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CROSS-CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN SELF-CONCEPT AND DISPOSITIONS TO SCHOOL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The article highlights the relationship between self-concept and dispositions to school education. The main definition of self-concept and its contemporary understanding is underlined. What is meant by the expression "dispositions to school education" are phenomena such as attitudes to school, motive to achieve, beliefs about personal control over learning, external constraints on learning, etc. The aim of the research is to find out the expression of individual areas of self-concept and dispositions to school education. A group of Slovenian and a group of British high school students participated in the study. The results of ANOVA as well as of the discriminant analysis showed significant differences as regards nationality. For example, British participants exceeded Slovenians in many areas of self-concept and the Britons' attitude to school is more positive than that of their Slovene counterparts. The results are interpreted in the light of particular personality and nationality differences.

Key words: dispositions to school education, attitudes to school, motive to achieve, trust in self-abilities, self-concept

DIFFERENZE INTERCULTURALI NELL'IMMAGINE DI SÉ E NEL RAPPORTO VERSO L'ISTRUZIONE SCOLASTICA

SINTESI

L'articolo esamina la correlazione tra immagine di sé e rapporto verso l'istruzione scolastica. L'accento è posto sulla definizione prevalente e sugli studi attuali dell'immagine di sé. Nel "rapporto verso l'istruzione scolastica" sono compresi diversi fenomeni, come l'opinione nei confronti della scuola, la motivazione scolastica, la sicurezza nelle proprie capacità di studio, le opinioni relative all'influenza di fattori esterni sullo studio, ecc. Fine della ricerca è accertare la manifestazione dei vari aspetti dell'immagine di sé e del rapporto verso l'istruzione scolastica. Alla ricerca hanno collaborato due gruppi di giovani sloveni e britannici. I risultati dell'analisi della varianza (ANOVA) e quelli dell'analisi discriminante, indicano alcune importanti differenze correlate alla nazionalità dei partecipanti. Gli studenti delle scuole medie britanniche, per esempio, fanno registrare un alto grado di manifestazione della maggior parte delle componenti dell'immagine di sé; e anche il loro rapporto verso l'istruzione scolastica è in generale più positivo di quello dei giovani sloveni. L'autrice spiega i risultati dal punto di vista delle differenze personali e interculturali.

Parole chiave: rapporto verso l'istruzione scolastica, opinione nei confronti della scuola, motivazione scolastica, fiducia nelle proprie capacità, immagine di sé

INTRODUCTION

Self-concept

Self-concept is a term that has been familiar in psychology – under various designations – for a good century. According to James (1890) self-concept is defined as everything that a person thinks about self and everything that a person wants to present to others about self. Generally, self-concept is defined by a variety of relationships that an individual, consciously or unconsciously, reestablishes towards oneself. The individual enters them gradually, by means of concepts, feelings, evaluations, self-evaluations, typified personal social dispositions and behaviour, etc., which have been developed since his/her birth (Keltingas-Järvinen, 1990). With such an organised entity of conceptions, attitudes, abilities, feelings, etc., the individual monitors and directs his/her behaviour (Musek, 1992) and connects his/her system of values with the value system of the immediate or wide social surroundings. In other words, the self-concept helps form the reality of the individual.

Numerous researches have shown that self-concept is being formed accordingly with the development of personality. This at the same time means that self-concept does not develop only as a whole, but gradually through building-up of various fields, ranging from physical, social, academic and emotional self-concept, to self-concept in the field of attitude towards sexuality, in the field of sincerity, creativity, etc. (Kobal, 2000).

The revised hypothesis on multidimensionality of self-concept, which was originally posed by James (1890) in the 80s, facilitated various researches into the influence of personal development on the multidimensionality of self-concept (Damon, Hart, 1988; Shavelson, Bolus, 1982; Pervin, 1996). The researches clearly show that self-concept changes through the years and becomes more and more layered (Elder, 1990; Harter, 1996; Oppenheimer et al., 1990). O'Malley and Bachman (1983) even presume a linear relation between self-concept and age. They hold the opinion that self-concept is the least layered in childhood, its fields being only poorly manifested. What follows are two strong increases in the number of fields, the first on the turning point from early to middle adolescence and the second on the turning point from late adolescence into early adulthood. Its structure begins to decrease in number with old age.

The researches that investigate into the self-concept in the academic field, point to the fact that the child takes on a new social role when entering school, unfamiliar till then, i.e. the role of the student. It is characterised by a strong connection with his/her self-perception, which becomes more and more layered at the turning point into adolescence. Gradually, the student starts to establish new aspects of self, of which par-

ticularly those referring directly to school bare special significance for his/her learning proficiency and school life. They were designated as 'academic aspects of self-concept' by Shavelson and Bolus (1982). According to the definition of self-concept (Musek, 1992; Kobal, 2000) academic self-concept is an organised entity of characteristics, traits, feelings, abilities, concepts, attitudes, etc., that the adolescent ascribes to his/her role as a student. Academic self-concept stands in important relation with learning proficiency and attitudes towards school (Marsh, 1987).

Disposition towards school and learning

The expression *disposition towards school education* emphasises that the object of study in this research is not merely school as an institution that teaches and pedagogically educates, but above all the process. In this context school education should be understood as a long-term institutionalised educational process, which allows the students to acquire knowledge and also mature through learning and mutual relationships with peer students. The object of our study is not motivation and learning in the 'classical' sense of the word, but most of all opinions, beliefs, judgements, concepts, descriptions and attitudes that adolescents form as to their own motive to achieve and their own school learning.

By means of the tools that were applied in this research to measure the above-mentioned phenomena, Robinson and his collaborators (Robinson, Breslav, 2000; Robinson et al., 1990; Robinson, Tayler, 1992) examined various problems of students and their interrelations with education. This refers mostly to: (1) opinions, beliefs, judgements, concepts, etc. of students about learning, (2) concepts of students about their own motivation, (3) significance of learning to the students and manner of motivation, (4) control of students over their own learning, (5) feelings and beliefs about their own ability, responsibility, trust in self-abilities and personal willingness for learning, (6) influence of external factors on personal achievement, (7) attitudes towards school and education, (8) disposition towards homework and the time spent learning, (9) opinions, feelings, beliefs about self-organisation and preparation for lessons, (10) opinions, judgements, attitudes towards personal willingness for co-operation in class, etc.

Already a quick glance at the list of study fields leads us to the thought that the authors did not merely examine these phenomena under the terms *motivation* and *learning*, moreover they were looking for more or less appropriate common denominators. In his texts they can be traced under: *approaches to school work* (Robinson, Breslav, 2000), *a set of questions ...*, which refer to (1) motive to achieve; (2) personal potency; (3) beliefs about personal control over learning ... (Robinson, Tayler, 1992), *Questionnaire – School learning, Question-*

naire – attitudes, behaviour, belief (Robinson et al., 1990), *School and school work* (Robinson, 1996), *Dispositions to school*, etc.

Therefore, the disposition to school education could be defined as an organised entity of opinions, beliefs, dispositions, attitudes, judgements, concepts, feelings and other mental contents that:

- the student holds towards school, teachers, learning, motivation, classmates, doing homework, preparations for examination, etc.;

- the student holds in evaluating his attitude towards education;

- influence the student's collection, processing and understanding of information about the significance and importance of education for the student

- enforce creation of new experience and direct the student's behaviour concerning education.

Also of interest are the international researches TIMSS (2000), in which scientists from various countries attempted to examine the attitude of students towards school, as well. This variable refers to the attitude of students towards mathematics and natural sciences. The researches show, among other, a less positive attitude of the Slovene students (of elementary schools) compared with most of the students from other countries. Among the 38 countries, which include e.g. the USA, Great Britain, Israel, Macedonia, Romania, the Philippines, Tunisia, Australia, Hong Kong, etc., Slovenia holds position 35. It is followed only by the Netherlands, Japan and South Korea. The most positive attitude towards mathematics is manifested in the students from Malaysia, Morocco, South African Republic, the Philippines and Tunisia. Apart from that, also the attitude towards natural sciences of students in Slovenia is one of the poorest in the world and has not changed since 1995.

Self-concept and disposition toward school education in students of different nationalities

In recent years also several international researches can be detected that investigate into self-concept and some aspects of attitude towards school as regards school achievement of various nations. Nevertheless, it needs to be pointed out that such studies still represent a rarity in the world literature of psychology. The reasons for that may stem from the methodological difficulties in controlling a variety of variables that are dependent on the influence of nationality, individual differences between the tested participants and on differences between school systems.

In 1990, Robinson et al (1990) performed an international study of school achievement, self-respect, identity and attitude towards school in groups of French and British students. Their basis was the Tajfel and Turner (Tajfel, 1982) theory of social identity, which states that social identity is an element of identity en-

abling the individual to recognise himself within a narrow desired group, which he compares with a wide desired group. This mechanism allows the individual to recognise his position also within the wider social community. If the individual is threatened by a decrease in his social identity, he will attempt to maintain the identity either by devaluating the significance of his previously desired narrow group and look for recognition of himself in another narrow group or he will search for those positive elements in his own group which will allow him to maintain his position within it.

On the basis of the theory by Tajfel and Turner Robinson et al. (1990) have formed two hypotheses of strategies of maintaining a positive social identity in school environment. The first hypothesis presupposed that students with lower school achievement were threatened by a lower social identity than the students with high school achievement. In view of the tendency towards maintaining a positive social identity, the unsuccessful students form negative attitudes towards school achievement. Instead of struggling to succeed, they value non-competitiveness, non-ambitiousness as regards school achievement and carelessness about school grades. They may, however, look for other narrow groups that enable them to recognise their position within it more easily. Some of the students may form both of the strategies in order to maintain their positive social identity. The second hypothesis, which was formed as a result of the first one, assumed that students with low school achievement devalue the positive meaning of school success and search for negative effects that school achievement was supposed to bring.

The authors' research encompassed 196 French students and 3000 British students in the ages from 11 to 14. They were classified according to school achievement into a group with high school achievement and one with low school achievement. The tested participants answered the questionnaire of self-perception *Perception of self*, a questionnaire measuring expectations regarding oneself, *Aspirations of self*, and the following questionnaires: *School learning*, *Attitudes, behaviour, beliefs, Values*, and *Self*, composed by the authors who then evaluated the statements on the Rosenberg self-respect scale.

The results have shown some statistically significant differences between students with low school achievement and students with high school achievement, also in respect of their nationality. It has been argued that the French are more successful, have higher self-respect, more trust in oneself and are more satisfied with oneself than their British peers. Also students with low school achievement keep a high level of self-respect, trust in self-abilities and are generally not displeased with the school system. The authors got the lowest values from the group of British students with low school achievement. Some statistically significant differences appeared

also in the area of attitude towards school. It has been suggested that highly proficient French participants exhibit a higher level of motive to achieve and trust in self-abilities, their attitudes towards school and learning are more positive, they are more conscientious and diligent in doing homework and preparations for tests and exhibit, regardless of their level of achievement, a greater sense of self-organisation than their British peers. On the contrary, the low proficient British participants manifest the highest need for external help in learning and consider themselves more opportunist compared to their more successful British peers and compared to French peers.

The researches presume that the reasons for higher values of the French tested participants are to be searched for within the school system as well as in other areas of adolescents' activities. They hold the opinion that the French educational system enables also less proficient students to keep a positive social identity within the school system, in which they are being educated. They assume that the educational programmes are composed in such a way that they enable a satisfactory realisation of each student's capabilities. The students therefore do not ascribe the reasons for low school achievement to external factors (educational programme, teachers, etc.) but to oneself. They themselves must study more, pay more attention in classes, etc. The French educational programme therefore encourages students' ambitiousness, the urge to succeed and enables them to impose higher expectations upon themselves. The student does not seem to experience lower school achievement as a stigma, because institutional education enables him to achieve his own actual level of success by trying harder. On the contrary their less successful British peers, who are exposed to a more rigorous school system, reject this system and the school environment and search for other groups that would make them feel more wanted. That is why British less proficient students exhibit more deviant behaviour than French less proficient students.

By means of the same instruments Robinson and Breslav (2000) have examined also self-concept and attitude to school in testing elementary-school students from Latvia and Great Britain. Their basic presupposition was that the Latvian adolescents had lower self-respect than their British peers. They searched for motives in the differences between the two social and political systems. Yet the outcome was the opposite, there were no significant differences between Latvian and British adolescents as regards self-respect.

On the basis of theoretical starting points and research results it is possible to make conclusions only about the degree of relation between self-concept and dispositions to school education, and not about the direction of the relation. Self-concept and dispositions to school are two psychological phenomena that mutually

effect each other, so it is impossible to presume whether self-concept influences attitude towards school more or is attitude to school the factor which defines self-concept more. The core problem of the research is to discover the manifestation of individual fields of self-concept of participants as part of their personality and their dispositions to school education. In the process of the research, we were especially interested in the above-mentioned differences as regards nationality.

THE METHOD

Participants

In the present research 400 participants took part, 193 of them Slovene and 207 of British nationality. The group of Slovenes attended high school (4 schools all together) and the group of Britains the comprehensive school (4 schools), meaning that the participants of the research had been selected on the basis of the level of education. Their average age was 16 years, half of them were boys and half girls. The criteria for selection were therefore the level of education (type of school), age and gender (50% males, 50% females).

Variables

The independent variable is represented by nationality. Dependent variables are represented by the fields of self-concept, expressed in the form of results of questionnaires SDQ III (Self description questionnaire III) (Marsh, O'Neill, 1984) and the field dispositions to school education represented in the form of results on the scale of Attitudes towards school and school work (Robinson, 1984; Robinson, 1996) and School learning (Robinson, 1984; Robinson, 1996; Robinson et al., 1990).

Measuring instruments

Three measuring instruments were used for the purpose of the research.

SDQ III – Self description questionnaire III.

The questionnaire on self-concept in adolescents by Marsh and O'Neill (1984) comprises of 136 points and measures 13 aspects of self-concept: (1) mathematical ability, (2) verbal ability, (3) academic self-concept, (4) problem solving or creativity, (5) physical ability and sports, (6) physical appearance, (7) relations with same sex peers, (8) relations with opposite sex peers, (9) relations with parents, (10) religion, (11) sincerity and reliability, (12) emotional stability and safety, as well as the (13) general self-concept. The reliability coefficient amounts to .936 (Cronbach-alfa). It is based on the model of Shavelson and Bolus (1982), who hypothe-

sized that the structure of self-concept is multidimensional and hierarchical.

Attitudes towards school and school work.

Robinson's questionnaire on attitudes towards school and school work (1996.; 1984; Robinson et al, 1990) measures 6 fields of adolescents' disposition towards school and education: (1) attitudes towards school (Attitude to school scale (Morton-Williams, Finch, 1968)), (2) doing homework, (3) preparation for examination, (4) self-organisation, (5) personal responsibility and (6) non-opportunism. The reliability coefficient amounts to .701 (Cronbach-alfa).

Questionnaire – School learning.

Robinson's questionnaire on attitude towards learning (1996; Robinson et al, 1990) measures 4 different fields: (1) motive to achieve, (2) rejection of personal impotence to learn, (3) beliefs in efficacy of learning strategies and the (4) need for external assistance in learning. The reliability coefficient amounts to .624 (Cronbach-alfa).

The procedure of data collecting

Preparation of the research and its execution took place in Slovenia and Great Britain. The participants obtained and completed a set of questionnaires (general questionnaire, SDQ III, Attitudes towards school and school work, and School learning). After the data had been collected, I had 2-hour interviews with the groups of Slovenian and British adolescents concerning their experience of adolescence, school, friends and about their plans for the future. By means of the interviews I wanted to make the data and results that I had gained from the questionnaires more presentable. This was especially useful because: (1) the talks helped me explain the results especially of British participants, above all, as I hadn't had a deeper insight into their experience of the above-mentioned fields preceding that time, and (2) because the talks enabled an immediate contact with the participants of the research, on the other hand data collection was performed in groups of classes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of a one-way ANOVA and discriminant analyses are given.

Table 1: Basic statistical results of Slovene and British participants.

Tabela 1: Osnovni statistični podatki o slovenskih in britanskih udeležencih.

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Mathematical	4	24	14,23	4,91	-,027	-,755
Religion	4	24	9,58	5,90	,911	-,336
Honesty and reliability	7	24	18,31	3,60	-,577	-,210
Emotional stability	5	24	16,48	3,54	-,397	,088
General self-concept	4	24	17,68	3,80	-,791	,518
Verbal ability	5	24	16,55	3,52	-,293	-,281
Academic self-concept	5	24	16,83	3,43	-,515	,189
Problem solving / creativity	10	24	17,47	2,81	-,165	-,313
Physical abilities / sports	4	24	16,75	5,19	-,433	-,680
Physical appearance	4	24	15,95	3,91	-,588	,274
Relations with same sex peers	7	24	18,31	2,94	-,500	,730
Relations with opposite sex peers	4	24	18,20	3,93	-,787	,523
Relations with parents	5	24	18,43	3,62	-,901	,747
Attitude to school	8	24	17,79	3,47	-,364	-,462
Doing homework	3	9	6,66	1,92	-,502	-,704
Preparation for tests	1	3	2,23	,90	-,460	-1,619
Personal responsibility	2	6	4,89	1,26	-,698	-,596
Organizes self	6	12	10,99	1,23	-1,237	1,358
Not opportunist	3	9	6,40	1,97	-,265	-1,089
Motive to achieve	6	25	19,26	3,04	-,498	,463
Rejection of personal impotence to l.	8	20	15,38	2,13	-,228	,242
Beliefs in efficacy of l. strategies	10	25	18,56	2,60	-,210	,268
Need for external assistance for l.	4	20	11,18	2,76	,037	,203

Table 1 shows basic statistical data of Slovene and British participants for all variables together. The distribution of all answers is normal, slight discrepancies could be detected only in degree of kurtosis. It seems that the Slovene as well as the British participants get on well with their parents, this field of self-concept being manifested the highest. Also their self-concept in relations with same sex peers and self-concept in the field of sincerity and reliability are high. The least manifested is their self-concept in the field of religion: it seems that a moderately low number of participants consider themselves religious, they rarely connect their life with religion, their parents, in average, being not very religious either.

Analogously, we could conclude that different fields of disposition towards school education are relatively

high manifested in the tested adolescents, all of them being above average values. The highest manifested is the field of personal responsibility for learning, and the least the field, referring to the need for external assistance in learning, although this aspect is above average, as well (Table 1). This result comes as no surprise, having in mind that the Slovene as well as the British adolescents attended, at the time of testing, relatively selectively oriented secondary schools (high school in Slovenia and comprehensive school in Great Britain). It seems that the adolescents covered by our research are aware of their own responsibility for learning and either pleasant or unpleasant consequences of their efforts in learning. Perhaps that is why they mostly rely on themselves and may not expect or need assistance from their parents, teachers, tutors, etc.

Table 2: Differences in the self-concept areas and disposition towards school as regards nationality (one-way ANOVA).

Tabela 2: Razlike v področjih samopodobe in odnosa do šole glede na nacionalnost (enosmerna analiza variance).

	M (Slo)	M (Brit)	SD (Slo)	SD (Brit)	F- test	p
Mathematical	14,08	14,36	4,35	5,39	,317	,573
Religion	10,12	9,07	6,17	5,59	3,123	,078
Honesty and reliability	16,95	19,60	3,50	3,20	61,955	,000***
Emotional stability	16,21	16,75	3,64	3,42	2,312	,129
General self-concept	17,75	17,60	3,44	4,13	,145	,704
Verbal ability	15,84	17,23	3,57	3,34	16,028	,000***
Academic self-concept	16,21	17,42	3,17	3,56	12,530	,000***
Problem solving / creativity	17,53	17,42	2,69	2,93	,137	,711
Physical abilities / sports	17,42	16,12	4,67	5,57	6,222	,013*
Physical appearance	15,89	16,01	3,61	4,18	,092	,761
Relations with same sex peers	17,80	18,79	3,03	2,77	11,365	,001**
Relations with opp. sex peers	17,17	19,17	4,22	3,36	27,146	,000***
Relations with parents	18,71	18,16	3,54	3,68	2,236	,136
Attitude to school	17,18	18,34	3,34	3,49	10,991	,001**
Doing homework	6,37	6,92	1,99	1,81	8,313	,004**
Preparation for tests	1,99	2,43	,94	,81	24,844	,000***
Personal responsibility	4,77	5,00	1,28	1,23	3,186	,075
Organizes self	10,71	11,25	1,33	1,06	19,923	,000***
Not opportunist	5,10	7,57	1,70	1,36	255,344	,000***
Motive to achieve	18,76	19,70	3,27	2,76	9,489	,002**
Rej. of personal impotence to learn	15,30	15,45	2,22	2,04	,513	,474
Beliefs in efficacy of l. strategies	18,83	18,30	2,72	2,46	4,103	,043*
Need for external assistance for l.	10,57	11,73	2,78	2,63	17,891	,000***

* $p < 0,05$; ** $p < 0,01$; *** $p < 0,001$

Table 3: Canonical discriminant function of nationality.**Tabela 3: Kanonična diskriminantna funkcija nacionalnosti.**

Func.	Eigen val.	% of variance	Cumul. %	Canonic corelation	After func.	Wilks. lambda	Hi-square	df	p
1	1,6364	100,00	100,00	,7878	0	,379307	318,936	24	,0000

Table 2 shows the results of one-way ANOVA in the fields of self-concept and disposition towards school education as regards the nationality of the participants. The differences in self-concept as regards nationality are statistically significant in the following fields: (a) the field of physical ability and sports is higher manifested in Slovene participants; (b) the fields of verbal ability, academic self-concept, relations with same sex peers and relations with opposite sex peers are higher manifested in British participants. The tendency towards a statistically significant difference in self-concept is present in the field of religion; this field being higher manifested in Slovene participants.

The differences in disposition towards school and learning as regards nationality are statistically significant in the following fields: (a) the field of trust in self-abilities is higher manifested in Slovene participants; (b) the fields of attitudes towards school, doing homework, preparation for examination, personal responsibility for learning, non-opportunism, motive to achieve and the need for external assistance in learning are higher manifested in British participants. The tendency towards

a statistically significant difference in disposition towards school is present in self-organisation, this field being higher manifested in British participants.

Table 3 shows results of the canonical discriminant function of nationality. Considering the two groups of participants, the analysis provided one discriminant function only. Because this function bares relevance, further analysis is justified.

Table 4 shows standard coefficients of the canonical discriminant function of nationality. It can be observed that the values of coefficients are very diverse. The function shows the highest density in the field non-opportunism; moderately low density is presented by self-concept in the field of relations with opposite sex peers.

Table 5 shows the structural matrix of correlations among variables, which allow us to discover differences between Slovene and British participants and the canonical discriminant function of nationality. The first place is occupied by the variable which has the highest density and the last place by the variable which has the least density of the discriminant function of nationality.

Table 4: Standard coefficients of canonical discriminant function of nationality.**Tabela 4: Standardni koeficient kanonične diskriminantne funkcije nacionalnosti.**

Variables	Function 1
Mathematical	-,1538
Religion	-,13588
Honesty and reliability	,13817
Emotional stability	,23317
General self-concept	,22530
Verbal ability	-,12195
Academic self-concept	,21914
Problem solving / creativity	-,08820
Physical abilities / sports	-,18438
Physical appearance	-,00218
Relations with same sex peers	,20235
Relations with opposite sex peers	,31671
Relations with parents	-,28486
Attitude to school	-,09629
Doing homework	-,16738
Preparation for tests	,09607
Personal responsibility	-,06699
Organizes self	,19058
Not opportunist	,84014
Motive to achieve	,07755
Rejection of personal impotence to learn.	,00228
Beliefs in efficacy of learning strategies	-,17458
Need for external assistance for learning	,23086

Table 5: Correlations between variables and the two canonical discriminant functions of nationality.**Tabela 5: Korelacije med spremenljivkami in dvema kanoničnima diskriminantnima funkcijama nacionalnosti.**

Variables	Function 1
Not opportunist	,66432
Honesty and reliability	,34338
Personal responsibility	,20358
Relations with opposite sex peers	,20742
Preparation for tests	,18666
Verbal ability	,18164
Relations with same sex peers	,16290
Attitude to school	,15726
Doing homework	,15212
Academic self-concept	,14705
Need for external assistance for learning	,14414
Religion	-,10506
Motive to achieve	,10259
Organizes self	,10023
Physical abilities / sports	-,09117
Beliefs in efficacy of learning strategies	-,08196
Emotional stability	,06575
Relations with parents	-,06117
Rejection of personal impotence to learn	,04876
Mathematical	,02764
Problem solving / creativity	-,01560
Physical appearance	,01039
General self-concept	-,00880

Table 6: Canonical discriminant function, defined by means (group centroids).**Tabela 6: Kanonična diskriminantna funkcija, določena z aritmetičnimi sredinami (skupinski centroidi).**

Group	Function 1
Slovenians	-1,34034
British	1,21375

Table 6 shows group centroids in a single dimensional discriminant sphere. On the basis of comparison of group centroids (Table 6) and standardised coefficients of discriminant functions (Table 4) it is possible to conclude that the British participants have the highest manifested disposition towards school and learning in the field of non-opportunism, partly also the self-concept in the field of relations with opposite sex peers.

The results of the analysis of variance (Table 2), in many points confirmed by the results of the discriminant analysis (Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6) show that the Slovene participants have higher manifested only one field of disposition towards school and learning. It seems that Slovene adolescents, covered by our research trust in their own abilities more than their British counterparts. On the other hand, the British adolescents like school more, they are of the opinion that there are many things of interest to them in school, that teachers give lessons with pleasure and that they learn useful things in school and are not bored. All the enumerated traits are higher manifested in them than in their Slovene counterparts. The former also seem to do their homework and preparations for examination more regularly, more conscientiously and accurately than their Slovene counterparts. They also feel more personally responsible for their school achievement; they like to cooperate in class, etc. But that is not all. The British participants are more motivated for learning, they seem to try harder than the Slovene participants in getting good grades, they try to learn also uninteresting matter, when doing school work they are more critical and try to do their best. It is interesting that they are not opposed to external assistance in learning.

The results of ANOVA and discriminant analysis show that the British students have 5 statistically higher ranging fields of self-concept. More than their Slovene counterparts they consider themselves to be persons with good speaking abilities, persons with no difficulties in written expression, pleasurable readers, persons with good abilities in expressing their opinions, wishes and feelings. They also like all school subjects more, because, in average, they do not cause them hard problems, and, more frequently than the group of Slovene adolescents, they believe that they can study the school matter quickly. They have more friends of the same and opposite sex, get along with them better, share many activities with them, etc. Finally, the British participants consider themselves sincere, trustworthy and honest per-

sons more frequently than the group of their Slovene counterparts.

The only difference between the nations in self-concept in favour of the group of Slovene adolescents is manifested in the field of physical abilities and sports. The Slovene participants consider themselves to be physically more competent, enjoying sports activities, etc. They seem to perceive themselves above all as good sportspeople, more than their British counterparts. The comparison with the study the differences in self-concept between Slovene and French adolescents, shows that this aspect of self-concept did not manifest itself as significantly higher in Slovene adolescents (Kobal, Musek, 2001).

Let us underline only this area of self-concept. It could be possible that the higher physical self-concept of the Slovene adolescents is partly affected by the institutionalised attitude towards concern for one's body, health, etc., which has intensively spread out after political independence and is presented in the form of healthy kindergartens, healthy schools, various youth projects for prevention of drugs, alcohol, AIDS, organised competitions in various sports fields, etc. It is possible that higher physical self-concept of the Slovene participants is actually a compensation for other fields of self-concept, which are lower manifested. A more socio-psychological manner of interpretation lies in the search for wider connections with the society and lifestyle that the Slovene adolescents have. If we metaphorically designate the current transitional period in Slovenia as 'the period of growing up', searching for individual, and above all social identity, not only on the level of politics (accession to the European Union, joining NATO, etc.), but on the general social level (concern for tourist and economic promotion of Slovenia), then it is not difficult to discover that sports and attitude towards sports are among the basic impetus in forming the Slovene social (or better – national) identity in Slovenia. Apart from that we find that the concern for top sportspeople, following their achievements in the great number of sports fields, last but not least also their youth as a guarantee for success, constitute the basis for forming a role model of lifestyle or, if nothing more, of the attitude towards sports in their peers – adolescents. In other words, it is possible that a group of Slovene adolescents manifest a higher degree of self-concept in the field of sports and physical activities also because they are looking for their own identity by searching for role models among the leading Slovene sportspeople. Surely media public advertising of the achievements and the personal life of Slovene sportspeople undoubtedly by far exceeds advertising of leading Slovene scientists. Maybe this information also relates to the fact that some adolescents have a higher appreciation of sports and physical abilities than of knowledge and academic faculties.

As already stated, British adolescents have – apart

from other fields – also a higher manifested self-concept with regard to their verbal abilities and general academic self-concept (Table 2). Their positive disposition to school education also seems to be manifested through their academic self-concept. This finding is, of course, no novelty: it seems perfectly common sense and it has already been confirmed by some researches, although few in number, the subject of which is relation between self-concept and some aspects of disposition towards school (Robinson et al., 1990).

SOME CONCLUDING FINDINGS

If our research shows the above-mentioned differences in the field of attitude to school and learning to be in favour of British adolescents, this cannot be stated for Robinson's research (Robinson et al., 1990). Almost in every field where the differences between British and French participants are statistically significant, the French adolescents show a more positive attitude towards school. The only exception was the need for external assistance in learning. This field was manifested higher also in British adolescents than in their Slovene counterparts from our study. In the field referring beliefs in efficacy of learning strategies where the Slovene adolescents show a better result, the Robinson's re-

search reveals no differences (Table 2).

Robinson et al. (1990) conclude that self-concept is actually related to attitude to school. Due to low results of the British adolescents in the fields of self-concept, disposition towards school, self respect and their relatedness with learning proficiency, the authors have doubts about the so-called 'friendliness' of the British school system, which was supposed to encourage only successful students towards a high degree of self respect and positive disposition towards school and learning.

If the comparison between the French and British results in self-concept and disposition towards school led Robinson and collaborators to conclude that the British educational system was perhaps more rigorous than the French one, not enabling appropriate development of a positive self-concept in less successful students, at the same time making them behave deviantly, what conclusions can we make from comparison between the Slovene and British results in the fields of self-concept and disposition towards school? Could this mean that the Slovene educational system is among the most rigorous and does not enable appropriate development of key fields of self-concept and disposition towards school? On the basis of the achieved results it may not be possible to state such a categorical opinion, yet it would be useful to search further in this direction.

MEDKULTURNE RAZLIKE V SAMOPODOBI IN ODNOSU DO ŠOLSKEGA IZOBRAŽEVANJA

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POVZETEK

Raziskava je pokazala, da med slovenskimi in britanskimi mladostniki, ki so sodelovali v raziskavi, obstajajo nekatere pomembne razlike tako v področjih samopodobe kot v področjih odnosa do šolskega izobraževanja. Samopodoba kot množstvo odnosov, ki jih posameznik zavestno ali nezavedno vzpostavlja do samega sebe, je še posebej pomembna prav v obdobju mladostništva, ko posameznik svojo identiteto šele gradi. Akademska samopodoba pa je pomembno povezana tako s kvaliteto učenja kot z odnosom do šolskega izobraževanja. Odnos do šolskega izobraževanja je mogoče opredeliti kot organizirano entiteto mnenj, prepričanj, stališč, sodb, konceptov, občutij in drugih psihičnih vsebin, ki jih učenec vzpostavlja do šole in ki vplivajo na njegovo izbiranje, procesiranje in razumevanje informacij o pomenu in vlogi izobraževanja. Odnos do šole obenem spodbuja oblikovanje novih izkušenj in usmerja učenčevo vedenje, povezano z izobraževanjem. Čeprav se v zadnjih letih kar nekaj tujih študij ukvarja s proučevanjem povezanosti med samopodobo in odnosom do šolskega izobraževanja, je potrebno poudariti, da je pričujoča raziskava še vedno med redkimi, ki se tega problema loteva z medkulturnega vidika. Razlogi so brez dvom metodološke narave, saj je težko kontrolirati različne spremenljivke, ki so pod vplivom nacionalnosti, individualnih razlik in razlik v šolskih sistemih. Glavni problem pričujoče raziskave je ugotoviti izraženost posameznih področij samopodobe kot dela osebnosti udeležencev in njihov odnos do šolskega izobraževanja. Avtorica je bila v raziskavi še posebej pozorna na zgoraj omenjene razlike v nacionalnosti. Razlike v samopodobi glede na nacionalnost so statistično pomembne na naslednjih področjih: (a) samopodoba, ki se nanaša na področje telesnih sposobnosti in športa je bolj izražena pri skupini slovenskih mladostnikov, (b) področja samopodobe, ki se nanašajo na verbalne sposobnosti, akademsko samopodobo, odnos z vrstniki istega spola in na odnos z vrstniki na-

sprotnega spola, so bolj izražena pri skupini britanskih mladostnikov. Razlike v odnosu do šolskega izobraževanja glede na nacionalnost pa so statistično pomembne na naslednjih področjih: (a) zaupanje v lastne sposobnosti je bolj izraženo pri slovenskih udeležencih, (b) področja, kot so: stališča do šole, opravljanje domačih nalog, priprava na šolske naloge, občutek osebne odgovornosti za učenje, neoportunistično vedenje, storilnostna motivacija in potreba po zunanji pomoči za učenje pa so bolj izraženi pri britanskih udeležencih. Brez dvoma je eden glavnih razlogov za dobljene rezultate različnost kultur, iz katerih prihajajo udeleženci, obenem pa se lahko vprašamo tudi o učinkovitosti šolskega sistema v Sloveniji. Na pričujoče študije seveda ni mogoče postaviti kategorične trditve, ali naš šolski sistem spodbuja visoko samopodobo učencev in njihov pozitiven odnos do izobraževanja ali ne, so pa lahko zbrani podatki dobra osnova za nadaljnje raziskovanje v tej smeri.

Ključne besede: odnos do šolskega izobraževanja, stališča do šole, storilnostna motivacija, zaupanje v lastne sposobnosti, samopodoba

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