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FACULTY OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK**

**SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS**

***THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF PARENTS’ MIGRATION ON CHILDREN LEFT  
HOME IN BISTRITA NASAUD COUNTY***

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## **Introduction**

The recent Romanian social context in which the migration phenomenon occurs is very worrying: both on macro-social (structural, society-level) and mezo- (groups, communities), respectively micro-social (families, individuals) levels migration has serious effects on various levels. Besides the evident positive consequences (especially in terms of remittances sent home, but also in terms of civilization import, axiological changes, human capital, etc.), there is a wide range of negative effects, out of which one is linked to the family, more specifically to children who, frequently, are left alone, mostly in situations when both of the parents are working abroad.

The circulatory migration, which is specific for the last waves of Romanian migration, is a relatively recent phenomenon in the history of international migration. This type of migration represents a constant reality for numerous children whose parents have a temporary migrant status. The recurrent going and returning of these parents have multiple consequences on the lives of their children. One of the most salient levels on which the effects on children are manifest is the socio-educational level.

Unfortunately, neither politics (in terms of laws and regulations), nor the broader society in terms of its formal and informal structures and practices, are able to handle efficiently the phenomenon of circulatory migration and this fact calls for the need of analysis and serious strategies both on the medium and long term.

The present doctoral dissertation starts from this need; the nature of my job as well as the great number of families and acquaintances being in the situation of circulatory migration allowed me to investigate more deeply the case of children and adolescence with migrant parents. The culture of migration is a dominant pattern of the society in several regions of Romania, and Bistrita-Nasaud county, where the empirical research took place, is illustrative for the effervescence of the circulatory migration especially in the rural areas of the county.

Following the theoretical chapters of the thesis within which I approached the epistemic problems of the contemporary family in terms of its functions, in the subsequent parts of the dissertation I described the statistical evolutions of the migration and made reference to studies which researched migration both generally and more specifically, in terms of its effects on children left home.

My personal research constitutes a triangulation of the information obtained from the principal actors of the socio-educational scene of the children left home. The data were collected through three field research and subsequent interviews with pupils, their adherents and teachers. Following the empirical research I developed, besides the conclusions, several proposals which are based both on the results of my research and on those signaled by previous Romanian studies.

## Chapter 1. Epistemological debates and options

Following the theoretical framing of the researched object, I start my thesis with an analysis in connection with migration and its effects. The section starts from the observation made by P. Iluț and M.S Rusu (2013) who state that the research object of sociology is quite problematic because in the studying of the sui-generis social reality, sociology needs to collaborate with other disciplines. The subject of my thesis, i.e. the situation of children (and pupils) whose parents are gone abroad for working reasons is a telling example in this sense: there have been elaborated not only comprehensive research agendas, but also doctoral thesis on this subject and these works are framed in various domains: social work, pedagogy, psychology, sociology, etc.

In the domain of sociology, there are multiple and frequently only apparently divergent paradigms. The various paradigms existing in connection with a certain object of study constitute one of the reasons of the crisis of sociology and they frequently make difficult the advancement of a certain research topic (cf. Iluț and Rusu, 2013, p. 93).

In terms of applying the modular paradigm to the description and explanation of childhood, A. James, C. Jenks and A. Prout (2008) enumerate as binary principles the followings: universalism-specificity, local-global, continuity-change. Here we can observe two important specificities: i) the first place of the enumeration is occupied by dichotomies of agency-structure and ii) authors are relatively prudent in considering such dichotomies as contrasting oppositions. As P. Iluț (1997) showed in his approach of *conceptual doublets*, between the major perspectives of analysis there are not only oppositions and contradictions, but also complementarities and interferences. He makes reference to doublets like: objective-subjective (symbolic); global-local (macro-micro); universalism-context (nomotetic-idiographic); natural-artificial; intern-extern; quantitative-qualitative (Iluț, 1997, pp. 24-41).

In sociology and not only in sociology, the contradictions of the absolutist postmodernism have their origin in the frequent contradictory approaches found not only at different authors, but sometimes also at the same author. N. K. Denzin (1994) manifests a serious inconsequence when in his manifest for qualitative research stands against positivism, but – in the same time – describes positivism as a well grounded domain which transcends disciplines, domains and thematic subjects. In their approach P. Iluț and M.S. Rusu (2013, pp. 92-102) consider that we can talk about a discrepancy in connection with the major ideas promoted by postmodernist thinkers who propose tens of postulates out of which we mention: the illuminist

project, anti-functionalism, anti-representations and anti-realism; cognitive relativism; anti-rationalism, euro-skepticism, etc.

Thus, it is obvious that epistemic relativism shows inherent contradictions. Out of the major ideas of the postmodern sociology, the most important for the present research is the position towards the truth, the validity of the research. This calls for axiological neutrality.

## **Chapter 2. Family and childhood: the socio-psychological framework of the development of human beings**

The discussion between the traditional and modern in the actual Romanian society is a salient one, both among scholars and the general public. Some argue that the Romanian family remained too traditional, while others claim that people have abandoned too easily the ancient values and traditional customs. It must be mentioned here that the traditional family (especially in terms of mentalities) is still present in Romania. Of course, there are many modern and postmodern families as well, but the majority of the families are a mixture between traditional and modern aspects in terms of affective relations, administration of family goods and residence. These patterns of the Romanian family are influenced by the internal migration (specific especially before 1989) and by the external, most frequently, circulatory migration.

The chapter makes an inventory among the functions of the family and accentuates its economic (the organization of the production and consumption), socio-affective, educative and socializing functions.

A specific section of the chapter is dedicated to parental care from the perspective of the Romanian laws. *Parental care* is a concept which replaced (through Law no. 272/2004) the former *parental power* concept which clearly showed the authority of parents, specifically that of the father without making much reference to children's rights and interests.

As my research (indirectly) suggests, patriarchal mentalities and practices cannot be overlooked but, without any doubt, the Romanian society is evolving towards a more democratic model of child care.

In the followings there are exposed and discussed the legal obligations towards children of the parents gone abroad for work. In Romania there are numerous situations when both parents are gone abroad for work. This phenomenon constitutes already a macro-social reality especially in some specific regions of the country (e.g., the counties from the Northern part of Moldova). The literature shows the importance of the social policies and legal regulations in the reduction of the numbers and gravities of such cases. The action taken until October 2013 were based on the Law 272/2004 in connection with children's protection and children's rights, but

this regulation has not clarified well the case of the children whose parents were working abroad. The modification of this law by Law 257/2013 has a number of newer dispositions out of which I mention: such parents are committed to notify authorities about their intention to leave and let their children home at least one month before their practical emigration and they need to nominate an adult person responsible for children's care and who must legally express his/her consent for being responsible for the children. It is obvious that the previous law's lacunas allowed for many irresponsible emigrations when minors' care was not sufficiently handled neither by parents nor by the authorities and thus children were exposed to major socio-affective risks. Numerous cases of such kind are in the evidence of the social care authorities of the country. Following the year 2014 the legislation become even stricter and in this way the negative consequences of this form of emigration on children are, at least theoretically, reduced.

Child neglect is a phenomenon which comprises various forms, some of them more concrete, while some of them more diffuse: physical, emotional, educational neglect are the most specific forms. Neglect can be episodic or chronic. Easy to deduce that all of these forms of neglect are frequent in the case of those families in which children are raised in the absence of both or one of the parents as a consequence of parents' international emigration. The literature describes broadly the effects of neglect (neuro-physiologic, psychological, social, economic, etc.). I analyzed the role of the social networks as forms of support for these children. Such networks can be stable, open, co-operant; stable, closed, latent; unstable, open, hostile, etc. (Crittenden, apud Corsaro, 2008). Obviously, depending on their patterns, such networks can be benefic or can have negative effects for children's development.

In the following part of the chapter I made an analysis on the theoretical perspectives concerning the stage of childhood and adolescence: life course perspective (Eder and Nenga, 2003; Tırhaş, 2003); social and cultural reproduction, including the theory of cultural capital transmission (Giddens, 2000); the interpretative approach (Mead, 1934) as well as socialization as a psycho-social process of value internalization, social learning and integration. I included in this subchapter also a number of relevant studies which assess the effects on children and adolescents' development of several agents of socialization in situations when they become problematic (family, school and community, friends, peer-groups, mass-media, etc.), situations in which such agents can contribute to deviant behaviors and delinquency. Here, the results of the studies are interpreted through the lenses of well-known theories: the theory of family socialization, the theory of bonding relations, the theory of social learning, the theory of cultural deviance; the theory of social disorganization, etc., but also through the lenses of genetic-behaviorist approaches. I discussed also about methodological processes through which one can

better circumscribe the intra-familial problems: the effect of the family on the children, respectively that of the children on the family.

### **Chapter 3. Theories of international migration**

The last two decades can be labeled “the new era of migrations” and there are emerging and extending four major phenomena which are globally interconnected: the volume and extensions of the migration phenomenon; changes on the level of diversification and dynamics of contemporary migration; dependence on migration and problems generated by immigrants and migration; the intensifying of globalization and the restructuring of the global economy (Horváth and Anghel, 2009, pp. 14-17).

There are numerous classifications of the migration movements, due to the various criteria of analysis. Such classifications take into account the levels of analysis (from micro- to macro-social), the distance and numbers of participants, the durations, motivation of emigration and the provenience of migrants, their adaptations and acculturation, etc. There are also numerous peculiarities which limit the typologies. In this chapter I largely expose the classical, neo-classical, structural and social network theories of migration, the vision of acculturation etc.

The chapter discusses the most important theories which explain migration on various levels of interpretation and analysis. In accordance with the study domains we have different theoretical approaches. a) in sociology and demography: the theory of human capital, the theory of the push and pull factors; social networks theory, theories of the transnational spaces, etc. b) in the economy: classical and neo-classical theories (including rational choice models); the theory of market dualism; the new economy of migration, etc. At the intersection of these domains there are several specific theories e.g. the theory of cumulative causalities, institutional theories and world system theories. c) in geography: gravitational models (classical approach), followed by the more recent theory of mobility transition. d) the most recent approaches are in accordance with the dynamics of the contemporary migration and they represent integrative approaches in the form of the theory of the migration systems and multi-disciplinary approaches.

Simply put, for the phenomenon of contemporary migration Massey's (2004) conclusions constitute important directives of research. The author contends that we need an integrative theory of migration which should take into account the followings: a) the analysis of the structural factors which lead to emigration from less developed countries; b) the analysis of the structural factors which attract the migrants in developed states; c) the analysis of migrants' motivations, aspirations and aims in accordance with the previous structural factors.; d) the

analysis of those social and economic structures which are developed in order to connect the zones of emigration and immigration.

#### **Chapter 4. Evolutions in the course of the Romanian migration**

In accordance with the statistical data and studies, the effects of the Romanians' international migration are complex and interlinked, both on demographic and economic levels and, in consequence, also on socio-cultural and familial levels.

In this chapter there are exposed the major tendencies of the migration occurring in the last decades, more precisely in the last five years. I used statistical data (INS 2007-2013 – [www.insse.ro](http://www.insse.ro); UNICEF reports in connection with migration's effects on children), surveys (the AMIGO survey- INS data; Public Opinion Barometer; data from the European Commission, 2010; Eurostat data- *Labor Force Survey*, 2013; surveys made by IRES 2012, 2013) and studies (Alexe, Horváth, Noica and Radu, 2012; Cucuruzan, 2008; Horváth, 2009; Larionescu, 2012; Nițulescu, Oancea and Tănase, 2007; Potot, 2003; Sandu, 2006; Sandu and Alexandru, 2009; Sandu et al., 2004; Șerban, 2011; Șerban and Toth, 2007; Ulrich, Bojincă, Stănciugelu and Mihăilă / Soros Foundation Romania, 2011 etc.)

The conclusion of this chapter is the idea (sustained also by numerous scholars) that we need a deep analysis on the positive and negative effects of the migration on individual, family and community levels. On individuals' levels economic migration, even if it is temporary, resulted in a number of positive outcomes for the family, communities and society, in terms of remittances, modernization of human capital and changes on the level of mentalities. These changes sustain the theory of the new economy of migration (Stark, 1999). In this theory migration constitutes a gate towards new opportunities. The validity of this theory is confirmed in connection with the Romanian rural environment.

Another important conclusion is that migration does not result in individual independency, but it consolidates the relation of interdependence between the migrant and his/her family. There is a need to gain money – a motivation which stimulates migration, but there is a positive relationship between extreme poverty and the reduced chance of such individuals to emigrate. In this context the international migration of the rural population can be interpreted in the sense of a strategy of risk avoidance.

As negative consequences of migration we must refer to the losing of the human capital (brain drain and brain waste), marital disruptions, effects on children and the import of several forms of delinquency. The solution of these problems could be the so called returning migration,



but we need also policies centered on real needs (professional orientation, formation, insertion of migrants in the labour market, etc.).

## **Chapter 5. Effects of parents' migration on children left home: the case of Romania**

A first section of this chapter takes an analysis on the family in the context of migration. Through the functions of the family, out of which I accentuate mainly the economic and socializing functions, I discuss several studies which researched the consequences of the migration on children and other members of the family. A second section is dedicated to the consequences of the emigration of the Romanian parents on children left home. Following a description of the most recent statistical trends, in November 2013 there were 82,464 children officially registered whose one or both parents are emigrants – ANDPC data. Out of these, 24,406 are children whose both parents emigrated abroad for working reasons, 47,154 are children from families in which only one of their parents is working abroad and 8,904 children are from mono-parental families having their sole parent working abroad.

The most numerous children with emigrant parents are residents in the Northern-East region of the country – more than 30,000 cases of such kind. In the South-Eastern region there are 12,800 children in this situation, while in the North-Western region nearly 10,000. In terms of counties, the most numerous population of children left home is in Suceava county – 8,500. In spite of these official data we do not know exactly the real number of the children left home as a result of their parents' working migration abroad. The local and central authorities of public administration constantly make efforts in order to register and determine the exact number of these children, but unfortunately not all of the parents declare their migration.

In this part of the thesis I discuss the results of several national studies (written in Romanian language) on the theme of parents' migration, out of which I mention: Save the Children Organization – “The impact of parents' migration on children left home”, 2007; The Soros Foundation Romania – “The effects of the migration: children left home”, 2007 and “Effects of migration: children left home. Risks and solutions, 2008; Alternative Sociale Association – “Home alone' Acasă”, 2007; coordinated by Gabriela Irimiescu; UNICEF, Gallup Romania, Association Alternative Sociale – “National level analysis on the phenomenon of children left home as a result of parents' working migration abroad” - 2008; Dunărea de Jos Galați University – “Problems of the children with their parents working abroad”, 2007 (coord. Viorel Rotilă); Manuela Sofia Stănculescu (coord.), Monica Marin, Alina Popp - „Child in Romania. A multi-dimensional diagnosis” - 2012.

The major conclusions of these studies show the following problems: problems of re-adaptation and social integration; disruptions in child-parent relationships; hidden mono-parentality, etc. On the ground of affective deprivation children may confront with the following problems: overwork, taking the roles of the adults; physical and emotional neglect; vulnerability in front of physical, psychological and sexual abuses; exploitation, child trafficking, prostitution; early debuted of sexual life; weak school results; various forms of delinquency.

Some of the studies propose solutions to these problems: psychological concealing, strategies of information and parents' concealing. Some of these ideas have been developed in the present thesis as well.

## **Chapter 6. The socio-educational situation of children whose parent are working abroad (personal empirical research)**

Given the fact that the subject of the thesis, i.e. the situation of the children left alone by their parent working alone is a relatively new study object, my research had an exploratory nature. As already mentioned, the emigration of the parents is, usually, the result of a series of structural constraints linked to poverty, community practices, social networks and other institutions (*structural approach*). On the other hand, children are active agents, who are able to understand the world in which they live and are able to negotiate their own status and to show specific attitudes towards their parents and parents' decisions (*interaction approach*).

The major objective of the study was to *investigate the social impact of the parents' emigration on children*. The research instruments (questionnaires) investigated this issue through questions which covered the following dimensions: with whom do children live during the school year; school results; leisure time; problems of the youngsters. The population of pupils, teachers and parents/tutors were selected from rural and quasi-rural schools from Bistrita-Nasaud county by relying on the so called conventional sampling method, i.e. by choosing diverse subjects for the specific social category. Pupils were selected from the schools of the following localities: Leșu, Măgura Ilvei, Tiha Bârgăului, Mureșenii Bârgăului and from the technologic gymnasium from Spermezeu. The three samples have been distributed in the following manner: 168 pupils, 99 parents/tutors and 76 teachers from the same localities/schools.

### *Children's situation and their perspectives*

On the level of our research population (and in comparison with the national average of approx. 25-30%) parents' migration occurs at a higher rate (more than 40% of the children have either their father, mother or both parents working abroad). In terms of percents, the rural region of Bistrita county is similar with the case of Moldova. Thus, the ratio of parents living home/working abroad shows that in less developed regions, emigration for working reasons is a dominant phenomenon.

*Residence during the school year:* My data shows that during the school year the most frequent type of residence is that of living with both parents. The families from the investigated localities show the presence of the circulatory, temporary migration. The fact that one third of the pupils live with only one of their parents during the school year indicates the existence of a culture of migration (Cucuruzan, 2008; Diminescu, 2003). Besides this, a part of the pupils show other types of familial situations, e.g. single parent families resulting after a divorce, one of the parents working in other locality from Romania (internal migration), etc.

*Comparisons between the pupils with parents working abroad and other pupils in terms of attitudes and socio-educational behaviors:* In order to investigate this issue, I introduced in the questionnaire the following situations: disciplinary sanctions, low marks, truancy, etc. In connection with truancy we have a significant difference (the majority of the pupils with this type of behavior are those who have their parents working abroad – 60% of these pupils reported truancy, the percent being 44% in the case of those pupils who have one of their parents working abroad). These data are in accordance with previous research and shows that the absence of parents correlates with behaviors linked to parental supervising (Lazăr and Grigoraș, 2011).

Other studies (Stănculescu et al., 2012) showed, however, that the low school performance is linked mostly to poverty and in the cases of extreme poverty, even if both parents are living with their children during the school year, such children have weaker educational performance than their counterparts who are better off. Thus, our results cannot confirm a concluding association between parents' migration, truancy and low school performance. The results can only signal that the absence of the parents makes truancy a more frequent behavior and, in consequence, *migration has the potential to influence the educational achievements of the children.*

In our sample "low marks", i.e. low educational achievement does not constitute a salient problem for the children with parents working abroad. The problem of quasi-absent parental control raises however important questions in terms of truancy and achievements. Our results show that pupils have problems with the visiting of school and fulfilling the educational activities; absenteeism and school abandon; higher probability of infractions, etc.

In connection with educational success, the effect of the absent parents is more accentuated. The lack of parental control and the lack of parental motivation determine that the children with parents working abroad do not show significant results in terms of success.

The children with parents working abroad show more frequent risky behaviors. Each category of pupils declares that they have already drunk alcohol, but the highest percent of such children occurs in the case of the category with both parents working abroad, followed by those with one of their parents working abroad. In the case of smoking, the differences between the categories are similar.

In connection with problems declared by the pupils, the following aspects were recorded: insufficient leisure time, the perception that there are too much and too difficult school duties; insufficient time spent with the parents. Thus, we have on the one hand the perception that time spent with the parent is insufficient, especially in the cases when mothers are gone abroad. In such cases leisure time is also perceived as being insufficient and such perception is explainable on the ground of the missing mother, a fact which calls for a more intense involvement of the children in housework and even childcare for smaller sisters/brothers, a situation which limits the free time of these children (Corsaro, 2008).

In connection with effective school results, i.e. pupils' mark averages, the results show that they are decreasing in direct relationship with the absence of parents. Even if the relationship is only marginally significant ( $p=0.07$ ), it is relevant: one third of the children with parents working abroad have low mark averages (between 5 and 6,99), compared to 14,7% of the pupils who do not have emigrant parents.

In accordance with the modes of residence (with both parents, with a single parent, other kinship) there are significant differences in terms of the insufficient time spent with the parents, those who claim this problem are the most numerous among the children who live with members of the kinship and without their parents. More than half of the pupils living with both of their parents have better school results than those who live with the members of kinship.

The need for change deals with pupils' aspirations and shows clear differences among the categories. Those who live with both of their parents wish to learn better (36.5%), and this percent is lower in the case of those pupils who live with one of their parents (24.2%) and it is even smaller in the case of the pupils living without their parents, with a tutor (none of the pupils from this category declared such an aspiration, which is explainable also on the basis of the bad school results of such children). The interest towards the improvement of interpersonal relationships shows a similar pattern. In general, children who live with both of their parents are more satisfied (50% of them declaring they would not change nothing in their lives). In the case

of the pupils living without their parents such a declarations less frequent and, in any case, it represents a kind of indifference and social apathy.

### ***Pupils' situation from the perspective of their adherents***

The most numerous adults are those who take care of a child with his/her father working abroad. The majority of such adults are women, many of them mothers or grandmothers of the children. They are followed by equal percents of adherents in the cases of children having their mothers working abroad (fathers) or none of the parents is working abroad or both parents are working abroad (grandparents, aunts, uncles and other kins). In terms of gender, the majority of the adherents are female (74 persons), and they correspond to the pupils who have their father working abroad (41 pupils), followed by those pupils who have both of their parents abroad (14 pupils), none of the parents abroad (13 cases), respectively their mother is working abroad (6 cases). Those 25 male adherents correspond to 13 pupils with their mother working abroad, respectively to 5 pupils with none of the parents abroad, 4 with their father abroad and 3 to both parents working abroad.

### ***Comparisons between children with their parents working abroad and other children on the basis of adherents' declarations***

In this case, disciplinary sanction as a function of the migratory status of the parents shows the most important differences between the categories ( $p=0.05$ ):

Most frequently, pupils with both of their parents being migrants have been – based on the declarations of the adherents – sanctioned. From the interviews with school masters, the most frequent behaviors which attract sanctions are verbal and physical aggression, neglect of school duties and general indiscipline. Truancy is the least frequent reason of sanction in the case of the pupils having their mother abroad, but it is a frequent reason of sanctions when both of the parents are abroad. This ambivalent situation shows that truancy and school abandon cannot be explained solely on the basis of parents' emigration, but also – and especially in rural settings – on the basis of children household duties, this being associated on its turn with poverty, the lower education of parents, etc.

The majority of the adherents (60%) consider that children are the most affected by the going of their parents, but adherents mention also other reasons of the low educational achievements: the most dominant explanation in this regard refers to the small amount of time dedicated to preparation for classes.

In connection with school achievements, the most successful are those pupils who have none of their parents abroad, followed by those whose father is working abroad. This findings

shows the role of the mother in generating motivations and exercising supervising in the case of the pupils.

The most frequent behavior change in the case of pupils having their parents abroad is aggression and slack as well as apathy, isolation and sadness.

### ***Statistical results based on the questionnaires applied to teachers***

Out of the 76 teachers who completed the questionnaires, 66 gave valid responses. Among the many items of the questionnaires there are also questions which refer to the educative process and to school management. Besides the analysis of frequencies I realized factorial analysis as well. Based on this analysis I succeeded to identify 6 factors which explain 60,6% of the variance of the 22 items of the questionnaire. These factors are the followings: 1<sup>st</sup> factor – pupils' socialization; 2<sup>nd</sup> factor – institutional management; 3<sup>rd</sup> factor – pupils' involvement; 4<sup>th</sup> factor – responsibility; 5<sup>th</sup> factor – citizen formation; 6<sup>th</sup> factor – problem solving.

A second factor analysis was realized on the items from the groups of questions 14 and 15: (14) *The reason of parents' emigration is.....* (15) *The changing of the behavior in the case of pupils with parents working abroad is visible through.....*

Following the analysis I found that the most comprehensive solution is the 5-factor model. The 5 factors explain altogether 76,9% of the variance of the 11 items: 1<sup>st</sup> factor – delinquent behavior; 2<sup>nd</sup> factor – school absenteeism; 3<sup>rd</sup> factor – isolation, introversion; 4<sup>th</sup> factor – disengagement with school; 5<sup>th</sup> factor – lack of attention.

These results sustain the idea that the effects of parents emigration on pupils' attitudes and behaviors are developing on a continuum ranging from delinquency and aggression to passivity.

The **cluster analysis** helped to provide a more nuanced picture: with the help of the first six factor I succeeded to realize the cluster analysis based on the Ward method (Euclidian distances). The thresholds of significant shows that these clusters can be regarded as types of appreciations on the educational process. In order to describe these types, I used the profiles of these types based on the factors which stayed at their basis.

Type 1 has a negative opinion about the educational process, it appreciates negatively especially the cases of problem solving. However, this is also a type which considers that the school makes a good job in forming civic attitudes.

Type 2 has a positive opinion about pupils' socialization, their involvement and about the development of civic attitudes. It appreciates positively the partnerships between the school and other institutions and considers that problems are solved in a good way.

Type 3 accentuates the need for problem solving, and it has no good opinion about pupils' involvement and socialization, and neither about the forming of civic attitudes.

Type 4 appreciates positively children's involvement and socialization but has a negative opinion about school management.

The most optimistic opinion occurs at type 5, which has a positive appreciation about all the dimensions, except the factor of socialization through school.

With the help of the 5 factors connected to the problems associated with parents' emigration I realized a cluster analysis (Ward method, Euclidian distances). Significance thresholds indicate that such clusters can be considered types of problems. The profiles of these types suggest that type 3 appreciates that children with parents working abroad show higher rates of absenteeism and they are uninvolved in school activities, they lack attention, are introverts and isolated.

Type 4 considers that such children show acts of delinquency, followed by absenteeism and disengagement with school activities. This type does not consider that lack of attention and isolation is a consequence of the absence of parents.

Type 1, 2 and 5 do not really think that such problems are associated with parents' emigration, however these types also mention several problems of the children (introversion, isolation, disengagement with school activities, etc.).

Taken on a statistical level, such categories of opinions reflect different forms of understandings and appreciations of the case of children with emigrant parents. As far as these are only statistical aggregates they are not strictly found in the reality, however are important indicators for the existence of several major opinions. In any case, such opinions circumscribe a relatively sad reality in which children adaptation, the incapacity of institutions in front of the emigration phenomenon are important cornerstones and challenges.

At the end of my research I outlined several proposals in the direction of improving the situation of children with emigrant parents. These were directed towards the following aspects:

- We need to systematically investigate the major areas of risk and protection in connection with this phenomenon and we need to clearly outline the consequences associated with the lack of parental control, lack of parental affection. We are in the need of prevention of anti-social behaviors at these children, especially when they reach the stage of adolescence. Thus, we need to identify a proper socializing environment among the kinship but discussions and negotiations with parents are also important in circumscribing the best practice for these children.
- We need to take into account the influence of the environment (including that of the school environment) and that of the peers on the delinquent behavior.

- Social assistance has to be involved in the life of these families, however it is a difficult to be realized because the families do not always want to cooperate with such institutions. These families are in the need of systemic family therapies and they need adequate programs in order to prevent behaviors associated with the absence of parents, e.g. juvenile delinquency and softer forms of anti-social behaviors (e.g. truancy).

**As a conclusion** I outline that my research put forward the existence of several problems outlined by previous studies as well: parental demission, structural ignorance, tacit opportunism, hidden single-parents, etc. Following the analysis of the empirical data I succeeded to outline a major idea: living without at least one of the parents has become a life style in the rural regions of Bistrita-Nasaud county and this fact indicates the real existence of the “culture of migration”. This evolution needs deeper analysis in order to reveal the long terms effects of this phenomenon on children: how they become adults, parents, etc., whether the problems they face during their childhood and adolescence translate in problematic attitudes and behaviors when they become adults and parents.

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