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## Moral reasoning of children with a severe socialisation deviation and their relation to important social norms

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Studia z Teorii Wychowania 6/3 (12), 95-115

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2015

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## **Moral reasoning of children with a severe socialisation deviation and their relation to important social norms**

### **Introduction to the problem**

To grasp the problem of children with a severe socialisation deviation, sometimes also known as behaviour disorder, the authors of this text base their understanding on a polyfactorial system definition of the aetiology of an individual's negative (positive) expression in a given social situation. Based on this is the "system definition of a serious socialisation deviation at a behaviour disorder level". *It is a serious socialization deviation, which manifests itself in breaking serious social norms, repeatedly and in the long term (at least 6 weeks). It can also be recognized in inadequate parameters achieved within a certain period of development, the child's level of intellectual abilities and its socio-cultural determination based on the individual's personality incompatibility settings and the current socialisation influences and values of society." This condition is caused by the incompatibility of the prior socialisation and educational influence on a child with predispositions, which did not accommodate properly for a socially desirable response in a given situation.* (Smolík, Svoboda, 2012, p. 30). The fact that an individual acts in contradiction (in line) with a severe social norm is caused by entering into a certain specifically defined correspondence of external factors with a time potential (time limit), during which they are exposed to specific influences with potential stress (Pelican, 1995), which they react to in a way that they perceive as the most acceptable, optimal, most useful strategy. In our opinion, an individual's violation of a social norm in a particular situation, reflects a consequence of the fact, that an inadequately influencing factor has not been compensated by another influence (set of influences) according to the previous set of socialisation (or educational) factors influencing the

individual's personality. An individual is therefore (not) ready for the stress of the arisen situation. They are unprepared for the hard choice and the implementation of a socially acceptable strategy. One can apply the same level of generalization to a positive or morally neutral act in any situation. In this case the social situation is structured into three components: cognitive, affectionate and conative (sometimes referred to as psychomotor). In this context it is important to draw attention to Orel's assertion that the line between the norm and abnormality (in this case between social norms and socialisation deviations) may not be sharp. It develops together with changes in society. In some cases, the "limit of a norm is artificially defined for example by defining and assessing certain criteria". We accept it as an auxiliary measure. The definition of what a norm is and what is abnormal should not overweigh people's individuality (Orel, 2012).

In the Czech Republic the area of care for individuals with severe socialization deviations at the level of behaviour disorders covered by the provision of so-called substitutes care. The provision of substitute care based on court decision regarding institutional or protective care or regarding a precautionary measure in the interest of the individual's healthy development, proper upbringing and education falls to facilities for institutional and protective care. As amended under Act 109/2002 Coll. educational facilities for institutional and protective care include:

*Diagnostic Institutes,*  
*Children's Homes,*  
*Children's Home and School,*  
*Institutional Treatment Institutes*

These facilities generally provide care otherwise provided by parents or guardians appointed by competent authority. The facilities particularly care for children with mandated institutional care or protective custody or for children, who are subject to precautionary measures.

### **The Moral Judgement and Relationship to Norms of Children Coming from Care Institutions, an Analysis**

The requirement for change in the system of Czech educational facilities providing institutional care, became the motivation for research. As part of the grant project entitled "*An Analysis of the Teleological Aspects of Substitute Care Facilities and their Impact on the Value System of Children with a Severe Socialisation Deviation*" a series of partial research activities was

carried out. The aim was to describe significant parts of the system, which is set to correct the personality of individuals diagnosed with behaviour disorders. The basic thesis of the research was the premise that the system of working with a child with a behaviour disorder must be compatible with the child's current status and needs. The intent of the study was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the system of substitute care educational facilities. The research itself was strategically divided into several areas. One of these areas was the level of children's moral development cultivation and potential socially acceptable applications of moral norms in real situations. The chosen research samples were children residing in substitute care educational facilities for more than one year.

One year was accepted as a sufficient period of time to initiate changes in the application of an individual's moral judgment and their relationship with a relevant norm (standards, the violation of which is the reason for institutional care). At the same time a sample of children from primary and secondary schools was analysed for comparison. The assumption here was a lesser differentiation between the levels of moral reasoning and their own moral judgment.

The research approached a representative sample of ten children's homes with integrated schools (seven with an integrated primary school and three with practical primary schools) and eight institutional treatment institutes. The method of moral analysis was weighed against a total of N – 717<sup>1</sup> respondents, of which N1 – 369 of children from children's homes with integrated schools (CHS – 152) and institutional treatment institutes (ITI – 186) and N2 – 348 respondents from the control sample of children from primary schools (PS -190) and high schools (HS – 158). The age range was 12-17 years old. Considering this research problem, it was necessary to differentiate the examined sample at facilities through other criteria.

The division of the sample throughout the data collection:

- data from children's homes with integrated schools and the control sample from primary schools
- data from children's homes with integrated practical primary schools and the control sample from practical primary schools
- children from institutional treatment institutes and the control sample from high schools and vocational schools.

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<sup>1</sup> 31 respondents with moderate mental retardation from primary school, who were not included in the statistical analysis.

The data was collected through the application of the moral dilemma method, which is based on analysing the achieved level of moral reasoning development (Vacek, 2010) and the individual's attitudes towards norms. The data was collected using a combination of research techniques – questionnaire and interview.

The default assumption was that the samples will be independent on the environment. This means, that the chosen significance levels will not differ based on the level of moral reasoning maturity, on the level of an individual's own moral judgment or on the level of applying one's moral judgment in difficult social situations. These were all individuals who, according to Piaget, based on their age, were already several years in a period that allowed them to implement moral judgments at the level of autonomous morality. Also, according to Kohlberg's theories, these individuals were able to cognitively relate to norms at the level of the second subgroup of the conventional level. At this stage, the individual should relate to a social norm in a way, that generalizes its social necessity. He or she accepts the necessity of compliance as a source of social stability. If we choose the language of "field data collection", the child is set to meet the standards even if nobody is watching.

### **The Method and Findings Reached**

Determining the hypothesis was based on the assumptions above based on Piaget's research that individuals from both monitored samples are able to autonomically respond. According to Kohlberg they should have reached a level of the second subgroup of conventional morals during the monitoring period. It was discovered during the preparations for the research itself that all respondents are aware of the monitored norms.

The main research method of moral analysis was aimed at selected areas of social rules that children placed in monitored facilities often fail. Repeated and long-term failure is the most common reason for subsequent mandated institutional care. The most common failures were for example, truancy, lying, robbery and theft. Please note that truancy is in clinical counselling practice considered one of the most important diagnostic clues for a potential diagnosis of behaviour disorder. Lastly, micro-stories with the theme of aggressive expression associated with a potential to harm the integrity of another person were included. It was the maximum of possible serious violations of social norms occurring in the case-histories of the monitored children.

The research tools – a questionnaire and interview, were designed as a free association of the Kohlberg moral dilemmas. The questionnaire was

the same for both boys and girls and it contained a total of 9 micro-stories simulating a state of moral dilemma. The need for a personalised research technique came from the requirement to match the text of the story with the current real experience of respondents (Heidbrink, 1997). The essence of the stories remained the same as in Kohlberg's stories, however the individual stylization differed. Each story contained additional questions with dual aim. The first objective was to determine the expression levels of moral reasoning loosely divided according to Piaget into heteronomous and autonomous (Piaget, Inhelder, 2010). The second objective was to assess the situation application of an individual in the field of moral judgment under moderately adverse conditions. The used stressors were in the form of time and personal pressure. We divided the expected data into four categories (groups) of 1, 3, 5, 7 and two levels of 1+5 and 3+7. The evaluation and interpretation starting point were the first two stages of the "Kohlbergian" understanding of moral reasoning – pre-conventional and conventional. The first group (1) included respondents, whose reasoning was based on a solution avoiding punishment. The second group (3) included respondents, whose solution to the situation was to their advantage, they were acting in accordance with the norm because they had the impression that it would pay off. This group also included respondents who would not address the situation at all. It was assumed that they also prefer utility. The third group (5) included respondents who chose a solution that has been approved by a particular authority, for example in the context of an emotionally positive tie (parent, teacher, friends, etc.). This group also included respondents who chose the solution characteristic for the approval by an authority in the context of delegated power in accordance with their own assessment of the situation. The aim in both cases was to prevent criticism coming from the authority and avoid feelings of guilt at the level of conscience. In this case, the child's relationship to a particular norm is shaped significantly according to another person and that their attitude to the norm. Even the *supposed* attitude of such a notable person (authority) can shape the child's relationship to norms. Such a person becomes a "model" of regularity, a measure of what is right. Applied this means the morals of a "good child" acting as expected. The fourth group (7) included "automatic" answers, e.g. "That's not allowed, it's not allowed to steal" etc. with the extension of statements such as "I'd feel bad". Ergo answers signifying an acceptance of moral conduct as a recognized necessity. This category also included respondents, whose answer was that norms apply to all equally.

Every story was evaluated separately (except for the second story<sup>2</sup>). We conducted a comprehensive evaluation based on the majority occurrence. This was done in both groups. Based on a chi-square test we evaluated the collected data after dividing the respondents into specific groups. This was done firstly for the achieved level in the area of moral judgement and secondly for the area focused on the respondent's application of the norm under time pressure within the micro-story. The moral dilemmas within the stories focused on issues according to the described norm and its social importance in a gradual mode. This was specifically about truancy, selfless lying, lying combined with robbery, selfish robbery with the intent to help a loved one, robbing a loved one, robbing an unknown stranger, manslaughter and intentional homicide. Every story was evaluated separately. Null and alternative hypotheses were determined for each micro-story within the monitored area of moral judgement and relationship to the norm, for example:

HA0: Children diagnosed with behaviour disorder and mandated institutional care (ITI) show the same frequency of signs within the level of moral judgment in the area of truancy as children without a diagnosed behavioural disorder (HS), there is no significant statistical difference.

The alternative hypothesis was established as:

HA1: Children diagnosed with behaviour disorder and mandated institutional care (ITI) show statistically significant differences in the frequency of signs within the level of moral judgment in the area of truancy compared to children without a diagnosed behavioural disorder (HS).

A contingency table was prepared when evaluating the independence test. The numbers in the contingency table expresses the frequency of pupils, who responded in the same way. The next step was to calculate the so-called expected frequencies (these frequencies correspond to the null hypothesis). A value of  $\chi^2$  was calculated for each contingency table field and these were then added up. We have chosen a level of significance based on the degree of freedom, in this case 0.01. The statistical tables informed the determination of the critical value of the test criteria, in our case it was 13.277 for the area of moral judgment and 20.090 for the area of norms and the relationships towards them. These numbers serve as an indicator for the acceptance or rejection of the null hypothesis. If the calculated value is less than the critical

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<sup>2</sup> The second story is evaluated differently, it therefore does not fall in the evaluation category.

value, the above null hypothesis is accepted if the calculated value is higher on the other hand, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is adopted equivalently.

**Evaluation sample:**

**Micro-story: truancy**

**1. The level of moral judgement**

Facility/moral	heteronomous	autonomous	
HS	1 (17,5)	157 (140,5)	158
ITI	37 (20,5)	148 (164,5)	185
	38	305	343

$$(1-17,5)^2/17,5 = 15,5 \quad (157-140,5)^2/140,5 = 1,9 \quad X^2 = 32,3$$

$$(37-20,5)^2/20,5 = 13,3 \quad (148-164,5)^2/164,5 = 1,6$$

**An evaluation of the level of moral judgment (ITI x HS)**

1. story	$X^2 = 32,3 > 13,277$	HA1
3. story	$X^2 = 53,2 > 13,277$	HC1
4. story	$X^2 = 6,6 < 13,277$	HD0
5. story	$X^2 = 21 > 13,277$	HE1
6. story	$X^2 = 23,7 > 13,277$	HF1
7. story	$X^2 = 16,6 > 13,277$	HG1
8. story	$X^2 = 26,9 > 13,277$	HH1
9. story	$X^2 = 29,6 > 13,277$	HI1
Overall evaluation	$X^2 = 14,3 > 13,277$	

$$f = (s-1) \times (r-1) = (3-1) \times (3-1) = 4$$

**The chosen level of significance  $\alpha = 0.01 = 13.277$**

**2. The level of relationship towards norms**

Facility/norm	1	3	5	7	
HS	4 (10,1)	2 (30,9)	56 (67,3)	96 (49,7)	158
ITI	18 (11,9)	65 (36,1)	90 (78,7)	12 (58,3)	185
	22	67	146	108	343

$$\begin{aligned}
 (4-10,1)2/10,1 &= 3,7 & (2-30,9)2/30,9 &= 27 & (56-67,3)2/67,3 &= 1,9 \\
 (18-11,9)2/11,9 &= 3,1 & (65-36,1)2/36,1 &= 23,1 & (90-78,7)2/78,7 &= 1,6 \\
 (96-49,7)2/49,7 &= 43,1 & (12-58,3)2/58,3 &= 36,8 & \mathbf{X^2 = 140,3} &
 \end{aligned}$$

The evaluation was carried out similarly for other micro-stories.

**The evaluation of the relationship towards a norm (ITI x HS) based on evaluated micro-stories**

1. story	$x^2 = 140,3 > 20,090$	HA2
3. story	$x^2 = 94,6 > 20,090$	HC2
4. story	$x^2 = 149,2 > 20,090$	HD2
5. story	$x^2 = 217,8 > 20,090$	HE2
6. story	$x^2 = 119,8 > 20,090$	HF2
7. story	$x^2 = 151,5 > 20,090$	HG2
8. story	$x^2 = 138,3 > 20,090$	HH2
9. story	$x^2 = 209,8 > 20,090$	HI2
Overall evaluation	$x^2 = 200,1 > 20,090$	

$$f = (r-1) \times (s-1) = (3 - 1) \times (5 - 1) = 8$$

**The chosen level of significance  $\alpha = 0,01 = 20.090$**

Both tested samples have a different potential on the scale of heteronomously – autonomous reasoning and approach to norms in connection to each micro-story. It was possible to conclude that a statistically significant number of children from high schools, approaches norms at an autonomous level, while a statistically significant number of children diagnosed with behaviour disorder approaches norms at a heteronomous level. Furthermore, a significant number of children from high schools shows differences in the achieved level of moral judgement compared to children diagnosed with behaviour disorder (apart from story no. 4., where we accepted the null

hypothesis based on statistical calculations). Other null hypotheses were rejected and equivalently alternative hypotheses were accepted.

This means that it is possible to find differences in a sample of children from Institutional Treatment Institutes. These differences give a basis to serious violations of social norms in the field of moral judgment operation level. These differences also affect the relation to the social norm.

**Micro-story: selfish lie in combination with robbery**

When partially evaluating individual stories towards the level of moral judgment, significant differences on the selected significance level of alpha were found among observed respondents except for the case of this micro story No. 4 – “selfish lie in combination with robbery”. This makes the result specific.

**Level of moral reasoning**

Facility/moral	heteronomous	autonomous	
HS	2 (6,9)	156 (151,1)	158
ITI	13 (8,1)	173 (177,9)	186
	15	329	344

$$\begin{array}{lll}
 (2-6,9)2/6,9 = 3,5 & (156-151,1)2/151,1 = 0,1 & \mathbf{X^2 = 6,6} \\
 (13-8,1)2/8,1 = 2,9 & (173-177,9)2/177,9 = 0,1 &
 \end{array}$$

Possible interpretation speaks in favour of successful working with this standard at the facilities level. In the monitored facilities it is usually seen as the most extreme ‘usual’ violation of social norms. The standard is therefore approached in similar way during educational activities and it is also interpreted this way. At the same time in media its unacceptability is often mentioned. Children therefore know how to approach it, and also probably know what is expected of them in terms of interpretation of their positions. On the basis of data obtained and based on the focus of the research project we monitored whether a sample of children from educational facilities, shows statistically significant concordance in the level of moral reasoning and in the access to social norms compared to their peers without a diagnosis of behaviour disorder.

## **Evaluation and interpretation**

### **Thesis**

To set the interpretive level of research we use Piaget's claim that the individual upon reaching certain developmental period is capable of autonomous moral judgment, which is preceded by a period of heteronomous judgement. Another assumption from which we draw are Kohlberg's conclusions that the children after a certain period of development (after reaching certain phase of CNS maturation) are capable of moral judgment at least on the conventional level. Monitored sample of children was selected so that it fully includes these achieved developmental periods. There should be no difference in the knowledge of norms and the common judgement towards them for both children in resocialisation facilities (with diagnosis of "behaviour disorder") and the ones not in such facilities. Based on clinical observations, we thought that under certain conditions this may not be true.

During the initial assigning of research technique, it was examined under the circumstances of no time pressure, whether respondents know the norms. It was confirmed that social norms contained in further applied micro stories are familiar to both samples of children (N – 717) that was also verbally confirmed by them.

### **Antithesis**

We tested further, how will both monitored samples decode and solve specific unusual and deliberately stressful situation of moral dilemma. The main added stressor was time and authoritative approach in organizing data collection. Artificially created stressful situation was intensified by escalating levels of presented dilemmas. During the assessment of the results, it was found that, there is no statistically significant concordance among monitored samples of respondents. A significant difference is demonstrated when children symbolically apply the norm under stress. Therefore for each sample, the emergence of the stress aspect created different perceptions of social situations. Differences between choices of respondent samples were tied to a potential behaviour – behaviour during particular "social situation" in particular "social environment". As a result, there is a triad of relations - "set social environment – nature of the social situation – applied social strategies".

	Social environment	Characteristics of social situation	Applied social strategies
Children with no behavioral disorders	The base is the same as intent	The stress did not influenced the moral judgement	The movement corresponding with age
Children with behavioral disorders	The base is the same as intent	The stress influenced the moral judgement	The movement at the level of lower age

Children from mainstream schools apply solutions and potential behaviour at a higher level of moral judgment, than children from the second sample. Ergo children diagnosed with behaviour disorder, in the event of increased pressure of social situation, behave at a lower level of moral judgment and probably even moral behaviour, than what they are allowed by achieved period (see above). This effect can be explained as a form of so-called. “Regressive movement” into a safety zone “of a certain moral judgment.” The child tries to intersect particular situation and its potential with the functioning “social map”. In the usual case, the social map of a child contains gradually acquired levels of moral judgment. This is a possible starting point for an explanation of why an individual in a particular case, under the influence of specific circumstances, moves away from his/her highest level of moral reasoning.

Suggested is an approach to understand the situation, when child knows the norm, but under the influence of moral relativism resulting from the level of personally conditional identification of social situation, does not act according to it. If such a condition occurs in a “laboratory conditions”, similar to those used for our data collection, then in social reality with presence of almost permanent emotional stress, the effects are probably even more intense. However, with regard to the systemic approach to the issue, it is much harder to measure. There will always be a certain generalization and reduction. We are aware of these limits in the interpretation.

As was already mentioned, children diagnosed with behaviour disorder became one research sample, which provably showed deviation from the control sample during induced situations. Thus showing statistically significant deviation from potentially elected “functional” solution of the complex social situation. The discrepancy is probably due to a different form of relativization of significant values. One of the possible effects of this condition is likely a degree of discomfort the individual is subjected to, as well as the rate of resilience, the level of volatile characteristics, emotional liability, etc. If children with behaviour disorder find themselves in difficult life situations,

characteristic of constraints arising from compliance with norms, they are apparently unable to adequately handle the cognitive – emotional character of the situations. The sample therefore showed the aforementioned deflection toward behaviour abreast with heteronomous reasoning, or even a choice at lower levels of moral reasoning than what is adequate for their achieved level of moral development.

At this level the conditions for conative act of an individual also start to differentiate towards compliance or violation of social norms.

### **Syntheses**

Based on the obtained findings, we think it is appropriate to focus further research towards the emotional component of the social situation. It has significantly influencing effect during the real application of the relationship to norm in specific social situations. On this basis, we expect potential movement of socially finest cognitive grasp of social norms. We also conclude that during the application of social norm, in the situation close to existential characteristics (existential threat towards the individual) there is a possibility of a social strategy closer to a rapid solution, organizationally less demanding solution, or a solution that is based on a greater saturation of security and safety sense. The quality of the final behaviour of the individual subsequently does not reach the level of the highest moral judgment, which should be the individual theoretically capable of. It applies solutions that Kohlberg connects rather with lower levels of moral development. At this point it is appropriate to emphasize the importance of self-esteem of individuals in the demanding, stressful or crisis situation and the importance of subjective interpretation of social reality and meaningfulness of the world.

### **Evaluation of specific micro-stories**

To increase the termination potential of the research, it has proved to be an effective option to get more data from specific evaluation of micro-stories. In this case, we have taken notice of the selected answers from two selected samples when under the laboratory burden. Significant is the frequency of choice election distribution in categories 1,3,5,7 from both samples of children. Categories corresponding with the four subcategories of preconventional a conventional level of moral development. For illustration, we show only outputs of three applied micro-stories. However, the distribution of frequency is interpretatively similarly important in other micro-stories, which are described below, in the text.

### Partial evaluation of the level of the norm

#### Micro story – Unselfish lie

Facility/norm	1	3	5	7	
HS	1 (9,2)	33 (56,4)	42 (48,5)	82 (43,9)	158
ITI	19 (10,8)	89 (65,6)	63 (56,5)	13 (51,1)	184

#### Micro story – Selfish lie in combination with robbery

Facility/norm	1	3	5	7	
HS	1 (8,3)	3 (31,8)	44 (59)	110 (59)	158
ITI	17 (9,7)	66 (37,2)	84 (69)	18 (69)	185

#### Micro Story – Robbery of strange, unknown person

Facility/norm	1	3	5	7	
HS	1 (9,2)	8 (52,9)	72 (53,4)	74 (39,6)	155
ITI	19 (10,8)	107 (62,1)	44 (62,6)	12 (46,4)	182

### Thesis

Most answers of the respondents' from the monitored sample of children with behaviour disorder is moving around the categories 3 and 5.3 It gives us a chance to review the effectiveness and results of monitored facilities. Due to the fact that children are in these facilities for at least a year, it should really be an example of the quality of pedagogical influence on individuals in the field of moral judgment and its application. Children from the school facilities of alternative educational care show mostly the importance of relevant norms in two categories. Firstly, in terms of profitability (group 3), reward and punishment. These are unconventional courts.

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<sup>3</sup> Group 3 queued respondents who used the solution in their favor. They act in accordance with the norm because they have the impression that it is paying off. They act so because they were rewarded for such behavior, or may potentially be. Into the group 5, we included respondents who used the solution, which was approved by the authority in the context of emotionally positive correlation (parent, teacher, friends, etc.). In this case, the relationship to the norm is significantly affected by the subjective relationship to another person and her/his attitude to norm. It is a so called morality of a „nice child“, acting according to what is expected, with the aim of creating or maintaining good relations. There is also considered the emphasis on harmony between human beings. At the same time, this group includes also respondents with the answer that norms apply to everyone equally – it is a persistent level of rigidity. This level is characteristic for Piaget, rather for the period ending with onset of puberty.

It can be assumed that this is probably the level of the norm, often known to children from non-institutional reality. The alternative is that this is a higher level of the norm reached by a child through educational work in institutional reality. Children are in duality, where the norms applied in the facility will be followed as far as they are in this environment. These data suggest against the current pressure on the shortest non-selective child's stay at the facility.

Assuming that a methodology of the facility has further potential to change the child's socialization deviation. The second category are testimonies to the conventional level of judgement, predicating about its conditionality to leading authority and so called 'Morality of a nice child'. It is characterized by an effort to achieve a positive assessment/evaluation of an individual by an important person, authority. Let's assume with reservations, it is a teaching staff. Children will probably adhere to the norms in order to receive positive feedback from the constitutional environment, represented by a teacher. If the child is freed from the long-term impact of teacher (for example, upon termination of institutional upbringing, or after escape from such facility), the question is who will be the next authority that affects individuals when "interlacing" the positive grip of particular social situation. If it is a parent of a fully functional family, we can expect a functional impact. The question is the degree and form of such protectivity. This can have an impact on the quality of further development of the child in the application of moral conduct. If for the child the fundamental authority is for example a friend form reprehensible peer group, or other socially unstable factor, then it may lead to the negation of the previous positive experience with application of specific norm (such as repeated violations of the norm) obtained in institutional environment.

### **Antithesis**

On the basis of the gathered data it can be further interpreted that in the observed teaching reality of the institutional environment in the Czech Republic, a child is not exposed to pedagogical activities, which purposefully and intentionally leads the child to higher relationship to the norm. We mean the setting up of pedagogical goals and choice of methods influencing for example the application-level of norms on the level of compliance in social relationships with other people, order and the foremost moral regulative – own conscience. In clinical practice, it is known that often educational work with the child is not adjusted according to his personality towards higher moral judgements but only to the moral level of a teacher, who is set at the

level of the categorical imperative for a child. The thing that is missing is what in accordance with Pelikán could be called substantial direction of teacher and child to higher levels of moral reasoning, acting in accordance with properly set conscience and better orientation in the social situation at the level of moral relativism. In this area, there is a noticeable non-direction of children in the monitored facilities, towards the sixth and seventh level, relating to the norm and its application. Children, leaving the facility have undergone something similar to greenhouse effect, without a greater potential of targeted influence of child's personality.

### **Syntheses**

Proper research also consists of creating new and relevant questions. Let us therefore assume, in accordance with Kohlberg and our findings, that the achieved level of moral development is not adequate and unified image of individual's behaviour in specific social situation. It is rather a potential maximum of possible moral judgment. Due to the results of the realized investigation the theory of the election of moral strategy in a particular situation should be considered. Operatively it is called "situation of reverse – regressive choice." We assume that: "When dealing with real social situation, a situation can arise when an individual is unable to act in accordance to his/her highest level of moral development. Previously mentioned moral level does not provide him/her with a compatible solution to such situations. Individual is not provided with his/her own systemic interpretation of such specific situation, surroundings do not resonate with his/her personality settings. In this case, he/she regresses to lower levels of moral reasoning developmental stages that are more compatible to resolve the situation. For these individuals it is for various reasons more acceptable. Here he/she finds support for behaviour in accordance to a norm. Interpretation of the situation resonates with the optimal solution. For example, an individual, in their evaluation rests on the authority, or rests on the social maximum punishment, rule of law and attempts to avoid a possible punishment through pro-social strategy. In such a situation, the individual is confident of their choice of social strategy. Such potential solution in accordance with the norm resonates to an individual for example in the emotional response to a situation. Special situation is behaviour that is not in compliance with the norm. The individual during regression do not encounter backing in the lower developmental stages of moral judgment. The individual therefore loses motivation to act in accordance with the norm. It must therefore find a strategy to deal with the specific social situation using different keys

(instincts, instantaneous movement, minimum investment into the will, the path of the least resistance, the influence of the other person, etc.). The above-mentioned behaviour is called hypothetical moral point “0” (point of coming into the world). With some exaggeration, it can be perceived (the aforementioned point) as an analogy to the early stage where we are trying to achieve the satisfaction of basic psychological and social needs by trial and error. From Kohlberg’s point of view we are looking out on the precursor of application of strategies based on “reward and punishment”. Naturally it is without social constraints that are characteristic of the early period of socialization of a small child.

The above-mentioned assumptions are a certain generalization of mechanism for application of moral judgment to the reality of situations with different levels of complexity. From the research team’s point of view there is a desire to create a certain interpretative model of a relatively complex system of choice. We are also aware that an individual in the later stages of maturing – development – learning as a human being achieve their needs through sophisticated multidimensional choice influenced through the value chain, the ego reference framework, etc.

We believe, however, that the described phenomenon of regression occurs in individual choices, group choices and judgements (groupement) as well as in more complex systems of social situations. The aforementioned theory can be accepted as the basis for the formation of the methodology for corrective actions of socializing deviations of children in observed school facilities with alternative educational care. The starting point for setting interventions can also be found in the point “0” of social strategies acquisition and relationship to the norm. Educational objective will require from the individual to live through the complex educational situations that will carry him again through the whole moral development process, and will teach him the application of the entire system of moral choices, including the experience of regression. This process cannot be realized, among other things, without the experience of contact with rewards and punishments. The child will live through potential and functional regression up to pre-moral period. The child should for example go through a situation, closest to the reality simulating a difference between a socially beneficial and socially desirable strategy. Based on the qualitative shift in the area of corrections of socialization deviations, a child must be capable of flexible adjustment to its previous strategies, the condition being certain specific preparedness of child’s personality psyche. The aim is to achieve the desired changes in the shortest time, but at the same avoid rush.

We must realize that the child's limitations in certain areas are not a manifestation of social revenge, but it is a pedagogically proven and functional effect of the experience of the natural result of improper choice of social strategy, as a result of socially incompatible personality setting of the individual. In this case, there is a real possibility for the child to experience an adequate level of responsibility and adequate feedback, informing children about the seriousness of the social situation. The child gets a fixed point from which he/she may reflect to in the often very unstable system of values in its home surroundings. Likewise, the teacher gets a fixed point and can use it to launch his educational activity. It is not realistic to determine when and under what conditions and what course of deviation occurred in the socialization of the child. Usually, we only presume. We are only able to map it in the case of flagrant violations of social norms. In the pedagogical reality, this means that an individual can (and often must) start newly his/her application of an adequate moral judgment in point "zero" with the transition to the first period of moral maturation. But there is a condition that this new "beginning" must be associated with a more comprehensive system of socialization.

In the field of teaching at the educational institutions, (we mean institutions monitored by us) it is desirable the institutions are not only formally preventive in nature with a very slight psychotherapeutic "paint" as it is today, but they should have a systemic, dynamic and growth-promoting pedagogical potential with a pressure on a change in the child's personality. One of the objectives of these facilities is, among others, improving the ability to accept responsibility for the incorrect decisions. In educational facilities with alternative educational care it is therefore appropriate to establish and apply pedagogical approach of character, so called "progrowth system of dynamic cultivation of a child with socialization deviation". A partial goal must be the moral development of an individual. The aforementioned progrowth is based on a created program that culminates after set periods. For example, the starting point of the first phase, so called adaptation period, is the emphasis on group size of education of educational groups, pressure on the community, belonging to educational groups, responsibility to the surroundings and the opportunity to acquire orientation in the first phase of the application of moral reasoning. Maximum possibilities of educational activities, which are characterized by their need to accept commands and prohibitions of "adults", when good is what is rewarded and evil what it is "penalized". The adult is a measure of the accuracy and determines what is positive and what is not. Accentuation of authoritative guidance on educational

groups. Adults also determine what is fair and what is unfair. The basis for evaluation of certain practices are adopted concrete consequences – “reward and punishment”. The setting of individual educational activity depends naturally on the needs of the child. The system of specific educational group must be able to respond in a certain time period to a potential change of the individual and to enable transition to the “training session” of application of further stages of moral judgment.

It is natural that for some individuals the development is accelerated by a certain moral “remembering” of the higher stages that has already passed and they can flexibly apply it in situations where they would in institutional reality fail. One of the important elements in the personality, which helps the child’s development and corrects the socialization deviations within the described programs, is the developed ability to withstand pressure and better level of frustration tolerance. Both in physical and mental areas. In these areas it is possible to find inspiration for the creation and application of other functional educational practices. We enable individuals successfully coping with these modelled social and educational situations, among other things, better ability to vote in the constitutional and nonconstitutional reality. The ideal is when educational strategies target higher potential of self concept. However it is not desirable to strengthen the self concept without adequate performance. An important condition is to create a field diagnostics to determine the time period when the setting of members of the educational group change towards better application of higher levels of moral reasoning and better ability of taking responsibility for them. The minimum objective is to achieve an orientation in an application level of morality and conscience authority (according to Kohlberg).

It is worth a consideration, whether in such case a growth potential of the evaluation of the child (including a system of rewards and sanctions) should be adjusted. We mean the transformation of an evaluation system based on sections of the educational process, which the educational group goes through. At the same time, we also see the need for a flexible transformation of an evaluation system towards personality changes of a child. We believe that in the first phase it should be a very strict, uncompromising and transparently fair issue. The following phase should be gradation (in moral reasoning area but also the entire structure of socialization in the facilities) through rigid adoption of norms to positive moral relativism, when an individual is capable of moral judgment considerably separately and is able to evaluate the social situation at the level of the developed conscience in combination with the common perception of the Order. The work with the

child programs should culminate on the axis of control accompaniment, in order to strengthen the child in the so-called “Socially acceptable autonomy”. At the same time the creators of these programs should not forget that they do not affect a child for him alone, but it is a social contract and thus they affect the child educationally for the society.

### **Conclusion**

The output of the analysis of children’s approach to solutions and application of moral dilemmas (micro stories made according to Kohlberg), it is clear that according to the results in the levels of cognition; the two groups do not significantly differ. We can assume that children representing intact population and even children diagnosed with behaviour disorder know the norm, but the latter ones do not act according to it. We need to look for the bases of this differentiation at the difference of affective potential during the social situation for both samples of children. We assume that every social situation is for child more or less stressful and is a challenge to respond within a certain strategy. At the same social situation the affective burden is different for a child with behaviour disorder. The influence naturally has an affective distribution of stress, which initiates the choice of behaviour strategies on the scale aggression – escape. Norms and rules are for the child in the form of stress (limit) on which it must adapt since childhood. Children with the disorder are often not capable of postponing immediate gratification, too early or too intense are their responses, or on the contrary, they do not respond at all (escape). A child with behaviour disorder often comes to other interpretations of social situations than child socialized within the norm. If we want to work more effectively with children in facilities, we must realize that cognitive goals are quite fulfilled there, they do not work pedagogically (goal and purpose) at the level of targets with a strong affective potential. Children are not deliberately cultivated in postponing immediate gratification; the staff does not work specifically with their frustration tolerance and application of socially acceptable strategies, which often ends at the level of external pressure and behavioural stimulus and response. The lack of effort in creating procedures within these facilities especially the on the basis of the present theoretical background and further educated and skilled teachers who would be implementing such assumptions are missing.

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### **Moral reasoning of children with a severe socialisation deviation and their relation to important social norms**

This text presents the partial results of a research project entitled *An Analysis of the Teleological Aspects of Substitute Care Facilities and their Impact on the Value System of Children with a Severe Socialisation Deviation*. The aim of the research was to assess the state of children's personality cultivation in the area of moral development when placed in substitute care (facilities for individuals with a diagnosis of behaviour disorder).

The focus of the project were children who have problems complying with important social rules at some point during their development. The level of their problems escalated up to the point of removal from the family. In this case the Czech school system offers the possibility of using alternative

educational strategies implemented at special educational institutions. In the context of our research the question also remained to what extent these institutions were prepared to effectively fulfil their social obligation. An important motive for the design of this research was the current situation within society, where the system of educational facilities used to perform mandated institutional care and protective custody in the Czech Republic was subjected to different often controversial interventions in the recent years (in the opinion of experts working in this segment of educational activities). The system has undergone several rather awkward attempts to improve the work with children diagnosed with behaviour disorder. The following text is an interpretation of significant partial findings based on collected data.