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FOSTERING COMPASSION: EXPLORING KINDERGARTEN EXPERIENCES FROM THE EYES OF CHILDREN AT RISK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

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THE PRESENTED RESEARCH WAS CONDUCTED WITHIN RESEARCH PROJECT MODEL OF RESPONSE TO EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN AT RISK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN ECEC INSTITUTIONS (MORENEC), FUNDED BY THE CROATIAN SCIENCE FOUNDATION **AIMED TO**:

- EXPLORE THE PREVALENCE OF CHILDREN FACING SOCIAL EXCLUSION RISKS (RSE).
- IDENTIFY VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF RISKS THEY ENCOUNTER.
- EXAMINE THE ENVIRONMENT WITHIN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE (ECEC) ESTABLISHMENTS.
- ASSESS THE APTITUDE OF EDUCATORS IN ENGAGING WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DEALING WITH RSE.
- DELVE INTO THE VIEWPOINTS OF CHILDREN REGARDING THEIR ENCOUNTERS WITHIN ECEC INSTITUTIONS.



WHAT DRIVES SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN OUR SOCIETY?

Child

Developmental status

- Neurodevelopmental risks
- Gifted children

Health

- Chronic conditions
- Emotional challenges
- Behavioral difficulties

Family

Family characteristics

- Single parenthood
- Social, economic and educational status
- Low-quality parenthood
- Families in rural areas

Care and support within the family

- Dysfunctional family dynamics
- Family neglect and mistreatment

Community

Support mechanisms for children

 Lack of Adequate Recognition of Children's Backgrounds

Support mechanisms for families

 Challenges in Achieving Inclusion Arising from Family Traits





UNVEILING THE UNKNOWN: WHAT DOES OUR INITIAL RESEARCH UNCOVER? (I)

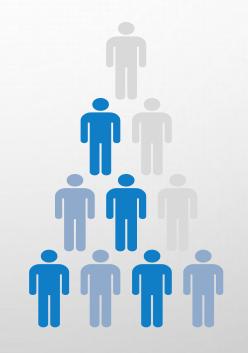
GENERAL SAMPLE

10% OF CROATIAN ECEC SETTINGS

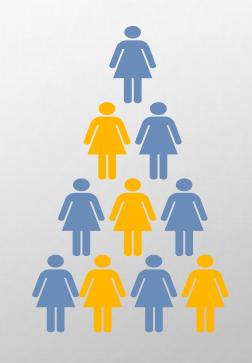
535 TEACHERS

3500 PARENTS

3500 CHILDREN











UNVEILING THE UNKNOWN: WHO ARE THE CHILDREN IN THE RISK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN CROATIA?

21,1% - ONE CATEGORY OF RISK

8.7% - TWO CATEGORIES OF RISKS

4,5% - THREE+ CATEGORIES OF RISKS









EXPLORING THE PERSPECTIVES OF CHILDREN AT RSI ON THEIR EXPERIENCES IN ECEC SETTINGS

- RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN
- QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
 - SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS
- SAMPLE
 - 43 CHILDREN 5-7 YEARS OLD
- THE ETHICAL CODE OF RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN (RH, 2020)









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THEMES ARISING FROM INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

TOPICS	CODES
Child's self-pespective	Strengths (what she/he is good in) Position in society
Family relationships	Support from close individuals (grandmother, grandfather, brother)
Social Interactions and Assistance	Support from educators Peer support Peer status Conflicts Problem-solving situations
Fundamental values	Perception of justice Classroom rules

CHILDREN'S SELF-PERCEPTION

CAN A CHILD IDENTIFY THEIR STRENGTHS WHEN...

"IS THE TEACHER HAPPY BECAUSE SHE HAS YOU IN HER GROUP?

CHILD: I DON'T KNOW."

"HAS A TEACHER EVER PRAISED YOU?

CHILD: NO!

HAS A TEACHER SAID: WELDONE?

CHILD:"NO!"







"CHILD: I AM VERY HAPPY WHEN I CAN PLAY FOOTBALL WITH MY FRIENDS, AND I AM VERY HAPPY WHEN WE GO ON A TRIP.

(EXCELLENT. AND WHEN YOU ARE NOT SATISFIED?)

CHILD: WELL, WHEN MY FRIENDS USUALLY MAKE ME ANGRY AND THEN I, NO, GET ANNOYED AND THEN ME, AND THEN THE WHOLE CYCLE IS DISTURBED.

(CACFES)

CHILD: YES.

(WHAT CYCLE?)

CHILD: THE CYCLE OF MY LIFE."

FAMILY RELATIONSHIP

- "PARENTS USUALLY DO NOT COME TO THE KINDERGARTEN."
- "I LIKE TO GO TO MY DAD'S WORKING PLACE WITH MY MOM. I LOVE THAT"
- "MY GRANDMOTHER CALLED ME MY SUN, AND MY MOTHER CALLED ME MY HEART."







- PERCEIVING THE PEER STATUS
 - "I HAVE JUST ONE FRIEND!"
- CONFLICT SOLVING
 - "IF I HAD A MAGIC WAND, I WOULD ENCHANT THEM INTO FROGS!"
 - "WHEN CHILDREN ARE FIGHTING I TELL THE TEACHER!"





- PERCEPTION OF JUSTICE
 - "IT IS NOT FAIR TO GIVE 3 CANDIES TO SOMEONE, AND JUST 1 TO ANOTHER ONE"
- RULES
 - "THAT WE SHOULD NOT FIGHT, THAT WE SHOULD NOT PUSH EACH OTHER, THAT WE SHOULD NOT THROW GARBAGE NEXT TO GARBAGE, THAT WE SHOULD THROW IT IN THE BASKET. NOT TO FIGHT EACH OTHER.

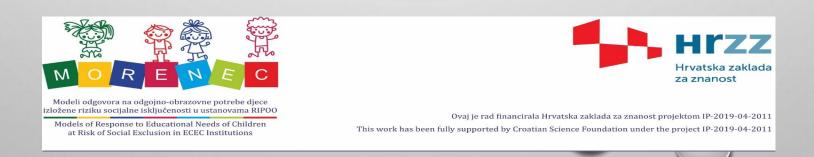
 AND WE ONLY HAVE 9 RULES, AND HOW MANY HAVE I LISTED NOW?"





RESULTS

- CHILDREN FROM THE SAMPLE ACKNOWLEDGE:
 - (POOR) QUALITY FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS,
 - (UNHEALTHY) ADULT BEHAVIORS,
 - (NEGATIVE) CONSEQUENCES FOR CHILDREN.
- IT CAN BE DEDUCED FROM THE CHILDREN'S STATEMENTS THAT THEY ARE EXPOSED TO VARIOUS FORMS OF DISCIPLINE, WITH FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS BEING A CONTRIBUTING RISK FACTOR.





CONCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS

- THE EVIDENT POOR QUALITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS SERVES AS A PIVOTAL ELEMENT, CONTRIBUTING TO A CASCADE OF ISSUES.
- CHILDREN ARE SUBJECTED TO VARIOUS FORMS OF DISCIPLINE THAT MAY NOT BE CONDUCIVE TO THEIR EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL GROWTH.
- CHILDREN CAN NOT DEFINE TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF THEM.

