

Breaking the cycle of poverty through meal provision at school: a Czech case study

Master Thesis

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ABSTRACT

Children from socially disadvantaged families are affected by improper alimentation. It has an impact on their social, behavioural and school functioning. This could lead to perpetuation of cycle of poverty throughout the generations. The thesis assumes that better education could lead to breaking out of the cycle of poverty. It was also assumed that better education of socially disadvantaged children could be achieved through meal provision at school. The thesis deals with the research question focusing on how meal provision contributes to breaking of the cycle of poverty. A case study in Kladno was conducted in order to answer the research question. The findings of the research suggest that there is no direct impact of the meal provision on better school achievement. Nevertheless, the meal provision has become a mediator that enables closer cooperation between school and socially disadvantaged families in terms of social, financial and psychological support. It results in motivation to achieve better education, children are more goal-oriented and their social status among classmates is increased.

KEY WORDS

Meal provision, food insecurity, meal skipping, poverty, cycle of poverty, impact of poverty, socially disadvantaged children, school, child allowance, sponsoring

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INTRODUCTION

Health and development of children is closely connected with proper eating. Food contains important vitamins, minerals and nutrients which help to maintain significant physical and mental processes in human body. Lack of nutrient intake can contribute to dis-functioning of body system and may lead to chronic disease risk. Children and adolescents are extremely sensitive to food intake. Inappropriate eating influences not only their development but also contributes to mental conditions and future eating attitude (Rampersaud, 2005). Children who do not eat properly often feel tired at school and have lower performance. They can be also more irritated and upset. In addition, bad alimentation in early age leads to health complications, inappropriate eating habits and adverse behaviour in adulthood (Pearson, 2009).

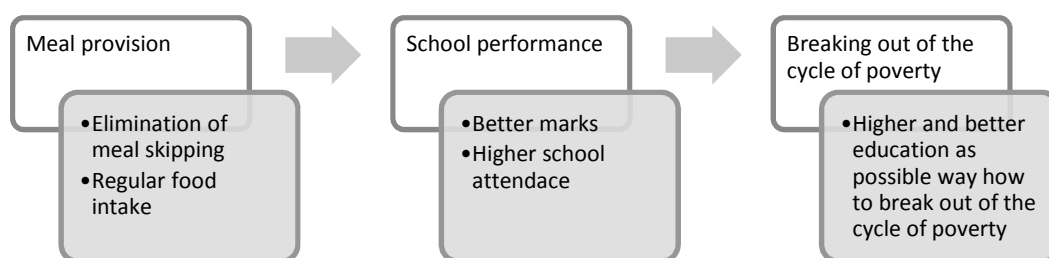
School-age children from food-insecure households have diminished behavioural, social and economic functioning (Fram et al., 2011; Aber et al., 1997). Food insecurity is defined as the lack of consistent access to adequate food (Wight et al., 2014). It is proven that children from food insufficient families have worse health, cognitive development, more educational difficulties and worse school performance concerning marks, grade repeating and school attendance (Alaimo, 2001; Pearson, 2009; Wight et al., 2014). Importance of proper alimentation of children is significant. The discussion is raising; how to feed these children if family is not able to provide sufficient food intake during the school day and who is responsible for that. Briefel (2013) states that healthy eating practices and its modelling are via parents and schools as gatekeepers. Parents and schools provide what types of foods and beverages are served and offered to children. Children consume, on average, 34% calories at school, 56% at home and 10% out of home during one typical school day. Therefore, there is seen big potential in contribution of schools as a food secure environment.

Children spend a significant part of the day at school. From the personal experience of teachers in Czech primary schools, it is known that some children not only skip breakfast at home but also they do not eat anything during the school time at all. Parents do not prepare either homemade lunch or snacks nor pay for school lunches or snacks for children in cafeterias. Therefore children regularly involuntarily skip meals because their family is unable to feed them properly. Impacts of almost half-day starving are mentioned above. Majority of cases is consisted of socially disadvantaged children from families with low socio-economic status (SES), minimum financial income and other limited resources. Mostly, these families manifest sings of culture of poverty which was defined by American anthropologist Oscar Lewis in the early sixties of the

twentieth century. While this theory has been subject to much controversy (more about this later), it also generates relevant hypotheses that may help to understand the way of life in poverty and behavioural aspects and aspirations of the poor. Significant part of the culture of poverty concept is the cycle of poverty where this situation is inherited from generation to generation. The cycle of poverty is defined by the business dictionary as a spiralling mechanism of events that occur once an individual or community fall below certain level of resourcefulness and lead to perpetuate the situation: lower level of education, unemployment, criminal activities, poor health, and family break ups etc. (Business Dictionary, 2014). Ansalone (2003) argues that education is seen as one of the factors contributing to the end of continual cycle of poverty.

On one hand the consciousness of improvement is rising concerning the implementation and taking part of schools in school health programs over the last 20 years in the Czech Republic. On the other hand there is only a negligible amount of programs or interventions focusing on alimentation of children from food insufficient families. These school-based interventions can be restricted from several reasons. Mostly, schools are unaware of poor situation of pupils, they do not have capacities and needed resources or they have lack of information regarding the solution to this situation. If schools manage to become a provider of sufficient amount of food to children from the food insecure households it could contribute to the improvement of academic performance and therefore help to break the cycle of poverty. This assumption leads to the main research question addressed to the thesis: *How does meal provision at school contribute to breaking out of the cycle of poverty?* The sub- research questions are aimed in order to answer the research question: *What are the possibilities for schools to provide food to children? How does meal provision in schools affect the division of responsibilities between schools and parent? What is the impact of meal provision at school on socially disadvantaged children? How does the meal provision contribute to the school performance? How does the meal provision contribute to the school attendance? What are other possibilities to break out the cycle of poverty?*

Following proposed scheme shows the meal provision as possible way how to break out of the cycle of poverty:



THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

CULTURE OF POVERTY

Oscar Lewis (1914-1970) firstly suggested the concept of a culture of poverty in his book *Five families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty* (1959). The concept was more elaborated in his known books *The Children of Sanchez* (1961) and *La Vida; A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty—San Juan and New York* (1966). In this book, Lewis determined poverty as a culture with its own structures as a way of life in cycle which is inheritable from generation to generation along family lines. He pointed out on the fact that the poverty is not only a matter of economic deprivation and absence of something but also it can mean something positive with reward provision without which the poor could hardly carry on. He put emphasis on similarities in family structures, interpersonal relations, time orientation, value system and spending patterns across transcendent regional, rural-urban and national differences. Lewis provided set of conditions about the culture of poverty under which some of the poor follow their way of life: (1) a cash economy, wage labour and production for profit; (2) a permanently high rate of unemployment for unskilled labour; (3) low wages; (4) a failure to provide social, political and economic organization; (5) set of values in the dominant class leads to explanation of low economic status as the result of personal inadequacy or inferiority; and (6) preferably a bilateral kinship system than an unilateral.

Lewis describes people in the culture of poverty as aliens in their own country with persuasion that institutions do not serve their interest and needs. Moreover, people in the culture of poverty have a feeling of marginality, of dependency, of helplessness and not belonging. The children usually absorb the basic values and attitudes of their subculture and they are not prepared to take advantages of changing conditions and opportunities which may appear in their lives. The poor also have little sense of history and they are people only with their own troubles and way of life in their local neighbourhoods. The culture of poverty on the local community level is abounded in lack of organization, poor housing conditions and informal grouping. The other trait of people in culture of poverty is laying stress on the present and neglecting of the future. They are sensitive to status distinction and class unconscious. Lewis emphasis that if the poor become members of trade union, class conscious and take up a position in internationalist outlook they can be no longer part of culture of poverty even they are still badly poor. Any movements which provide hope and sense of solidarity and identification with larger groups can ruined the psychological and social core of the culture of poverty. "*It is much more difficult to eliminate the culture of poverty than to eliminate poverty per se.*" (Lewis, 1963; 1966)

The concept culture of poverty emphasize on the social perspective. Lewis worked on the assumption that the poor adapt their marginal position within the scope of majority. The result of this adaptation on unsuitable and inconvenient life conditions is phenomenon of the culture of poverty. It is a specific pattern of actions and behaviour which is passed on from one generation to the other on the base of social learning. These characteristics in long-term poverty conditions and social exclusion may be probably adopted by everyone. The culture of poverty is significantly different from the majority of society but on the other hand it is still its part. Therefore people in the culture of poverty are better oriented in the rules of their own subculture than in the environment excepted by majority. As a result, they are affected with high rate of disorganisation, criminality, unemployment, illiteracy, deprivation etc. The involvement and participation in social institutions, which are set up by the majority, is unable from their position (Toušek, 2007).

CRITICISM OF THE CULTURE OF POVERTY CONCEPT

Oscar Lewis's term, the culture of poverty, raises a variety of questions about poverty. For example, Coward et al. (1974) examines the main categories and aspects of the culture of poverty. The study suggests inclination to the situational factor rather than the culture of poverty itself. The findings showed little support for Lewis's point of view. His perspective was supported only in less than half of the asserted traits. Considering Lewis, the study approves social isolation attitudes, impact of family structure, partly the distinguishing of the poor and the non-poor (but not in the way of life). Additionally, there was found little support for segregation and political action. Some traits of this study support and agree with Lewis's critique Charles A. Valentine. Valentine (1968) proposes that the poverty is more about the external factors (e.g. housing conditions, crowding, segregation, and lack of economic resources) and situational expediency rather than cultural creations internal to the sub-society.

Another critique of Abell & Lyon (1979) examined empirical documentation to Lewis's original hypothesis. They evaluated the culture of poverty model in order to produce documentation about Lewis's propositions and subsequent critique. First, they examined attitudinal, value, and behavioural differences between the poor and the non-poor. Second, these differences are passed on from one generation to the other. Third, there is causality with educational, occupational and financial achievement. Their findings show differences between the offspring of the lower class in comparison with the offspring in the middle class in relation to family structure, school system, country region, race, degree of urbanism and IQ. These distinguishing behaviours occurred to be socially passed on from one generation to the other in relation to

level of income, occupational prestige and IQ scores. In terms of prediction of educational, occupational and financial achievement, the lower and the middle class appeared differently. The structural and societal forces had less power for educational and occupational succeeding than individual and family factors. There is found supportive documentation of Lewis's propositions: *"Certain individual and familial behaviors that differentiate the lower and middle classes are causally linked with occupational prestige and income. However, these cultural behaviors are not the primary factors in the perpetuation of economic poverty"* On the other hand, their findings also affirm Lewis's critique, that mixture of situational views and cultural patterns determine behavioral norms and aspirations (Abel & Lyon, 1979).

Later critique Gorski (2008) encourages critique that the concept of the culture of poverty is constructed from a collection of stereotypes which prowled into mainstream thinking. Differences in values, actions and behaviours among the poor are on the same level as those between poor and wealthy people. Verdict of Lewis's opponent is clear: There is nothing such as culture of poverty. Gorski presents segments of the culture of poverty as a myth and he disproves these myths. For example, the myths that the poor are unmotivated and with weak work ethics, they are uninvolved in their children's learning and education, they tend to abuse more drugs and alcohol. He states that the myth of culture of poverty diverts the society from perilous existing culture – the culture of classicism. In terms of education, students are defined according to their weaknesses rather than their strengths. Cultural classicism goes hand in hand with deficit perspective. The deficit perspective propagates world from the view of established stereotypes (e.g. poor people do not value education) and disregard conditions that support the cycle of poverty (e.g. access to quality schooling).

Despite of the critique, Lewis's concept, the culture of poverty and its significant part the cycle of poverty, is taken as a milestone for the thesis. Nevertheless, the criticism of these concepts is taken into consideration. Summing up the critique of the culture of poverty, other aspects that incline to different explanation and clarification of situation among the poor are taken into account. The influence of external factors (e.g. housing, lack of finances, segregation) and situational expediency (Valentine, 1968) and situational factors (Coward et al., 1974) is suggested. The other criticism provided by Abel & Lyon (1979) does not fully support Lewis's concept and affirms his critique in terms of omitting situational views and cultural patterns for determination of norms and aspirations. Despite of this fact, their empirical study confirmed Lewis's propositions in some aspects such as passing on behaviour from one generation to the other in relation to income, occupational status and IQ scores. Referring to the latest critique of Gorski (2008) the construction of myths and stereotypes about the poor has to be taken into consideration and eventual signs of the culture of classicism.

DEFINITION OF POVERTY

There has been no consensus how to define the term *poverty*, because the poverty includes income as well as other accompanying factor such as education, occupation etc. The poverty threshold is difficult to define from a several reasons. The food expenditures, housing, job-related expanses, child care cost have taken up different share of family income with respect to family's place of residence. The other problem is that an annual income fluctuates from year to year so if the cash income is taken as accurate measure of family resources at a given time, it is not precise measure of economic well-being over time. There should also be taken into account noncash government benefits accompanying the poor such as food stamps, housing and energy assistance and subsidized food programs (Aber & Bennet et al., 1997; Wight et al. 2014). The definition of poverty line is important in order to formulate policy formation. Ideal measure of poverty should meet two basic criteria: public acceptability and statistical defensibility (Aber & Bennet et al., 1997).

Interesting is absolute and relative division of poverty by Amartya Sen. Sen (1983) argues in his work *Poor, relatively speaking* about using absolute and relative view of poverty in the rich countries. He states: "*Absolute deprivation in terms of a person's capabilities relates to relative deprivation in terms of commodities, incomes and resources.*" It is important to take into consideration that absolutist and relativist approach has to be also examined by defining the space and time where these approaches are discussed. Extent of poverty is judged in relation to contemporary standards not in relation to absolute historically defined standard of living. Additionally, Sen elaborates different approach to the relativist view that occurred in the study of Fiegen, Lansley and Smith in 1953-1973 in Britain. It is said that there is always a part of society which receives below-average income so this part of society persist relatively deprived. It leads to the conclusion that the poverty cannot be really eliminated and anti-poverty programs cannot reach success. Sen considers also the aspects of standards of living in absolute point of view. He argues that even though there are certain inequalities due to the lower standards of living of some people, the poverty cannot be proved, unless it is known more about the standards that these people actually enjoy in fact. It tempts to the proposition that absolute satisfaction of needs might depend on relative position of people.

Coudouel et al. (2002) defines three steps how to determine the poverty: (1) choice of relevant dimensions and indicators of well-being, (2) definition of poverty line and (3) selection of measure in order to report poverty either for whole population or subgroups. Indicators of poverty are divided into the monetary indicators of poverty (e.g. income or consumption as the

indicator of well-being), and to the non-monetary indicators of poverty (e.g. outcomes in relation to health, nutrition, literacy). The poverty line defines threshold which draw a line between the poor and the non-poor and can help distinguish among different levels of poverty. The poverty line determines two main levels of poverty settings which can be combined; absolute poverty line (absolute standards in order to meet basic needs of households) and relative poverty line (relation to overall distribution of income or consumption). Subjective and self-reported measures are the alternative way how to set the poverty line. Considering poverty measures, there are three most common using; incidence of poverty (a share of population with income and consumption below the poverty line), depth of poverty (how far households are from poverty line), and poverty severity (an inequality among the poor).

All above mentioned authors indicate difficulties regarding the definition of poverty line. Moreover, there are many angles to determine the poverty itself. In the thesis, the decisive poverty line that is formulated in the Czech Republic is used. It is a proportion of people living in households where the income is set at 60% of median equivalised disposable household's income. In 2013, the poverty line was 116,093 CZK/year, it is approximately 4,176 €/year (Czech Statistical Office, 2014). Additionally, there is taken into consideration the non-monetary indicators of poverty (e.g. health, literacy) defined by Coudouel et al. (2002). There is also attempt to put emphasis on relativist and absolutist approaches towards poverty mentioned by Sen (1983) and by Coudouel et al. (2002).

IMPACTS OF POVERTY

Children from poor families are uniquely handicapped for education. They have insufficient access to school materials and supplies, computers and other support for quality education that is normally occurred in middle- and upper- class families. In addition, they are exposed to problems in their communities that are often affected by physical decay, crime, alcohol and drug problems and family disturbances as incarceration of some family member or divorces. Other risk factors correlated with poverty are race, ethnicity and immigrant status (Payne & Biddle, 1999; Aber et al., 1997). Neighborhoods and communities play role in achievement of their inhabitants. They do not only reflect past achievements but also determine possibilities for future economic success. They have the effect on values, beliefs and knowledge of people who occupy the same space with influence on connection to the rest of society (Massey et al., 1991).

A lot of studies confirm the negative impact of poverty on health and morbidity level among children with lower socioeconomic status as a result of lower odds of early intervention and increased risk of accidents and illnesses. The availability of health care, food and housing is directly influence by income. Family financial difficulties also often lead to behavioural problems and/or school failures. Parents living in the long-term poverty are more likely to display harsh behaviour such as shouting, yelling and slapping (Lempers, 1989; McLeod, 1993, Aber et al., 1997). People living in the poverty are more likely to live in stress and depression due to financial insecurity. They also perceive lack of social support. Children are raised in insecure and emotional attachment what subsequently lead to poor goal orientation, low level of self-confidence and social competence (Aber et al., 1997).

Brooks-Gun & Duncan (1997) summed up specific dimensions of the well-being of children and youths which are substantially influenced by the family income in the United States. Poor children suffer physical health (low birth weight, growth stunting, lead poisoning), cognitive ability (intelligence, verbal ability, achievement test scores), school, emotional and behavioral outcomes and teenage out-of-wedlock childbearing. They suggest pathways how improve physical and cognitive outcomes. Their main recommendations point out to nutrition programs and parental educational programs.

POVERTY AND MEAL SKIPPING

Regular breakfast eating is associated with health benefits. It is important for health, mental and physical development of children and adolescents. Breakfast eating improves cognitive functions related to school performance, mental distress and has positive influence on school attendance. Moreover, breakfast consumption is associated with a lower body mass index (BMI), which is one of the measurements of obesity (Pearson, 2009). Many studies show that skipping of breakfast is correlated with overweight and obesity of children. (Cheng, 2008; Dubois, 2006; Ortega, 1997). Omitting breakfast is related to less healthy lifestyle, poor food choices, smoking and drinking alcohol in adulthood (Cheng, 2008; Rampersaud, 2005). Breakfast skipping is more frequent among girls, children from families of low socio-economic status, older children, and adolescents (Brugman, 1998; Rampersaud, 2005). Meal skipping is associated with gender and region of residence. Females and adolescents from metropolitan areas were more likely to omit breakfast or lunch (Savidge et al., 2007).

Main reasons, why children skip their breakfast or meal, are the lack of time in the morning for eating, poor choice of breakfast food (Cheng, 2008), lack of hunger, and dieting in order to lose weight (Rampersaud, 2005). Another barriers affecting breakfast consumption or participation in school meal programs are connected to personal, environmental, and behavioural factors. There are included pricing, competing among free choices of food offers, lack of time in cafeteria (e.g. speed service and convenience), transportation schedule and its issues, and perceived welfare stimulation (Reddan, 2002). There are also evidences that family environment has significant influence on dietary behaviour (Pearson, 2009; Patrick & Nicklas, 2005).

Katherine Alaimo et al. (2001) demonstrate the relation among family income, family food insufficiency and health measures in the research *Food Insufficiency, Family Income, and Health in US Preschool and School-Aged Children*. Food insufficiency was defined as an inadequate amount of food intake due to the lack of resources. It was approved that children without enough adequate food to eat were significantly more likely to be reported as being in poorer health. Children who live in food insufficiency were more likely to have more frequent stomachaches, headaches and colds.

There is a lack of studies with focus on involuntarily starving and possible protective responses. Insufficient calories intake, as is mentioned above, results in poor mental and psychical health and contributes to the school performance. Starving is mainly associated with family insufficient resources to provide proper nutrition intake to children. A conceptual model for the influence of resources on child hunger was used in the study that examines child hunger and protective effects of implicated program among Mexican-origin families on Texas border, near the town of Progreso in Hidalgo County and near La Feria in Cameron County. This model shows reasons why children starve and skip their meals. Striking protective and risk factors included in the model are economic resources (e.g. financial situation and employment), family (e.g. household composition and relatives), community (e.g. neighbours, transportation, number and types of nutrition and emergency food programs), and knowledge and education as individual resources (Sharkey et al., 2013). Key determinants of food insecurity in low-income households are job opportunities, wage rates, work supports such as income taxes credits, child care subsidies, and supplemental nutrition assistance available to working households (Nord, 2009).

Family food insufficiency of school-aged children is associated with their academic and psychosocial performance. Food-insufficient children are more likely to repeat grades, see a psychologist, have difficulties to get along with the peers and have bigger amount of missed school days. It is important to take into consideration the fact that negative outcomes associated

with family food insufficiency may have a serious impact on the future life in adulthood. Low academic achievement and grades failures lead to the lower long-term academic achievement and later behavioral problems. Evaluation of chosen US nutrition programs shows small but significant benefits of food supplementation in school achievement and absence (Alaimo et al., 2001).

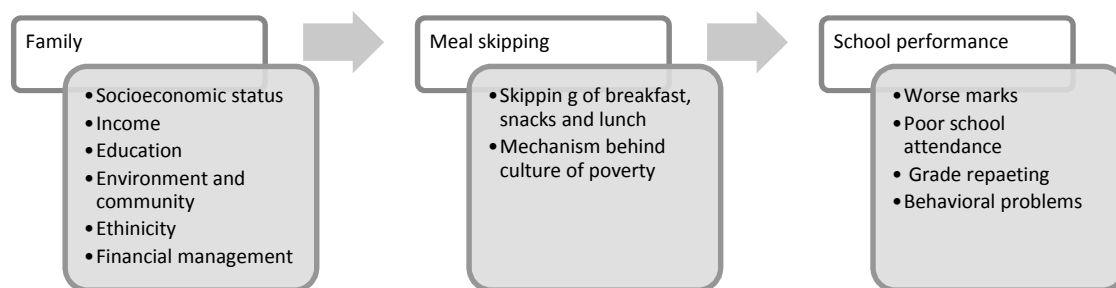
Fram et al. (2011) investigated awareness and taking responsibility for managing food resources in food insecure households in South Carolina. Awareness reported by children respondents was split into three subcategories: cognitive (knowledge about food scarcity and knowledge that family manages food problems), physical (physical feelings related to food scarcity such as hunger, pain, tiredness, weakness) and emotional (feeling related to food insecurity). It was found that children indicate behaviour connected to taking responsibility for managing food insecurity. Children usually act in the way that according to them can help deal with insufficient food situation. They stretch resources, request to not eat a meal when resources are low, or generate more resources by themselves.

NOT EVERY LOW INCOME FAMILY IS FOOD INSECURE

Increasing risk of food hardship is more likely linked to the specific socio-demographic characteristics such as age, educational level of household head, race and ethnicity, and family structures. The higher risk of food insecurity is connected with younger, having minority status, being single mother and having low levels of education. Additionally, the food insecurity is more likely to increase when macroeconomic factors incorporate high taxes and housing costs, low average wages, and low participation in nutrition programs. The most decisive factor regarding food insufficiency is income. To be less likely food insecure is related to higher financial and food-management skills such as managing bills, making budget, stretching groceries and preparing meals (Wight et al., 2014).

The financial management affects household's food security. Better financial management skills contribute to the fact that households are less likely to be food insecure. The financial skills, as one of the unobserved factors, are ascribe to the situations where households with lower income live in food secure environment and other households experience food insufficiency despite their higher income. Households with good financial management abilities demonstrate significant success considering food security in comparison to households with poor financial management even though the households have the same income level (Gundersen, 2012).

On the base of theoretical background the relationship among family, meal skipping and school performance was derived:



METHODOLOGY

A case study was conducted for the purpose of answering the thesis research questions. The case study took place from 15th December 2014 to 20th January 2015. The main research question was: *How does meal provision at school contribute to breaking out of the cycle of poverty?* Six sub-questions were formulated in order to answer the research question: (1) *What are the possibilities for schools to provide food to children?* (2) *How does meal provision in schools affect the division of responsibilities between schools and parent?* (3) *How important is meal provision at school for socially disadvantaged children?* (4) *How does the meal provision contribute to the school performance?* (5) *How does the meal provision contribute to the school attendance?* (6) *What is the impact of poverty on children?*

The whole data collection process and data analysis was carried out in Czech language. The key findings were translated into English. On the base of the gathered information from different sources and actors, who were involved in the case study (Figure 1), the research questions were answered and a model was proposed for further investigation.

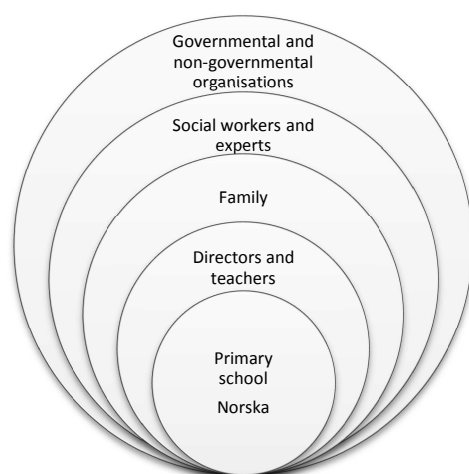


FIGURE 1: ACTORS INVOLVED IN THE CASE STUDY

The case study paid attention to ethical issues. Participation was voluntary and participants were told that they have a right to withdraw from the data collection or decline to answer any particular questions in any point of the case study. Participants were fully informed about propose of the thesis, basic procedures that the investigation follows, and what data might be published. The case study guaranteed anonymity and maintained confidentiality. Only the first names and age of children were used in order to protect their privacy. In the case of the interviewed mothers, only the first names and the initials of surnames were used. All experts agreed with the publication of their names and functions.

SELECTION OF THE CASE

The case study was conducted at the Primary and Nursery School Norska (Norska). The primary school Norska is located in Kladno, Czech Republic. Kladno is situated approximately 25km away from the capital, Prague, in the Central Bohemian Region. The city has around 70,000 inhabitants. Currently, there are 782 pupils and 60 teachers in Norska, to January 2015. Norska was chosen for the use of this case study, because it is an unique primary school in Kladno, where attention is paid to socially disadvantaged pupils and their families. A complex consulting department including special pedagogue, school psychologist, two guidance counsellors and crisis prevention officer in order to serve this purpose was set up in there. Uniquely, Norska has been ensuring food for 29 social disadvantaged pupils and therefore the research questions could be answered through its investigation. The part of the case study was conducted at this school from 5th January 2015 to 10th January 2015.

DATA COLLECTION

Multiple data-collection methods were used to gain in-depth knowledge about the phenomenon of the interest. The following activities were used in the case study: (1) **interviews**, (2) **review** of documents regarding the investigated topic, (3) **observation** of pupils, teachers and the special pedagogue. Triangulation of data-collection techniques with different actors increased the construct validity of the case study.

INTERVIEWS

Interviews were preferably conducted in person. The questions in the interviews were open-ended. A conversation was focused on the topic, while there was still a room to express the own opinion of the interviewees. The interviews lasted from 15 minutes to 1 hour. The duration of the interviews was set according to the willingness of participants to answer the questions and talk about the investigated topics. There was an intention to give them an unrestricted room for expression. In case of lack of time or inability to conduct personal interview, the questions were sent via email. Personal interviews were either recorded (with the permission of the informant), or notes were taken in case of disagreement.

First, interviews at primary school Norska were carried out. Six Norska's staff members were personally interviewed: the director (Mgr. Daniela Vlčková), the deputy of the headmaster and

teacher (Mgr. Helena Lachmanová), teachers (PeaDr. Petra Sanitráková, Anna Chocholová), the special pedagogue (Mgr. Klára Štrachová), and the school psychologist (Mgr. Zuzana Ziburiová). The aim was to gain as many viewpoints about ensuring meal for socially disadvantaged pupils as possible. The emphasis was put on the process of ensuring meals, impediments, (dis-) advantages, impact of alimentation on pupils and their school performance. Subsequently, five pupils from socially disadvantaged families were interviewed: Marie (10 years), Tereza (8 years), Jiří (15 years), Bořek (12 years), and Jana (13 years). Two pupils, who were not from socially disadvantaged background, were interviewed as well: Marie and Lucie (10 years). The interviews were focused on their opinion about regular alimentation, attitudes towards meal provision, what does meal mean for them, if they perceive change in their lives due to the regular food intake at school, and if they would like to apply the same food aid once they have their own kids. The interviews in Norska were conducted from 5th January 2015 to 10th January 2015.

Secondly, an anonymous electronic form in Google Docs was created (Appendix A). It included one close-ended and eight open-ended questions. The questions were focused on alimentation of socially disadvantaged children during the school time. The emphasis was put on the following issues: awareness about poor alimentation of some children from socially disadvantaged families during school time, knowledge about possible solutions how to execute meal provision for those children, impediments regarding meal provision, and importance of meal provision and education as a possible way how to break out the cycle of poverty. The form was sent to thirteen directors of primary schools in Kladno with a kind request to spread the form among the employed teachers. Norska was excluded. The form could be answered from 6th January 2015 to 18th January 2015. Unfortunately, there was zero feedback from the directors, none of them even replied to the request. Consequently, only four teacher's answers were received out of at least 300 teachers operating in Kladno.

Thirdly, the aim was to interview three parents, who live beneath the poverty line, to gain information from family's personal experience. In 2013, the poverty line was 116,093 CZK/year, which is approximately 4,176 €/year in the Czech Republic (Czech Statistical Office, 2014). There were two interviews conducted with mothers, Helena M. and Jana K., whose families are from socially disadvantaged environment. The third selected mother changed her mind and did not participate in the case study.

Fourth, it was aimed to interview two social workers and two experts engaged and experienced in the work with socially disadvantaged families in order to get additional profound information

about life in poverty from the professional perspective. Simultaneously, it was intended to make interviews with representatives of Kladno's police department, the local authority, the workers of crisis and prevention department of Kladno's municipality and the representatives of non-governmental organisations. The emphasis was put on the background of poverty in Kladno, possible ways of how to break out the poverty cycle, and opinion, awareness and attitudes towards alimentionation of socially disadvantages children during the school time. A kind request was sent by either personal or electronic form in order to conduct an interview to 23 governmental and non-governmental institutions. It was succeeded to set up interviews with Ing. Václav Kohlík (the director of Asylum House Kladno), Mgr. Jana Evanová (the head of regional social center Střep), Mgr. Magda Michalová (the head of Department of Social and Family Affairs Kladno), Jaroslav Tomeš (the ex-warden and current prison carer in custodial prison Ruzyně), Mgr. Iva Bešťáková (the director of primary school Doberská), and Aleš Kratochvíl (the police officer). The interviews were conducted from 10th January 2015 to 20th January 2015. The rest of approached people either denied the participation and cooperation because they did not feel like contributing to the case study, or did not respond at all.

REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS

Legislative documents and regulations about school alimentionation were reviewed. The main aim of this review was to find out fundamental requirements that a school must follow in order to guarantee hygienic and nutritional demands. Supportive documents were investigated in order to approve or reject statements of interviewed actors.

It was aimed to go through the school records of children, with whom the school Norska was successful in ensuring regular food intake, in order to find out the impact of regular meal provision on children's school attendance and school performance. Unfortunately, the access to these documents was denied because of the sensitivity of information.

OBSERVATION

Mgr. Klára Štrachová, the special pedagogue, was observed for a whole week (5th January 2015 to 10th January 2015) during the execution of her work. The observation of the special pedagogue was non-structured with the main intention to capture everything that occurs. The emphasis was put on the interaction and cooperation with socially disadvantaged pupils, the way of how the administration work of child allowances and sponsor findings works, and the complex work within Norska.

The second observation was based on observing the socially disadvantaged children in Norska. The way in which they interacted with the special pedagogue, regular pedagogues and classmates was observed. Additionally, there was a focus on their behaviour during the interviews. The observation was non-structured.

DATA ANALYSES

The interviews were analysed on the basis of qualitative content analysis. All materials from the interviews (records, notes, paper answers) were rewritten into transcripts. Three coding schemes were created in order to code the transcripts of the interviews (Appendix B). The first coding scheme was created for the group consisting of Norska's staff and experts, the second one for mothers, and the third one for the investigated children. Codes were deductively derived from the conducted interviews and the theoretical background. The similar codes of the coding scheme were clustered into meaningful categories. The electronic form that was sent to all primary schools in Kladno was excluded, because only four answers cannot be taken as a representative opinion of the majority of teachers.

Different colours were assigned to certain categories. Then a part of the text of transcripts was highlighted by colours that represented the specific categories. The highlighted parts were written to a transcription table. The transcription table provided synoptical overview of opinions and statements of the certain categories. Phrases and quotes from transcription table were inductively and deductively analysed and used as the proof and source for the results. Similarities and differences among points of view were processed and put to overall picture in order to fully understand the phenomenon of the interest. The whole process is seen on Figure 2.

Supportive documents and field notes from the observations were taken into account in order to support or reject the findings from interviews. Moreover, the documents and field notes were used for the depiction of the whole case.



FIGURE 2: PROCESS OF QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSES

RESULTS

SUB-RESEARCH QUESTION 1: *WHAT ARE THE POSSIBILITIES FOR SCHOOLS TO PROVIDE FOOD TO CHILDREN?*

In the Czech Republic, primary schools have a mandatory bureaucratic responsibility to support eating patterns in order to fulfil children dietary intake. Regular breaks must exist between classes in order to provide time to eat snacks and lunches. Moreover, schools provide sufficient opportunities to keep up with caloric intake in form of school cafeterias, vending machines and kiosks where it is possible to buy food if children do not have prepared lunch or snack from home. School cafeterias must fulfil hygienic and nutritional requirements according to certain state law regulations and rules. School cafeterias must follow basic hygienic rules and nutritional requirements according school law regulation 561/2004 Sb. and regulation 107/2005 Sb. in the Czech Republic. The cardinal rule is to follow so-called consumer basket. The consumer basket is group of basic foodstuffs (meat, fish, milk, dairy products, lipids, sugar, vegetable, fruit, potatoes, legumes) and their recommended daily intake per children per day. This should guarantee sufficient intake of all needed nutrients. Furthermore, it is assumed that a lunch covers approximately 35% of daily intake (Strosserová, 2009).

Apart from the fact that schools follow above mentioned law regulations, there also is a tendency to voluntary help the families to overcome food scarcity in cases when families do not have means to ensure proper alimentation during the school time. The Czech project called “They can do it”, which was realized with the support of the Roma Education Fund, helps children from socially disadvantaged families to overcome educational obstacles and difficulties. The group of fifteen special pedagogues, Romany experts and social coordinators created a special manual “They can do it – How support socially disadvantaged children in primary schools” in order to endorse and encourage these families. Besides this support, several steps and techniques regarding possible ways of how to ensure food provision, are described there: (1) sponsoring and fundraising, (2) taking control and administration of child allowance and (3) communication with parents about critical situations. These steps are describes in detail in the following part.

Sponsoring and fundraising

Practising of sponsoring and fundraising is a legitimate activity of every school. These activities contribute to the development of educational institutions and mitigate its financial flows. School can gain means to cover extra expenditures which exceed basic year budget. Sponsoring or fundraising can appear on different levels. Financial means could be acquired from individuals (form of gifts, public collection, charity auction, volunteering) or from companies (financing, gifts, advertising and PR, space and rooms lending, corporate products, sales, free services). A big contribution can be given from the side of foundations and endowment funds.

Norska started using the sponsoring in order to ensure money for socially disadvantaged children a few years ago. The money is primarily used for making purchase of school lunches and snacks. The rest of the budget is withdrawn for school supplies and school activities such as school trips, cinemas, theatres and concerts. A certain kid can acquire sponsoring either from private persons or companies and organizations. The special pedagogue, Mgr. Klára Štrachová, is assigned with sponsor finding and money administration. The pupils in need are selected carefully for sponsoring. In order to serve this purpose, the special pedagogue works with families and teachers. Teachers tell her when they are suspicious about poor meal provision in class and she investigates it. Norska's deputy of headmaster and teacher Mgr. Helena Lachmanová says:

Currently, the worst social cases are covered at our school. If we continue further on, we would be careful about misusing of resources and our help.

The special pedagogue, Mgr. Klára Štrachová, finds sponsors in a specific way. She writes a few page stories about children's life and family situation. Therefore the sponsoring is targeted on a certain kid and sponsors know, who they help to. She got full authorization to public all the private issues and sensitive information about the families. Subsequently, she sends the stories to companies and non-governmental organizations, which are willing to provide financial support. Mgr. Helena Lachmanová, the deputy of headmaster and teacher, describes situation when Prague law office sent sponsorship to school for five children:

This law office had always sent money to the institutions for abandoned children. It was the first time they send money to our pupils in need last year. Children sent them a letter of thanks. They were wondered and they did not believe that this situation is possible after so many years after the Velvet revolution. Children gave thanks for having a lunch, having a snack, having a lunch chip, having school supplies or a school bag like their schoolmates.

Indeed, children sent the letter. The children were asked to say, what it means for them to have a lunch at school. There are some statements:

I like having a lunch. I am very happy.

I am so grateful for the chip. It is important for me. I have never had it before and I can sit with my schoolmates during the lunch time now.

It is unbelievable. It does not rumble in my belly. I am looking forward to have a lunch whole morning every day.

I have never left any leftovers. I eat everything.

This people must be nice. I don't know them but I really like them.

Taking control and administration of child allowance

It can happen that parents do neither pay school fees for necessary school supplies and school trips nor school lunches for children. In order to cover these important expanses schools have possibility to take over the control and administrate the child allowances, which family receives within the state social support. The child allowance is paid out to families to cover expenditures connected with raising and alimentation of dependent children. Decisive revenue is 2.4 multiple of family life minimum. It is paid out according the age of dependent children: 500 CZK (less than 6 years), 610 CZK (6-15 years) and 700 CZK (15-26 years). There is a big emphasis on cooperation with school, family and certain Czech social administration offices. This tool is appropriate in situations when parents do not cover school children expanses in the long-term period. Mgr. Klára Štrachová, the special pedagogue, administrates child allowances at Norska. She states:

It was a long-term procedure at the beginning. It lasted more than half year. The Czech Social Administration Office and Labour Office did not know anything about this option. They kept verifying this procedure for months. They had to repeatedly attend families in order to confirm that the family does not care about a kid and he or she does not have anything to eat nor needed school supplies. I wanted to speed up this process so I started to offer this solution to families as a service. Parent signed the special form and I have become the administrator of money. Parents were so satisfied that after some time new parents came to my office and asked me to do it for their children as well.

I have special accounting system for every child so everything is transparent. Money goes according to the law only to the direct purpose of children – food, school supplies, school activities, transportation. On the other hand it is demanding sometimes, because during every break somebody is here and asks me for money. I have not restricted dispensing time yet. I really try to be in my office every break in order to react on their needs.

Communication with parents

Good communication and understanding between school and parents builds important relationships to improve children's situation at school. Most important situation is when parents do not sufficiently fulfil their duties and obligations to their children, especially in relation to their education and alimentation. More positive attitude towards school can lead to better support of children in households. This can mirror motivation, pleasant work atmosphere and motivation for regular school attendance. Information exchange between school and family leads to interconnection of home preparation, bigger interest of family about children and solving the certain problems (Mají na to, 2014). Klára Štrachová, the special pedagogue, says:

The service of the special pedagogue and psychologist is not only strictly focused on school issues. We often exceed a scope of competencies. We also help in economic sphere and social sphere such as administration of child allowances, handling and arranging financial execution and debts, work consultancy. If we exhaust all options and sources then we offer other possibilities where the family can ask for help.

Mgr. Zuzana Ziburová, the school psychologist, describes her work and cooperation with parents as follows:

Forms of my work are either individual work with pupils and parents or group work such as the investigation of class environment, bullying etc. Individually we mainly deal with personal problems, family problems, educational and behavioural problems. Children go to my office because they know there is the principle of confidentiality, thus they don't have to be afraid that someone else knows about their problems and situation. We don't have to solve only school issues, sometimes we also solve family and behavioural problems which are manifested beyond the purview of school. The first contact with school is shrouded in mistrust, maybe fear, because the school makes demands and family did not expect reciprocity. Klára has been investing a lot of time to these issues; she got huge trust and confidence from parents' side. They turn to her with everything and they feel support. Therefore they share their problems and family situation so we can pull together.

Jana K. confirms position and strategy how school tries to build good relationships with family:

Three from my four kids attended this school. They take it in friendly, family way. I have never had a problem with teachers and special pedagogue. The cooperation with school works perfectly. I appreciate human manners as well as financial support.

Unfortunately, not every family accepts that school partly assumed the responsibility for children's education and alimentation. They did not handle demands and support. The care became burden so they gave their kids to a new school. Mgr. Helena Lachmanová, the deputy of headmaster and teacher explains:

Even though some schools describe us as the Romany primary school, we have one of the lowest percentages of Romany pupils. We overpowered them with care. Most of them didn't handle the interest and care so they took the kid away.

The system of child allowance administration as well as sponsoring is verified and beneficial for all sides. The school administrates the money so that the children have regular food intake and school supplies. Moreover, it enables them to attend school actions with other classmates. Unfortunately, this service is not applied at every school in Kladno. Norska is unique. The main reason why other primary schools do not take advantage from this system is that they do not employ any person who can be responsible for it. Regular teacher cannot handle the whole administration due to time restrictions and competencies. Schools would have to hire a special employee in order to serve this purpose. Norska has extensive experience, which other primary schools in Kladno do not have, regarding the socially disadvantaged families or families with children with behavioural problems. Mostly, it is about the devolving responsibility for them because it is an exacting task to care about them. Mgr. Klára Štrachová, the special pedagogue, talks about her experience:

If I present it somewhere, everybody is excited. They even don't know about this way at some primary schools. Unfortunately, they don't have a person who can be concerned with the money administration. Regular teacher doesn't have a time to do it if she has thirty kids in a class. Hardly any of them will keep eye on someone's money or allowances and connected paper work. Most of them let it go because it is really responsibility and burden.

SUB-RESEARCH QUESTION 2: HOW DOES MEAL PROVISION IN SCHOOLS AFFECT THE DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND PARENT?

Thanks to above mentioned ways of how the school can ensure food for socially disadvantaged children and thus help the family to overcome difficulties connected to food scarcity, the question about assuming responsibility rises.

Sponsored meal provision and child allowance administration significantly helps in families where family has insufficient level of income, because parents are unemployed or they work for minimal amount of money. Working parents reach a level where the social benefits are not provided by states. Unfortunately, this income is sometimes lower than the social benefits. Usually, the family is in deep financial trap due to high debts, executions and outstanding bill so paying for school lunches and school supplies is luxury for them. Therefore, the responsibility for children's alimentation is often transferred from parents to school. Parents basically do not

have to care about it anymore and they do not feel pressure from school's side that family owe money for school stuff or that child is hungry during a school time. Helena M., mother of three kids, single parent says:

I have worked in a bakery. My work shift lasts 12 hours. I lost the opportunity to get the state financial support since Roman (the son) turned eleven. I am so glad that school helps us because we would not have any money left. We are happy with Roman for that.

Parents and children really appreciate this service, because before the school lunches were inconceivable part of family budget. Jana K., mother of four children, says:

Jakub (the son) got a lunch chip from Klára because we really did not have financial means to let him have a lunch. He was so happy. It uplifted him so much. He asked me after Christmas holidays if he would keep continuing to have a lunch at school. It was visible, he really cares.

Helena M. has an experience with her neighbours in Masokombinát, a former socially excluded area. It is seen in her experience that in some families, parents prefer to spend the family budget on different stuff rather than food:

They got maternity pay, social benefits and child allowance. Then they played gambling machines or went on a bender. Kids were hungry, ragged, noodles everywhere and without hygienic manners.

Mgr. Klára Štrachová, the special pedagogue, closely worked with Romany pupils from socially excluded locality Masokombinát. The special project *Giving Hand* was based on social and educational support for pupils from socially disadvantaged environment in order to overcome the difficulties, and social and racial exclusion at school. Some families were not able to cooperate even on the basic level – to wake up the children and send him or her to school. She therefore took the responsibility to wake children up and drove them to school. She describes her everyday situation:

It was a shock for some families. Children didn't go to school at all or they had extremely high non-attendance. Suddenly, I was regularly knocking on a door every morning at 7 a.m. A whole family was lying in one bed so I had to wake them up and take the kid. She usually did not have a pyjama so she wore clothes that she slept in during the day. It was so unmotivated for the kid. She saw that her parents and siblings stayed in the bed and they did not have to do anything and she had to go to school. Somebody did not handle this regularity and steadiness and left our school. It is taken as an encroachment to privacy and bothers some of them. It is a consequence of their priorities, because education is not generally the priority.

The help offered by Norska was based on reciprocity. Helena Lachmanová, the deputy of headmaster and teacher, affirms experience from the project. She adds how the reciprocity worked:

We offered them free transportation to school and other benefits but under some conditions; children will not have louses, they will be clean etc. They were excited about it at the beginning but after some time they gave it up and left our school. Klára got a laundry detergent from her friends and she taught them how to do the washing. Some of them have never seen a detergent before. If children were cleaned, without louses and did their homework, family got the detergent as a reward.

Helena M. lived in Masokombinát that time. Her son David was participating in the project. She remembers how some mothers were angry about the overtaking of the responsibility by the school:

Some mothers got angry after some time of Klára's care. They berated, and hurled curses at Klára. I didn't know why. They were not happy about her because she came to pick kids up by car and she was knocking on the door when they overslept. They should be glad, because children didn't have to go by bus where somebody was cursing and yelling on them that they were gipsies or somebody still calmed them down because of the fact they were noisy. Klára liked, helped and stand up not only for my son but for every our kid. I told them they should be glad that somebody cared about them. I and David appreciate her help. I cannot complain.

SUB-RESEARCH QUESTION 3: WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF MEAL PROVISION AT SCHOOL ON SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN?

A several major findings were uncovered. First, if children compared the situation before and after meal provision they were glad and grateful for school lunches and snacks. Tereza (8 years) says:

I love having lunches. I am not hungry anymore.

Second, every investigated child confirmed at least one of the subcategories regarding children's awareness and responsibility for managing food resources in food insecure households formulated by Fram et al. (2001). All of them were aware about food scarcity in family and that family manages food problems. They remembered physical feelings related to food scarcity such as hunger and tiredness. Bořek (12 years) states about his awareness concerning family food insecurity and physical feelings related to being hungry:

It is good now. I am not sleepy anymore. I am more focused during a class. I can imagine not having lunches but my mum would have cook and spend money. It is good now.

Jiří (15 years) has similar experience:

It is better now. You think about stuff differently. Sitting at school and have nothing to eat it's drag.

Some kids also showed emotional feelings concerning food insecurity. For example Marie (10 years) says:

It was weird when I did not eat anything a whole day. I didn't feel sick but I was ashamed because everybody asked me why I didn't have a snack. I can eat properly now and I am not hungry. It is better, I even don't have to be jealous that somebody has a lunch chip and I don't. My class mates were curious where I took the chip so I told them I had money on a school account. I don't know if my brother has lunches now because I don't know if my mum paid for it.

Third, children indicated behaviour connected with managing resources. They stretch resources; generally they do not leave leftovers. Bořek (12 years) and his sister Jana (13 years) approve together:

We don't leave anything on a plate. No leftovers. We like everything.

Some children generate more resources by themselves. Marie (10 years) used to ask her classmates for food, when she was hungry. She also cheated with her sister in school canteen even though this behaviour is forbidden, because every kid has a claim to have only one lunch per day:

That time I didn't have snacks, I sometimes asked friends of mine to give a bite. We swapped plates with my sister. I gave the meal to her when I didn't like it. It would be a pity if somebody through it away. She gave me her plate. So I went with her plate for more food and ate her second portion.

Jiří (15 years) deals with bad financial situation and food insufficiency own way:

When I didn't have a lunch I bought something when I had money. But generally it was money that I earned. I used to work in Labyrint (center for children), or just anywhere it was possible.

Fourth, despite of the fact that food satisfies primary needs, there was a significant change noted in their status among their schoolmates. Alber et al. (1997) states that children, who are raised in insecure and emotional attachment, are poor goal oriented, they have low self-confidence and social competence. It was found out that attending school canteen during the lunch enabled them be more involved in interaction with other children, they deepen the relationship with

their classmates and find new friends. It has an impact on psychics. Children are more self-confident and with better mood. Marie describes who she eats lunch with:

When my sister had lunches I used to eat with her. Now I have lunch with Anežka and Ondra and other classmates.

Jiří (15 years) also affirms interaction with other school mates and finding of new friends:

It is better. We have a chat during the lunch time. I met somebody from school and also found friends.

PeaDr. Petra Sanitráková, the former teacher of Bořek and Jana and current teacher of Marie, confirms the change in social status and better mood of children:

I used to teach Bořek and Jana. I meet them in school canteen this year and their greeting me with smile. I see enthusiasm that they are in canteen and they belong there as well. I also see difference in behaviour of other children. When we ended classes last year they disappeared quickly from school without saying goodbye. They go to canteen now with straight head. They ask me what I have for the lunch or they boast about what they had. I also see them being friends with other kids who they had never even talked to before.

Mgr. Hele Lachmanová, the deputy of headmaster and teacher praise how children's confidence improved as well as their interaction with other kids:

Children are more self-confident and they have a sense of belongingness with class. It is regular issue for normal kids to have a lunch at school but for those kids it is not.

Ing. Václav Kohlík, the director of Asylum House Kladno, has worked in social sphere for many years. He has a rich experience with children who live with their mothers in the asylum house:

I think that not having the lunch has a huge impact on psychics of the children. They are pushed away and set aside from the class collective.

Fifth, the meal provision has become the mediator to get closer to the children in order to understand their problems and eventually provide them with wider care. Mgr. Zuzana Ziburová, the school psychologist, explains the role of alimentation provision in a wider scope:

The support regarding school lunches belongs in a wider context. On one hand kids get lunches, but on the other hand these kids get much more. Minimally, the kid gets interest, attention, care and a sense that the kid is needed. Despite this fact, we give them a lunch we also give them something else – we care what they like, what delights them, we care about their problems.

Sixth, it was confirmed that there is relationship between inappropriate food consumption of socially disadvantaged families and overweight and obesity of its members as was proposed by many authors such as Cheng, (2008), Dubois (2006), and Ortega (1997). Mgr. Jana Evenová, head of regional center Štěp, says:

Children don't eat breakfast at all. We have also different experience with snacks. They have a school snack prepared at home. Sometime the snacks are so big that they even cannot eat it. But I agree that it can happen that some children do not have snacks at all. Sometime it is cheaper to cook at home. We encounter situations, where family provides unhealthy food so the children are obese. It is so difficult to change their eating behavior because drinking cola and eating chips is completely normal for them. We tried to change it but it was with minimum result.

Seventh, the school detected regular cases of snack thefts. Children were so hungry that they stole snacks of their class mates. Or they stole it because they have never tasted it before. These thefts were completely eliminated through the meal provision. Mgr. Helena Lachmanová, the deputy of headmaster and teacher, describes situation that used to happen before the meal provision started:

At one time we noticed a high number of snack thefts. When we investigated it we found out that it wasn't because these kids were thieves or bad. It was act of pure hopelessness. They were so hungry that they took or bite to someone else's snacks. Or they did it because they have never had a biscuits before. The meal provision contributed to solve this situation.

SUB-RESEARCH QUESTION 4: HOW DOES THE MEAL PROVISION CONTRIBUTE TO THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE?

All Norska's staff approved statements of Payne & Biddle (1999) and Aber et al. (1997) that socially disadvantaged children have insufficient access to school materials and supplies. Moreover, all investigated children were exposed to problems such as domestic violence, drug and alcohol problems, incarceration of family member and divorces. All of this creates unique handicap for education according to above mentioned authors. Teachers also confirmed that socially disadvantaged children are more likely to have below-average school results and they are more likely to repeat grades.

It was also found out that in many socially disadvantaged families parents do not sufficiently encourage children to have good school results in order to continue at higher school institutions. Children also live in an environment where they are minimally motivated to get better

education. In most of the cases, parents achieved just basic education as well. Children are usually reconciled with the situation that their educational career ends with termination of primary school. Mgr. Jana Evanová, the head of regional centre Střep, explains relations in these families and their attitudes towards education:

Children terminate primary school and don't continue to higher educational institutions. If they continue they give it up after few days or months. It corresponds with the fact that they don't want to continue. They even didn't want to go to primary school. They even don't have a vision what they would like to do in the future. Education is not on the first position in family. Parents cannot ensure conditions and support to encourage them to improve their education. They don't guide them to do it as it is in normal families. Generally, these families have negative attitudes towards school. Teachers are disparaged. They don't talk about what children do at school. If the kid starts to go to school, he or she starts to have a daily regime. Unfortunately, their parent don't have a regime at all. It is difficult for them to wake up every day with kids and get them ready to go to school. So when kids end up with the primary school, parents relieve. Nobody doesn't want anything from them and nobody annoys them with school stuff anymore. These issues affect children a lot. On the top of that, they are more likely to have behavioural problems and learning disabilities.

Lack of motivation from the family side and poor daily regime is confirmed Jaroslav Tomeš, the ex-prison warden and current caretaker in the Ruzyně prison. He says:

Nowadays, children are not interested in anything; they do not have to go to school because nobody cares. Parent guide their kids to the situation that their end up at the Labour Office anyway. They don't motivate them at all. This generation doesn't know from their parents what it means to go to work. They don't have everyday habits such as waking up in the morning, going to work, going to do shopping.

In terms of meal provision in Norska, there was not find direct influence of meal provision on school performance. Nevertheless, there was uncovered significant role of the meal provision as a mediator to work and be in closer relationship with socially disadvantaged families. This is a result of the fact that meal provision exists in a wider concept of offered help. It means that there is not only cooperation with socially disadvantaged children and their families in terms of alimentation but also in terms of social, psychological and financial support. This is main reason why kids and parents from the meal provision program indicated bigger care about their future and importance of education in children's life. Children and families disapproved general experience of the experts about low incentive of family environment that is mention above. They are aware about learning disabilities, behavioral problems and financial possibilities. Anyway, they try to reach possible adequate educational level. Attitudes towards school are also on different degree. They cooperate with school as best as they can. The major mediator between families and school is the special pedagogue, Klára Štrachová. Families feel support and they

have a milestone where they can build their life and solve problems. Children are under permanent supervision of special pedagogue so if there are some behavioral problems or school performance deviation she immediately intervenes. Helena M. (David's mother, David has been in the school meal program since the beginning) is highly motivated to support David in order to provide him as best education as she can. Obviously, her attitudes towards importance of education are positive:

We talk about school with David a lot. He comes from school and tells me what happened at school or if he had some problems. I want that he will get apprenticeship certificate once. I would like to have one kid apprenticed. I will force him to continue with education after the primary school. If he doesn't have an education he will end up in the Labour Office and with unemployment allowance. He can choose whatever he wants to do and I will be satisfied. It is better than push handcart with iron and getting money from government every month. If he has some behavioral problems I and his brother persuade him to not to behave like that. He cannot be naughty. I have to work a lot in order to pay rent and bills. David knows and gets that I am alone to keep household working.

Jana K., Jakub's mother also praises what school does for her. She will be rather if Jakub would continue with his education once. She states:

Jakub is really glad at this school. The cooperation works well, he has got lunches, and he can go also to school trips with other kids. Once we think about school change because of financial problems, but then we realized that cooperation would end. I am glad also for myself, Jakub was happy with teachers as well as with this support he can draw. He is getting better thanks to this project. He loves astronomy. He would like to be a scientist. Or he would like to work with animals. We will see. It also depends on possibilities and financial means. We had huge behavioral problems with my older son Honza. If Klára Štrachová was not here he would definitely end up in diagnostic institution.

Also socially disadvantaged children participating in the meal provision support think about possible future. This finding shows that children started to be goal oriented. Jiří (15 years), who is currently in the last grade at Norska, says:

I would like to continue at vocational school after primary school and become an electrician.

Also Bořek (12 years) wondered what he would like to in the future:

I want to be a baker. I would like to own my shop where I will be a baker.

SUB-RESEARCH QUESTION 5: HOW DOES THE MEAL PROVISION CONTRIBUTE TO THE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE?

It was impossible to have a look to school records in order to compare attendance of investigated pupils. Therefore the question could not be entirely answered. Despite of this fact, there was found that the children participating in meal provision support program like going to school and enjoy the meal. Teachers experienced that attendance is highly influence by financial situation of the family, where the family currently lives, and the willingness to send children to school. For example, Marie's teacher confirms that she has higher attendance in comparison to previous year. But it is the consequence of the fact that the family changed its location and Marie lives close to the school now. The mother did not send her to school before because her family did not have money for transportation.

Mgr. Helena Lachmanová, the deputy of headmaster and teacher, talks about correlation between meal provision and school attendance and explains different reasons influencing attendance:

I don't think that meal provision affects attendance. It depends on the family. We have a kid who gets school lunches but his mother doesn't send him to school from different reasons. For example, she didn't send him to school before Christmas because he didn't have a gift for his classmate.

School has constrained the possibilities of how to deal with extremely low attendance, non-excused attendance and truancy. School had to announce all cases when children exceeded 10 non-excused hours to the Social Office. It has not been valid anymore since March 2014. Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs passed methodical steps how to deal with truancy on 14th March 2014. There is said that the school has to be capable to solve non-attendance and truancy on the base of its own strength and competencies. Asking for help and support from the side of social institutions is possible in the moment when the school is not able to do rectification by its own. It means that the school will inform social institutions about truancy after exhaust all possibilities to stop pupils doing truanting. This act has weakened the cooperation between the school and the social institutions with high number of non-excused attendance.

Mgr. Iva Bešťáková, the director of primary school Doberská, talks about troubles with interaction of the school and state social organs:

The Social Office doesn't help us with truancy anymore. We had to announce when children exceed certain amount of hours before. According to new instructions we don't announce it.

But the main problem is that if there is some problem with a kid, we have no feedback from the side of social organ after the announcement. There is no feedback in case of truancy as well as criminality, home violence or child abuse. We announced to the Social Office that we have reasonable suspicion that children was abused but we didn't know if there was remedy or supervision from their side. Therefore we see the biggest support in cooperation with police department, where its immediate intervention helped in some families in case of domestic violence and child abuse.

Sub-research question 6: What are other possibilities to break out the cycle of poverty?

Several propositions were discovered that could contribute to breaking the vicious cycle of poverty on the base of interviews with experts. The experts see major factors that could have impact on change in: labor market, social system, living conditions, and financial literacy. It is believed that positive modification of these factors can be a decisive influence on the family environment and functioning, and therefore contribute to the destruction of the cycle of poverty. Visibly, the positive change in these factors should be carried out within the structural conditions rather than in the modification of cultural settings. It supports the criticism of Lewis's culture of poverty defined by Valentine (1968) and Coward et al. (1974) that poverty is more likely to be shaped by external and situational factors, and situational expediency rather than cultural aspects.

Considering socially disadvantaged children from Norska, who come from families where apart from minimum financial resources, there was psychical or physical abuse and domestic violence towards themselves or their mothers detected. Majority of them grows up only with their mother and siblings. The mother is usually unemployed or work long hours for low wage. Families are in debt. Oppressive financial situation leads to stressful family environment, criminality, domestic violence, and poor housing conditions. Mgr. Zuzana Ziburová, the school psychologist, describes family background of socially disadvantaged pupils at Norska:

There is a bigger accumulation of crisis and load situations in comparison to normal families. There are more risk factors. We are talking about high divorce rate, health problems, often moving to different places and changes. Children are not certain about their place. They are surrounded by unpredictable and abnormal situations and consequences. Parent don't handle it in calm, and children are drag to the issues which are not appropriate to their age.

All of above mention factors have a big impact on children's health. Most of them have learning disabilities and mental disorders. Some of disorders are congenital but some of them have developed since they were really young as a response to permanent stress, domestic violence, inappropriate family environment, food insecurity and family lifestyle. Jana K. is mother of four kids. Her oldest daughter is physically handicapped and went through leukemia. Younger daughter is mentally retarded. Jakub, the younger son, suffer from insomnia and depression. Honza, the older son, has deep behavioral problems, disharmonious development of personality and self-harm. Jana K. was in one moment so psychically exhausted that she started to see the psychologist and she takes medicaments. Nor school staff nor social workers and state officers remember that there were so many children medicated and mental diseases and learning disabilities were not so widespread as nowadays.

Labor market

Retrospectively, the experts agree that the situation in families in terms of employment, indebtedness, criminality and domestic violence is more unfavorable and there is general slump in families. The main reason is assigned to a worse current labor market in comparison to labor market before the Velvet Revolution. People did must have a work during the communist era otherwise they were arrested. It means that family had some income at least and parents had a daily regime. Children saw them working. Nowadays, the most of the parents from socially disadvantaged families do not work at all. In some cases they have never worked in their entire life. It resulted in situations where parent pass their lifestyle and family model on children. Mgr. Magda Michálková, the head of Social Office, compares the situation this way:

If I compare the situation when I started work in social sphere and now, the situation in families is worse. Parents worked because they had to work. Children saw them go to work every day, they had some set of rules and order. Nowadays, they don't have to do anything.

Ing. Václav Kohlík, the director of Asylum House Kladno, draws a comparison between labor market before the Velvet revolution and current labor market:

There were not so many people in this miserable situation before. A lot of people had lost their jobs after the revolution. They must work during last regime. Labor market is in bad conditions now. Main problem in current society is that there is a minimum of job opportunities and therefore people don't work. There is a big amount of people who are long-term unemployed. Hand in hand with unemployment go other problems if women don't work at all, men don't work either or only sometimes. They stop paying rents and they are indebted. There is domestic violence in families as a consequence.

Social system

There is a consensus of the experts, that current social system is set improperly. This setting goes hand in hand with the situation on labor market. It means that social benefits are set too high and therefore the whole system does not motivate people to find a job. It is worthy for some people to be unemployed and take the social benefits than work for a minimal wage. Because some families have so high social benefits that they would have not ever had if they start work. It is beneficial to stay at home than do low-paid job for less or the same amount of money. One of the experts, Magda Michalová, the head of Social Office, confirms:

There is absolutely unmotivated and awry system of social benefits in the Czech Republic. It is better to stay home for the parents, because their revenue would have never been so high if they worked.

Living conditions

The experts also put an emphasis on the importance of where a family lives. Family often moves from one place to the other. The living conditions are inappropriate in the most cases. There is an incredible boom of lodging houses in Kladno. It has become a huge business for certain people. The price for this inappropriate accommodation is higher than the price for regular apartments in the majority of cases. All costs regarding lodging housing are covered by state social benefits. Whole families live together in one few square meters room. Bathrooms and toilets are usually shared with whole floor. The community of people who live in lodging housing consists mainly of worst social cases, socially disadvantaged families, Romany, alcoholics, gamblers and junkies. All of this creates dreadful, unmotivated and stressful environment for families. This environment leaves traces on their health, mental condition, attitudes, values and beliefs. One of the reasons why the families are forced to go there is the desperate lack of social housing in Kladno. Aleš Kratochvíl, the police officer, has rich experience with people who live in the lodging houses. He describes the quality of the living conditions:

State welfare offices pay incredible amount of money for rents in the lodging houses. But quality of accommodation and living conditions are absolutely bellow this price. Rooms are overcrowded. For room 4x4 meters a family pays 10,000 CZK.

The director of the Asylum House Kladno, Ing. Václav Kohlík, has a similar experience. On the other hand he emphasizes that the work of the lodging houses is important in the lives of his

clients because they often have no other option where to go when they are leaving the asylum. He states:

There are lodging houses in Kladno which profit from people who don't have place where to stay. State enables it and it works. Social benefits are set so high that family can afford this type of expensive accommodation even though the price is not set according to quality. On the other hand I am glad because it is only place where people can take refuge because there is lack of social accommodation.

There is an illustrative story of how life in a socially excluded location looks like. Helena M. talks about her life in former socially excluded location Masokombinát in Kladno (Appendix C). She had lived there for 12 years with her three children and grandchild. She got a new apartment after this location was destroyed and liquidated. She was lucky because she got a new apartment. Most of the families had to leave the town or go to a lodging house, where the conditions and community is mostly similar:

When I got to the Masokombinát, it was told me, it was for three months. I spent there 12 years. It was horrible at the beginning. They thought I am Hungarian. We entered the room and started cry where we were. The kids were still beaten. After some time they found out I am also gypsy as they were. There lived only gypsies. Then they were still knocking on my door and asked me for food. It drove me crazy. I didn't do shopping for them. Once we were robbed. They took money and TV. We went for a walk but unfortunately one key fitted to all doors. So we came home and we noticed that stuffs were missing. I recognized our stuffs on other people but I did not want them back. It was like a nightmare. They stole eaves and then they sold it in order to get money to live. As they couldn't go to earn money at work. They got only state social benefits. Then they spend this money for gambling or alcohol. Children were ragged and dirty. There were horrible and filthy people. They didn't appreciate they had a place where to live. They robbed eaves, everything from iron, electricity when they didn't have anything to eat. It was raining to our apartment once. They set a fire in one apartment once. They thought they got a new one. I paid a debt from Masokombinát. It was 30,000 – 40,000 CZK debt for water. We paid it for someone else. We couldn't use so much water. So I was repaying it. The money was charged from my wage. I was in crisis for a long time, but I have already repaid everything so I got this apartment.

Financial literacy

As Gundersen (2012) mentioned, financial management affects household's food security. It was found out during the case study that socially disadvantaged households have minimal financial literacy. It is proven that the special pedagogue Mgr. Klára Štrachová is able to save money from child allowance 500 CZK or 610 CZK per month to buy school lunches, snacks, necessary school supplies, pay for school activities, and in long term saving it is possible to pay for one week school trip. Therefore, there is an inclination and effort to teach socially disadvantaged children and families to improve financial literacy. Mgr. Zuzana Ziburová, the school psychologist, and Mgr. Helena Lachmanová, the deputy of headmaster and teachers, both states about financial literacy of socially disadvantaged families:

These families don't have a financial literacy. They don't know how to handle money. Therefore we teach children financial literacy.

Ing. Jan Koblík, the director of Asylum House Kladno, has the same experience:

Mothers living in an asylum, not every mother, they have low financial literacy. We try to show them how to spend money.

Mgr. Klára Štrachová the special pedagogue, talks about the way how she is trying to improve children's financial literacy at Norska:

I want that children from second grade of our school look after their budget withdrawing by their own. If they need to withdraw money, they come to my office and I give it to them. They can pay for themselves school activities as other kids. They can go there and feel important that they pay for it. If I do it by myself I would not teach them anything. I just control transaction by asking their teachers whether they really pay for it or not. If they pay for something in shops they must bring as well as their mothers the receipts back.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

It was known from the personal experience of Czech teachers that some children from socially disadvantaged families do not eat anything during the school day. This has consequences on their physical and psychical activity and development. The thesis is based on the assumption that children and their families are caught in a trap of the cycle of poverty; beneath a certain level of resourcefulness, which leads to the situations such as unemployment, low level of education, criminality, poor health etc. These situations perpetuate and are inherited from one generation to the other. It was assumed that ensuring of meal provision leads to breaking out of the cycle of poverty through better reached education. The main research question was attempted to be answered: *How does meal provision at school contribute to breaking out of the cycle of poverty?* The sub-questions are aimed in order to answer the research question: *What are the possibilities for schools to provide food to children? How does meal provision in schools affect the division of responsibilities between schools and parent? What is the impact of meal provision at school on socially disadvantaged children? How does the meal provision contribute to the school performance? How does the meal provision contribute to the school attendance? What are other possibilities to break out the cycle of poverty?*

The answer to the first sub-research question (*What are the possibilities for schools to provide food to children?*) shown ways of how to ensure meal for socially disadvantaged children; without drawing the school budget. The main impediments are for ensuring the meal provision through own budget restricted finances, competencies and form of discrimination towards other children. There are three ways applied for meal provision in Norska: sponsoring, administration of child allowances, and communication with families. Sponsoring is based on financial aid from external subjects for concrete children. Administration of child allowances is built of sequestration of this social benefit. It is paid out according the age of dependent children: 500 CZK (younger than 6 years), 610 CZK (6-15 years) and 700 CZK (15-26 years). This certain amount of money is withdrawn from the family budget and therefore the family has a bigger interest in how the money is used. Financial aid from sponsoring as well as child allowance is used on direct needs of children: lunches and snacks, school activities, transportation. Third way, communication with parents, is important part in the situations, when parents do not carry out their duties towards children and school sufficiently, especially in terms of education, alimentation and care. The school negotiates a remedy and builds positive interaction between the school and the family in order to enhance quality of school preparation and alimentation.

The second sub-research question (*How does meal provision in schools affect the division of responsibilities between schools and parent?*) copes with the fact that the school assumes responsibilities for children's alimentation. Families transferred their responsibility to the school mainly because of their financial situation. Buying school lunches and school supplies is considered as a substantial part of the family budget that the family cannot afford or is not willing to pay for.

In Norska, the school support works partly on the base of reciprocity. The support is not considered as a one way act. Families should also show their contribution. On one hand, the school is willing to assume the responsibility for alimentation and purchase of school supplies, but on the other hand, it is required that the family ensures basic habits as hygiene and cleanness of children, sending them to school, school preparation and common problem solving. Unfortunately, some families were not able to bear the responsibility to fulfil these basic requirements. Regular interest, care and demands changed their minds after some time and they put their children to a new school. The families who persisted are satisfied and found a way how to deal with reciprocity. The cooperation and support is praised from parents as well as children.

The third sub-research question (*What is the impact of meal provision at school on socially disadvantaged children*) uncovered seven major findings. First, investigated children are incredibly glad and grateful for meal provision. Second, the children evince the behavior connected to the subcategories regarding children's awareness and responsibility for managing food resources in food insecure households formulated by Fram et al. (2001). They are aware of food scarcity in the family, they know the physical and emotional feelings related to food scarcity and insecurity. Third, the children illustrate behaviour connected with managing the resources – stretching the resources, not leaving leftovers, generating more resources by themselves. Fourth, there is a big change in their social status among their schoolmates. They found new friends and they spend lunch time with children who they have never talked to before. It has a positive impact on their psychics, mood, self-confidence and social competence. Fifth, the meal provision has become a mediator that enables a closer cooperation with the family. Therefore the school can provide all complex care in order to enhance their educational, social and financial stability. Sixth, there were confirmed statements of authors such as Cheng, (2008), Dubois (2006), and Ortega (1997) that members of socially disadvantaged families incline to be overweight or obese because of their inappropriate food consumption. Seventh, lack of food forced children to steal snacks of their classmates. These acts often brought them to embarrassing and inconvenient situations. School meal provision solved this problem.

The fourth sub-research question (*How does the meal provision contribute to the school performance?*) examines the contribution to the school performance after the children start with regular eating at school. Authors like Alaimo (2001), Person (2009), and Wight et al. (2014) state that children from food insufficient families have more educational difficulties and worse school performance. They are more likely to repeat grades and they have lower school attendance. It was proven that the socially disadvantaged children are more likely to have below-average school results and they are more likely to repeat grades. The major factor influencing the school performance is the family environment. In many cases, the family is not able to ensure a sufficiently motivated environment that would lead children to better results. They do not have the financial means to buy the school supplies, ensure the transportation to school or pay for continuing on the higher educational institutions. This approves the statement of Payne & Biddle (1999) and Aber et al. (1997) that socially disadvantaged children have insufficient access to the school materials and supplies. Striking point is that the education is not on the first places of family priorities as well. This has an impact on the family support and motivation to end up primary school with adequate marks which could open the door to the higher education. Children are mostly reconciled with the situation that their education ends with a primary school and they will live from the state social benefits. This leads to the repetition of family history because the most of the parents from the socially disadvantaged families do not work and have minimal education. Another factor that corresponds and influences the school achievement is that the socially disadvantaged children are more likely to have behavioral problems, lower intelligence, learning disabilities, and mental disorders.

Taking into consideration the impact of the meal provision in Norska, there was not find a direct influence of the meal provision on the school performance. There was found an indirect impact of the meal provision as a part of a broad, complex care that Norska offers to socially disadvantaged families. This care provides a wide range of social, economic and educational support to children and their families who are involved in the meal provision support program. Through the offered meal provision to children, families can reach the above mentioned social, economic and educational care more easily. This results in the fact, that the families indicate greater care of the child's future and school achievement. They also indicated a positive attitude towards the school and its cooperation. The children have become more goal-oriented. All of the investigated children would like to continue on higher educational levels and they have an idea about their future occupation.

The fifth sub-research question (*How does the meal provision contribute to the school attendance?*) aimed to uncover if there is a contribution of meal provision to a higher school attendance. Due to an impossibility to go through the children records, the sub-research question could not be fully answered. Even though the children indicated that they enjoy and like having food at school, there are stronger factors influencing their school attendance: current financial situation of family, priorities, willingness of the parents to send them to school and the location of their current housing. The school has come to a worse position regarding the high non-excused attendance hours and truancy since 3/2014, because the cooperation with the state social organs is possible only after exhausting all the possibilities of how to fight against truancy by its own strength.

The sixth sub-research question (*What are other possibilities to break out the cycle of poverty?*) investigated what other ways or factors can influence the break of the cycle of poverty. There were areas found with whose augmentation there could be a contribution to the breaking out of the vicious cycle of poverty: labor market, social system, living conditions, and financial literacy.

Considering the socially disadvantaged children from Norska, they come from families where there is a lack of financial resources, experience with domestic violence, and criminality of either their parent, sibling or other relatives. Mostly, the children live only with their mother and they are rarely in touch with their biological father. The mothers are usually unemployed or have a low paid job. The households are indebted. The oppressive financial situation, poor family relations and living conditions, and domestic violence lead to stressful environment and force children to deal with the issues which are inappropriate to their age. All of this has a big impact on their health; most of them have learning disabilities and mental disorders.

A big impact on the family slump is assigned to the current **labor market**. Retrospectively, there is a consensus that unemployment, high debts, criminality and domestic violence is more unfavorable. The labor market is seen as major contributor to this situation. People must have worked during the communist era; it was enforced by law. If somebody did not work for certain period, they were arrested. Mandatory working led to the condition that a family received some income and the parents had a daily regime. Children saw them work. Nowadays, there are families where parents are long-term unemployed or they have never worked. It resulted in situations, when parents pass this lifestyle and family model on their children. These working habits do not support Czech social system. The current **social system** is set improperly. The social benefits are too high so it does not motivate people to find a job. It is more beneficial for

them to stay at home unemployed and take social benefits, then do a low-paid job for less, or the same amount of money.

The experts also emphasized the importance of the family **living conditions**. Family often moves from one place to the other. Living conditions are inappropriate in the majority of cases. Moreover, social disadvantaged families and people are concentrated in private lodging houses. It has become an incredibly favorable business for certain people. Lodging houses offer rooms of approximately 12-25 m², where the whole family lives. Usually, the sanitary facility is common for whole floor. The cost of one room is higher than the tenancy in a regular few-room apartment. All costs are covered by the Czech social system though. The community that lives there and the inappropriate living conditions provide stressful and unmotivated environment for children. This leaves traces on their health, mental condition, attitudes, values and beliefs.

Financial management has an impact on household's food security (Gundersen, 2012). It was approved during the case study that socially disadvantaged households have minimal financial literacy. In Norska, the special pedagogue is able to be economical with the family's child allowance. She is able to buy lunches, snacks, school supplies, and school activities with assigned 500 CZ or 610 CZK. Families are more likely to spend money in a different way; therefore there is a tendency to teach them, how the financial management works.

All above mentioned areas evoke transformation in the structural conditions, rather than a change in the cultural position of families. This finding supports the latest critique of Gorski (2008) and his proposition about the deficit perspective; the society perceives the poor via established stereotypes and disregard structural conditions. It puts the term culture of poverty into question: is it really a cultural issue or is it a structural context where families have less chance than the others?

Summing up the results of all the sub-research questions, **the main research question** (*How does a meal provision at school contribute to breaking out of the cycle of poverty?*) can be answered. There was not find any direct influence on school attendance and school performance. Despite of this fact, it is important to realize that the meal provision is a part of a complex care provided to socially disadvantaged children in Norska. Meal provision is an important mediator that enables cooperation between the school and the family. It results in the fact, that the school can tackle important issues in families and apply appropriate support and intervention. Thanks to a closer interaction between the school and families, the education in many cases moved on the higher preferential level.

According to results gathered in the case study, **a model** was derived (Figure 3). The model proposes relations of the affecting factors that have the biggest influence on breaking out of the cycle of poverty. The model suggests that the family and the school have a direct impact on children. Therefore, there should be cooperation between the school and the family in order to enhance school achievement, positive attitudes towards future, prevent criminality and maintain health development. School should provide complex care regarding educational, psychological and social support with meal provision as an elementary part. There are direct structural factors that contribute to the functioning of family: living conditions, labour market, social system and financial management. Simultaneously, these factors could indirectly influence the cycle of poverty. It means that a positive change in these factors directly influences the family and thus it could lead to breaking out the cycle of poverty.

There is a highlighted role of the meal provision in the model. As a part of a complex school care the meal provision enables an important link to the cooperation between the school and the family. There are also direct impacts of meal provision on children stressed. Children are not hungry anymore, they have better psychics and self-confidence, their social status and social competence has increased, they find new friends, and they are not forced to steal snacks because of hunger.

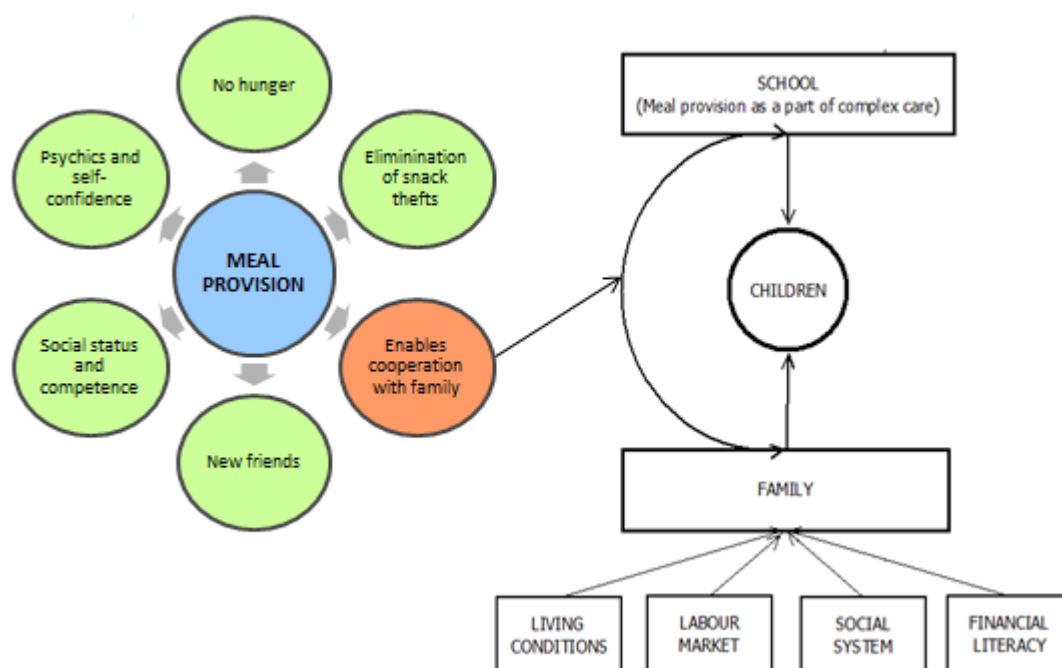


FIGURE 3: PROPOSED MODEL - HOW MEAL PROVISION CONTRIBUTE TO THE BREAKING OUT OF THE CYCLE OF POVERTY

It is important to point out the work of the **special pedagogue** Mgr. Klára Štrachová. It was found out on the basis of the observation and interviews with involved actors that she significantly influences family and children's attitudes towards better education and their future. Despite of the fact that she administrates child allowances and finds new sponsors, she also provides a complex social, financial, educational and psychological support. The coordination and participation in special social projects enables socially disadvantaged families and excluded minorities to overcome difficulties with integration and assimilation in the class and fear from the school environment. The work of the special pedagogue incorporates elimination of prejudice and bias of the majority of kids in order to improve the position of minorities and socially disadvantaged kids with a better self-realization and academic success. The fact that she provides food, she gets to the close cooperation with families and therefore it enables her to tackle other issues that regular teachers cannot monitor.

The case study has **weaknesses and limitations**. As a researcher, I was the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. I was left to my own instincts and abilities. Although, I tried to be unbiased and collect as many data as possible, more experienced and trained researcher may find data that were unintentionally omitted. Other limitation is that teachers and director of other Kladno's primary schools did not cooperate with filling of the electronic form. Therefore a part of research is missing, which would help to depict the whole case. Additionally, I did not have a chance to interview families who do not want to cooperate with the school. It would be helpful to compare their opinions and attitudes with the families, where cooperation works and has a positive impact on children. Data collection was also restricted by time. There would be more precise data collected via a long-term investigation.

There are number of issues which are suggested for **further investigation**. First, the new case study can be conducted by professional researcher in order to gather unbiased and deeper information about the phenomenon. Using of quantitative and experimental methods may increase the quality of the results and increase the validity. It is also suggested to continue with the monitoring of the cohort of the investigated socially disadvantaged children in Norska. It would uncover impacts of the current support that they are given. There is also a big room to investigate the proposed model to approve or reject its functioning. It will be beneficial to find out what structural factors positively influence families the most in order to break out the cycle of poverty.

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APPENDIX

A: ANONYMOUS ELECTRONIC FORM

Dobrý den,

jsem studentkou posledního ročníku magisterského studia na holandské universitě Wageningen University. Mé zaměření je ekonomie a sociologie domácností. K úspěšnému zakončení studia mi chybí dopsat diplomová práce. Konkrétně svůj výzkum směřuji jako případovou studii na téma Prolomení kruhu chudoby skrze poskytování stravy ve školách (originální název: Breaking the cycle of poverty through meal provision at school - a Czech case study).

Cílem dotazníku je zjistit, co nejvíce informací a zkušeností z pohledu pedagogů v rámci práce se sociálně znevýhodněnými dětmi a zajišťování stravy během dne ve škole. Na stravování žáků jsem se zaměřila z toho důvodu, protože bylo dokázáno, že stravování má vliv na učení a pozornost žáků.

Tento osmi otázkový dotazník byl rozeslán do všech základních škol v Kladně. Jedná se o otevřené otázky, kde můžete sdělit jakýkoliv názor či podnět. Dotazník je anonymní a nelze dopátrat, o jaké škole se respondent vyjadřuje.

Děkuji za vyplnění a přeji příjemný den.

*Povinné pole

Máte ve třídě či ve škole žáky ze sociálně slabého prostředí? *

- ☐ ☐ Ano
- ☐ ☐ Ne

Víte přibližný počet těchto žáků ve škole?

Odpovídejte jen v případě, že jste na předchozí otázku odpověděli "ANO"

- ☐ ☐ 1-10
- ☐ ☐ 11-20
- ☐ ☐ 21-30
- ☐ ☐ 31-40
- ☐ ☐ 41 a více
- ☐ ☐ Nedokážu odhadnout

Myslíte si, že se obecně docházka a prospěch sociálně znevýhodněných žáků liší od žáků, kteří nepocházejí ze sociálně znevýhodněného prostředí? *

Jestli ANO, napište prosím jakým způsobem a jak se k tomu staví škola.

Myslíte si, že se obecně chování sociálně znevýhodněných žáků liší od žáků, kteří nepocházejí ze sociálně znevýhodněného prostředí? *

Jestli ANO, napište prosím jakým způsobem a jak se k tomu staví škola.

Ze zkušeností jiných pedagogů je doloženo, že někteří žáci ze sociálně slabých rodin se ve škole nestravují. Jaká je situace na Vaší škole a jak tuto situaci škola řeší? *

Myslíte si, že by bylo přínosné zaměstnávat ve škole osobu, která by zajišťovala veškerou péči týkající se sociálně znevýhodněných dětí (např. zajišťování stravování, psychologická péče, doučování)? *

V následujícím seznamu jsou vypsány možnosti, jak škola může zajistit stravování sociálně znevýhodněných dětí, aniž by to šlo z jejího rozpočtu. O jakých možnostech jste doposud věděl/a? *

- ☐ Sponsoring
- ☐ Obstavení sociálních dávek rodině a jejich administrace
- ☐ Dary od vnějších subjektů
- ☐ Neslyšel/a jsem ani o jednom
- ☐ Jiné:

Jaké jsou podle Vás největší překážky pro zajišťování stravy pro sociálně znevýhodněné žáky? *

Máte nějaké komentáře či podněty, které byste chtěl/a ještě zmínit?

B: CODING SCHEMES

Coding system for school staff and professionals

Codes	Examples
Cycle of poverty	Being familiar with cycle of poverty, criticizing it, agreeing or disagreeing
Poverty and children	Impact on children, school performance, grade repeating, behaviour, family relations, attitudes, abilities
Poverty and adults	Impact on parents, behaviour, family relations, criminality, family history, employment, education
Poverty and health	Whether poverty has an impact on health or not, being obese or not
School	Role of school, work of psychologist, work of teachers and other staff, school environment, school support, how it works on other primary schools
Special pedagogue	Work of special pedagogue, whether she helps or not, competencies, relationship with children and their families
Social institutions	Role of social institutions, criticism or praise, work of social institutions, experience
Meal skipping	Whether there is meal skipping or not, reasons, impacts
Meal provision	How works meal provision, impacts, importance, reactions
Financial management	whether there is financial literacy or not
Managing food resources	Knowledge about food scarcity, physical feelings related to food scarcity, helping with insufficient food situation

Coding system for mothers

Relationship with children	A children who attend currently Norska school, interaction with children, future of children, how mother perceive this children, care
Relationship with partner	Interaction with partner, how partner react to family situation and family itself, whether there is support from his side or not
Family	Relations within family, relationship with other children and within children, how family deal with situations, family history, family settings, financial situation, criminality
Health	Health conditions, diagnosis, impact poverty on heath, impact of family on heath
School	Role of school, work of psychologist, work of teachers and other staff, school environment, school support
Relations out of family	Interaction of family with friends and communities, perceiving and judging behaviour of the others
Special pedagogue	Work of special pedagogue, whether she helps or not, competencies, relationship with children and their families
Social institutions	Role of social institutions, criticism or praise, work of social institutions, experience
Work	Whether work or not, working experience, role of work, importance of work
Meal provision	Whether they like it or not, how children reacts on meal provision, importance, impacts
Managing resources	Helping with insufficient situation, stretching of sources

Coding system for children

Family	Relations within family, relationship with other children and within children, how family deal with situations, family history, family settings, financial situation, criminality
School	School support, financing, relationship with schoolmates and teachers, role of school
Meal provision	Whether they like it or not, reactions on meal provision, importance, impacts, feelings related meal provision
Managing resources	Helping with insufficient situation, stretching of resources

C: MASOKOMBINÁT

Source: Personal collection of Mgr. Klára Štrachová.



IMAGE 1: MASOKOMBINÁT: ACCOMMODATION FOR SOCIALLY EXCLUDED CASES

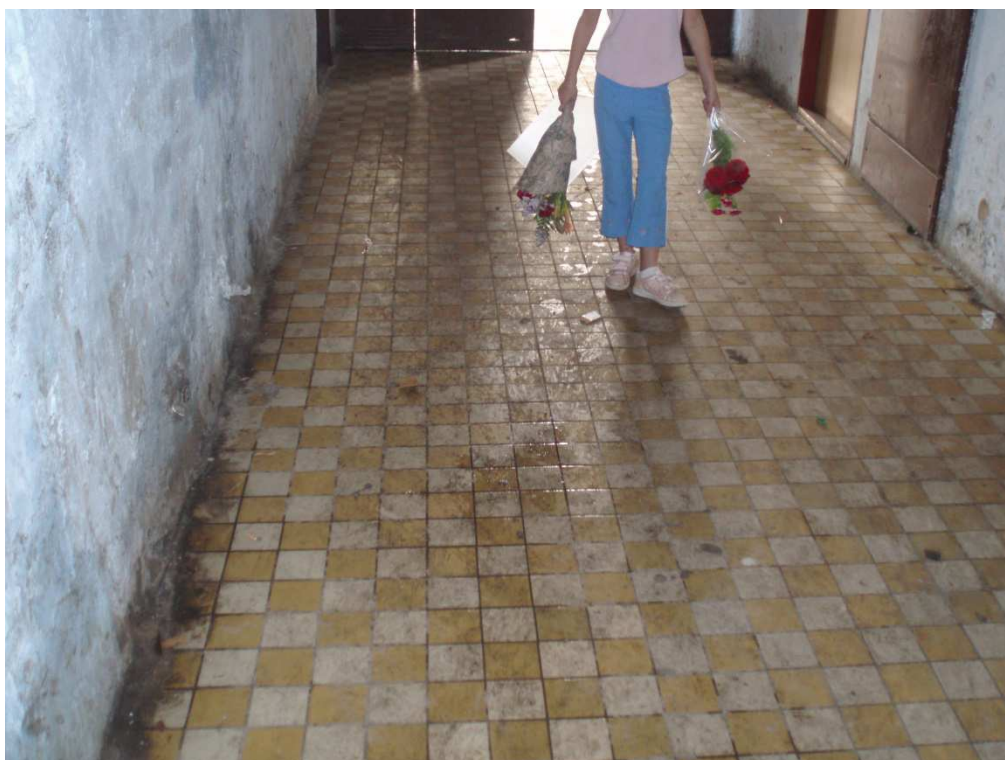


IMAGE 2: CORRIDOR BEHIND THE ENTRANCE DOOR



IMAGE 3: STAIRS I

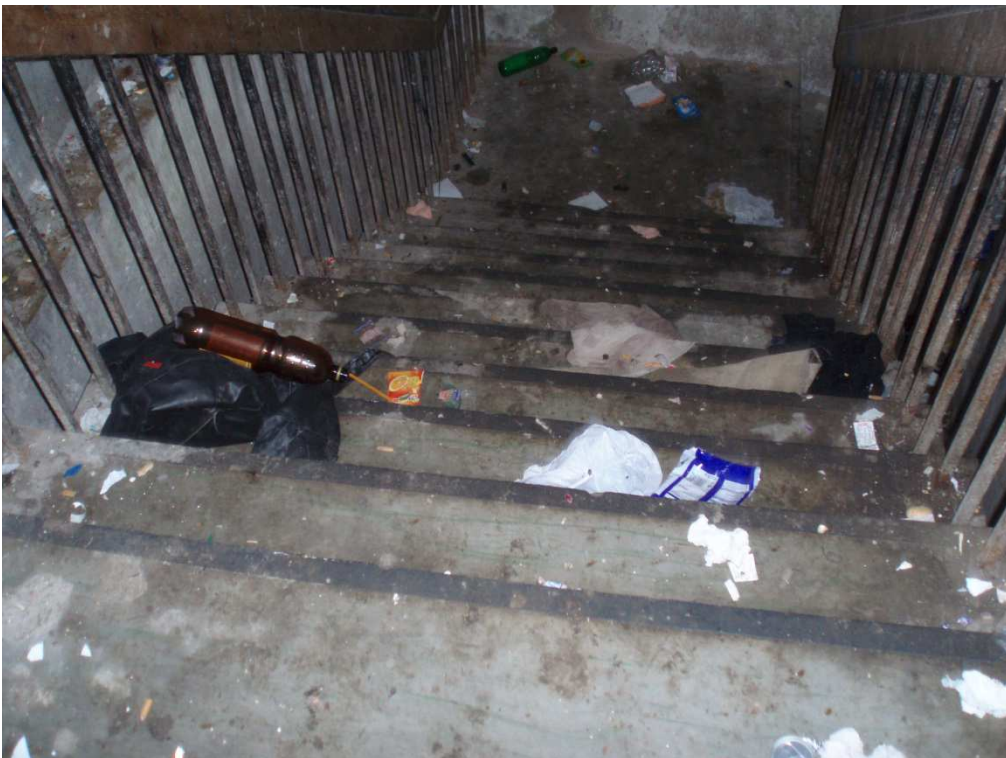


IMAGE 4: STAIRS II



IMAGE 5: UNKNOWN ROOM



IMAGE 6: MASOKOMBINÁT AFTER ABANDONING