílení informací se SPOD by mohlo být předání potřebných informací pro posouzení situace v rodině a tím její rychlejší řešení, zároveň i upevňování vzájemné spolupráce pro budoucí případy, protože v případech nemotivovaných klientů je tato spolupráce nezbytná.

Etický kodex: Pokud bychom posuzovali uvedenou situaci z pohledu etického kodexu, povinností mediátora by bylo zachovat mlčenlivost a podporovat sebeurčení rodičů. Etický kodex mediátorů tedy nepostihuje situace, kdy mediátor vykonává svoji profesi v rámci organizace.

Praktické postupy: V procesu řešení problému jsou důležité praktické postupy sociální práce. Jedním z nástrojů zachování důvěrnosti je tzv. informovaný souhlas, kdy je klient informován o způsobech realizace služby, spolupráci se SPOD a rozsahu poskytování informací a uděluje k tomu písemný souhlas. Mediátor ve zprávě zaznamenává pouze faktické údaje o tom, kdy se mediace konala a jaké dohody bylo dosaženo, klienty nijak nehodnotí.[47]

Příklad 2: Zasáhnout, či nezasáhnout

Dilema zasáhnout, či nezasáhnout do života klienta je jedním ze sedmi typů všedních dilemat, které definuje Musil. Pomáhající se může dopustit dvojí chyby, totiž buďto zasahuje do života klienta ukvapeně, nebo nezasahuje vůbec a dopustí se nedbalosti.[48]

Rodiče v dlouhodobém porozvodovém sporu pečují o dítě předškolního věku formou střídavé péče v rámci téhož města. Otec již před započetím mediace prosadil, aby dítě v týdnu, kdy je u něj v péči, docházelo do mateřské školky (MŠ) v blízkosti jeho bydliště. Dítě tedy dochází současně do dvou MŠ. Matka chce, aby dítě docházelo pouze do jednoho zařízení, protože stávající situace představuje pro dítě psychickou zátěž. Sděluje na mediaci, že „její" školka pořádala besídku v době, kdy bylo dítě v „otcově" školce a otec dítěti nedovolil se besídky zúčastnit.

Mediátor si klade otázky: Jak asi prožívá situaci dítě? Má se vyjadřovat ke způsobu vzdělávání dítěte a pokud ano, jak? Co je vlastně dobré pro dítě?

Identifikace etického problému: V této situaci dochází ke střetu těchto oblastí:

- princip nestrannosti samotné profese mediátora;
- právo rodičů na sebeurčení, právo rozhodovat o výchově dítěte;
- zájem matky, aby dítě chodilo pouze do jedné MŠ;
- zájem otce ušetřit si čas, dávat dítě do MŠ v blízkosti svého bydliště;
- zájem dítěte;
- osobní hodnoty mediátora, tj. jeho vlastní zkušenosti s MŠ a jeho pohled na výchovu.

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47 Srov. Mátel, *Etika sociálnej práce*, 114–116.
48 Srov. Geert van der Laan, 'Otázky legitimizace sociální práce', in *„Ráda bych vám pomohla, ale…": Dilemata práce s klienty v organizacích*, ed. Libor Musil (Brno: Marek Zeman, 2004), 137.

Mediátor si uvědomuje svoje zkušenosti s MŠ z dětství a vlastní odmítavý postoj k výchovným způsobům otce. Je přesvědčen, že stanovisko otce není v zájmu dítěte, ale v jeho vlastním zájmu, aby ušetřil čas a měl MŠ blízko. Dítě se za těchto podmínek musí adaptovat na dvě předškolní zařízení, navazovat vztah s dalšími dětmi a učitelkami. Současně si je mediátor vědom toho, že je v rozporu s jeho rolí udílet klientům rady, zároveň je jeho úkolem hájit zájmy dítěte, o čemž informuje klienty hned na počátku poskytované činnosti.

Bilance přínosů a rizik. Pokud mediátor sdělí svoje postoje rodičům, bude riskovat svoji neutralitu a otec nabyde dojmu, že mediátor stojí na straně matky, což může v konfliktní situaci znesnadnit průběh mediace. Avšak zároveň pokud je otevřeně sdělí, bude hájit zájmy dítěte, tedy zachovat pouze jednu stávající MŠ. Je to však opravdu nejlepší zájem dítěte?

Etický kodex a legislativa. Mediátor se při svém rozhodování bude opírat o legislativu, která stanovuje mediátorovi povinnost zohledňovat zejména zájem dítěte.[49] Jeho povinností není zjišťovat názor dítěte, ale zjišťovat, zda rodiče jeho názor znají a zda ho zohledňují při vytváření dohody.[50] Záleží však na jeho komunikačních schopnostech, jakým způsobem bude zájmy dítěte tlumočit a zda se zdrží promítání osobních hodnot do práce s klienty.

Praktické postupy. Ani v tomto případě si mediátor nevystačí s etickým kodexem. Hlubší vhled do problematiky mu může poskytnout konzultace se zkušenými kolegy a se supervizorem. Mediátor by měl v obou výše uvedených příkladech neustále reflektovat svoje zkušenosti s výkonem své práce a promýšlet, co by mohl udělat jinak, jak by mohl zlepšit osobní přípravu pro práci s klienty, aby kultivoval sebe sama a stával se citlivějším pro konkrétní situace. To se týká jednak výchovy jeho svědomí, jednak i prohlubování jeho profesních ctností.

Výše uvedené situace ilustrovaly etické problémy, které mohou v praxi nastat, přitom to, jak mediátor situaci vnímá, je ovlivněno jeho morální citlivostí, schopností sebereflexe, reflexí situace, jeho znalostmi a dovednostmi, zkušenostmi v rámci profese i mimo ni. Pro jednoho mediátora mohou být tyto situace pouze otázkou dodržování pravidel, pro jiného obtížným rozhodováním.[51]

DISKUZE A ZÁVĚR

V úvodu textu byla představena mediace jako užitečný způsob řešení konfliktů, které se mezi lidmi přirozeně vyskytují, a společnost by tedy měla vytvořit podmínky pro jejich regulaci. Mediaci již můžeme považovat za profesi, neboť má vlastní teoretickou základnu, vlastní etický kodex, profesní hodnoty a získává si stále více uznání ve společnosti.[52]

Činnost mediátora jako pomáhajícího se nachází v eticky významném poli. Je propletena sítí vztahů a rozdílných hodnot jak na straně klienta, samotného mediátora, tak i prostředí, kde se pomoc odehrává. Mediátor se nemůže ve své praxi rozhodovat o tom, co má a nemá dělat pouze na základě svého svědomí. Naše svědomí se může mýlit, proto je třeba jej stavět do světla norem společnosti a požadavků daného povolání, kterým jsou profesní kodexy. Cílem textu bylo hlubší porozumění etickému kodexu mediátorů jako regulativu morálního jednání.

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49 Zákon 202/2012 Sb., § 8, b.; srov. Nečasová, 'Profesní etika', 48.
50 Srov. Šišková, *Průvodce rodinnou mediací*, 176.
51 Srov. Mirka Nečasová, Zdeňka Dohnalová, Renáta Talašová, 'Využití vybraných etických teorií v praxi sociální práce', *Sociální práce / Sociálna práca* 10, č. 3 (2010), 77.
52 Srov. Mirka Nečasová, 'Profesionalismus a etické kodexy v sociální práci', in *Etika pro sociální práci*, eds. Ondřej Fischer, René Milfait (Praha: Jabok, 2010), 72–76.

Přínos etického kodexu

Prvním dílčím cílem bylo ukázat přínos etického kodexu, který spočívá ve vytváření profesní identity ve formě ideálu, slouží k orientaci a hodnocení aktuální praxe, a tím zabezpečuje kvalitu poskytované služby. Kodex rovněž chrání klienty před zneužitím a zanedbáním úřední moci (VO1a).[53] Zachycuje důležité principy a hodnoty charakteristické pro tuto profesi, ve kterých by se měl mediátor orientovat. Hodnoty a principy by měly být vodítkem pro profesionální jednání mediátora a jejich porozumění je důležité pro jejich aplikaci v praxi.[54]

Principy a hodnoty etického kodexu

Druhým cílem textu bylo zjistit, jaké jsou hlavní explicitně vyjádřené principy a hodnoty etického kodexu zapsaných mediátorů (VO2). Analýzou obsahu kodexu bylo identifikováno 6 profesních hodnot vztahujících se k osobě mediátora (odbornost, odpovědnost, otevřenost, pravdivost, čestnost, kolegialita). Požadavky na morální kvality mediátora jsou hodnotami samy o sobě a odkazují na etiku ctností. Profesionál nemůže postupovat pouze podle pravidel a daných postupů. K eticky správnému jednání může dospět díky určité osobnostní zralosti, zkušenosti a motivaci k výkonu pomáhající profese, schopnosti dialogu a sebereflexe.[55] Lze říci, že osobnost je důležitým nástrojem všech pomáhajících profesí. Patří sem kombinace nadání, zkušeností, moudrosti, schopnosti projevit lidský zájem a empatii. Vlastnosti pomáhajícího jsou někdy upozaďovány oproti principiálním hodnotám pomáhání, proto je etika ctností přínosem, když poukazuje i na širší souvislosti, nejen na principy dané profese.

Ve vztahu k samotnému procesu mediace kodex obsahuje dalších 6 hodnot (spravedlnost, respekt, důvěra, sebeurčení, svobodná vůle, odpovědnost) a 4 stěžejní principy (nestrannost, dobrovolnost, důvěrnost, zájem dítěte), které z těchto hodnot vycházejí a jsou jejich konkrétním vyjádřením. Například důvěrnost je předpokladem pro zdárné řešení sporu mezi lidmi a jejím vyjádřením je princip mlčenlivosti. Hodnoty spravedlnost, respekt, právo na sebeurčení, svoboda a odpovědnost se odráží v principu nestrannosti a dobrovolnosti i v principu hájit zájmy dítěte. Principy etického kodexu odkazují na Kantovu etiku, zejména pro jejich povahu povinnosti a univerzálnosti jako požadavků k výkonu profese. Podle kategorického imperativu je správné takové jednání, o kterém lze říci, že bude považováno za všeobecně závazné. Díky Kantovi je lidská důstojnost a autonomie uznanou obecnou hodnotou a další mravní hodnoty jsou z této hodnoty odvozené. K druhému člověku se máme vztahovat jako k někomu, kdo má vlastní cíle, a ne jako k prostředku našeho snažení. Konání podle pravidel dává jistotu k určitému jednání, zároveň je třeba vnímat i hodnotový systém dané profese, klienta, mediátora a kontext, ve kterém se mediace realizuje.

Etické problémy

Poslední část textu si kladla za cíl ilustrovat konkrétní příklady etických problémů, které mohou v praxi nastat (VO3). Příklady ukazují, že principy etického kodexu mohou být ve vzájemném rozporu a vyvolávat v pomáhajícím vnitřní konflikt. První příklad popsal střet principu důvěrnosti

53   Srov. Andrej Mátel, Milan Schavel, Pavel Mühlpachr a kol., *Aplikovaná etika v sociální práci* (Brno: Institut mezioborových studií, 2010), 59–60.

54   Srov. Mátel, Schavel, Mühlpachr a kol., *Aplikovaná etika v sociální práci*, 59–60.

55   Srov. Ondřej Fischer, 'Potřebuje slušně vychovaný sociální pracovník zákon o sociální práci?', in *Profesionalita a rozvoj sociální práce*, eds. Zuzana Truhlářová, Katarína Levická (Hradec Králové: Gaudeamus, 2014), 17; Ondřej Fischer, *Profesionalita, ctnosti a etika povolání* (Praha: Karolinum, 2022), 11.

a očekávání organizace, zájmů rodičů zachovat si soukromí, zájmy SPOD řešit rodinnou situaci během rozvodu, hodnoty mediátora a jeho snahu o loajalitu ke klientům a zároveň i k organizaci. Mediátor je povinen být diskrétní, jak jen to je možné. Mlčenlivost však nemá být absolutní hodnotou vzhledem k určitým podmínkám, které byly popsány u prvního příkladu. Je to situace ochrany dětí v rozvodovém uspořádání rodiny a v kontextu realizace mediace v rámci sociálních služeb. V této souvislosti není mediace jen pomocí, ale také kontrolou v pomáhání.[56] Klienti by měli být ihned na počátku spolupráce informováni o tom, za jakým účelem o nich budou informace shromažďovány a předávány dál, v jakém rozsahu a kterým odborníkům. Klienti by měli mít také svobodnou volbu do vztahu s pomáhajícím vstoupit nebo se ho vzdát vzhledem k předestřeným podmínkám a mediátor by měl brát v potaz, že i když klienti dávají ke spolupráci informovaný souhlas, stále jsou vůči pomáhajícímu v nerovném postavení.[57]

Druhý příklad ukazuje profesní hodnotu práva na sebeurčení a princip hájit zájmy dítěte, zároveň osobní hodnoty každého z rodičů i osobní hodnoty mediátora. Každý rodič chce vychovávat své dítě podle vlastního uvážení, tím spíše v situaci rozpadu rodiny. I když se tento text nezabýval morálním hodnocením klientů, ale etikou mediace, je na příkladu patrné, že konflikty mohou vznikat na základě různých hierarchií hodnot. Jeden z rodičů upřednostní lepší dostupnost MŠ a časové výhody, druhý hledí spíše na spokojenost dítěte, tedy prosazuje variantu ponechat mu jedno předškolní zařízení. Jedním z důvodů, proč vznikají nedorozumění a konflikty mezi lidmi, jsou právě rozdílné hodnotové systémy.

Práce mediátora spočívá v respektu ke klientovi a podporování jeho autonomie bez ohledu na to, jakým způsobem jedná. Zároveň je jeho povinností také hájit zájmy dítěte i jeho autonomii. Rovněž i mediátor do situace vnáší vlastní postoje, které se do jisté míry zakládají na jeho osobních zkušenostech s rodinou, s dětmi apod., a proto je nezbytné, aby svoje postoje reflektoval s kolegy, dokázal je odložit stranou a nebyl jimi negativně ovlivněn při své práci.

Domnívám se, že nepřebírat za klienty zodpovědnost a nechat je svobodně se rozhodovat v konfliktních situacích klade poměrně vysoké nároky na morální kvality pomáhajícího, vyžaduje jeho sebeovládání a osobnostní zralost. Podpora sebeurčení klientů a nestrannost patří k nejobtížnějším momentům v mediaci a vyžadují pokorný postoj. Pokorný pomáhající se dívá na klienty jako na sobě rovné, projevuje jim úctu a podporuje jejich důstojnost. V komunikaci se projevuje mírností, laskavostí, sebeovládáním a skromností. Mediátor si musí být vědom, že jeho odbornost není pevná, protože odráží proměnlivou a nejednoznačnou povahu sociálních problémů, s nimiž spolu s klienty zápasí.[58] Pokora také znamená, že ačkoli mediátor využije všechny své dovednosti k vyřešení sporu, je na klientech, zda jej budou respektovat jako důvěryhodnou osobu, která je celým procesem provede. Díky pokoře může mediátor akceptovat, že výsledkem procesu nemusí být uzavřená dohoda, ani nemusí dojít k ukončení sporu. Znesvářené strany možná budou dále trvat na svých stanoviscích a chovat vůči sobě zášť. Pokora chrání samotného pomáhajícího před manipulací s klientem, zneužitím moci a autority v jeho profesi a napomáhá mu smířit se s tím, že výsledky pomáhání někdy neodpovídají jeho představám.

Úskalí etického kodexu

Jaká jsou tedy úskalí etického kodexu (VO1b)? Na základě analýzy dokumentů bylo shledáno několik obsahových i formálních nedostatků. Kodexy jsou vyjádřením pravidel, která mají obecnou

56   Srov. Úlehla, *Umění pomáhat*, 22.
57   Srov. Geoff Lindsay, Casper Koene, Haldor Ovreeide a kol, *Etika pro evropské psychology* (Praha: Triton, 2010), 84–102.
58   Srov. Tomáš Akvinský, *Kardinální ctnosti* (Praha: Krystal OP, 2013), 171–174.

platnost, ale neberou zřetel na kontext situací, ve kterých se mediátor nachází, a ani na důsledky, které jeho rozhodnutí přinese. Další úskalí kodexu spočívá v tom, že jeho vydání a schválení nezaručuje, že bude mediátory respektován. Není jisté, zda jsou s ním seznámeni a pokud ano, zda ho pochopili, zda s ním souhlasí a zda se jím také řídí.[59] V etických kodexech nenajdeme návod pro specifické problematické situace každého konkrétního klienta. Pokud bude pomáhající bez přemýšlení postupovat podle kodexu, vytratí se upřímná etická reflexe.

Z formálního hlediska může etický kodex mediátorů působit na čtenáře nesouvislým dojmem, například nezávislost a nestrannost je popsána v odstavci 2.1., dobrovolnost je zmíněna pouze okrajově v odstavci 3.3. a princip důvěrnosti je uveden až v závěru. Z obsahového hlediska by bylo vhodné zde zdůraznit nejen potřebu vzdělávání mediátora, ale také nezbytnost prohlubování jeho sebepoznání a sebereflexe, hodnot, hranic a zodpovědnosti k sobě samému, což je potřeba mediátorů, o které píše Jeřábková.[60] Rovněž by bylo potřebné vyjasnit princip zájmu dítěte, a to nejen pouhou zmínkou o účasti dítěte na mediaci a jejích podmínkách.

Na rozdíl od etického kodexu sociálních pracovníků nenajdeme v kodexu mediátorů zmínku o etických problémech a dilematech, chybí zde také souvislost s povinností k pracovišti, kde je mediace vykonávána.[61] Kodexy jsou platné pro profesi mediátora, ale opomíjí, že péče o klienty probíhá v multidisciplinárních týmech, kde nelze předpokládat hodnotový konsenzus.[62] Příklady ukázaly, že etické konflikty nelze řešit pouze prostřednictvím principů, ale také s ohledem na kulturní a osobní kontext a mezilidské vztahy.[63]

Reflexe kodexu odkazuje na tři etické pozice – etiku ctností, deontologickou etiku a etiku hodnot. Etický kodex není jediným ukazatelem pro morální rozhodování mediátora a rigidní dodržování jeho principů z něj neučiní dobrého profesionála. Mediátor musí vnímavě a odpovědně zacházet s platnou legislativou, osobními hodnotami, vycházet z konzultací se svými kolegy a supervizory a mít ohled na kulturu svého pracoviště, na němž pomoc klientům poskytuje. Kromě odborné kvalifikace jsou v této profesi stejně důležité rovněž jeho charakterové vlastnosti a schopnost sebereflexe v emočně vypjatých chvílích, které pomáhání druhým přináší.

Závěrem je třeba zdůraznit, že etika v mediaci u nás není dostatečně skloňovaným tématem a zaslouží si více pozornosti, především v oblasti etických problémů a dilemat.

Výsledky těchto zjištění mohou přispět mediátorům a sociálním pracovníkům k větší jistotě a ke zvýšení kompetence při výkonu povolání a vedou k doporučení zabývat se tématem etiky v mediaci hlouběji, aby pomoc klientům přinášela více radosti a pracovního naplnění.

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59   Srov. Holá, *Mediace v teorii a praxi*, 227; Jeřábková, 'Etické problémy mediace', 71.
60   Srov. Jeřábková, 'Etické problémy mediace', 60.
61   Srov. Mátel, Schavel, Mühlpachr a kol., *Aplikovaná etika v sociální práci*, 67.
62   Srov. Mátel, Schavel, Mühlpachr a kol., *Aplikovaná etika v sociální práci*, 111.
63   Srov. Henriksen, Veltesen, *Blízké a vzdálené*, 162.

Recenze

Sarah Jaquette Ray, *Průvodce klimatickou úzkostí: Jak si udržet chladnou hlavu na zahřívající se planetě,* Praha: Portál 2024, 198 stran, ISBN: 978-80-262-2187-6

Autorka knihy, americká vysokoškolská pedagožka Sarah Jaquette Ray, je badatelkou v oboru environmentální humanistky.

Zatímco a) samotná ochrana přírody se zrodila již počátkem 19. století v souvislosti s plošným vytěžováním přírodních zdrojů; b) pojem ekologie, úzce spjatý s ochranou životního prostředí, poprvé definoval Ernst Haeckel v r. 1866 a c) ochrana životního prostředí jako samostatný obor se rozvíjí po druhé světové válce (zejména pak v šedesátých a sedmdesátých letech), environmentální humanistika se etablovala až v poslední dekádě minulého století – v ČR je jako studijní obor založena prof. Hanou Librovou na FF MU v Brně roku 1998. Jako multidisciplinární, resp. interdisciplinární obor se zaměřuje na odborně specifické aspekty environmentální problematiky s ohledem na hodnoty člověka, jeho potřeby a jeho vztah k životnímu prostředí z perspektivy humanitních věd.

V pojednávané knize Sarah J. Ray konkrétně kombinuje poznatky z psychologie, sociologie a environmentálních věd a propojuje je s koncepty jako mindfulness a sociální spravedlnost. Čerpá z řady navzájem odlišných epistemologií, aby dosáhla komplexního přístupu, bez něhož podle ní nelze smysluplně usilovat o klimatickou spravedlnost. Klíčovými odbornými oblastmi jsou pro autorku zjevně – a vzhledem k nadpisu knihy nepřekvapivě – především emoční psychologie a kognitivní psychologie. V terénu mají čtenáře doprovázet „všímavost, kritické myšlení a emoční inteligence" (s. 20). Kniha neřeší a nechce řešit environmentální problémy jako takové, nýbrž chce pomoci identifikovat pocity a myšlenky, které si lidé spojují s environmentálními problémy, když/pokud je řeší. Autorka má za sebou rovněž praktické desetileté zkušenosti s vedením studentů v programech environmentálních studií a v knize je patrné, jak tyto praktické zkušenosti usměrňují její teoretická východiska.

Kniha není pouhou „technickou" příručkou. Psána angažovaným, performativním jazykem je spíše láskyplným průvodcem po labyrintu, z něhož by člověk sám nemusel najít cestu. V sedmi kapitolách se představuje, jak – oproti polarizujícímu myšlení – alternativně uvažovat o fenoménu environmentální krize a jakými možnými způsoby s touto skutečností zacházet. Kapitoly na sebe nenavazují ve striktní logice, není tedy nutné je číst popořade. Jsou pouze volně provázané a zároveň se jejich obsahy v jistém smyslu opakují a daly by se místy i zaměňovat. Metodická difuznost může pro někoho přinášet vítanou svobodu v zacházení s textem, pro jiného znamená nedostatek. Debatovat by se dalo i o tom, zda by interdisciplinární perspektiva nevyžadovala – kromě

využitých odborných hledisek – taktéž větší ukotvení spirituální (nad rámec buddhismu zmíněného spíše okrajově v kontextu mindfulness) a etické. Neboť tak jako lze na jedné straně rozumět tomu, že úzké hodnotové nastavení vede k exkluzi, nesnášenlivosti a nespolupráci na společném díle, nelze na druhou stranu u žádných projektů rezignovat na hodnotovou formaci. Hodnotově nezorientovaný člověk nejedná, nýbrž spíše reaguje na podněty. Psychologizace problematiky má své limity, pokud se na ni díváme z pohledu filosofické a teologické antropologie, které usilují o komplexní pojetí člověka jako osoby, jež je tělesná, duševní, sociální a také duchovní, svobodná, jednající.

Je velkou předností knihy, že autorka od začátku přiznává vlastní ideovou pozici a se sebekritickou upřímností mluví o tom, jak se tato její pozice vyvíjela a jaké různé představy, pocity a myšlenky musely být postupně proměněny či opuštěny. Psychologicky to funguje tak, že čtenář sám je pak otevřenější k tomu, aby překročil vlastní předsudečné představy a přestal případně myslet schematicky. Je autorským záměrem Sarah J. Ray, aby její kniha posílila to, čemu se odborně říká odolnost, resilience. Čtenář má porozumět sobě a potažmo názorům druhých a unést to, nikoli se kontinuálně utvrzovat ve frustraci z postojů druhých lidí a ze stavu světa tak, jak se nám jeví na základě tvrdých dat. Ostatně vědecká fakta nejsou něco, na co lidé pouze reagují, nýbrž vždycky zároveň nastolují otázku, kdo a proč rozhoduje, jakými fakty se zabývat a co tato fakta mají pro konkrétního člověka vlastně znamenat. Autorka ukazuje, jak destruktivní je vyvolávat v lidech pocity viny za environmentální krizi (ekovina) a k jakým neefektivním obranným mechanismům to následně vede. Dobrý zvuk pro ni nemá ani empatie, která může vést ke vzájemnému ochromování a neaktivitě, a kriticky se vyjadřuje i o naději, která by jen utěšovala a harmonizovala. Pozitivní roli naopak přisuzuje pravému soucitu, který přivádí k aktivitě, nebo nepotlačovanému žalu, díky němuž je možné zrevidovat obvykle bezmyšlenkovitý předpoklad, že v životě mají lidé očekávat štěstí. Sarah J. Ray také rozbourává nejrůznější mýty, které ve společnosti kolují, jako třeba že výsledky naší práce musejí být vždycky velkolepé a měřitelné, nebo představa, že jeden člověk toho nemůže moc změnit. Důraz klade na budování vztahů, ne na prosazování pravdy v kterékoli části jejího spektra.

Kniha působí povzbudivě. Environmentální krizi neprospívá nutně jednostranný aktivismus ani nesmlouvavé nároky na sebe a okolí. Jako důležité se ukazuje pozitivní myšlení, opravdová motivace a trénování vlastní mysli k tomu, aby volila a tvořila svět, po kterém já sám toužím. Protože člověk dokáže dělat dlouhodobě dobře pouze to, čemu věří, co ho naplňuje a co mu přináší radost. Odolnost neznamená přijetí nezměnitelné reality, nýbrž jde ruku v ruce s kreativním odporem. Odolná, nefanatická proenvironmentální aktivita jako existenciální aktivita – to je, oč v knize běží.

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Caritas et veritas
Časopis pro reflexi křesťanských souvislostí v sociálních a humanitních oborech

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