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Young people and cohabitation in marriage with a marriage certificate

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1. Objective

The objective of the contribution is to present some findings of the research realized in 2009 on the topic of reproductive and matrimonial behaviour of young people, their opinions and ideas about this. They were young people at the age of 17 to 35 who are not married/in a partnership.

The objective is also to present the findings in connection with a short historical input into the researched field and in connection with social work¹⁹.

2. A historic discursion into demographic and population behaviour²⁰

The first research about marriage, family and planned parentage was realized in former Czechoslovakia in 1956 by The National Statistic Office. Other researches were based on natality decrease which happened in spite of the socialistic ideological concept that expected a better life and consequently a higher fertility level.

The demographic statistics could not have explained those unexpected changes; it would have been necessary to complete them with the ideas about possible

¹⁹ Characteristics of the respondents: Structure of the respondents according to gender is distributed in disadvantage for men (31,2 % men and 68,8 % women). Structure of the respondents according to permanent address slightly predominated in behalf of town (61% village, 39% town). Structure of age of the respondents: up to 20 years old 34,0%, 21-30 years old 48,3%, over 30 years old 17,7%. Structure of the respondents according to reached education: elementary school 8,7%, technical middle school 38,4%, high school 18,1%, university 34,8%.

²⁰ Treated according to: Fialová, Hamplová, Kučera, Vymětalová, *Představu mladých lidí o manželství a rodičovství*, Praha: 1997.

prenatal measures done by the state which would lead to a improvement of life conditions, of the service level as well as the social child care and of the increase of the amount of children in families.

The matter they dealt with was usually the income situation of young people (young meaning parents not older than 30 years old), their living situation, a women's employment, childcare for pre-school children. Special attention was paid to the opinions of women about the period of the primarily short maternity leave.

Questions about possible ways of cohabitation were of no interest to the investigation. Till the end of the 80s "full" marriage was prior in Czechoslovakia and about 90% men and 96% young women got married.

The topics of marriage, family and children did not appear in common repute researches in the 70s and 80s. They got attention only in the early 90s. The need to investigate and know the ideas about planned family size as well as anticipated marriage behaviour arose in later years when the amount of cohabitations without a marriage certificate grew.

The population situation in the 60s in Slovakia was similar to other countries of the eastern block when a so called east-European model of demographic behaviour was established, characterized as follows: low rate of students studying in high schools and universities, a greater rate of students studying in labor unions, equalization of wages what devaluated the reached education, nearly all inoperable population got employed – incl. women and mothers with small children, conditions created by the state where both working parents were able to create a family and care about their children (newly-wedded loans, longer maternity leave, a map of nurseries and kindergartens, school nursery, doped prices of groceries for children a. o.), highly doped rents by the state in state, communal, corporate and cooperative flats. About 94% women took part in the reproduction. The average age of first-time-mothers was low (approximately 25 years old) and this is connected with the low age of the bride when marrying (about 22 years old).

Qualitative changes of this behaviour in Slovakia happened in the late 80s, mainly after the year 1993. Some reasons for these changes are: freedom in running a business, the possibility to travel, a greater interest and possibilities to study at universities, a wider offer in life changes, working abroad, liberalization of prices (especially for doped goods), a noticeable increase of the price level rather than of wages and social benefits, inability to get an own flat, increasing unemployment a. o. In the process of these changes also the demographic behaviour of young people started to change, first slowly, later very fast. Changes of the average age when marrying for the first time, giving birth to the first child and others got more and more significant; those I will comment further on in the article.

3. Concept, acceptance and reasons for willingness of young people to get married with a marriage certificate

Nearly half of the respondents stated that a strong factor influencing their decision to get married with a marriage certificate was their friends, one fifth of the respondents state that marrying with a marriage certificate was their own decision, 13,0% are hereby influenced by tradition, 10,0% by parents, 7,5% by fashion and 1% of the respondents state that they would do it because of religious conviction.

That means that 67,5% of the respondents are influenced by their surroundings (outside influence) when making their decision. 21,5% are influenced by inner factors, their own conviction and religious conviction. We do emphasize this fact because 66% of the asked were over 21 years old where own decisions and own responsibility are expected.

At the same time it is not possible to oversee the connection between decisions and religious conviction. Religious conviction was a voluntary choice, anyways 129 respondents out of 141 (83,7%) answered that they are Christians, what approximately corresponds with this reality for Slovaks (numbers at the last census). Only two respondents answered the question why they want to marry legitimately that they are lead to it by religious conviction. The respondents had a choice of 3 reasons, three possibilities to complete them.

A legitimate marriage would not want to enter 7 respondents out of all. Even if there are few answers and it is not possible to generalize them, I transfer main categories of their answers:

1. Category – factor of inner conviction built by 41% of the answers.
2. Category – influence of the surroundings and fashion – 17% of the answers.
3. Category – not to be bound formally – 30% of the answers.

We suppose that preferring the answer “not to be bound” notifies unwillingness to be bound by responsibility for others, by effort or need to live alone for you, not to be limited by needs and requirements of others; this shows a new start of individualism within the young generation.

4. Opinions of respondents on those who do not want to enter a legalized marriage

The reflexion of those who want to get married with a marriage certificate talks about important tolerance when deciding about life of others as it does the reflexion of own potential decisions. This may be a wanted level of relationship and characteristic but the question remains: “Is this tolerance based on esteem and respect to one-another or on indifference and lack of interest?” what would also evoke connections with a high tendency to individualism.

On the other hand when officiating the meaning of a marriage certificate in marriage, the respondents preferred these three categories of answers out of all offered possible answers (3 had to be chosen):

- Category: the answers were lead by **values of relationship** moving marriage to a higher level of values (love and solidarity 28,17%, high moral value of the relationship 18,86%) (altogether 47%)
- Category: **moral level** (partly economical) 19,2% (children are from a legal marriage)
- Category: **economical practical level** 32,2% (economic security, practical institution, the marriage is more stable, being sure that the husband will not leave me a. o.).

According to that we can assume that in spite of the presented tolerance of the form of living of two people according to their own decision, the respondents rather chose the advantages and contributions of a legitimate marriage, mainly the ideas that that kind of marriage is more stable.

5. Concept of living with one partner

According to the high amount of divorces nowadays (The Statistic Yearbook 2009) in The Slovak Republic (in 2001 – 41,3 divorced marriages to 100 married, in 2006 – 49,0 is the highest amount of divorces in the history of Slovakia in the past years, in 2008 – 44,8 divorces to 100 marriages) we asked the respondents about their concept of life with only one partner for the whole life. The result showed an inclination of young people to the traditional form of marriage in our socio-cultural area, meaning life with one partner. The scale of deciding: the most acceptable form – I can imagine that answered 65,11% respondents. On the scale of possible answers: the least acceptable answer – I cannot imagine that answered 34,76% respondents.

The stated results confirm the psychologically known fact that it is easier to put the demand for completing something on someone else then on us personally.

It is a pity that these results cannot be compared with others of this kind and of another historical period. In spite of being hypothetical opinions, they anticipate a certain leading, a tendency in behaviour of young people in the researched area.

6. Concept of life without children and a partner

When finding out if the respondents would want to stay in life without children and a partner, the respondents answered open questions. 136 out of 140 answered that they would not want to stay without a partner and children. As an explanation of their opinion they stated: it makes the sense of my life (24,2%), I want to have

a family (10,75%), I do not want to stay alone (22,7%). Security, support, help were as answers to having children and a partner stated by 4 respondents (3,2%). 30,6% respondents did not state any explanation or reason. It would surely be interesting to know their non-answers, if it is comfort, unwillingness to devote to the research or if they even think about it a. o.

7. The average age when marrying

To complete the research situation with connection to the reproductive behaviour of the researched sample of respondents, we state the dependence of age when entering marriage.

The question of age when entering marriage directly relates to the reproductive behaviour of young people. However this is not the matter of our contribution, to complete the situation of marriage/partner behaviour we state the following facts. The research results say that the respondents think the optimal age to enter marriage is 25 years old for women (47,7%) with relation to 23 and 24 years old and 30 years old with marginal years of minimum 20 and maximum 35. For the optimal age for men to enter marriage were stated years between 20 and 30 with great preference to 25 years old (20,0%) and 30 years old (23,4%).

The reality of age when entering marriage shows the following scheme.

<i>Average age</i>	<i>80s</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2008</i>
Men	24	28	30	31
Women	22	25	27	28

According to these numbers it is clear that the reality of age when really entering marriage in 2008 is shifted higher, especially with women it is shifted by 3 years. A secondary analysis of the found research results would surely give closer information even in connection to age, education, or other classified marks as well as in connection to other analyzed facts.

8. The meaning of chosen observed values for respondents

With the hierarchical organization of the offered values in the research it is clear that young people prefer values like a functioning family, partners, children, but as if by accident or by chance even material values entered the human and partner harmony – owning a car. Sure, it is a technical attainment to make sure a certain comfort of an individual, family or even to make sure an indispensable need; but it still is a sign of material wealth.

The other four values from the point of view of admitted point evaluation were: job, money, success in job, own house/flat are telling about the need to secure the family and about responsibility for you and your relatives.

Preferences of selected values

Selected values	Average	Modus	Median
Functioning family	3,74	4	4
Own car	3,73	3	3
Children	3,52	4	4
Job	3,25	3	3
Money	3,08	3	3
Success in the Job	3,07	3	3
Own house/flat	3,20	3	3
Wife, husband, partner	3,58	4	4

The middle values modus and median are about equal and dominantly frequented affiliation to the stated values in the evaluation level 4 or 3 on the 1 – 4 scale (1= completely unimportant value, 2= not important, 3=important, 4= very important). The other levels of evaluation were according to the intensity of the respected value taken by: good looks of both partners, rich and nice surroundings, vacation a. o.

For the written description of the family values the respondents classified values that are generally accepted, preferred and principally evaluated in our social and economic situation. The high score of all characteristics speaks for itself.

Evaluating the meaning of family

Meanings of family	Average	Modus	Median
They are my relatives who always stand by me	3,84	4	4
Being loved by parents, siblings and other relatives	3,84	4	4
Support when I was in trouble	3,72	4	4
Asylum where I can come back to	3,55	4	4
Secured basic services	3,47	4	4
Financial security	3,26	4	3
Not referring to me, I did not grow up in a family	1,13	1	1
Other	0,07	0	0

Note: The respondents had the possibility to evaluate offered meanings (values) of family while 1 – no, 2 – rather not, 3 – rather yes, 4 – yes.

5. Conclusion

or **the significance of the research** and its results for theory and practice of social work:

In consequence to a low natality of the young population and in consequence to “postponing” the birth of children to a “later” age, **a population gap originates** in the demographic evolution of the present population.

In consequence to that, in about twenty years there will be less labour force what means that **the state and fund budget will be burdened**. That means:

- The state will decrease granted benefits for help in financial and social destitute
- Services for those who are reliant on them will be less reachable

In consequence to the effort to insure yourself, **individualism** within inter-human relations and within by the state donated inter-generation and inter-human solidarity **will grow**. Consequently there will be **greater demands** and needs (pressure) to

- The socio-legal defense
- The development (quantity and quality) of the third sector

- The legislative anchoring of responsibility for yourself and your relatives

The same assumption about behaviour and sequential risks is also true for the field of health security what in result means a decrease of the health security level for the citizens of Slovakia.

This contribution does not deal with other negative connections of the demographic development as may be the ineligible to socio-pathological behaviour of social groups in need, falling-off of the macro-economical markers of the Slovak economy a. o.

The way to elimination of the stated risks or **the way to civil co-action** could lead through:

- Development of the social behaviour intensity (closeness one to other)
- Support of responsibility for yourself and your relatives
- Instructions and support of how to build socio-economical premises in the own family in connection with the own future (discipline in management and counting on the own future)
- Elimination of the population gap (prenatal politics, immigration politics).

Młodzi ludzie i wspólnie pożycie w małżeństwie z aktu małżeństwa

Streszczenie

Artykuł poświęcony jest rezultatom badań nad zachowaniami małżeńskimi oraz związanymi z rozrodnością młodych ludzi na Słowacji. Ukazane są związki z podobnymi badaniami przeprowadzonymi w ubiegłych latach. Zawartość artykułu ograniczona jest do obserwacji, wiedzy i praktyki w pracy socjalnej.

Słowa kluczowe: małżeństwo, zachowania rozrodcze, wspólnie pożycie w małżeństwie, kohabitacja, nauka, społeczeństwo.

Summary

The contribution is devoted to research results of the reproductive and matrimonial behaviour of young people in Slovakia, its connections with similar investigations in the past years. The contribution is bordered by perceptions, knowledge and social work practice.

Keywords: marriage, reproductive behavior, cohabitation, science, society.

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Parental tutoring as an expression of familial community

1. Crisis in family – depreciation of values

Family life crisis is an area of many scientific domains interest. In its scope it includes the whole structural and functional spectrum of this educational institution, since the image of family is created by parents, as well as children. Generally, the family crisis is searched/noticed “in values hierarchy depreciation, family values depreciation, procreation values depreciation, depreciation of ‘tomorrow’, authority values depreciation (father’s especially), educational process values depreciation”, what creates axiological space (Mastalski, 2009: 43–54). In its hitherto established rhythm and structure new trends valuating human life penetrated, and gave quality in the materialistic and hedonistic dimension. As J. Mastalski writes “postmodern man attributes himself divine features: full consciousness, total infallibility, absolute freedom, complete self-sufficiency” (Mastalski, 2009: 45). It may be stated, that this is full of despair effigy of a man and postmodern time family, for it is hard to submit rigour and educational impact, therefore it is educationally hard.

Family in crisis (family of social and individual risk) is usually characterized with “special set of features undesirable from social point of view and that it is not fulfilling her functions (control and protection, care and upbringing, socializing, emotional)” (Kawula, 2007: 55). Generally, in such family the complete and proper growth of child can not be reached. Infant has no support in his family, and the supporting actions are either occasional or they never happen. The educational struggles are becoming child’s individual matter, with which he needs to cope alone. Child brought up in family during crisis, draws standards from her, so as to reject them later and construe as his own. He internalize them in his identity as distinctive.