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**Examining teachers roles, exploring teachers activities in secondary school dormitories
of the Central Transdanubian region**

Summary of (PhD) Thesis



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1. The topic of the PhD thesis

Nowadays, I do not believe it is an exaggeration to say, that a teacher's work in a Hungarian secondary school dormitory is a plethora of pedagogical challenges. Teachers need to possess reliable, up-to-date professional role repertoires of their roles and activities. These individual characteristics and personal abilities are absolutely necessary for efficacy and competitiveness of the educational organizations (Benedek I., 2002).

Each student has an individual schedule and unique needs, which depend on their parents' and school's expectations, considerably influences personal or family hopes for the future, as well as, real-live human relationships, e.t.c. When a Hungarian secondary school student think of a „dormitory”, they first recall the outdated rules (regulations, restrictions) and the different teachers, who hold us accountable with regard to those central boundaries (Pribék, 2017b).

The needs - expressed by the students and their parents - are not or hardly ever reflected in the education system, even though they are referred to as "internal consumers" (Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1993, quoted by Kotschy, 1996). Internationally it is a well-known fact that parental-studential evaluations and opinions on educational services, as well as the level of actual satisfaction basically determine the range, number and composition of their users.

The needs-based resource allocation in education (Ross-Levacic, 1999), especially in the field of secondary school dormitories has not spread in Hungary. Typically, the maintainer-state does not pay attention to changes in customer (first of all, parental and studential) needs. Unsurprisingly, the frequent consequence is that the number of students dropping out of secondary school and dormitory is drastically increasing. The phenomenon cannot be explained (only) by demographic reasons and this unfavourable tendency cannot be disguised (Pribék, 2017c).

2. Resurgence of the topic of dormitories

This paper has been written in a time of forced educational changes. **During 2004-2014, the number of students essentially went down by half the amount than before, the percentage of teachers decreased by one-third in the dormitories of Central Transdanubia region.** This critical situation seriously endangers the future of these 15 secondary school dormitory in the aforementioned region (this phenomenon is not uncommon in other regions). In the absence of professional training and thematics, the roles of teachers

and activities became one of the most pivotal fields of professional development. Understanding and interpretation the situation, however, raises several problems:

- we have not got relevant information about the real needs of parents and their children, and until 2015 there were not any scientifically empirical research results in Hungary (Pribék, 2017a, 2017b); the majority of core rules in secondary school dormitories are obsolete; buildings and infrastructure need to be refurbished; organizational crisis situations are unique (there are partly identical and different professional patterns and problem sets);

- we have not got accurate and detailed informations regarding the real practice of teachers in secondary school dormitories, that is why the teachers' role repertoires and their activities are needed to be examined and analyzed within the framework of qualitative methodology (Pribék, 2017a), using the Creswellian interpretive sequence (Morse's nomination: quant → QUAL) model (Creswell, 2012, quoted by Sántha, 2015);

- the profession itself does not have adequate and up-to-date textbooks for communal and individual development in higher education (Pribék, 2019).

Source of true concern: the dominant overflow of professional disadvantages

Based on previous empirical research (Pribék, 2012, 2014, Princz - B. Fekete, 2016, Pribék, 2017a) we suppose, that the main professional problem in secondary school dormitories is not only from external (general underfunding, amortized infrastructure, unbalanced human resources allocation, demographic problems in region, e.t.c.) reasons. *In the background we can reveal and depict the dominant overflow of professional disadvantages, which have a more disturbing connection with organizational crises.*

3. Aims and subject of the research

Our aims are to reveal the most problematic factors within the framework of internal and professional disadvantages; to underline the practical and theoretical areas for a change; to make a suggestion - based on the results of complex empirical research conducted over the timespan of 2 years (2015-16) - for new professional trainings, furthermore, reconsidering the central educational program in Hungarian secondary school dormitories.

Hungarian secondary school dormitories are organising and implementing their day-to-day operations in a "threefold grip-pressure". They are required to meet the social expectations of the majority, to co-operate with other partners and to act in accordance with the values

outlined in the pedagogical program, and at the same time, to strive to meet current costumers' needs. We are convinced, that we can identify the worst elements and explore their relationships; these factors raise various organizational (staff-, leadership, development, quality improvement) problems (Benedek I., 1997).

4. About complex empirical research in secondary school dormitories

The complex empirical research commenced from several different angles in 2015. We were especially interested in the pedagogical practice from the point of view of teachers and students (in order to reveal the educational bottlenecks, concentrating on the educational processes and teachers' roles, dominant activities). An electronic student questionnaire and also a parental questionnaire - consisting of 62 and 64 closed questions - were evaluated and analyzed using SPSS (Sajtos-Mitev, 2007) in 2016, focused on the pedagogically adaptable Falus-theory (1986, quoted by Szabó, 2010). A quantitative research supported the accurate interpretation of the results of qualitative metaphor research (Vámos, 2001, 2003), following the scientific framework of the mixed methods and triangulation requirements (Sántha, 2009).

Semi-structured thematic teachers' interviews were conducted in 2016, following the support instructions of Kvale (1996), Szabolcs (2001), Szokolszky (2004), Seidman (2003) and Sántha (2006). The total of 16 individual teacher's interviews were processed and analyzed by a type-building method in the polythetic space (Kuckartz, 2014), with the „preliminary work done in thematic and evaluative coding” (Kuckartz, 2014:103). This was particularly important for us, because we were able to get the nearest pieces of information about weekdays of an „ideal student” in Hungarian secondary school dormitories.

Qualitative content analysis of the central educational program is a decisive process for diagnosing the expectations of the maintainer. However, it is an interesting basis for comparison. This is especially true in the light of real needs and actual practices. First of all, we are looking for answers on how consistent the professional content is in the document, using type-building method in the polythetic space (Kuckartz, 2014); exactly: What kind of features does this special and dynamic space have?

5. Hypotheses of the research

1. hypothesis: The overwhelming reduction of students in Hungarian secondary school dormitories is significantly influenced by the general underfunding, amortised infrastructure, unbalanced human resources allocation and demographic problems in Transdanubian region.

2. hypothesis: In addition, there is another slew of professional disadvantages, which originates from problems - arising from professional crises - and has a significant impact on students and their parents' image of secondary school dormitories and its decisions.

3. hypothesis: The collection of professional disadvantages has a negative impact on student numbers, the lack of teachers' roles and teachers' activities hinder the satisfaction of students' and parents' needs.

4. hypothesis: The content features of the Central Educational Program for secondary school dormitories unfavourably strengthen the lack of teachers' roles and activities, their impact accumulates studential and parental dissatisfaction with secondary school dormitories.

5. hypothesis: The current practice of teachers' roles and activities is less and less in line with the constantly changing demands of students and their parents. The negative phenomenon causes more and more role conflicts and role-building stress in teachers. The dominant type of teachers' conflicts is in-role.

6. hypothesis: In the logical framework of the research, the identified teachers' roles and activities are able to designate areas of professional development in the form of various proposals.

6. Applied research methods and study areas

Study areas	Applied research methods	Sample processing and analyzing	Participants from the Central Transdanubian region
Opinions, the level of satisfaction about pedagogical processes	Paper-based questionnaire	SPSS ranking and Principal Component Analysis	Parents
Opinions, the level of satisfaction about pedagogical processes, phenomena	E-questionnaire	SPSS ranking and Principal Component Analysis	Students from secondary school dormitories

Metaphors and their text justifications	Qualitative metaphor research	Qualitative content analysis	Students from secondary school dormitories
Pedagogical processes, teachers' roles and activities in practice	Semi-structured individual interviews	Qualitative content analysis	Teachers from secondary school dormitories
Maintainer' expectations in the central educational program	Document selection	Qualitative content analysis	Relevant professional contents

7. The main results of the research

In presenting the results, we rely on Falus's systematic theory of pedagogical processes (Falus, 1986, quoted by Szabó, 2010), and in an adapted model, we shall follow it.

Identified problems before moving in a dormitory:

The decisions of the students (to move in or not to) are adversely and unfavourable affected by the opinions and bad stereotypes about secondary school dormitories of relatives, acquaintances and family members; particularly student family members have, in particular, bad opinions about institutions (this is „the real-live, internal advertisement”). First and foremost, they are dissatisfied with the strict rules and adamant institutional operations, as well as, the compatibility regarding privacy.

Evaluation of student life in secondary school dormitories:

Almost half of students (exactly 42%) identify dormitories as a prison. The „prison-metaphors” primarily originate from a too strict institutional framework: outdated rules (regulations, restrictions) should be mentioned here, a lot of professional compulsion (compulsory institutional programs, compulsory weekly time-frames, without differentiation and individual pedagogy), the old post-Stalinistic routines and practical solutions, e.t.c. easy to see that these are far from the new-generational student needs of today.

Institutional catering is also a problematic area: poor and inadequate food negatively impacting students' well-being.

Dormitory buildings are in such a bad condition, that most of them are unable to function as a proper living, learning and working environment.

Parental needs focus on developing student motivation, autonomy, greater awareness and initiative in everyday life.

Two thirds of identified teachers' roles (a total of 24) and their dominant activities are challenged by teachers. On the one hand, these roles are not closely related to teachers' pedagogical work; on the other hand, they don't want to do it, but they have to do it; finally: the proportions of teachers' practical roles have shifted. For example, casually these roles can be highlighted here: plumber, security guard, cleaning worker, electrician, e.t.c. There is no time for teachers to put their rudimentary roles in use: for example students need to replace their parents in everyday life, they want to share their current problems (school, private, family) with someone and ask for advice. Unfortunately, the current professional legislation does not allow these teachers' roles and activities.

The number of teacher roles increases, it causes stress and conflicts in teachers inner inside. Despite international examples, the involvement of external experts is not typical to the pedagogical work in Hungarian secondary school dormitories. The supply of the real-live student needs causes more and more problems.

In the international study of dormitories, it can be stated that Hungarian professional practice is most similar to the Russian example. However, based on the examined examples, these Russian secondary school dormitories do not suffer from general underfunding and amortised infrastructure.

Individual characteristics of students:

Students are overwhelmed and bored at the same time: their daily routines and schedules are very different. There is no professional basis for differentiation and individualization in Hungarian secondary school dormitories, adaptive learning organization procedures have no tradition. First and foremost, they need help with motivation.

Reasons for moving out:

Adolescent conflicts in schools, inefficiency in studies, family problems and too strict rules in secondary school dormitories: these are the most common problems.

Serious problems with the central educational program in the secondary school dormitories:

Qualitative content analysis highlights a number of problems: the approach of the main professional document contains provisions in terms of weekly hours (it is one-sided), which are neither professionally nor scientifically substantiated; these provisions and rules are „broken” (professional definitions and concepts are not clear, there are no pedagogical-methodological contents); there are no clear pedagogical possibilities of differentiation and individualization; all specifications are expressed in hours, not in pedagogical performance or efficiency.

8. Professional development proposal

Recommendations for development based on the main results of the research:

Suggested professional development, training:	Level of professional implementation:	Justification, based on research results:
1. Institutional situation analysis (by SWOT analysis)	Leadership and teaching staff	Critical drop in student numbers, search for institutional breakouts from the difficult situation
2. Internal training using a causal (Ishikawa) diagram, involving an external expert	Teaching staff	Communal identification and discussion of institutional weaknesses (for example: recruiting) and causes of threats
3. Brainstorming of teaching staff in dormitories, involving an external expert	Teaching staff	Assigning professional change-specialization directions, uploading content and work with groups
4. Peculiarities of adolescence - psychological training with the involvement of an external expert	Teaching staff	Concerns of a dormitory pedagogist, affirmance of the roles as a confidant and as an expletive parent with the application of new educational elements
5. Adaptive learning organization and cooperative techniques in practice - interactive training with involvement of an expert	Individual and teaching staff	Rethinking and improving dormitory activities, including extra curricular activities and lessons, from a methodological point of view
6. Differentiation in pedagogical practice - interactive teacher training with the involvement of an external expert	Individual and teaching staff	Monolit amalgamation, the obvious technical failure of „mass-amalgamation” of students
7. Opportunities for individualized education in secondary school dormitories - teacher training, involving an external specialist	Individual and teaching staff	The need and the intensively alarming demand of following and assisting the individual development of board students as learners
8. Relevant conflict management techniques in adolescence - interactive teacher training, involving an external expert	Individual and teaching staff	Satiating and assisting the needs of adolescent board students’ day-to-day conflict dealing skills
9. Professional specialization of teachers in the international practice - interactive training with involvement of an expert	Individual and teachers’ teams	National examples, in lack of technical networking, finding the technical way out, shift of approach
10. What does a mentalisation dormitory mean in practice? - teacher training, involving an external expert	Individual and teachers’ teams	Lack of approach centered around clients and based on needs regarding national dormitory pedagogy

9. Summary

The crisis situation of Hungarian secondary school dormitories requires immediate intervention and assistance in many professional areas. In the background of the overwhelming studential reduction we can find the multiple slew of professional disadvantages. It need professional recognition of new teacher roles and activities, closely related to the needs of new-generational adolescents. There are serious problems with organizational cultures and practices, the Central Educational Program also plays a crucial role in the maintaining of old routines and solutions. Two-thirds of identified teachers' roles and activities are forced and the real-live professional bottlenecks, as well as, accumulating organizational weaknesses.

Today, there is no professional intention to generate changes. If the leaders of secondary school dormitories knew the necessity of the professional changes, there is no unified approach to these efforts yet. If dormitories want to stay alive, they are have to step urgently within the student opinions (about dormitories). First and foremost, the „prison” metaphor is disturbing and thought-provoking: it has many practical accessories and features that can be changed from within.

Since the 1990s, the crisis of Hungarian secondary school dormitories has widened. In the international arena, Hungarian secondary school dormitories are uncompetitive and not efficient enough. Unlike the foreign examples, Hungarian teachers do not specialize in sub-fields: there is not enough local and central support (financial, temporal, moral, professional) for these tasks; it is not a purpose to develop teachers in a targeted way.

The current condition of the Hungarian secondary school dormitories is not suitable for modern learning or housing. In many cases, the presence of adolescents in the dormitories can be related to the home (unfavourable) situations.

In fact, the low number of dormitories has recently been unjustified: these institutions are special elements of domestic education, but they receive little attention in education policy. If this situation does not change, in the foreseeable way most of them will soon disappear from the educational system.

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