

## Everyday Family Experience: A Child's Home Preparation for School

*Jana Majerčíková – Barbora Petrů Puhrová\**

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### **Abstract:**

**Introduction:** The family life of a child of compulsory school age is influenced by the way that a child's educational career is discussed and practically supported. This is transmitted into normal family life through the completion of the child's homework and any other school-related responsibilities. The parent is considered an actor who contributes significantly to the supervision of the child's homework.

**Methods:** This research project explored how parents and children describe their experience of homework through semi-structured interviews with elementary school pupils and their parents. The results are presented in our study. Seven, mostly university-educated parents and six pupils were interviewed at the start of compulsory schooling, when the bonds and interaction are the most intensive between parents and children in the context of homework. The transcribed interviews were analysed using the technique of open coding. Codes identified were repeatedly read, reviewed and subsequently grouped into categories with the aim of description and explanation.

**Results:** The survey revealed that the completion of homework in the parent - child interaction is an implicit part of everyday family life. Homework and advance home preparation are considered to be the responsibility of the parent as well as the child, on the other hand, the home preparation is also time-consuming and gender-marked.

**Limitations:** The limitations of the study relate primarily to the construction of the research sample. The intentional sample of parents was determined by socioeconomic status and quantity and also by the parents' willingness to share their parenting experience, and for the child by the extent of data gathered. In further research, this will be supported by observation in the home setting.

**Conclusions:** The research findings contribute to a description of the child's life in the family and confirm the importance of inevitable parental participation in their educational socialization at the beginning of compulsory school attendance.

**Key words:** home preparation, homework, parent, child.

## 1 Introduction

Today, an ideally functioning family is still considered an original and important social unit. Looking at the phenomenon of families through the prism of functionalism is consistent with the interpretation that the normal everyday life of a family is tightly

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\* Jana Majerčíková, Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Faculty of Humanities, Zlín, Czech Republic; majercikova@fhs.utb.cz

Barbora Petrů Puhrová, Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Faculty of Humanities, Zlín, Czech Republic; petru\_puhrova@fhs.utb.cz

bound to the fulfilment of its function – especially when taking into account the needs of society and individual family members. The particularity of this situation also depends on the age structure of the family. Families with school-age children are also determined by how education and schooling career of their youngest members are being promoted and practically supported. Children's school agendas have several dimensions in a family, one of them being home preparation and the fulfilment of school duties.

What happens in school remains hidden from parents who can only rely on how schools and teachers include them in the socialization of their children. Another important aspect is the semantics of any information provided by the children on school and activities that take place there. What, however, creates an interesting picture of the school and the child itself and re-emerges in family constellations is also the daily preparation for school. In the present text, the phenomenon of home preparation is described based on the experiences and opinions of its participants, in the parent-child dyads.

## **2 Theoretical framework**

The moment one becomes a parent, one takes on a certain kind of responsibility. It is a commitment to perform a number of purposeful activities to ensure the survival and overall development of the child (Hoghghi & Long, 2004). This practical and broad concept of parenthood is the starting point for fulfilling the goal of uncovering the context which will be of primary concern in the present text. This context includes the circumstances related to the role of a pupil in the home environment.<sup>1</sup> It is clear that the ways in which parents perform their parental roles also model the childhood of their offspring.

What happens in a family reflects the interaction of its members. In the home environment, children's responsibilities, which are associated with their role as pupils, are saturated in co-operation with their parents. This is especially the case at the beginning of compulsory education when children must adapt to this situation and thus, the parenting supervision and tutoring play the most important and most intense role. The extent of parental involvement in their children's school issues is decreasing with the increasing age of the child, with the most important being the involvement of parents in the learning activities of children at home (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003).

### *2.1 Home preparation, homework, home learning*

The terminology used, related to the issues of preparing children for school in the home environment, is mainly connected with the concepts of home preparation, homework and home learning. The meaning of these concepts is intertwined and applied in similar contexts. In agreement with Maňák (1992), home preparation, including homework, is considered to be a part of schooling and a continuation of school learning. Jursová

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<sup>1</sup> We consider it necessary to remind the readers that the following text cannot ignore the aspects of parenthood provided by related social sciences such as psychology, sociology, law or biology. For example, sociology teaches us that parenthood is an important organizational principle of the family life cycle (Možný, 2006), which is also evident in the relationship of a family and parents to the institutional education of their children. From psychology, we know that the issues of the quality of mutual intergenerational relationships, the nature of emotions, understanding, motivation or mutual needs are also among the aspects that promote the child's schooling career in the family. Furthermore, parents are required by law to monitor their child's school attendance, etc. It has its own justification because each of these disciplines provides a link that is needed to explain what is happening between the parent and the child during the time of home preparation.

(2011) describes home preparation as activities that have not been directly assigned by the teacher but that will facilitate the pupil's work at school (preparing and checking supplies, repeating and practicing, possibly broadening the curriculum, etc.). The pupil performs these activities at home in order to be ready for learning. Homework usually has a direct relation to teaching and its content is intended to support the processes of learning, deepening and repeating. Schools set their own rules for assigning and doing homework, what form and scope it takes as well as setting assessments and possible sanctions for noncompliance.

Thus, home preparation involves more than just home duties in the form of individual homework assignments. In primary education, it is considered to be a systematic and repetitive activity carried out in co-operation between children, parents and teachers. This co-operation is conditioned by parents and children spending their time effectively. Through home preparation and homework, children have a chance to acquire habits and experiences of independence and responsibility. The assignments can also stimulate them and often force them to tackle the frustrations they cause.

## *2.2 Parents in their children's school*

In a family with a school-age child, a certain harmonization of the family life in relation to the child's school duties is expected. This involves, above all, adapting the conditions for the fulfilment of the work-related and other obligations of the parents and the school duties of their children (Carvalho, 2001).

The parent's participation in the home preparation of their children can be divided into several levels. We will use an analogy for the symbolic structure of the school organization. At times, parents create a school environment at home. They may act as a director who performs overall supervision and monitors the home preparation activities. They are also a janitor, involved in the preparation of physical and psychological background for doing homework and taking care of the spatial conditions for learning. The broadest position is undoubtedly that of a teacher, helping, leading, motivating, exemplifying, evaluating and sharing his or her own experience, knowledge and skills. Another important aspect is the emotional support of a child who may be provided by a teacher but also by a school psychologist who is involved in solving school problems and assessing children's development in relation to their developmental potential. Motivation and emotional saturation is, however, where parents can best fulfil their potential thanks to the power of family relations which allows them to separate the world of family and school more clearly.<sup>2</sup>

Children in the family world do not only lead their private lives in their home environment: their childhood is, at the same time, institutionalized by the fact that they spend a considerable part of their time in a school environment where they are pupils in the school world. Children's home preparation is thus an instrument for creating collaboration between the two domains school and family (Holte, 2016). Even for parents, home preparation is an instrument for understanding a certain part of their child's life. According to Gill and Schlossman (1995, as cited in Carvalho, 2001, p. 130), homework is the parents' eyes and ears: home preparation is the primary and sometimes the only communication channel for information about the academic mission

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<sup>2</sup> To establish this framework, we used an explanation of parental involvement in home preparation by Walker, Hoover-Dempsey (2004).

of schools.” The circumstances of home preparation and completion of the assigned homework give the teachers, of course, a similarly important message and feedback about the pupils and their families. The issue of home preparation for school thus appears to be extremely interesting and well connected to many obvious influences and circumstances. It is considered a strong, emotionally rooted learning experience that structures learning behaviour and relationships between children, teachers and parents, while reflecting the identity of the parents (usually mothers) and the children themselves (Hutchison, 2012).

### *2.3 Children as pupils in the family*

The pupil’s role in the family is, among other things, undoubtedly fulfilled through homework. This role may modify the attitudes of parents to children, the style of family life. The aspects that accompany parent-child relationships are based on individual parental demands for good school results and home preparation.

The educational parenting style contributes to the strengthening, but also to the weakening of the child’s autonomy in home preparation. Parental support is expected to strengthen the child’s autonomy in order to enhance family cohesion, helping the child get a respected and firm position in the family structure (Šulová, 2014). On the other hand, it is also necessary to take into account the negative effects of parenting. Some children are bothered by their parents’ participation and stressed by the mere presence of a parent during home preparation. In essence, it is more about the quality factor, in relation to the motivation and emotional experience and expression, that the parents bring into communication with children during school preparation. Even the very first question, “What is your homework?” or “What do you have to learn for school?” may carry connotations that can influence the current situation and create a certain atmosphere during home preparation. The parent attributes motivational and emotional meaning to home preparation: it is an important aspect of social prestige children bring to school (Vágnerová, 2014).

We have reasons to assume that the attitudes of pupils to homework depend on their personality, experience with school and teachers and undoubtedly on their success at school. As for parents, their significant position was confirmed, especially when motivating and helping their children meet the goals of home preparation. The positive relationship of children to home preparation correlated with parental support based on meaningful motivation (Froiland, 2011). Children’s attitudes towards homework also involve their beliefs about the usefulness and meaningfulness of homework. Corno and Xu (2004) found that pupils quickly discover the differences between homework that need to be done right away and others that they can complete according to their own preferences. Although a positive correlation between the intensity of home preparation and the pupils’ good school results has not been confirmed (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001), its minimum aim is to help develop the pupils’ ability to organize their time and space, cope with common problems, avoid distraction, lack of interest and fatigue (Corno & Xu, 2004).

The specific situation of pupils at the beginning of compulsory education is also related to the level of parental support in home preparation. There is an indirect proportion, similar to the degree of parents’ involvement in all school-related issues. The older the pupil, the less frequently parents interact with school (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). When doing homework in the home environment at the beginning of compulsory

education, parental involvement is an implicit part of the family's life, and later, at the next stages of education, personal responsibility and autonomous behaviour of the pupil will be required. Apart from relation to the developmental dispositions of a child, it is also the expectation of parents who count on such reciprocal behaviour of their children in the future.

### **3 Methodology**

We tried to contribute to the problematics of home preparation at the beginning of compulsory education in the family, based on the focus of two key participants in it: adults and children.

#### *3.1 Research goals and questions*

As we have already indicated, the relevant issue is more complex. At this early stage, we chose a descriptive approach with the ambition to explore family circumstances while completing homework and in the context of targeted preparation for education. The main objective of the research was to uncover the experiences and opinions of parents and children with homeworking. The research questions further specified and concreted our research efforts. We stated the following questions:

1. How do the parents reflect home preparation in the family?
2. What kind of behaviour accompanies the homeworking both in parents and children?
3. How do children perceive the homeworking with the regard on themselves and their parents?

#### *3.2 Method of data collection and processing*

To gain empirical data, a half-structured interview with parents and children has been used. The interviews had a similar theme structure: both groups of participants had to capture the attitudes and approaches of a parent and a child to homeworking, eventually to each other.

The data source was formed by the transcripts of recorded interviews with individual participants. When choosing the content analysis procedure that is offered in several versions, it is necessary to take the character of the data (in our case, the obtained transcripts) into account. These were passages that were thematically linked to the set structure. They differed in the range and complexity of declared opinions of participants. The transcripts were divided into segments, the meaning complex. Consequently, the meanings were identified using open coding in the segments and the meanings were marked with codes. The individual segments were repeatedly read, the codes were modified and revised with the intent to capture the range of data obtained at the best. It was followed by a grouping of the codes into categories with similar meaning, followed by their description and explanation.

#### *3.3 Research sample*

For the purposes of the research we focused on the field of primary education, in which the level of involvement of parents gains the highest intensity (Šulová, 2012). The entrance of a child in compulsory education at elementary school is an important milestone not only for the child but also for the whole family, especially for parents.

The interviews with seven parents, five of whom had a university education and two of whom had high school education, were carried out. Six mothers and one father were

intentionally chosen, with the main criterion of their choice being their willingness to share their opinions and parental experiences with their child's home preparation and to uncover the family situation in relation to the school's duty of children.

A further view of the subject was provided by the interviewed children. These were six children – primary school pupils. The interviews were conducted with four girls and two boys. All children were from full and functional families and all showed excellent and very good school results. One of the girls was the best pupil of her form and one of the boys was warned by a class teacher because he was forgetting written homework constantly. Each of the questioned children had minimally one sibling.

### *3.4 Research investigation limits*

Before the results of the research are presented, it is necessary to reflect what limitations are needed to cope with in this context. As we have already advised, the research limits mainly concern the construction of a research sample. The intent of parental choice in terms of socio-economic status and number was determined primarily by their openness to mediate their opinions, but also to share the normal family activities during homework. They were, above all, parents with higher education who were in favour of giving us feedback on how they manage their parenting and co-operation with a child as part of their schooling.

The survey also confirmed that barriers during obtaining objective information must be surmounted when examining a family. The barriers are mainly mystification (white lies) and idealization of reality, declarativeness, time selectivity (the so-called memory optimism) or deliberate selectivity (conscious concealment, incompleteness etc.) (Guráň & Filadelfiová 1994, p. 5). It was revealed as a demanding task for researchers to gain valid empirical data, which meant penetrating the privacy of the parents and families. Compared with immediate and relatively naive children, parents tended to act (especially when recording testimonies) as those who manage their parenting responsibilities well and those whose home preparation management is carried out according to the prepared strategy and under the working supervision. Only after a well-executed rapport, the researchers managed to validate the data obtained.

Seven parents, mostly college-educated, entered the research survey. All parents declared the functional environment of a complete family, interest, possibilities and home conditions to supervise the home preparation of their children. From this point of view, the results of the survey appear to be monochromatic, revealing a certain part of the family spectrum in relation to the family typology and the background that they can create for the support of school children's careers.

On the children's side, limits have been identified concerning the limited range of data material. It has turned out that it is necessary to repeat the interviewing of children and to triangulate ways to obtain empirical data. In further research, the data will be supported by observation and ongoing interviews in the family home environment.

## **4 Results**

As it emerges from the research questions, it was reasonable to choose a descriptive approach when analysing the data obtained from the interviews. In the introduction of the result section of the study, we present a summary of the categories (Table 1) that arose after the arrangement and coding of the data material

Table 1

*An overview of categories describing experiences and opinions of parents and children with home preparation.*

<i>Name of category</i>	<i>Category characteristics</i>	<i>The example which represents the category</i>
home preparation - part of family life	every day, obviousness, the duty of both parent and child	<i>the homework is a duty; you cannot avoid it</i>
the reasons of parental participation in home preparation	Control, perspective of the child's independence in home preparation, ambition of child success, prevention of failure at school	<i>I do it so that E' will not be given a frowning face sign, I do not want her to be given a frowning face sign</i>
the reasons of positive approach of parents towards home preparation	positive habitude, regular and systematic work, the perspective of the child's self-sufficiency in life, acceptance is obvious for children	<i>there must be some kind of systematic and regular preparation...; my mother was expressly glad that we had homework</i>
negative emotions – the reasons and consequences	conflict, screaming, disagreements, family disharmonies, children's procrastination, quarrels, bans	<i>he will be angry, he will scream; and he argues that it is so (argues in blood) and that you are really completely stupid, because it is so – we've been fighting really badly...</i>
demanding parenting	burdening, responsibility for the child; time demand; child psychology	<i>there is no time for ourselves; fatigue after coming back from the office; I did not feel like somebody worked so hard with us and when I did not handle something, I do not have good memories; I must estimate the right mood of my elder son</i>
complicated childhood	increased school demands on the child, the perspective of the future	<i>when I come late from the course, I do not have time and this is the homework for the next day, I do not want to do this homework, but I make myself do it</i>

From the results presented, it is clear that parents consider the supervision and participation in the home preparation of their children an obvious part of their upbringing. The normal working day of the family is then undoubtedly inevitably linked to the writing of homework; home preparation is obligatory - for both the child and his parents. In words of two of the parents:

*I would say it's just a duty – something was given and you have to do it.*

*Mostly we have set it up so that I have duties and then fun, otherwise we would not get to it: the day is only 24 hours and we would not be able to do it.*

The fact that home preparation is an integral part of family life has its reasons, of course. It is the expected quality of parenting, which includes support for a child in home preparation. Parents clearly declare their interest in and responsibility to contributing to their child's success at school or to prevent problems and failures associated with their school career through their intense participation in homework. One of the mothers says:

*Yes, of course, I do not understand that a lot of parents leave it alone on the backs of the school and they do nothing at home with their children: it cannot do any good. This child, especially at this age, is not so conscientious as to prepare himself, (s)he has to be pushed mentally to do it: it won't happen by itself.*

Parents' responsibility is also evident from this statement: *A good parent in home preparation is such a parent who, when the child needs it, will help the child, but surely the parent does not do everything for the child. The parent must lead the child to independence, just to let the child know that there is someone to turn to, but not to have his/her parents as a servant who will do it all for him/her. I just think there is a need to work with these children and that they cannot be alone, we have to lead them a little bit, but they have to realize that if they do something wrong, it will have consequences.*

Another reason in this context is to consider oneself as a supervisor of preparation. An intense interest in facilitating a child in home preparation also has its own personal goals. By supporting a child, parents follow the acquisition of such children's skills that guarantee and independent and responsible processing of homework and other responsibilities associated with the school in the future:

*Yeah, in the first class we sat and prepared with him; I do not know if it helped, but in the fourth grade he must be responsible for his homework... he will be in the second grade soon and there will be no one to take care of him.*

Home preparation also reflects the ambition and personality tuning of parents. As the father says:

*I'll always have time. I'm an above-average parent in home preparation. It matters to me when he goes to school unprepared.*

Among the interviewed parents, we did not find those who would refuse homework and day-to-day training for school. The coincidence that the educational activity of their children at home is beneficial was justified by its potential to create incentives and space for systematic activity, acquiring the skills to organize your own time, duties or interests, even in the longer term. One of the interviewed mothers expresses this as an urgent need:

*I think they should definitely have them (tasks)! The child needs to get used to some preparation. At school, they are up to 12 o'clock and then in the afternoon, they must, must, must get used to; ... they will practice it, they have to be with that parent, I'm all ten for homework and home preparation... There has to be homework, systematic and regular... The kids think about it differently, but they will accept it. Nothing else is left to them: it is a part of the day.*



Such parental convictions were also apparent in the interviews for children who perceived positive attitudes of their parents, even though it might have been a burden on parents.

*That it is good for practicing and repeating, that they think it is important, but some parents ask why should they do it and that it is annoying for the children. I think, that my parents agree with homework.*

If our interest was also focused on revealing the family's homework experience, it was interesting to see what parental and child behaviour was. It has turned out that fulfilling homework obligations is also a source of discomfort on the part of parents and children, which ultimately causes a conflict accompanied by a quarrel or shout:

*Sometimes my nerves go away, and when I raise my voice ... and I tell them I do not want to, I do not want to be like that, and you (the children) are forcing me to do it ...*

Children do not always want to do their homework: the adults often become procrastinating, parents are tired or stressed in time. The result is unmanaged emotions and relationship problems. Thus, homework is also the source of disharmony in family life. Parents and children comment on it:

*Yes, I had to be harder sometimes, there was even a scream, I remember it ...*

*Well, Mom's upset, often, she just wants me to have it right and well written, but I mind it so much, then I do not want to do it at all.*

Overall, we can conclude that home preparation in the family also has a negative connotation. Home preparation is a burden, a duty, that is hard to fulfil. On the parent's side, it indicates new parenting demands, according to that parental supervision is undoubtedly expected. It means interference into the leisure time of parents who could and often would like to devote this time to themselves or their family and to the children themselves, but in activities that are more attractive to them. One of the mothers complains:

*Yeah, when I'm really tired, when I am tired from my office, my head is like a balloon, and now all three children are coming and it is only... I need this and this here ... and now it's too much at once, so either gradually or it simply washes over me.*

The other says: *I do not like when they start to say to me: mum, it does not work as it is; it has to go, I personally hate the word.*

The difficulty of a parent's position in home preparation also lies in the way how he/she has to deal with the child's reactions related to its psychological settings or character traits and, accordingly, to choose appropriate strategies for working with this child. It is presented by the following parental statement:

*I have to guess a moment, when my elder son is well-tuned... so, it is pretty difficult to get him into a good mood...but when he is in the good mood, he eats well, circumstances, now you must use it for the purpose, take it, look and take a note...My husband wants something from him, but he does not know the children so much, because he is not with them for the whole week and he treats them sometimes badly; and I tell him, if he wants anything from him, that he is too pushy and our son would be angry and you personally would be angry, you will scream, try to motivate him in a different way, you make it all wrong. No, he simply says, that we need to do it now, so it will be now. And of course, so they can understand to be happy with themselves to say, now we've done it, now it's fine, we can enjoy our free time now, enjoy it your way, it is not important for me.*

However, the claims are not only for parents, they were also identified from the point of view of children when one of the girls said:

*When I come late from the course, I do not have time and this is the homework for the next day, I do not want to do this homework already, but I make myself do it and I will have all evening free. Some say (classmates) that they remember at midnight and go to do the homework at midnight.*

Not entirely answered, however, in this context, the question remains, whether these are the demands of a teacher, school, society, or whether the demands are the result of the ambitions of the parents themselves. Parents naturally see their resources at school, but also in their justified efforts to bring their children to such an education that will prospectively ensure them a certain quality of life. This is evident in the statement of two of the parents:

*I'm trying to predict things forward, in the future, that I do not do it for my own consumption, the need, but for him to make it better in the future. This is related to the fact that I have a clear idea.*

*So, I try to help him, especially lead to him because I tell him that it is for his life, he will have some tasks; even if he does not go to school, he will have to learn. Have a good job, because what he is learning now, it will not be lost.*

So, the parent acts as a supervisor, support and expert who is willing and ready to help the child, but not to take on the child's responsibilities. From the beginning, it leads to the fact that the tasks are his current and lasting duty, and the parent or others are only helping him with this duty.

As shown in the discussion, the research results are not unique. However, related to the conditions of the Czech Republic or the Slovak Republic, they show signs of originality, because the attention paid to this topic is not intense in home conditions. In the Czech Republic, this topic is discussed e.g. by Maňák (1992), Solfronk and Bělohradská (2001), Šulová (2012; 2014), eventually Pospíšilová (2011) and the latest study comes from Pohnětalová (2015).

## **5 Discussion**

The results of the survey do not reverse the well-known theory of parental participation in home preparation, especially at the beginning of the child's education (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001); rather, they move it to the next level. Even for parents, it is a duty, a fulfilment that is a part of parenthood at a certain child's age.

Examined parents perceive homework as a benefit for the child. This is particularly true as regards their autonomy, the ability of adopting rules of systematic work: they are expecting habits in personal management. Similarly, it is also seen by Bempechat (2004), when he is talking about the need for faith and belief in success and the acquisition of behavioural habits that are developed through homework. In connection with the socio-economic status of the author's family, it does not matter whether the child is from a poor or rich family: all children need to be guided, pushed forward somehow.

In the research, it turned out that parents must reflect the personality characteristics of the child in a good timing of fulfilling their homework and choose a rather sophisticated approach to homeworking cooperation. Šulová (2013), in this context, talks about parental didactics, which is only owned by parents themselves in some kind of teaching in an environment outside the school. Pomerantz, Moorman and Litwack (2007) even offer some categories presenting the quality of parental involvement in homework, where parents focus on the actual process of accomplishing the task and on the actor

him or herself: the child, or the positive and negative effects of homework. They provide evidence that a sophisticated parenting approach to homeworking is one of the parenting dimensions of the child's compulsory schooling age.

According to parents' and children's announcements, homework carries also a sign of a certain burden. It is about fulfilling the duties. On the part of children, there are school-related responsibilities; on the part of parents there are parental responsibilities, as a result of their parenting. For parents, the burden is due to its time requirement as well as to the expectation of physical and mental availability after workload. Lacina-Gifford and Gifford (2004), Bruce (2007, as cited in Farrell & Danby, 2015) came to the similar conclusion, that homework is a negative matter which makes children and parents busy, has an impact on family and family time and is a source of unnecessary stress.

Kralovec (2001) paid attention to the negative aspects of homework in families where the conditions for its preparation may not always be the same. Disadvantages include, for example, stressful or demanding occupation of parents who need to relax at home after work, not to attend to the child, to write essays or other assignments with him/her right now. The stated time requirements for home preparation are presented as an obstacle also in other research surveys. Kohn (2007) discloses factors that reduce the positive effects of homework, including, in particular, little time for further activities. According to him (Kohn, 2007), parents are the ones who complain about homework that requires their time and even acts as an intrusive factor of their relationship with the child. The negative connotations of home preparation are, according to our findings, also caused by the fact that it is often accompanied by negative emotional manifestations. Kohn (2006), in her research, also confirms that shouting, worrying and nervousness, especially if the child cannot handle everything without problem, and a parent as a teacher who cannot handle it, is a part of home preparation.

We know a little about children involved in homeworking, not just according to our survey. Warton (2001) also points to the lack of research. But a few years later, Hutchison (2011) conducted video-ethnographic studies and called for reflection on how children perceive their school responsibilities and how their everyday experiences with the school are reflected in their personal lives. It appeals, and also challenges us, that visual methods have a lot to offer to researchers, as these methods have the potential to structure children's experiences in their day-to-day reality of school attendance.

## **6 Conclusion**

Education and upbringing are key processes resonating not only in the school's educational environment. They also have a place in the ordinary life of families with school-age children, a fact which was confirmed in the presented research. Finally, we would like to offer a reminder that our results reflect the situation in middle-class families, where support and participation in school socialization of children is purposeful and perceived as an important part of parenting and family life. Parents with college education have ambitions and relevant cognitive resources.

Depending on how parents reported themselves, we can state that they are aware of the irreplaceable position in preparing a child for school at the beginning of compulsory education. Every day, they count on having to support the schooling of a child and to help him or her manage school issues – in many ways. In addition to partial and practical actions and interventions in the family environment, as Šulová (2014) agreed, they

provide the child with necessary models of behaviour, they support the child in case of failure and try to lead the child to the use of what the school offers. They presented it as a difficult task.

Reflected experiences of parents and children with homework naturally correspond with the context in which the family lives, the personality characteristics of parents and children or the demands of the school. However, these experiences are intense because they accompany their family life daily, especially on working days. But they do not avoid the connotation of the problem, of a certain burden not only for children but also for their parents. Home preparation as a burden is the result of fatigue, child access and lack of time for other personal or family activities. It is also an obstacle for children because they, like the parents, want to use their time in the post-school period without it. Because parents know that the necessary support in home preparation for the child is essential, they do so. Children accept it. Parents care for children, so they organize their supervision and provide the conditions for home preparation, with good homework, good performance and success at school and acquiring the necessary skills for his or her next school career at the end of the journey.

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