

**ČERVENKA, Karel. *Sud, který nemá dno? Potřeby dětí s poruchami emocí a chování očima výchovných profesionálů* (Barrel with No Bottom? Educational Needs of Children with Behavioural and Emotional Difficulties from the Perspective of Educational Professionals). Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 2016. 139 pp. ISBN 978-80-210-8138-3.**

## **ABSTRACT**

From the educational point of view, it is useful to perceive emotional and behavioural disorder in the context of impact it has on child's life and consider it *as a specific barrier* in his or her life, which stands between them and realizing their full individual potential. Therefore, it is important to focus our attention on individual educational needs of the children with EBD and on conditions for successful development of their individual potentials.

The monograph (habilitation thesis) expands upon the conclusions of the previous monograph (*Zdroje a bariéry sociální inkluze dětí s poruchami chování z hlediska výchovných profesionálů*<sup>1</sup>, Červenka, 2014). Both books present the conclusions of two phases of a qualitative research. The research aimed at deeper exploration of some aspects of the special education process in intervention in children with EBD. In general, it was aimed at gaining insight into the experience of educational professionals and the research was focused on answering the question: *How do educational professionals perceive children with behavioural disorders and their situation?*

The main conclusions of the first phase of the research (presented in the previous book - Červenka, 2014) included the finding that educational professionals believe that relationships with children with whom they work in educational institutions are an essential part of the process of special educational intervention. The relationships are seen as an opportunity for educators to perceive individual characteristics and needs of children in a more sensitive manner and use such knowledge within the intervention process.

**The monograph (habilitation thesis)** deals with the second phase of the research. It was aimed at answering two questions: 1) *What is the nature of pro-inclusive intervention approach of educational professionals to children with EBD?* 2) *What are the needs of children with EBD that should be met by the intervention, according to the participants?*

The research used a qualitative method and the data was collected mainly through semi-structured qualitative interviews with 15 participants (educational professions from residential educational facilities for children with EBD). The data was also collected through engaged observations, three pre-research group interviews, and field notes.

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<sup>1</sup> Sources and barriers of social inclusion of children with behavioural disorders from the perspective of educational professionals.

Participants were invited to the research on the basis of a deliberate sample. The starting point for the selection of participants was the assumption that the professional role of an educator relates to a special experience. This kind of experience allows them to gain a certain degree of insight into the situation and life experiences of the children with EBD. From the point of view of inclusive education and intervention, such experience can be seen as an opportunity to grasp the educational needs of children. There were two key selection criteria – 1) kind of the residential educational facility and 2) professional position of the participants within the facilities (facility manager, special educational teachers, psychologists and other specialists). The starting point for data analysis consisted in the ethnographic approach. The data analysis had two main stages: open coding and focused coding. For the data analysis, I used software for qualitative data analysis Atlas.ti.

The data revealed an apparent effort of the participants (educational professionals) to perceive the child as a person and not just as someone who has or causes trouble. Such an **approach** is described in the book as **personality-oriented and holistic** and it is seen as part of pro-inclusive intervention relationship and also as a prerequisite for informed (inclusive) intervention. It is an approach through which participants manifest their interest in the child with EBD as an integral personality. The participants tend to perceive children with EBD “primarily as children” but are well aware of their distinctive characteristics and needs, which stem mainly from their behavioural disorders.

In the data, there were also two categories of needs of children with EBD identified that were ranked by the participants as the most important. The results suggest that the needs of **positive setting of boundaries** and **opening of identities and perspectives** are essential in terms of intervention objectives. From the perspective of personal concept of education, **the need for positive setting of boundaries** can be interpreted as a way for the child’s disengagement from reliance on other people. In a general sense, we can combine this way with self-understanding, with awareness of own responsibility for one’s life and for one’s behaviour towards others, finding a balance between safety of boundaries and freedom. The need for **opening identities and perspectives** can be interpreted as a way for the children to realize their potentialities. Both discussed needs point toward the objectives of children’s education – the maximum possible development of their individual potentials and ensuring the highest possible quality of life for these children in the future.