

# Introduction

One of the characteristic features of the modern world is fluidity, which affects every dimension of human life. These changes require the researchers to constantly analyze and monitor the reasons behind, as well as the character and consequences of the occurring processes. Pedagogical knowledge derived from both theoretical considerations and practice allows a better exploration, understanding and explanation of crucial social phenomena, and socio-environmental transformations (education, job market, social, cultural and family life).

Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, this monograph discusses crucial changes occurring in various areas of education.

The publication presents both empirical and theoretical data in social sciences, with special emphasis on pedagogy and its current research issues. It contains 15 articles grouped into three parts, which focus on social issues in pedagogy and education, vocational education, and students' special needs.

Thematically, the book is divided into three parts devoted to work education, special pedagogy and social pedagogy. The first part concerns broadly understood professional training and the job market.

Katarzyna Nowosad derives inspiration from Augustyn Bańka's theory and with the use of his Scale of Proactive Behavior, she discusses proactivity among the unemployed and employed. The author points to factors common to and differentiating both groups of respondents.

Job satisfaction among professionally active young pedagogues has been researched by Joanna Wierzejska who analyses it in the context of job-related values.

Grzegorz Sanecki has attempted to verify common beliefs concerning the professional careers of contemporary Polish emigrants. He focuses on defining the real professional situation of migrants and confronts it with the opinions promoted by the media and other opinion-shaping agents. Sanecki

emphasizes that Polish emigrants are by no means a homogenous group, and how well they function abroad is conditioned by various factors.

The issues concerning caring professions are discussed by Ewelina Florys, whose research focuses on the connection between the sense of professional identification and burnout among social workers. The author analyses motivation, involvement, professional satisfaction, and the prospects of professional success through the prism of the danger of professional burnout. She sees the necessity of designing and implementing new solutions meeting the needs of social workers so as to strengthen their sense of professional identification and, simultaneously, lower the risk of professional burnout.

The second chapter of the book touches upon the issues related to special pedagogy. The functioning of people with disabilities has been the subject of extensive research and analysis focusing on diagnosing the specific needs of this group. The aim is to ensure that people with disabilities fully participate in social life, enjoy equal chances in education and work, and gain independence. Janusz Kirenko points out that the initiatives undertaken with a view to including the disabled in society should be not only accompanied by better legal solutions and formal legislation but also facilitated by the knowledge of the needs and abilities these people have. The author emphasizes the importance of the relation between public spaces and people with disabilities and attempts to find rational ways to overcome barriers and stereotypes.

Anna Grabowiec's empirical research concentrates on the specific personal resources of young people with learning difficulties. The aim of the study is to establish the level of coherence as well as the network and the intensity of social support among students with learning difficulties in comparison with their peers with no such problems. The research was conducted among students in the second and third grades of junior high school. The author emphasizes that the outcomes necessitate further analysis, both theoretical and empirical.

Marzena Kowaluk-Romanek focuses on dyslexia, which can constitute a stress factor in itself, but it can also affect self-esteem and ability to manage in difficult situations. The author presents her own research and aims at finding differences in the above-mentioned aspects between the students with dyslexia and their peers without learning difficulties.

Special pedagogy includes also issues concerning talented students. Numerous studies reveal that a huge percentage of talented students do not realize their full potential at school. Kamila Magdalena Kosiak emphasizes the importance of working with a gifted student. This requires diagnosing the specific features of the student's thinking and learning processes, as well

as adopting effective strategies for the individualization of teaching procedures, for the development of the student's interests and for the facilitation of independent work. The author poses two fundamental questions: "How knowledgeable are teachers about talents and special gifts?", and "Is action taken to support the gifted and talented students?"

Małgorzata Kuśpit emphasizes that nowadays the attention is paid to the complexity and multidimensionality of talent; she analyses the functioning of gifted people in the context of factors unrelated to intellect. The author presents the findings of her own research into the interrelationship between gifted people's personality traits, self-esteem and strategies for coping with stressful situations.

Anna Wojnarska presents the analysis of the study on communication competence of maladjusted youth. Social and cultural factors determine restricted codes of communication among adolescents, especially juvenile delinquents.

The third part of the publication touches upon social issues. Anna Kanios's article, which opens the final section of the book, discusses the issue of cross-sectoral partnership as an important factor in the development of local environments. Solving contemporary social problems requires cooperation between the authorities and social partners (non-governmental organizations). The author emphasizes that partnership has become an important tool of social policy, especially in Europe, while in Poland it also proved important due to the broadly understood political transformation and the need to adjust to the European norms.

One of the factors affecting the quality of family life is the economic situation. Anna Korzeniowska emphasizes that it affects the level of education, the sense of financial security, and the ability to fulfill the needs in the field of culture, self-development and self-realization. Favorable economic situation also allows the accumulation of wealth that is later on handed down to the next generation. The author stresses that the property received from their parents enables the younger generation to begin their adult life more easily, but it may also encourage them to make more risky financial decisions. Anna Korzeniowska focuses on the economic situation in the Polish households.

Currently, the family is undergoing numerous changes, especially with respect to its structure. One of the consequences of this is the fact that the number of single-parent families is increasing. The children who come from such households are stigmatized as a result of experiencing a variety of emotions connected with the society's stereotypical attitude to single-parenthood. Agnieszka Bochniarz claims that because of that the resources

(or, in other words, the person's potential) activated in critical situations are becoming increasingly significant. She stresses the importance of one of such resources, the sense of coherence, defined as a fundamental determinant of health and its maintenance.

Agnieszka Lewicka-Zelent shows that in the Polish juvenile justice system there are no procedures for selecting appropriate mediators. Mediation can be offered to anyone. However, in the case of minors, the common course of action is the application of some educational means; rarely are they offered an opportunity to correct their mistakes. Thanks to the developed research tool, the minors who want to make amends may be easily recognized. In her research, the author has measured the minors' level of readiness to make amends as well as their level of expectation of compensation from potential culprits. The findings have been compared to the data obtained from the school students who have not had any legal issues.

The last article in the collection has been written by Joanna Paszkowska and discusses the image of the contemporary man in selected social roles. It attempts to define important aspects that shape the man's image. It refers to the necessity to perform various social roles and to the stereotypes that are deeply rooted in our culture, especially the sex-based stereotypes.

The aim of this book is to define the possible directions for future research in the field of pedagogy. The editors truly hope that readers will be inspired to further discuss the issues raised in this book.

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