

**Summary of a doctoral dissertation by Anna K. Duda, written under the scientific supervision of Prof. dr hab. Joanna Łukasik, entitled: "Effectiveness of the Peer Mediator Training Program in shaping the mediation competences of students "**

**Key words:**

peer mediation, mediation competences, key competences, school space, early adolescence

Mediation is becoming more and more visible in the school space, both in the formal (legal requirements) and in the pragmatic dimension (introducing mediators to schools, training in mediation for teachers' councils, workshops for students). Although mediation in education is the youngest area of alternative dispute resolution, it is also developing the fastest. The importance of their effects is emphasized by school principals, teachers and educators who have started mediation practice, as well as the community of mediators, which conducts educational mediation, organizes trainings, workshops and events popularizing knowledge about mediation. Various government departments have also introduced mediation programs for children and adolescents at various educational stages, indicating that they contribute to changing aggressive behavior and focusing on cooperation. The positive importance of mediation in the process of building the organizational culture of the school is also noticed.

Despite the growing interest in mediation in school or other educational institutions, there is still a lack of scientific publications in this field, as well as tools for work with young people, the effectiveness of which would be verified, and the possibility of using mediation within the capabilities of teachers and trainers. There is a visible lack of empirical evidence to confirm the observations of adults who introduce mediation. Therefore, the aim of the doctoral dissertation was: Exploration

and description of the issue of mediation competences, getting to know the effectiveness of PSMR in the process of shaping mediation competences of students, explaining to what extent it is possible to develop mediation competences of students in school conditions, explaining the relationship between the way of preparing peer mediators and the level of

mediation competences of students, as well as Peer mediation that is not included or exceeds the standards of peer mediation. These are both scientific and pragmatic goals because the assumption was made that the work and activities undertaken are to translate in the future into concrete support for teachers and directors of educational institutions striving to develop the culture of a learning organization.

The main subject of considerations in the work is the mediation competences of primary school students. The doctoral thesis under preparation consists of the following chapters: 1. School as a space for conflicts and mediation; 2. Conflicts in the school space; 3. Peer mediation in the school space; 4. Methodological assumptions of own research; 5. Analysis and interpretation of own research results; 6. Discussion of the results; 7. Conclusions

and recommendations. Each of the chapters has been divided into detailed sub-chapters, in which the reader is gradually led through the issues of mediation and conflicts in the school space, as well as the mediation competences of students, which are crucial for the analysis.

In the first chapter, the school is characterized as a specific space of interpersonal interactions in which conflicts occur. The school is a diverse space in terms of the entities it contains, where each of them performs specific roles and tasks. On the one hand, a school is a building - a building - where education takes place, but its importance far exceeds such traditional understanding and representation. The study analyzes both the institutional (formal) space of the school, which primarily covers the activities of the school resulting from the assumptions of the education law and - more broadly - the education system; relational space concerning the connections between school entities; axiological space (often overlooked), but it is within it that the assumptions of the mediator's ethics are realized.

The second chapter presents the concepts of a conflict located in relations taking place in the school space. Functional theories of conflict were taken into account in a special way, as they speak of the genesis of mediation. Each conflict, both for the society and for individual individuals who experience it, performs specific functions, not only disintegrating, but also integrating, constructive and developmental. The typologies of conflicts and styles were presented in detail, along with strategies for resolving them, each time referring in the analysis to both the school space and peer mediation.

The next chapter focuses on the theoretical assumptions of peer mediation taking into account their essence, principles and ethics, legal basis, and presents the characteristics of the mediator (competences, skills, etc.). A short history of educational mediation and its underlying genesis are also presented in criminal mediation with juvenile perpetrators of a criminal act. In this chapter, the key is the description of mediation competences presented as a metacategory, consisting of partial competences. The effects of programs and projects, which implemented at least the basic issues related to mediation and legal education of children and young people, were also presented in as much detail as possible. Again, attention was paid to the issues of conflict and the school environment, this time relating these issues to the method of peer mediation.

The fourth chapter presents a research project containing the main problem, purpose, organization and other data concerning the conducted research. All this is reflected in the fifth chapter containing the analysis of the results of the pre-test and post-test experiment. The experiment was conducted in natural school conditions, but the selection of three groups should be distinguished, and not as classically suggested by the methodology of two: experimental and control. The third was the intermediate group whose existence was significant for determining the effect of the intergroup transmission of knowledge about experimental activities, and thus mediation. Then, an analysis of the collected data was carried out in order to obtain answers to all the research questions posed.

The work was completed with a discussion of results, conclusions and recommendations for mediation work at school, both for principals and teachers, as well as school and peer mediation trainers. The whole is closed with a bibliography, which also includes normative acts containing premises for mediation. The work is complemented by a separate document in the form of the Training Program for Peer Mediators.

As a result of the conducted research, the main hypotheses were confirmed, indicating that 1) The Peer Mediator Training Program "Mediation Academy" is significantly effective in developing mediation competences of students and 2) students participating in the Peer Mediator Training Program have a higher level of mediation competences compared to students not participating in it. The majority of specific hypotheses were also confirmed, indicating that participation in the PSMR contributed to the development of individual categories of mediation competences, such as social, emotional, communication and legal skills. The changes caused in the experimental group also concerned the use of the conflict

resolution style, which means that the students participating in the Program developed the ability to use non-antagonistic styles of conflict resolution as opposed to the other groups. Thanks to the experiment carried out with the participation of three types of research groups, it turned out that educational activities carried out in a specific group of students translate into other members of the community that uses the effects of mediation as an innovation.

The positive result of the conducted research may prove the validity of introducing mediation to schools, first as an innovation, and then ensuring that it becomes a permanent element of the school's culture. Introducing mediation in schools must be a planned, systematic process and not treated as a "one-time action" but as a change, the effects of which will be perpetuated by ensuring the continuity of activities. The school is a special place for training various skills that can contribute to shaping attitudes of openness, tolerance and willingness to cooperate. These are key factors in a society's ability to function democratically or not. The introduction of mediation in schools is therefore a necessary and necessary change that gives hope for a better tomorrow.