

ABSTRACTS

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STUDENTS AND METHODOLOGY

FOLLOW-UP OF THE LAST TWO GENERATIONS
OF THE PROFESSIONAL STUDY PROGRAMME OF
SOCIAL WORK

The follow-up carried out among two generations of students (2003/04 and 2004/05; n = 464) from the 2nd year of the professional programme of social work at the University of Ljubljana Faculty of Social Work presents indicators of the students' secondary schooling achievement and their first-year academic achievement within the professional programme at the Faculty of Social Work. It also includes their experiences with research activities as well as their expectations and aspirations regarding the academic subject Methodology of Research with Statistics I. The results show weak to zero correlations between the measures of their achievement at the secondary school and those of their first year's academic achievement, even though their academic achievement at the secondary school is the sole criterion for their admission to colleges and faculties. This unexpected outcome may be interpreted as a result of the relativity of achievement measures at the secondary school and of the disregard, within the enrolment procedure, of the level accredited to secondary schools on the grounds of their students' average academic achievement, which leads to the relative achievement being taken for the absolute one. Consistency has been found in the moderate correlations between the measures of academic achievement in the first year of study and the achievement at Methodology, which supports the view that the Faculty's evaluation policy is appropriate. Changes in the enrolment system and a further improvement of the Faculty's evaluation criteria are proposed.

Keywords: quality of study, academic success, social differentiation, social justice.

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Tomaž Deželan, Manca Drobne

IDENTIFICATION OF THE POLICY ON ILLICIT DRUGS IN SLOVENIA: THE INSTITUTIONAL ASPECT

Policies on illicit drug generally reflect the variety of diverse theoretical beliefs. More often than not, they can be classed between the repressive model at one end and the common-sense model based on the salutogenetic approach at the other. Our survey of the Slovenian institutional framework in the field of the use of illicit drugs, its prevention and the treatment of their consumers reaffirms frequently made observations on the domination of the public health paradigm in the field. The advanced and complex level of the public health sector coincides with the clear deficiencies of social and non-governmental sectors. In addition, the modifications of the Slovenian policy on illicit drugs towards pathological models have amplified the already existing imbalance in favour of public health institutions and increased the subordination of the non-governmental sector. These conclusions are confirmed by an analysis of public spending on drugs, or the "drugs budget", which reveals the dominant position of the public health sector and the stability of its funding, something which the non-governmental sector lacks.

Keywords: public spending on illicit drugs, drug budget, harm reduction.

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Tanja Cink
QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE BENEFICIARIES
OF SOCIAL WELFARE BENEFITS,
THE CASE OF THE MUNICIPALITY
OF NOVA GORICA

In the early 1990s, the transition to market economy in Slovenia required changes in social policy. However, social policy has not been adapted to the dominant conservative corporatism with the intensity characteristic of the countries of continental Europe. The state has continued to play the key role in the provision of social services and the scope and level of social transfers. Since 1992, the social protection of citizens has been regulated by the Social Protection Act that also describes social welfare benefit as a right. It is allocated to the individual or family when all other possibilities are exhausted, and is designed to ensure the meeting of minimal needs and subsistence. Still, it is difficult to imagine how one can live on 200 euros a month. The consequences of unemployment or loss of work or employment have clear consequences for the material quality of life, as well as for the social, psychological and health ones. With the prolongation of the unemployment period, individuals face growing risks. Unemployment is both a social and an economic problem and therefore requires complex systemic solutions, especially in education, housing and employment policies, as well as in the field of prevention.

Keywords: unemployment, social security, social endangerment.

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Tanja Gregorec, Mateja Debeljak
PARTICIPATION OF THE YOUTH IN THEIR
EXTRA-FAMILY PLACEMENTS

The authors organised a focus group with five adolescents who live in residential units in an institution and in a foster family, with the aim to identify positive and negative aspects of placement and residential care outside their family, and to estimate the degree of their participation. The subjects assessed their current extra-family care as positive, as an appeasement by the establishment of clearer boundaries, and as »better than home«. In the process of placement, they missed better information and more detailed explanations about where they would be placed. Workers gained the respondents' trust when they presented both good and bad aspects of new placements. According to the subjects, they had few opportunities during the placement process to express their wishes and needs, and they felt rather like passive receivers of help. Within limits, however, most of them could participate in decision-making, for example, by consenting to leave their family, which they regarded as very important. What they considered positive in the actions of professional workers included the correspondence between their words and actions, their respect of agreements, information about placement possibilities, the effort they made, their standing up for the adolescent, and their trust in the adolescent. In extra-family care, adolescents want as much autonomy as possible, room for individuality, and control over their own lives. In their opinion, they did not have enough opportunities for decision-making regarding their everyday activities; as they saw it, only those who have power in the group made decisions. Also, their proposals were not taken into consideration often enough. The help and support of their mentors meant the most for the subjects. In their words, good mentors are relaxed, trustworthy, and like their job. The adolescents draw strength from their foreseen future independence, and from their expectations to achieve something.

Keywords: young people's perspective, participation, placement.

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Branka Maučec
PROFESSIONAL ETHICS
IN SOCIAL WORK IN THE USA

The practice of social work complies to a great extent with the principles and standards as outlined in the Code of Ethics and the codes of conduct of social care institutions, as well as with local, state and federal legislature. On the one hand, those legal documents provide support to decision-making and assistance to the practitioners of social work services. However, they can also expose social workers to the dilemma of how to address highly complex ethical questions and at the same time remain within the boundaries of their personal ethical concern. This study addresses the evolution of ethics within the development of the US system of social work and outlines the areas of risk

social workers have been facing through the exposure to malpractice suits. Furthermore, the study analyses some ethical complaints presented to the National Association of Social Workers, and presents the strategies of risk management and mitigation as the mechanisms of fundamental importance for the competent practice and performance of social work.

Keywords: Code of Ethics, complaints, risk management, practice, professional associations

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