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## Professional self-efficacy of students in the field of teaching

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### Abstract

The topic of this paper is a research of professional self-efficacy of student teachers in relation to future parents of their children and pupils. Our goal is to provide the insight into the issue in conditions of preparation of teaching profession at Faculty of Education in Hradec Králové, Czech Republic. It is a quantitative survey, which used a questionnaire entitled: Self-efficacy of teachers to work with parents, by Majerčíková, J. and Gavora, P. The questionnaire contains 24 scale items in five dimensions: the ability to inform of a child's well-being, explain the functioning of a school as an organisation, advise parents in education, be transparent to parents and to convince parents to support the school. The research of professional self-efficacy does not reflect actual abilities of surveyed students but their subjective idea. This article presents pilot research results.

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### 1. Introduction

The theme of the presented article are results of a pilot study, which surveyed professional self-efficacy of student teachers (specifically a three year bachelor course of Pre-primary Teaching at Pre-schools), in relation to future parents of their children. The aim was to map professional self-efficacy – cooperate with parents – on students of the

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final year of Teaching programmes for Pre-school at Faculty of Education in Hradec Králové (in the Czech Republic) and to provide the insight on this issue in conditions of preparation for a teaching profession. The result of university preparation of future teachers should be a professionally educated personality but also a mature individual personality who is prepared also in communicative, attitude and opinion way. Its personal maturity is subsequently reflected in appropriate communication and co-operation with parents, a paediatrician, a psychologist and other experts with whom he/she can meet during profession. Student teachers learn how to plan, project, educate, communicate during their course, but not always we do not take into account the parents of children. The professionalism in this field is developed implicitly during the studies, obtaining personal and a practical experience is undoubtedly influenced by the effort, motivation and professional preferences of the student teacher. As reported Bartošová (2009), the students' qualitative input parameters are also important.

Necessary presuppositions of the performance of the teaching profession are professional competences which the student teacher gains during his/her studies. It is relatively complicated set of competences that are based on knowledge, skills and attitudes, which are interdependent. The school graduate is not simply "the product" but its development is influenced by a variety of other factors, as the family, inheritance, social climate and local environment (Havlík, Koťa, 2007), which are social determinants, that should be considered while assessment of the teacher's professionalism.

## 2. Theoretical background

The author of the term self-efficacy is American psychologist Albert Bandura (1994, In Majerčíková, 2012), who defines it as one's belief in one's ability to organize and perform activities which lead towards the results. It expresses the reviews of own; one's expressed potentialities for the performance of certain activities and is created on the base of authentic experience, mediated experience and belief. Within the framework of bachelor and master studies the future teachers of pre-schools and primary schools intensively build up their professional self-efficacy. The student gains professional knowledge, within the practical training develops its educational skills, verifies educational procedures, communication strategies and stabilizes attitudes towards educational reality and creates its own teaching philosophy.

The teacher's self-concept plays a big role on the success of a teaching profession as obtained professional competence. Blatný (1993, p. 446) defines the self-concept as mental presentation which is created during the process of individual's interaction mainly with social environment. The teacher's self-concept presents an idea or a feeling that the professional activity can be managed on a certain level. It is therefore a certain degree of self-esteem that is determined by the ability to reflect oneself and perceive the feedback of one's surroundings. Positive evaluation induces positive perception of oneself (as negative evaluation induces negative perception) and this mechanism works also in teaching preparation where next to the quality and effective professional preparation should be created positive and supporting background towards the development of professional self-concept.

Research by Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2002) with the title *Teacher Beliefs About Parent Involvement* detected the teachers' beliefs about the importance of co-operation with parents. Under the direction of Hoover-Dempsey there were made extensive researches at Vanderbilt University in the USA in the field of relations between school, a teacher and parents and already in the 90's of the 20th century (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992; 2002). The basic findings give evidence that teachers who are more involved as teachers and furthermore they expend more effort in engaging parents into co-operation is positively evaluated. The research presented under the title *Family Involvement Teacher Efficacy Scale* by D. C. Garcia (2004) brought similar results. It investigated statements of teachers in the issue of co-operation with parents whereas it was based on the typology by Epstein (6 types of theoretical Framework of parental engagement, Epstein, 2010). Furthermore the survey was involved in finding the frequency of using individual forms of co-operation of teachers with parents. Relations between personal teacher's beliefs to co-operate with parents and frequency of his/her co-operation with parents were positive. The research sample presented teachers of primary education from American state Florida. The results showed the fact that teacher's professional self-efficacy is actually an ability of the teacher to pay attention, deployment and effort in this issue (Gavora, In Majerčíková 2012). In the recent years in Slovakia Gavora, Wiegerová and Ficová have been involved in the topic of professional self-efficacy (Gavora, 2011, Wiegerová, Ficová, 2012, In Majerčíková, 2012). In research of P. Gavora there was made an adaptation of questionnaires TES (Teacher Efficacy Scale, authors

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