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SCHOOL PERFORMANCE MOTIVATION OF HOMESCHOOL
GRADUATES

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Abstract

Research in the field of problems involved in school performance motivation of home school graduates. This partial but important topic deserves further more recognition amongst researchers in the Czech environment. The aim of this pilot research was to gain insight into the school performance motivation of those pupils who received primary education as home schooling and who are now receiving their secondary education in an educational institution. We examined the level of the need for achievement and the level of the need to avoid failure. Our respondents were pupils who went from home schooling to attending primary schools and multi-year grammar schools. Because of this fact we also had the opportunity to see the school performance motivation according to the type of school in which the pupils have received their compulsory education. It was a quantitative research based on the standardized questionnaire The school performance motivation of pupils. The pupils were given a twelve items questionnaire to marked the level of the surveyed statement. So they evaluated their feelings using a five-degree scale which apply different approach to learning and classification. According to the early mentioned questionnaire The school performance motivation of pupils we classified the pupils into five types. The results showed that only 18.75 % of the respondents are clearly motivated by positive achievement and that the majority (62.5 %) of the respondents are unbound types. Overall there are no preferences amongst pupils who received primary education as home schooling and their results are balanced.

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1. Introduction

The pilot study is a first research probe in the field of problems involved in school performance motivation of home school graduates, who are now receiving standard school education. This study is a follow-up to researches made in 2016 and 2017, at that time we at first examined the family environment of pupils who were receiving alternative education and among other things also the parents' motivation to educate their children at home and further more we examined the didactic aspects of home schooling (i.e. how is conducted).

In our research held in 2017 we found out that the home school education in 80.2 % out of 96 examined families differed from the standard school education and that it was "living with children", which is referred to as "home education" by experts (Dobson, 1998) and the education is taken place wherever and whenever and is not limited by the age of children (Pohnětalová, Klingrová, & Váňová, 2017).

Evaluation of progress, achievements and educational outcomes differs from the standard school education. The children either evaluate themselves or they are evaluated by an educator (most often their mother) who gives them verbal feedback in most cases. The feedback gives more space for appreciation compared to school marks. In case of individual training (not group one) when there was no comparison with other children so the child was only evaluated according to his/her performance and progression, the child usually thrived in such safe environment and was positively performance-oriented (which was confirmed in research: Dobson, 1998; Medlin, 2013). When children transfer to state schools, they find themselves in a place where they are being classified in a different way than they were used to.

The school performance motivation of pupils who went from home schooling to the institutional type of education is now our concern. Using the standardized questionnaire, the school performance motivation of pupils: The questionnaire for pupils - authors Hrabal and Pavelková (2011) we conducted a survey of performance motivation of those pupils who were educated at home and who are now studying in an educational institution. Specifically, we investigated the level of the need for achievement (PÚV) and the level of the need to avoid failure (PVN).

2. Problem Statement

In this pilot study we focused on the home school graduates with the aim to get the initial information about their performance motivation in an educational institution.

Atkinson's approach (Atkinson & Raynor, 1974) became a basis for creating a standardized questionnaire from authors Hrabal and Pavelková (2011) to measure school performance motivation. The theory of performance motivation is based on the concept of independence of the need for achievement (PÚV) and the need to avoid failure (PVN). The need for achievement and the need to avoid failure are the basis of performance orientation which further consist of the degree of attractiveness of the performance activity to the individual and the subjective probability of the expected outcome. The resulting orientation of a person in a performance situation then depends on the predominance of the one or the other tendency (Hrabal & Pavelková, 2011). Performance needs are updated in every situation that results in some evaluable performance, regardless of type of activity.

Pupils are confronted with such situations all the time. Parental expectations are significant for development of need for achievement. Parental expectations can be lower, reasonable or disproportionate to the child's ability. If there are appropriately high expectations for children which are as result evaluated, then it is very likely that the child will develop a need for achievement. The child acquires adequate level of self-expectations and makes the necessary efforts to achieve success in performance activities. Another situation occurs when the child is overloaded, where the evaluators primarily focus on criticism and failures. In this case it is very likely that the child will start developing the need of avoiding failure, which is a defines mechanism that protects the child against failure. When there are no expectations for a child, their development of need for achievement will probably not be sufficient (Hrabal & Pavelková, 2011). It should be emphasized that this issue must be seen in all its complexity. The performance behaviour of pupils is reflected in their attitude to success and failure, in the goal preference and is conditioned by the family background, pupil's personality characteristics, self-confidence and intelligence. For example, memory is a key factor in the learning process, it participates in the development of all mental abilities (Besedová, 2016) and plays a major role in whether or not a pupil is successful at school.

In the Czech Republic the home education legislation is grounded in the Education Act No. 561/2004 Sb., in § 4 as individual education, that is education, that takes place in a safe family environment (School Act, 2004). There are two opposite opinions regarding the home schooling issue. There are studies which show better school results and greater self-confidence of those pupils educated at home (Medlin, 2013; Kostecká, Machovcová, Beláňová, & Štambergová 2018), but there are also concerns about the lack of so-called secondary socialization at school (Štech, 2003). In the school environment, the child is emancipated from the family, the child enters into new relationships, adopts new rules, learns to function in a new social group. According to Štech (2003) the absence of experience from the school environment can bring shortcomings not only in the social but also in the cognitive level.

We wonder whether the competitive motivation and performance focus that still persist in most standard schools has an impact on the performance motivation of home education graduates. Some pupils may be motivated by the competitive environment, at the same time they may be afraid of failure and feel the need of avoiding it. It is obvious that the character of performance motivation is individual and depends on the child's personal experience with success, on their self-concept, but also on the performance orientation of parents (Plhánková, 2007).

3. Research Questions

The research problem is defined as an examination of the performance motivation of home education graduates who are currently receiving the compulsory education at the 2nd grade of primary schools (in primary schools and multi- year grammar schools). Using the standardized questionnaire, the school performance motivation of pupils: The questionnaire for pupils - authors Hrabal and Pavelková (2011) we conducted a survey of performance motivation of those pupils who were educated at home and who are now studying in an educational institution. Specifically, we investigated the level of the need for achievement (PÚV) and the level of the need to avoid failure (PVN). For the purpose of the research were defined following research questions:

- What is the level of school performance motivation of home education graduates?
- Is there a difference in the school performance motivation of home graduates depending on the type of school (multi-year grammar school, primary school)?

4. Purpose of the Study

The standardized school performance motivation questionnaire is usually used to measure the performance motivation of pupils in one class. According to the results, the teacher has an option to choose the level of difficulty of a task given both from the perspective of individual pupils and the whole class, and thus optimize the performance motivation in teaching. This enables the pupils with positive performance tendency (i.e. with developed need for achievement and low fear of failure) to optimally use this tendency in the classroom and helps to those pupils with prevailing tendency to avoid failure to positively change their performance orientation. Based on comparison with the pupil's population standard, the teacher can identify the prevailing performance tendency of their class and optimize their work with performance motivation in the classroom (Hrabal & Pavelková, 2011).

The aim of our study was to find out the level of school performance motivation of home education graduates with the use of the above-mentioned standardized questionnaire. Our respondents were pupils who went from home schooling to attending upper grade primary schools and multi-year grammar schools. The pupils were therefore given the questionnaire at the beginning of a completely different stage of education than they have received so far. In institutional education, children are confronted with a large number of assessments of a completely new character and furthermore, their performance is compared with other pupils. The pilot study presents the first probe into this issue in the Czech environment.

5. Research Methods

It was a quantitative research, whose research tool was the standardized questionnaire. The school performance motivation of pupils - authors Hrabal and Pavelková (2011). The questionnaire consists of 12 five-level scale items related to different attitudes to learning and classification; it measures the pupil's school performance motivation consisting of the need for achievement and the need to avoid failure. The proportion of these needs affects the attitude and behaviour of pupils in school performance situations and thus the effectiveness of their learning. Individual pupils can be classified into the following 5 types:

1. high need for successful performance while low need to avoid failure
2. low need for successful performance while high need to avoid failure
3. high need for successful performance while high need to avoid failure
4. low need for successful performance while low need to avoid failure
5. neutral type

The research sample consisted of home education graduates who are currently receiving the compulsory education in the upper grade of primary schools and multi-year grammar schools. Although the numbers of home graduates in the Czech Republic are increasing, they still constitute a specific narrower group of pupils, so finding respondents was not easy. It was therefore a deliberate choice aimed on specific

schools in which home education graduates are now educated. We managed to get 16 respondents for the pilot study: 6 respondents from the upper grade of primary school, 8 from multi-year grammar schools and 2 from secondary schools. For the purposes of this research, we excluded secondary school pupils and focused only on pupils who are receiving compulsory education. We present the results of this pilot study on the basis of the data obtained from fourteen respondents.

6. Findings

Firstly, we examined the level of school performance motivation of home educated graduates. The first six items 1 – 6 of standardized questionnaire correspond to the gross score of the need for achievement (PÚV), items 7 – 12 correspond to the gross score of the need to avoid failure (PVN). Evaluation of the questionnaire is carried out on a five-stage scale, where: a = 5 points, b = 4 points, c = 3 points, d = 2 points, e = 1 point. In both parts, the pupil can earn 6 - 30 gross scores. After obtaining rough scores in both parts of the questionnaire, we found the corresponding standard score of 1-5 in the standards for pupils. Table 1. presents standards for pupils in primary education.

Table 01. Standards for pupils in primary education

The need for achievement		The need to avoid failure	
Gross score	Standard score	Gross score	Standard score
28 - 30	5 very high need (6.5 % of pupils)	25 - 30	5 very high fear (9.6 % pupils)
25 - 27	4 high need (22.7 % of pupils)	22 - 24	4 high fear (16.0 % pupils)
21 - 24	3 average need (40.6 % of pupils)	17 - 21	3 average fear (42.6 % pupils)
18 - 20	2 low need (19.8 % of pupils)	14 - 16	2 low fear (20.2 % pupils)
do 17	1 very low need (10.4 % of pupils)	do 13	1 very low fear (11.6 % pupils)

On the left side of Table 02 are the gross scores (GS) of the need for achievement and the need to avoid failure in individual students. In the following part of the table, gross scores are converted to standard scores (SS). When interpreting the results of the questionnaire, we work with standard scores, where the ratio of the need for successful performance and the need to avoid failure is essential for understanding the pupil's performance tendency. We compared the standard scores with the standards for elementary school (Table 01).

Table 02 shows that out of a total of 14 respondents, only 5 respondents (marked in red) could be included in the above types. Three pupils (18.75%) from our pilot study can be assigned to type 1, which is clearly positively motivated by performance. It means, that these pupils have high need for achievement while having low need to avoid failure. These are pupils who have the advantage at school that they are not hampered by worries and approach the task situations adequately. respondent can be assigned to type 2, which indicates a low need for achievement while having a high need to avoid failure. Usually these are pupils who are motivated by fear and work at school with anxiety about possible failure. One respondent came out as type 3, which represents a high need for achievement while having a high need to avoid failure. Pupils of this type, on the one hand, have a strong tendency to embark on the task, while on the other hand, they experience situations of fear (high need to avoid failure).

In our sample, there are the most neutral types N (62.5%), which shows that neither type of motivation was significantly higher than the other. This means that either in the need for achievement box PÚV or in the need to avoid failure PVN box came out with a standard score 3, which according to the School performance motivation manual shows the neutrality (average score) of the need given. The level of the second need is essential for interpretation. However, these results cannot show whether the motivation is clearly either the need for achievement or the need to avoid failure. This is only a view of which motivation slightly prevails. In table 02 are those respondents who predominate in their need for achievement highlighted in green and those ones who rather have the need to avoid failure highlighted in blue. For these pupils, performance motivation is usually one but not the most important source of school performance.

Table 02. Level of school performance motivation

	GS		SS		School	Final type
	PÚV	PVN	PÚV	PVN		
1	22	10	3	1	ZŠ	N
2	18	25	2	5	G	2
3	21	22	3	4	G	N
4	26	23	4	3	G	N
5	26	22	4	4	ZŠ	3
6	19	19	2	3	G	N
7	18	18	2	3	G	N
8	22	15	3	2	G	N
9	19	20	2	3	ZŠ	N
10	26	15	4	2	ZŠ	1
11	25	13	4	1	G	1
12	25	10	4	1	ZŠ	1
13	17	18	2	3	G	N
14	21	26	3	5	ZŠ	N

Explanatory notes: GS: gross score, SS: standard score;
 PÚV: need for achievement; PVN: need to avoid failure;
 DV: home schooling; N: neutral type;
 ZŠ: upper grade of primary school; G: multi-year grammar school.

We also investigated whether there was a difference in the school performance motivation of home education graduates depending on the type of school (multi-year grammar school, secondary school). Our respondents were 6 pupils from a secondary school and 8 pupils from the multi-year (six year) grammar school, where the pupils are currently receiving the compulsory education. The following table 03 shows the results of school performance motivation divided by type of school: ZŠ - education at upper grade of primary school and G - education at multi-year grammar school.

Table 03. School performance motivation according to a type of school

Type of school	Standard score		Final type	Type of school	Standard score		Final type
	PÚV	PVN			PÚV	PVN	
ZŠ	3	1	N	G	2	5	2
ZŠ	4	4	3	G	3	4	N
ZŠ	2	3	N	G	4	3	N
ZŠ	4	2	1	G	2	3	N
ZŠ	4	1	1	G	2	3	N
ZŠ	3	5	N	G	3	2	N
				G	4	1	1
				G	2	3	N

Explanatory notes: PÚV: need for achievement; PVN: need to avoid failure; ZŠ: upper grade of primary school; G: multi-year grammar school.

It is clear from Table 03 that two pupils from upper grade primary school and one pupil from grammar school fall into type one, thus having a high need for achievement while having a low need to avoid failure, which means that they are clearly positively motivated in performance. Type 3 belongs to a pupil from secondary school and type 2 belongs to a pupil from grammar school. The others fall into the neutral types N, with the need to avoid failure outweighing the need for achievement in both the secondary and grammar school students. These results may be related to school evaluation, which is quite different from the evaluation methods in home education. In schools, the comparison of pupils with one another still prevails and their performance is graded, whereas in home schooling, children were predominantly evaluated verbally and on the basis of their own progress without comparison with others, which means that they did not experience failure. However, it is not possible to draw conclusions from this number of respondents generalizing differences in school performance motivation of home graduates depending on the type of school.

7. Conclusion

In the Czech Republic home schooling was only legalized in 2005 and it is still marginalized by researchers and is only gradually finding a place in the education system. The aim of this pilot study was to gain an insight into the issue of school performance motivation of home education graduates and thus open space for further research in this field. The pilot study represented the first stage of our research, which showed that none of the mentioned types and needs predominantly prevailed among our respondents who received home education and their results are balanced. Due to the low number of respondents, these results cannot be generalized in any way; they serve as a basis for further research surveys. In the next stage of the survey with the help of statistical test of the Pearson's correlation coefficient, we will reconnoitre whether there is a relationship between the length of home education and school performance motivation.

This topic offers many other challenges that could bring new knowledge and information not only about school performance motivation of home school graduates, but also about their benefit in institutional education, the impact of parents' expectations on the performance of children at school, etc. Pupils' performance motivation is influenced by a number of factors that cannot be comprehensively addressed in

our research. Nevertheless, we believe that the results will provide the necessary insight into the issues of this specific group of children with completely different educational experiences and will stimulate further research.

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