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**NECESSITY OF VALUES IN EDUCATION**

**Diploma thesis**

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**UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS IN BRATISLAVA**  
**FACULTY OF APPLIED LANGUAGES**

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**Diploma thesis**

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**Affirmation**

I hereby affirm, that I have elaborated the final thesis independently and that I have listed all the used literature.

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## **ABSTRAKT**

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Cieľom diplomovej práce je definovať hodnoty a ich vplyv na školský systém na Slovensku, v práci sa zameriavame na školskú kultúru prítomnú na Fakulte aplikovaných jazykov na Ekonomickej univerzite v Bratislave. Práca je rozdelená do štyroch kapitol. Prvá kapitola definuje hodnoty, rozdelenie hodnôt a ich význam. V druhej kapitole sa zameriavame na význam kultúry a jej dopad na školstvo. Uvádžeme rozdiely medzi školskou kultúrou a školskou klímou. Tretia kapitola je zameraná na základné prvky kultúry na Ekonomickej univerzite v Bratislave a Fakulte aplikovaných jazykov. Štvrtá kapitola je praktická časť práce, v ktorej analyzujeme školskú kultúru prítomnú na Fakulte aplikovaných jazykov. Výskum prebieha medzi učiteľmi formou dotazníka. Pri spracovaní kapitol využívame uvedenú odbornú literatúru a dôveryhodné internetové zdroje.

**Kľúčové slová:** hodnoty, školský systém, školská kultúra, školská klíma

## **ABSTRACT**

Bielová, Andrea: Necessity of Values in Education. – The University of Economics in Bratislava. Faculty of Applied Languages; Department of Intercultural Communication. – PhDr. Tatiana Hrivíková, PhD. – Bratislava: FAJ EU, 2019, p.

The aim of the diploma thesis is to define values and their effects on school system in Slovakia. We focus on school culture present at the Faculty of Applied Languages at the University of Economics in Bratislava. The diploma thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter defines values, value classification and their effects. In the second chapter, we deal with the term culture and its impact on education. We introduce the difference between school culture and school climate. The third chapter reveals the particular elements of the school culture at the University of Economics in Bratislava as well as at the Faculty of Applied Languages. The fourth chapter is the research is conducted among teachers through the Cultural Typology Activity. When processing chapters, we use academic literature and credible Internet sources.

**Key words:** values, school system, school culture, school climate

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## **Introduction**

In the 21st century organizational culture seems not to be an important topic. The time goes fast and therefore management prefers to focus on other things to keep good results than to focus on culture. Nevertheless, organizational culture is an important factor that influences the results of the organization. Culture is reflected not only in choice, decision-making, management, and strategic planning, but also in all business functions and activities involved in achieving the results of the organization. At workplace people often talk about organizational culture and organizational values which reflects the working environment. Organizational culture is a set of values, attitudes, norms, and behaviour patterns in an organization that significantly affect the performance and long-term success of the organization. Culture in the organization completes the working benefit of each employee and all stakeholders. Work relations and work processes depend on culture as well.

The aim of the diploma thesis is to underline the importance of values in education and their effects on education. Also, we introduce the difference between school culture and school climate. In the practical part of the diploma thesis, we analyse school culture at the Faculty of Applied Languages at the University of Economics in Bratislava.

The first chapter is focused on the description of values. We deal with the meaning, the fields of its usage and exploration. We provide value classification by Mrs. Kučerová. We introduce selection and the realization of the values. Also, we explain norms and value ladder of an individual.

The second chapter is aimed at culture in education. We provide definition of culture and education system in Slovakia. We deal with difference between school culture and school climate. We focus on six types of school cultures created by Mr. Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) and Deal and Kennedy (1999). We mention elements of the school culture as well as the aspects of school culture.

The third chapter provide insight to the mission and vision of the University of Economics in Bratislava and the Faculty of Applied Languages as well.

The fourth chapter is the analyses of the school culture at the Faculty of Applied Languages. The analyses is based on Cultural Typology Activity developed by Mr. Gruenert and Mr. Valentine. The Cultural Typology Activity consists of eleven aspects of school and six types of school cultures. The analyses is focused on teachers who are considered as one of the key factors in creating a school culture.

# 1. Values

Values are part of everyday life. The physical things, as well as the abstract things can be considered as values. Everything we can imagine can have value but at the same time, the same image for different people doesn't have to have the same value. The value can be found as something, event, relation, knowledge, humans and their acts and at the same time, any of all mentioned don't need to be considered as a value. Values differ from one individual to another. The same thing can be an object or tool or result of the human doing too.

The way we realize the quality of the value depends mainly on the norms which we measure, it means those we know very well, those we have at our disposal, those we have acquired and consider them as the rate of quality. Mr. Brožík claims: *„these norms perform as a sieve which captures some relevant functions. It means the norms are not able to deal with the whole phenomenon. The application of several norms brings a full picture of the value, and thus it's not only one-sided valuation any more.“* (Brožík, 2000, s 13-20)

An online business dictionary defines values as follows - *„Important and lasting beliefs or ideals shared by the members of a culture about what is good or bad and desirable or undesirable. Values have major influence on a person's behaviour and attitude and serve as broad guidelines in all situations.“*

Value as a term is a subject of different scientific disciplines in the professional literature. Values are frequently used in the field of philosophy, ethics, sociology, economics, pedagogy and psychology. Values can be defined as a cross-functional category that means values are an interdisciplinary category because they fall into different fields of interest at the same time.

## 1.2 Values in different fields

The term value is derived from the Greek work timé (prize, value, reward, honour) and the word axia, axón, axis (axis). *„In the field of ethics, the value represents what is worthy to be accomplished and the ideal we try to achieve. The value in this field represents wanting*

*for something. The value from the point of view of ethics is a moral value which means the ideal which we consider beneficial for a society's advance (Grác, 1979, p. 19).“*

In Sociology, we consider value as some or ideal subject, idea or institution which can be real or imaginary, and to which an individual or group of people have a valuation attitude, and ascribe it a high priority in their lives. In this case, values design principles of the society' cohabitation as a base of social purpose for individual members of the group. The values from Sociology's point of view represent a must or need.

The axiology as a part of philosophy is responsible for the exploration of the importance of values. *Axiology dedicates to the investigation of the origin and the character of values, defining systems, the hierarchy of values and their mutual relations and their impact on society and culture (Sokol, 1998, p. 91).* Values in Philosophy appeared in Ancient Greece but they haven't named values yet. In Ancient Greece values were known by concrete names such as goodness, beauty (Plato), blessing in the positive sense and pain and suffering in the negative sense (Democritus, Epicures). In Ontology, the value appears such as „science about the being“ in which the highest being represented the highest value. In the current philosophy, we have different views on values. Neo-positivism denies a real existence of value features on the object and claims the good and the beauty are the only expressions of the subjective relation to the object or phenomenon which is valued. *Idealists in reverse consider a value some „supernatural essence coming from the world which is behind space and behind human experience“ (Čačka, 1997, p. 332).* *Values in the philosophy are seen as things and activity which can satisfy our needs and emphasizes the base of every value is the utility and ability to satisfy some needs of the human or to hinder satisfaction (Grác, 1979, p. 20).* Mrs. Kučerová characterizes values in the narrow meaning as well, she defines values as a basic cultural category corresponding to the higher social, moral and aesthetic norms and ideals.

According to the introduced definitions we can conclude that anything can become a value for individuals who act in the way to satisfy their needs and are able to value anything in relation to their needs. Values appear such as life leading values which impact a whole human and their behaviour, doing and create culture around us.

### **1.3 Valuation**

Values are still present and it is a human responsibility to discover them in order to be able to understand each other. Valuation helps us to discover the value of different things, needs or interests.

Valuation is a process of the value acquisition which leads us to value. Every human being is uncommon and unique in some way which means each of us enters the unique relations with the world around us, and every one of us is responsible for their own behaviour and actions, and from this specific position, each one of us evaluates the world around us and themselves in the world. In valuation, we want to discover, evaluate, and know what different things mean to us.

Each of us is different, there is no one in the world that is the very same as we are because every human being is unique, and this uniqueness of human individuals causes that our valuations are different. The same thing which is important, useful and comfortable for one person doesn't have to have the same value for others and vice versa, and this is what we call uniqueness. The valuation is a process in which we discover what is correct and incorrect as well as what is beneficial and what is harmful to us. According to the evaluation process of particular things and phenomena, we assign values.

### **1.4 Value classification**

We use value classification when measuring, valuing and classifying some norm in a positive or negative way. Every human is unique and not repeatable therefore they order values according to their own convictions. Humans are used to changing their attitude, thus values based on their valuation, and caused by new experience or knowledge. Thus, the value of the individual is formed in the active process in which the key role is an objective reality such as term, thing, idea together with a subjective attitude.

Mrs. Kučerová made a value classification according to the dimensions in which humans can perceive themselves as well as the world around them:

#### **1. Natural values:**

- a) Vital and life values are the needs of nature and its existence. They are an expression of a tendency to maintain, protect and develop a life of organisms, individuals, and species. It includes natural conditions of health, fitness, luminosity, physical well-being, and sensory sensations. From the beginning, humans have been in perfect unity with nature which persist until now.
  - b) Social values based on nature are the relations between humans, the relationship between themselves, and between others. Humans have a need for association, fellowship, reciprocity, emotional response, desiring to love and to be loved. Humans also have a tendency towards selfishness, the tendency for self-actualization, to be recognized, appreciated, and to be successful.
2. Civilization values are conditions and results of the society organization (the elementary groups, families, nations, countries as an organization and legal establishment), communication (speech, writing, tools for sharing information), production and transformation (different level and character of technology and economics) and accumulated knowledge (collective experience, science).
  3. Spiritual values are from one point of view considered as a culture itself, and on the other hand they are perceived as an inner wealth of the human personality which creates the need to search for the importance and meaning of things and life, a reasonable order of the authentic human life, truth, good, beauty, free and conscious humanity. *The spiritual values correspond to the need for the integration, the inner unity of each other and others, of themselves and nature, of themselves and the world, of the unity and the diverse, the diverse tendencies of the human life, the need for a conscious order of the life at all. (Kučerová, 1996, p. 72-73)*
  4. The valuation of an individual is influenced by their habits and morals. Basic values orientation is made up of congenital dispositions as well as external factors. *The ideal values are spiritual values, including knowledge and experience which are considered as undisputable. We usually distinguish between the vital and life values, these values are normally chosen by human representing quality, work*

*experiences, and experiences that fills the human existence. (Kučerová, 1996, p. 74-76)*

## **1.5 Selection and the realization of the values**

We are aware of the values when comparing two or more things among each other. We often use a norm which is the general equivalent of the evaluated phenomenon to help us with valuing the object we choose.

The general equivalent represents a norm that is known in society and became a rule which requires a certain behaviour in society. These norms are formed by the past and present generations. Human acting on purpose as a social being does not last with his acquired knowledge and competence but the human needs a vision for the future and image of how it should come true. It depends not only on the knowledge and competence on the consciousness of the human's needs, new experience, and human interests. For example, a person can have a new experience and new feelings thanks to art which he would not be able to experience on their own. For instance, we can experience and express ourselves through some kind of art, such as writing, painting, playing on instrument what we are missing in our own value ladder.

### **1.5.1 Norms and value ladder**

*„The human desires try to convince ourselves there are values on the earth, and which can become reasons for our desires, being,..“ (Hrehová, 2002, p. 25).*

By valuing things we assign an order and function to the values, and we can assign them a negative function by which they create a value attitude to the particular thing and they shape a value ladder indirectly. In value, the basis is composed by the feeling perception, sensitivity, satisfaction or dissatisfaction in our instincts, and the human's need. The core abilities in valuing are the ability to distinguish the instincts and learn new things. The basic value differentiation is a division based on polarity for something good and something bad. We look for positive values and we try to avoid the negative ones. We don't take into account only the values polarity but also the quality of their functions. By experiencing and learning we create our own value system. Values and needs develop our feelings. Every human is able to feel, value and hierarchize the feelings.

The sense of the norm is to serve for some purpose. If we do not understand the purpose, we will not follow the norm because the norm will not make any sense to us. For example, there are values for order, justice, value telling truth, and we assign them some norms such as to be orderly, be righteous, say the truth. We create norms which impact the quality of our lives in positive and negative ways. The norm serves as a regulation or the rate to make a decision.

There are four ways of realizing values in a person's life according to Mrs. Kučerová:

1. **Order method** – the criterion of this method is the intensity and type of value. The same meaning is assigned to each value regardless of its origin. Thus, any value has a key role.
2. **Layering method** – the emphasis is put on the principle of subordination, so, it's gradual realizing individual layers of values. This method focuses more on how to proceed and not on the reason why to proceed which would represent the motivation.
3. **Pyramid method** – a risky way of realizing values because it distinguishes the most important value to which all other values are subordinate. In case of disappearance of this value, the whole structure is disrupted.
4. **Hierarchical method** – from the existentially significant values emerge the main roles, each of which can fulfil the role in a person's life. This method takes into account the uniqueness of human needs and also respects the right of the human to have surplus value (God) as the highest value.

## 2. Culture

The origins of the term culture date back to the Middle Ages. It was formed from the Latin word *colo* or more precisely „*colere*” which means to cultivate. Compound word “agriculture” means farming. The term culture is a polysemantic word which means that we need to understand it in line with the contextual background.

*According to Mr. Souček, the culture is a specific human way of the organization, performance and developing activities which are a collective result of the active influence of the concrete society and we can identify on the base of the concrete expressions of the material and spiritual feature. It is a set of social creatures which expresses certain stability, steadiness and are transmitted from generation to generation (Souček, 1947, p. 16).*

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation defines culture as a set of specific spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of the society or social groups which includes art and literature, a common way of life, lifestyle, value system, traditions, and the faith. The UNESCO mission is to protect the culture of the whole mankind in consideration of the cultural heritage, under which we understand what is valuable and worthy to be preserved for future generations.

The researchers who investigate different forms of cultural products disagree with the opinions of what the culture represents, what phenomenon and expression it includes. We can recognise three opinions:

- a) Mr. A. Bláha claims that the culture as a civilization represents everything what human society has created in history. It includes positive and negative products and phenomena such as wars, nuclear weapons, etc. The culture is understood as opposed to the nature. Many philosophers perceive culture in a traditional way which means that culture is the expression of all products which promote mankind above nature and animals.

- b) Culture as a set of values represents a society which is continuously developing. The culture which is perceived as a positive quality in human production, for example, art and invention, is beneficial for society.
  
- c) Culture as an expression of the quality in the behaviour of mankind (lifestyle, level of the communication) and the level of the culturalism is understood as honouring and accepting every human.

## **2.1 Culture in education**

In the Agrarian age, the basic needs which are fundamentally essential for the life of humans were provided within family. Nowadays schools and self-education fulfil this function. In Post-World War period which was under the control of communism the term culture was not really used in pedagogy. If the term culture was used in some pedagogical works it was not actually considered as an important factor because the application of the homogeneous school resulted in recognition in only one culture. Any form of culture or subculture was not perceived as a forming tool which impacts an individual or a group of people.

### **2.1.1 Common values in European education**

According to the Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, the Member States of the European Union share some identical values which serve to bind countries, communities and people together.

#### **The European common values are as follows:**

**Human dignity** – an individuals or group's importance of self-respect and self-worth, physical and psychological integrity.

**Freedom** – the power or right to act, speak or think willingly.

**Democracy** – a system of government representing the whole, typically through elected representatives.

**Equality** – the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities.

**The rule of law** – the restriction of the arbitrary exercise of power by subordinating it to well-defined and established laws.

Respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities is believed to belong to every person. Creating and maintaining a cohesive European society is to have an inclusive and high education at all levels. It is crucial to maintain, preserve and learn Europe's common heritage and diversity as well as to understand the origins and function of the EU.

The Council Recommendation on Common Values, Inclusive Education and the European Dimension of Teaching was proposed by the Commission on January 17th in 2018 and adopted by the Council on May 22nd in 2018. The main goal is to strengthen national democracies and promote European Union. Also, there is a focus on the strengthening of the social cohesion in order to fight and prevent populism, xenophobia, radicalization, divisive nationalism and the spreading of fake news.

**Four core recommendations:**

1. Promote common values at all levels of education.
2. Foster more inclusive education.
3. Encourage a European dimension of teaching, without prejudice to the national prerogatives in this realm.
4. Support teachers and teaching methods.

The European Union's tools to achieve the goals are mainly the ongoing work on implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights, Erasmus+ programme and the European Structural and Investment Funds.

**2.1.2 Culture and family in the current pedagogy**

The term culture began to appear in the last two decades. The frequency of the culture researchers started to increase after the forming space for work freedom of the teachers at schools. Thanks to the innovative projects, schools started to look for their own identity to create their own culture and school climate. Abandonment of the strict discipline at schools has created the space for free expression. Parents started to be more involved in the school issues through the Parents Committee thanks to which they could intervene in the school system in an active way.

School is an institution whose function is to bring institutional education. The culture of society has been transmitted via education of formal institutions. *The educational content acquired through educational system represents the most intensive way of culture acquisition by an individual. (Harbakus, 1997, p. 2)*

## **2.2 School climate and school culture**

Students spend a significant amount of time at school. Therefore, students' feelings about their school experience can have a big impact on their daily lives. Students not only need to feel safe at school, but they should also feel comfortable, and as part of supportive environment. *Persistent positive school climate has been linked to positive student development, learning, academic achievement, effective risk prevention, and health promotion (Thapa, Cohen, Guffey & HigginsD'Alessandro, 2013). A positive school climate should be a priority because learning in a safe, engaged, and responsive environment sets the foundation for positive academic, social, and emotional development (Blum, McNeely, & Reinhart, 2002).*

### **2.2.1 Difference between school climate and school culture**

Although there is no one clear definition, school climate is commonly defined by the *"quality and character of school life"* (School Climate Council, 2007, p. 5). School climate encompasses the experiences of individuals at school, including learning and building relation. Students spend a significant amount of time at school and that's why the school climate is important. Students' feelings about their school experience can have a big impact on their development, learning, academic achievement, health promotion, and in general, on their daily lives. Positive climate should create a positive environment in which students should feel safe, comfortable and they should be part of the supportive environment. School climate is not only an individual's experience, it is the "feeling" of the school.

On the other hand, school culture is defined as the values, rules, belief patterns, teaching and learning approaches, behaviours, and relationships shared among or across the individuals in a school. Culture represents a school's norms, unwritten rules, traditions, and expectations. These may influence a whole range of aspects, from the way people dress to the way they interact with each other. Culture is most deeply rooted at school, and

therefore it may only be altered over a longer period of time through a systematic change in a school's climate.

School culture is often confused with school climate, but in fact, these two terms are different. The school climate refers to the individual experiences and feelings that students, teachers, and staff have about the school, whereas school culture is about the long-term physical and social environment, including the values or beliefs of the school shared across individuals and time. Climate is perception-based, while culture is grounded in shared values and beliefs (Gruenert, 2008). In this sense, climate is how people feel at school, and culture is a deeper sense of how people act at school.

Contrasting climate and culture (Table n. 1)

<b>Climate</b>	<b>Culture</b>
Attitude or mood of the group	Personality of the group
State of mind	Way of thinking
Flexible, easy to change	Many years to change
Based on perception	Based on values and beliefs
Feeling when entering the school or class	Members can not feel it
All around us	Part of us
The way we feel around	The way we do things around
The first step to improvement	Determines if improvement is possible
It's in our head	It's in our head

### **Attitude - Personality**

We consider climate as school's attitude and culture as school's personality. The main difference between them is that an attitude is far easier to change than a personality. For example, when announcing a one-day holiday due to snow calamity, we might notice a sudden change in climate as educators' and students' mood suddenly changes in a positive way. The announcement about one-day holiday does not change the school personality (culture), but produces a collective shift in attitude (climate). On this reaction, we can see what the students really value. In this case, the school climate reveals that the culture values not being in school. Changing personality requires a more purposeful and sustained effort than an attitude does.

### **Miserable Mondays – Lovely Mondays**

Monday is a day after two days of rest and as a result of that many people dislike it means, some of us don't like this day. Monday is considered a miserable day because it's the beginning of the work week. Many teachers are practically useless on Mondays, and it is not because they are tired, but because they feel they are supposed to act like that. For example, on Monday morning one of the teachers enters school and has a good mood, smile of the face, etc. The reaction of the teacher's colleagues are – “What are you so happy about?” The colleagues react in the way the culture is based on. Another example, when teachers rush out of the building as soon as possible on Friday afternoons. Again we can see the culture at school. A school culture which values miserable Mondays' mind-set and the “can't-wait-to-leave” mind-set of teachers shows students that they can and they should have miserable Mondays and not want to be at school, but on contrary, they should wait and look forward to the weekends only. Culture reflects what the members celebrate, ignore and anticipate. *Values are usually unconscious to those who carry them and thus difficult to interpret, but values can be observed and explained. When identifying values it helps us to make them sustainable (Argyris, 2010).*

### **State of mind – Way of thinking**

Culture defines what is normal and how we should think. If we try to think outside of the box, for a while it will be considered as an act of creativity, but only for a while. We cannot be outside of the box and still, maintain all the rights and privileges related to the particular culture. The pressure to remain within the box is what Elder and Paul (2012) name sociocentric thinking: *“The tendency to internalize group norms and beliefs, take on group identities, and act as we are supposed.”*

### **Based on perception – Based on values**

One of the differences between climate and culture is that we can easily describe what we do and what they do (climate), rather than why we do and why they do (culture). Newcomers or visitors are those who can feel the difference at school culture most. The students who come from different school or new teachers who come from a different school culture can feel the difference. But eventually the student will receive new information in the class and the teacher will receive new instructions, so both of them will adapt to the new culture and they will start to consider it as a normal.

### **Climate is around us - Culture is part of us**

Climate is a result of the culture, it points to the culture we may have and it helps us to diagnose and make strategies to change the culture. On the other hand, culture represents a school identity and its branding, which is reflected in the workshops we provide, what we laugh at, what projects we are part of. Culture tells us when to be tense and when to relax, and rewards us for acting appropriately in the form of more self-esteem, access to internal information, etc.

### **The way we feel around – The way we do things around**

Climate is a result of the collective attitudes of the members of a group. It shows how we mostly feel in a certain situation most of the time. We still reflect values of the culture, and even though it may seem the climate is changing in some moments, it can be still within the boundaries of the culture. Changing culture may create many enemies among students, colleagues, parents, etc. The bonding necessary for a group to become a team to start with shaping culture requires goals which will require the virtue of persistence.

### **The first step to improvement - Determines if improvement is possible**

One of the functions of school education is to mediate information to students in order to improve the quality of life for all. In the majority of cases, school cultures point out individual failures rather than focusing on the opportunity for improvement. A school culture may try to adopt a concept of school improvement. A concept of school improvement does not mean to change the whole value system, it means to change at least some of it. A concept of school improvement will immediately change the climate, and later on may change the values of the culture.

### **It's in our head**

A change in climate can happen instantly, a change in culture is a slow process. If the director takes action to behave in a positive and friendly manner and keeps his new habits, the director can impact colleagues and the climate will be immediately changed. If the director soon reverts back to the previous behaviour, the climate will not change. We can not precisely say when the shift from climate to culture comes, but certainly, a shift from short-term behaviours to long-term expectations will happen.

School leaders who decide to change the school culture should realize that it will take

many years to see the new beliefs that form a behaviour. Leaders can start with changing structures and procedures to shape the new culture.

Climate and culture show the way how we interact with our environment. Culture impacts our values and beliefs, while climate results in actions from the values and beliefs.

Hofstede and Minkov (2010) introduce an example, „*the culture is the software for the mind – it is the operating program that the group provides you wish to support it. By contrast, the climate is what shows up on your computer desktop. Culture massages the data from the environment you take in and then limits your choice of responses to each situation. Climate is the sum of responses.*“ Reality is a matter of interpretation – this is why we have a set of memories in our minds. Values of the culture helps us to understand what we see. When we are aware of why we do certain things, we can no longer act unthinkingly (Ray, 2001). When we are aware of the culture, we can not become victims any more because we still can comply with, change things, or leave.

## **2.3 Building blocks of school culture**

Cultures are made up of building blocks in the form of all the elements that make life comfortable, predictable, and safe for us. We depend on people around us at the workplace, colleagues fulfil their assigned roles and it all helps us to our own efficiency and sanity. In order to be able to understand these elements, it is important to know who is a member of the culture and who is not.

### **2.3.1 Elements of the school culture**

When analysing school culture, we work with the following elements of the culture:

- Climate
- Mission and vision
- Language
- Humour
- Routines, rituals, and ceremonies
- Norms
- Roles
- Symbols
- Stories

- Heroes
- Values and belief

### **Climate**

Climate displays culture in the form of behaviours and attitudes. The first step is to change the way we behave and our attitude by including specific strategies. Over time, if the changes sustain they will become part of our culture.

### **Mission and vision**

The purpose of a mission is to institutionalize a set of beliefs and behaviours which are in line with a particular school culture. Mission defines the purpose that the school should try to achieve. *Mission statements do not matter much, what does matter is the degree to which leadership and faculty are emotionally invested in the mission (Turner, 2013)*. Many schools have missions, but they do not have visions, which means they can perceive themselves only in the current stage, not as they will be. The culture exists to manage the school in the present stage. Culture does not lead, leaders do. Mission and vision should be clearly defined to see changing culture as an progress for the society around.

### **Language**

The language people use at school can create boundaries with people who do not attend the same school. It's the same when learning a new language we do not learn only language but culture within all nuances. Foreign countries have different dialects within their language, and the same applies for different institutions and organizations. The specific dialect we use at school is called – local vocabulary. Local vocabulary at school can look like teachers from the 1st floor, special class, etc. The acronyms and jargon of the school show us who is informed and who is not, and offer faculty a sense of comfort and competence to solve problems quickly. To understand the local language means to show a higher level of usefulness from the perspective of the culture.

### **Humour**

Humour can separate us from the people who are part of the same school as well. There are some jokes that can be understood only by a select group of people. When we laugh at

something it is a sign that we are all on the same page. We have something in common and we understand each other even though no details were mentioned. It makes us part of that culture.

### **Routines, Rituals, and Ceremonies**

Routines can be transformed into rituals which can, in turn, become ceremonies. Routines represent things we do every day to be able to perform efficiently at school. Rituals are defined as a stylized public expression of our values and beliefs. Rituals make statements about the quality of life and set standards for behaviour (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). We do some rituals only because our culture is used to them but they can be useless. Ceremonies are regular events based on rituals when we want to underline certain values. Ceremonies usually include a special protocol. Examples of school ceremonies are graduation, festivals, athletic events, etc.

### **Norms**

Norms are the unwritten rules which help us to maintain smooth work. Norms include rules regarding time orientation when to show up, when it is time to go home, how fast we should work. Some norms can make or break new initiatives, new employees, or new leaders. The culture is shaped by the worst behaviour the leader is willing to tolerate. The leader is responsible for sanctioning every individual who broke the norm to ensure that he will not repeat it again.

### **Roles**

Norms define our roles at school. The role we have can present a quiet person who does not share an opinion. In case, a quiet person shares an opinion, others may be surprised because it is not a role the person used to perform in a certain culture.

### **Symbols**

*Symbols include words, gestures, pictures, or objects that carry a particular meaning that is only recognized by those who share the culture (Geertz, 1973). Symbols represent what school value most. Like rituals, symbols are more „visible to an outside observer, however, the cultural meaning is invisible and lies precisely and only in the ways these practices are interpreted by insiders“ (Hofstede, 1997, p. 8).*

## **Stories**

Stories have at least five organizational functions:

1. Give information about a culture's rules,
2. Preserve institutional memory sharp,
3. Promote commitment and loyalty,
4. Strengthen the artefact of the culture
5. Connecting current faculty with the institutions' past. (Kuh & Whitt, 1988)

Stories are the “currency” of a culture they represent the simplest thing we can do to transfer information from one person to another. Leaders tell stories to inspire members on how to solve problems and how to become successful as well as to support our belief systems.

## **Heroes**

Heroes are those people – dead or alive, real or imaginary – who possess characteristics that are highly appreciated in culture and thus serve as models for behaviour (Deal & Kennedy, 1982). Heroes describe appropriate behaviour which the school values most.

## **Values and Beliefs**

Values are things that we attach biggest importance to. „*Values provide the basis for a system of beliefs, which are „learned responses to threats made on the institution“ that „exert a powerful influence over what people think“ (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, p. 25).* Beliefs teach us how to perceive reality. Values and beliefs are not easy to explain, we use stories, symbols to present and teach them.

### **2.3.2 Aspects of school culture**

Mr. Gruenert and Mr. Valentine developed 11 aspects of school culture which we take into consideration when analysing culture at school:

- 1. Student achievement** – is a student doing well academically, obtaining life skills and giving back to their community concerning the help of the student's teacher.
- 2. Collegial awareness** – being conscious of the shared responsibility or congenial relationship of colleagues.
- 3. Shared values** – explicit or implicit fundamental values and beliefs that underline the culture of an organization.
- 4. Decision-making** – the action or process of making important decisions.

5. **Risk taking** – willingness to take risky action in the hope of desired results.
6. **Trust** – firm belief in the reliability, truth, or ability of someone or something.
7. **Openness** – lack of secrecy or concealment, frankness.
8. **Leadership** – the action of leading a group of people or an organization.
9. **Communication** – the imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium.
10. **Socialization** – the process of learning to behave in a way that is acceptable to society.
11. **Organizational history** – the general history of a group of people who work together in an organized way for a shared purpose.

## 2.4 Cultural change

Cultural change is not an exact science. For real culture change to occur in any organization, there will need individuals who are willing to be the first to make a move. Cultural change must be a school-wide movement, not just an individual effort. Though Schein notes that *“cultural changes require anywhere from 5-15 or more years if basic assumptions are really to be changed, once the changes begin, things can move pretty fast.”* (Schein, p. 317)

Vision is one of the key factor in changing the culture. A vision includes the capacity to imagine a new reality and takes into account all the necessary components to achieve and maintain it. Most of the components form people: imperfect humans with prejudices, preferences, manners, insecurities, families, faiths, and values. Vision is driving individuals to do things the way they do.

### 2.4.1 Types of School Culture

For the purposes of the thesis, we will introduce six general types of school cultures. We have to mention that within every school has a subculture of its on. The first five types are created by Mr. Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) and the sixth type is added by Deal and Kennedy (1999):

1. Collaborative,
2. Comfortable-Collaborative,
3. Contrived-Collegial,
4. Balkanized,

5. Fragmented,
6. Toxic

### **1. Collaborative School Culture**

The collaborative school culture is the theoretical “nirvana” of school cultures which embraces learning for all adults and students. In this culture, teachers share educational values, are committed to teaching and learning, critically analyse teaching methods, and focus on student achievement. Research confirms that a collaborative school culture correlates positively with student achievement (Gruenert, 2005). The expression – collaborative culture, represents values we usually have in families, such as help, support, trust, openness, collective reflection, and collective efficacy. Pounder (1998) claims, *„When we speak of changing schools into more collaborative organizations, what we really mean is that we want to change the nature of the relationships, or patterns of relating“ (Gruenert, Whitaker, p. 29). Collaborating with colleagues grant us „access to expanded knowledge, resources, and creative alternatives for action“ (p. 90).*

### **2. Comfortable-Collaborative School Culture**

This type of culture is very common in many schools. In a comfortable-collaborative school culture, teachers and students tend to be nice to each other, but it may result in to not providing the real deep feedback or reflection to each other. Teachers begin to search for reasons rather than a moral imperative to keep working hard (Sergiovanni, 1990). This kind of culture does not represent a true collaborative school culture.

### **3. Contrived-Collegial School Culture**

In this case, contrived-collegial school culture defines how the staff is supposed to behave. The leadership often tends to enforce collaboration as well as controlling the situations. The result of this culture is that teachers lose their autonomy. Forcing relationship which would do not work anyway results in false collegiality and a decrease in teachers' motivation.

### **4. Balkanized School Culture**

Balkanized school culture represents small groups which compete among themselves. In this kind of culture, only the like-minded staff unites and creates a group which can grow in strength for the wrong reason. Teachers feel the need to compete for position, resources,

and territory. If one of the groups does not agree with the rest of the staff, they tend to laugh and whisper at the meeting. Stronger groups have the capacity to plot together and accomplish what they want.

### **5. Fragmented School Culture**

In this type of culture, everything seems to be nice and perfect because the staff is collegial and we can find them talking and laughing, but this is due to the culture they have. Fragmented culture does not admit its weaknesses and failures. Problems may occur in case of the lack of professional interaction among teachers, such as sharing the best practices or student achievement. Teachers work independently and teaching means competition for them. The culture of competition is then also visible among students.

### **6. Toxic School Culture**

Toxic school culture is reflected in ineffective or negative teachers which can be perceived as heroes by colleagues or students with the same mind-set. Teachers and students in this culture are used to blaming others for their failures, humiliating students, gossiping about colleagues. Not every member of this culture has a toxic mind-set. A toxic culture may start as a subculture of a few negative members and evolve into a decision-making force. *„Members who have never experience more positive culture will think of a toxic culture as a normal one“ (Whitaker, 2015).*

## **2.5 The function of the Slovak schools nowadays**

The Slovak school represents a formal institution which is at disposal of tools allowing to acquire a general acceptable education. In holistic vie, school also represents a significant guard mechanism which secures the transmission the of cultural values in a society. The key functions of school include education and cultural values transmission in a society which the next generation should develop in their lives.

*“Culture and school are products of social evolution. School represents an implicit mediation of the patterns of activities which are typical for the institutions“ (Kaiser Kaiserová, 1993, p.69).* School is a polyfunctional and cultural creation supposed to maintain cultural values as well as its quality.

We consider education as one of the tools for future prosperity of an individual. School as an educational institution includes several functions in commitment towards the society. Authors of the pedagogical textbook Mr. And Mrs. Kaiser (1993) introduced functions of the school from which only those relevant to us are mentioned:

1. **Education function** – it is a key function of the school. An educational institution mediates information to a student who transforms information into knowledge. It's an interactive process between teacher and student. This function ensures the overall development personality. Acquired knowledge (competence) is a decisive factor in creating cultural capital, and it follows the achievement of social status in the society.
2. **Nurturing function** – it is a function which focuses on a balanced and harmonic development of a student personality in the way how the student thinks, how the student perceives morality, aesthetics, body, etc.
3. **Integrity function** – school as a social institution empowers individuals for the social life as well as for the role of the citizen which includes public and political responsibilities. School is a representation of the state and the student is involved in school which means entering the official structures of the state. The function is to introduce a political and legal affairs of the valid state constitution to the student.
4. **The function of forming personalities** – school as a formal institution helps to form character features of an individual and contributes to a forming harmonic and authentic individuals who are able to act independently and defend their opinion.
5. **Qualification function** – is a function which is responsible for mediating information and teaching abilities and habits necessary to acquire a qualification and diploma as the recognition for further education as well as profession.
6. **Selective and Differentiation function** – on the base of the student performance, and thus achieved results in the particular subjects, the student realizes differentiation and classification of the successful evaluation grades.

- 7. Socialization function** – school provides space for socialization. It's a secondary socialization tool after the primary socialization which is family.

**The secondary socialization takes part in:**

- a) Stability of the abilities and attitudes acquired in family.
- b) Differentiation of the acquired abilities and attitudes in terms of their complementation with the newly acquired information and knowledge.

- 8. Acculturation function**– *is responsible for transmitting information and cultural values. The function of school acculturation focuses on forming of an individual's thinking and acting (Obdržalek and coll, 2003, p. 26-28).* The function also includes education in cultural thinking and acting as well as in forming of cultivated personality.

Students from different families and different social stratifications live in diverse cultures and subcultures. Diverse cultures have different priorities, cultural patterns, preferences and different value order in the value ladder and have different impact on a society. The culture of the majority society is reflected in the content of the education in schools and is transmitted into particular subjects. State schools include the values in the education content which provide the transmission of the dominant culture. It needs to be mentioned that in case of students from different cultures may not understand the content of the education well due to the transmission of the particular culturally-typical values.

## **2.6 The quality of the Slovak school education**

The quality of school education is measured according to the quality of its main elements, such as teachers, students, and educational content. The main vision of school is to prepare the next generation for life in adulthood. In democratic societies, we expect that schools as social institutions ensure that all individuals will receive the same education. We have to underline that there is a bond between education and social stratification. It is an issue which is also known as equality of educational opportunities or education and social justice. According to Mrs. Cabanová, the equality of educational opportunities in any social stratifications is still relative, because schools are differentiated according to the

social stratification such as selective schools, elite schools, and public schools which produces an inequality.

The social status of an individual is destined based on the achieved education in meritocracy. It depends on individual effort, attitude and performance. We can find a continuing proportion between the level of education and the level of wage which refers to the standard of living. We can define that education as one of the key factors for an individual in the 21st century.

Many children in families do not have an optimal background which would stimulate their development opportunities. There are some children who bring their issues from home to. The vision of the school education in the democratic societies should be helping with and trying to overcome development difficulties which children who attend school might have.

Students' success at school in the Slovak culture is determined by the culture which the student comes from and by the social and economic status of the student's parents rather than the student's effort and hard work. The literacy research made by PISA (2004) pointed out a serious fact about the formal educational system: the schools are markedly selective. The international comparison also underlined the fact that there is not the same provision of the same education quality to all inhabitants as it is mentioned in the constitution of the Slovak Republic. The state does not fulfil the main criterion of the meritocratic society when individuals entering the maturity and self-sufficiency leave after finishing their studies. The educational opportunities began to be perceived as the basic human right and a chance for a better life in the second half of the 20th century.

The level of school education based on quality varies in certain regions. According to PISA research (2003), quality education is higher in cities. The range of the offered services by school decreases in cities with less than 15, 000 inhabitants (Rosa, 2004).

### **3. University of Economics in Bratislava (UEBA)**

At present, the University of Economics in Bratislava is the largest university in the Slovak Republic providing comprehensive education in economic and management study programs at all levels of study. Nowadays the UEBA includes seven different faculties.

#### **Mission of the University of Economics in Bratislava:**

*„The UEBA is the part of the European Higher Education Area and the common European Research Area (ERA). As part of this integration its mission is to provide a quality higher education in all three levels of university studies in the complex of economic and management curricula and selected study programs in the humanities and the informatics, to develop the knowledge based on the freedom of creative scientific research in economics, informatics, humanities and social sciences, and thus contributing to development of the knowledge society in Slovakia and in the European area.”*  
([www.euba.sk](http://www.euba.sk))

#### **Vision of the University of Economics**

The UEBA is one of the leaders in providing higher education and research in economics and management in Slovakia. The UEBA will be continuing with the proven level and quality of education, intensity and quality of research, successful application of its graduates in the labour market, especially in the Slovak Republic and the EU, active cooperation with socio-economic practice in promoting mutually beneficial knowledge transfer in creating a qualitative and effective network of international relations, achieving prestigious quality characteristics based on the results of national comprehensive accreditation of its activities and ongoing international accreditation results in the AACSB system, as well as on the visibility and effective communication of achievements in the relevant public, perceived and acknowledged as a modern and dynamic university comparable to major and generally respected higher education institutions of similar professional orientation at least in the region of Central Europe with a high professional and scientific-research level, reflecting the social responsibility, which is reflected in specific projects of cooperation with institutions and organizations in Slovakia and abroad.

## **Principles and values:**

In fulfilling its mission, the UEBA identifies the principles as follows:

1. Social responsibility in line with Slovakia and foreign countries.
2. Academic excellence and quality education.
3. Internationalisation of the activities.

The UEBA identified with values and principles of Magna Charter Universitatum. Official values are as follows:

- *moral integrity,*
- *awareness of social responsibility and its active implementation,*
- *applying the sense of duty, performance and quality at work and study,*
- *loyal attitude towards the University, institutional fellowship and public defence of its interests,*
- *the pursuit of continuous personal development and lifelong learning without distinction of position held at the University,*
- *innovation and creativity, a sense of teamwork,*
- *observance of the principles of professional ethics in relation to the University as well as to the external environment,*
- *interpersonal empathy, mutual respect and tolerance, willingness to lead constructive dialogue and discussion.*

### **3.1 Faculty of Applied Languages at the UEBA**

Faculty of Applied Languages of the University of Economics in Bratislava provides a high-quality education which includes a high level of communicative competence in two foreign languages, intercultural communication, fundamentals of economics, law and selected social science disciplines. In addition, the Faculty of Applied Languages provides teaching of foreign at all faculties of the University of Economics in Bratislava.

#### **Mission of the Faculty of Applied Languages**

The mission of the Faculty of Applied Languages is to provide higher education in humanities, to develop and disseminate knowledge, to educate professionals able to

succeed in the global labour market and thereby contribute to the development of contemporary society.

The mission of the faculty in individual areas ([www.faj.euba.sk](http://www.faj.euba.sk)):

### ***Education***

- *Provide quality and innovative higher education in attractive humanities and social science study programs, with an emphasis on the interdisciplinary nature of the study.*
- *Prepare competitive graduates from the humanities and social sciences programs to successfully respond to current labour market demands in both national and international contexts.*
- *Create conditions for the implementation of the doctoral study program.*
- *Offer continuing education in humanities and social sciences (rigorosum).*
- *Support students' practice in practice and business.*

### ***Science and research***

- *Focus on high-quality scientific and research activities in the field of humanities and social sciences.*
- *Promote publishing activities of faculty members with an emphasis on quality and international importance.*
- *Promote the qualification growth of faculty members.*

### ***International relations and cooperation***

- *Support the mechanisms of internationalization of education and academic cooperation.*
- *Establish and develop international cooperation with reputable foreign partners.*
- *Promote and participate in the creation of joint and double diplomas.*
- *Promote international mobility of teachers and students.*
- *To develop cooperation with external environment (institutions, organizations and subjects from socio-economic practice)*

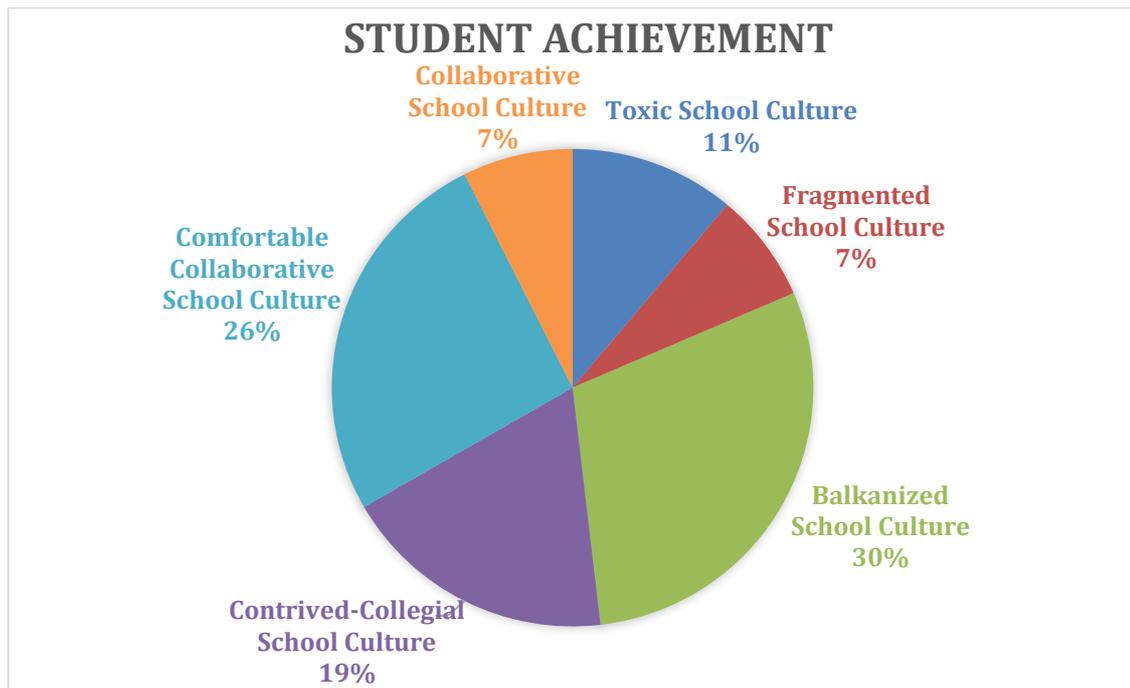
### **Vision of the Faculty of Applied Languages**

In 2019, the Faculty of Applied Languages will be continuing with providing a high-quality and attractive interdisciplinary higher education in accredited study programs. The faculty will be supporting scientific, research, project and publishing activities of its employees with an emphasis on the international dimension. It will create conditions for the qualification growth of its members and for the successful implementation of the study program at the third level of university studies. The faculty will continue to establish and develop international academic cooperation and actively cooperate with national and international practice. As a place of collaboration among teachers and students and the synergy of teaching and research, the faculty will consolidate its position as a dynamic and quality educational institution in the field of humanities and social sciences in the Slovak Republic, whose graduates will be able to succeed in the global labour market.

#### **4. Cultural Typology Activity**

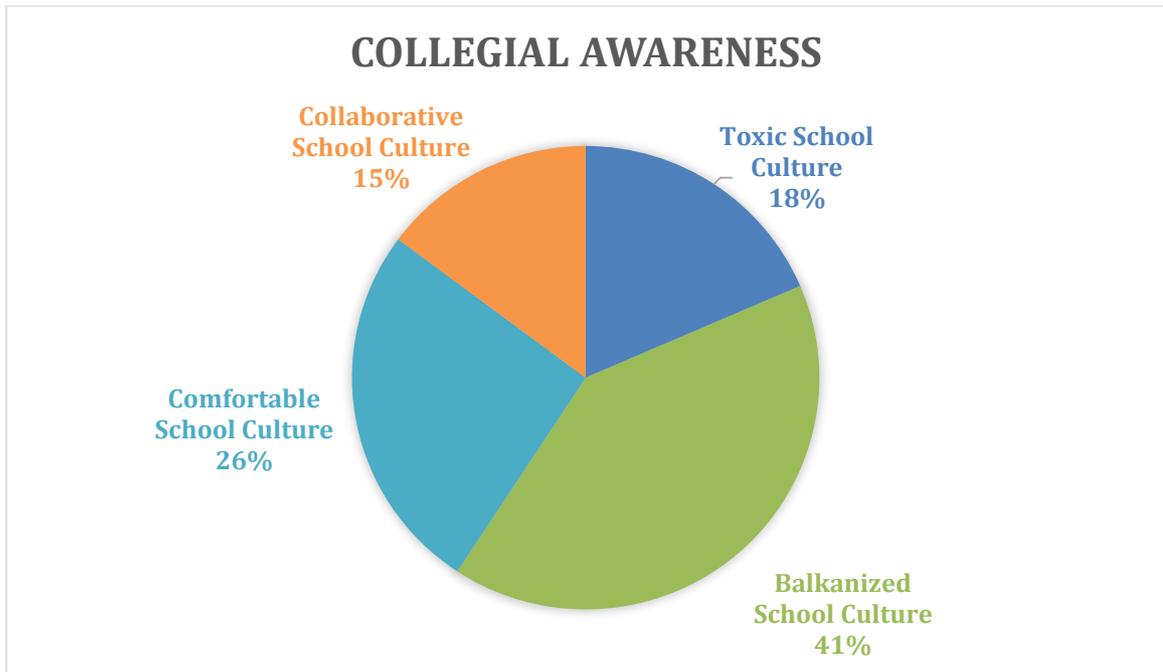
The practical part of the diploma thesis will be devoted to the Cultural Typology Activity developed by Gruenert and Valentine. It is focused on identifying what type of culture is present at the Faculty of Applied Languages with the intention to improve the school culture and provide some recommendations. The activity was targeted on teachers who teach students at a specific faculty and was adapted to our cultural conditions. The activity represented the nuances of the 6 different types of school cultures which were mentioned in more details in the previous chapter and required to determine the nuances which teachers observe and participate in at the faculty. The activity was anonymous and included 11 key aspects of school culture. Neither the name of the specific school cultures nor the specific aspects of the school culture were mentioned in the Cultural Typology Activity in order not to influence the teacher's decision-making. Teachers were supposed to choose one specific nuance in every aspect of school culture. The Cultural Typology Activity was translated into the Slovak language to be more comprehensible for most teachers at the determined faculty.

In total, 27 teachers out of 38 teachers participated in the Cultural Typology Activity. The aim of the first aspect of the school culture was focused on student achievement. We examined what type of school culture teachers used to observe and participate at the faculty which have an impact on the student achievement. The responses were different - eight teachers chose nuances typical for balkanized school culture (29,6%), seven teachers identified with nuances typical for comfortable-collaborative school culture (25,9%), five teachers agreed with the contrived-collegial school culture (19%), three teachers held the view that the toxic school culture is present at the faculty (11%), two teachers were for collaborative school culture (7%) and at the same time another two teachers agreed with the nuances from the fragmented culture (7%). The most frequently present nuances were related to the balkanized school culture, comfortable collaboration school culture and contrived-collegial school culture. As all possible options were chosen, we assume there are different subcultures present at the faculty – different departments, different professional orientation, different age or gender of the teachers. The results of this aspect of the school culture are illustrated in the Graph number 1:



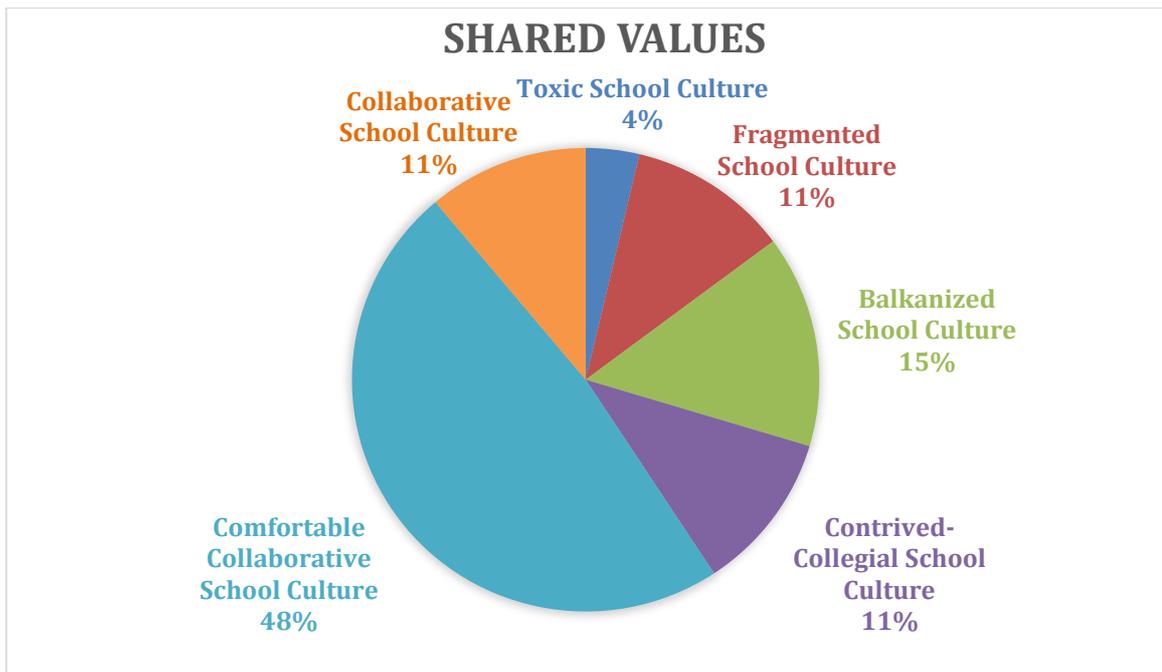
Graph number 1: Student Achievement

In the second aspect of the school culture, the thesis was focused on collegial awareness with the intention to reveal how much time teachers invest in learning from other colleagues for the purpose of improving their practice. In this aspect, only five out of 6 different school cultures were chosen compared to the previous aspect. Eleven teachers agreed with the nuance of the balkanized school culture (41%), seven teachers identified themselves with the nuance of the comfortable collaboration school culture (26%). Five teachers held the view that the nuance of the toxic culture (18%) is similar to the school culture at the faculty and at the same time four teachers chose the nuance of the collaborative school (15%) culture which is considered as the ideal type of school culture. We think that the discrepancy in responses related to choosing the opposites – the collaborative school culture and at the same time the toxic school culture for the same aspect – is caused by different experience from different subcultures as we mentioned earlier. The three most frequent school cultures in the aspect of the collegial awareness were followed – the balkanized school culture, the comfortable collaborative and the toxic culture. The results of this aspect of the school culture are provided in the Graph number 2:



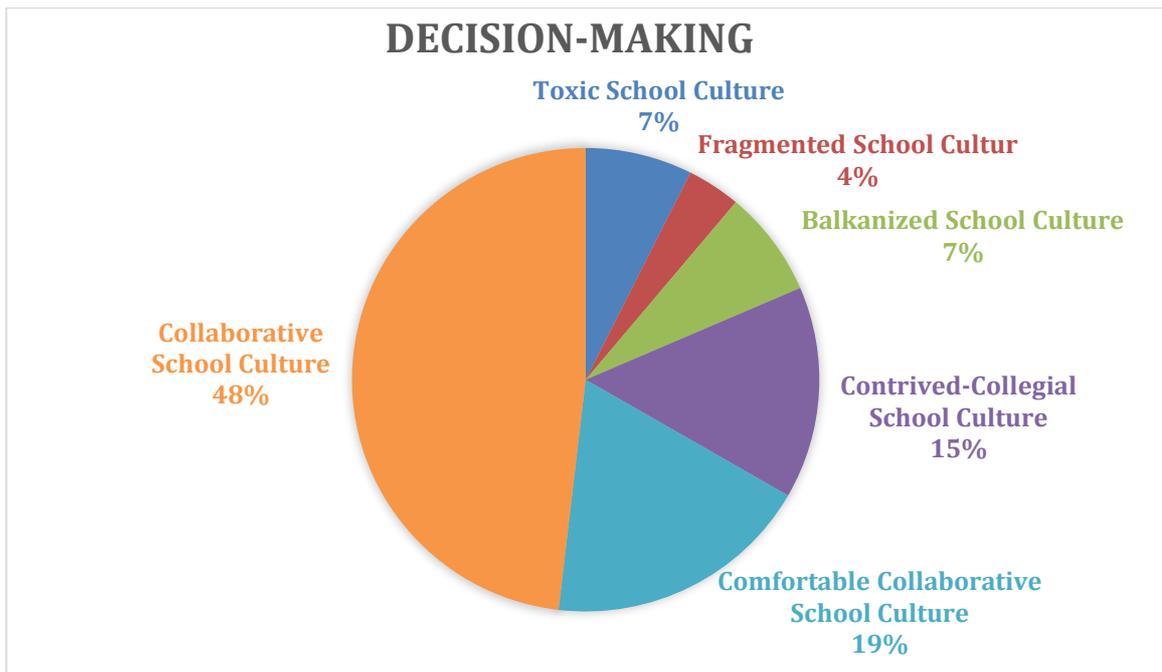
Graph number 2: Collegial Awareness

We examined the shared values as the third aspect of the school culture. We focused on what degree the teachers are identified with given educational values. In the aspect of shared values, each of the 6 school cultures was chosen by some teacher. The responses of the teachers were as follows – thirteen teachers responded with nuance typical for the comfortable collaborative culture (48%), four teachers were aligned with the balkanized school culture (15%), three teachers agreed with the collaborative school culture (11%), another three teachers were for the contrived-collegial school culture (11%), other three participants considered the fragmented school culture (11%) as the most similar to the present culture at the faculty and one teacher chose the toxic school culture (4%). Again, the results show a variety of subcultures at the faculty and their subjective perception. The most frequent responses were nuances from the comfortable collaborative culture and from the balkanized school culture. The results of the third aspect of the school culture are displayed in the Graph number 3:



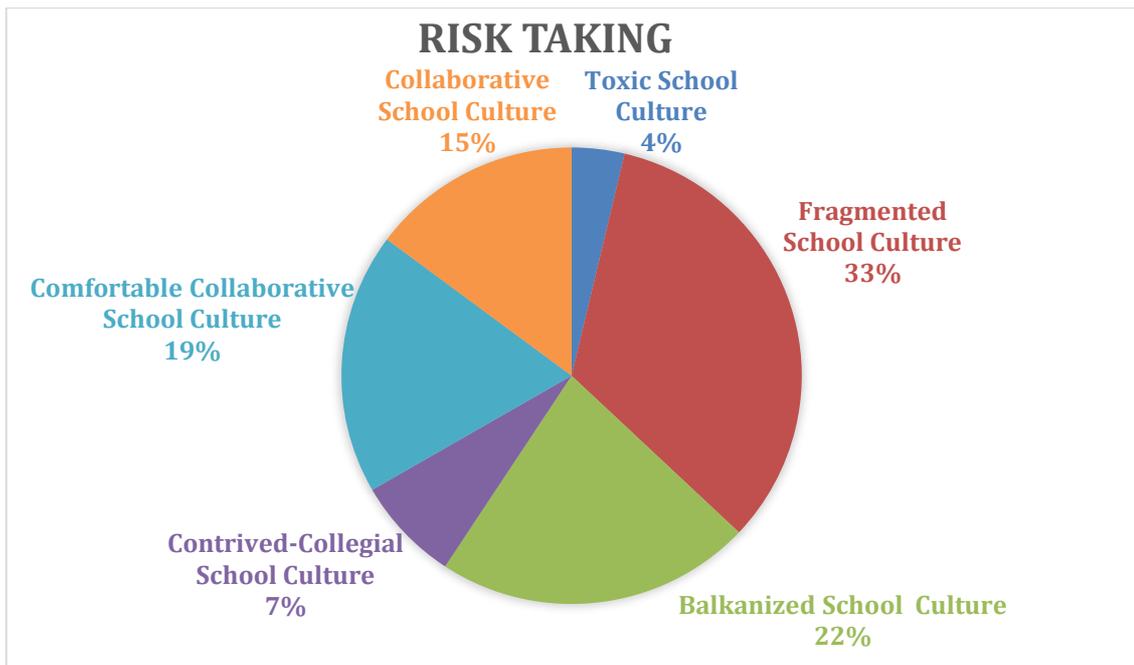
Graph number 3: Shared values

The fourth aspect of the school culture was aimed at decision-making. We examined the degree of participation at making a decision that affects student achievement. Again, all of the six provided cultures were chosen by some teacher. The results of the fourth aspect were as follows – thirteen teachers agreed with the nuance typical for the collaborative school culture (48%), five teachers found out that the comfortable school culture was similar to the culture at the faculty (19%), four teachers held the view for the contrived-collegial school culture (15%), two teachers were for the balkanized school culture (7%), other two teachers were considered toxic school culture as the proper one (7%) and the one teacher chose the fragmented school culture (4%). We can see that almost half of all the teachers considered the decision-making as one of the strongest aspects at the faculty, so, this strong culture should be seen in the student achievements. Also, we have to mention there are small numbers for the weak school culture such as toxic school culture, fragmented school culture and balkanized school culture which is very positive too. The results of the fourth aspect of the school culture are given in Graph number 4:



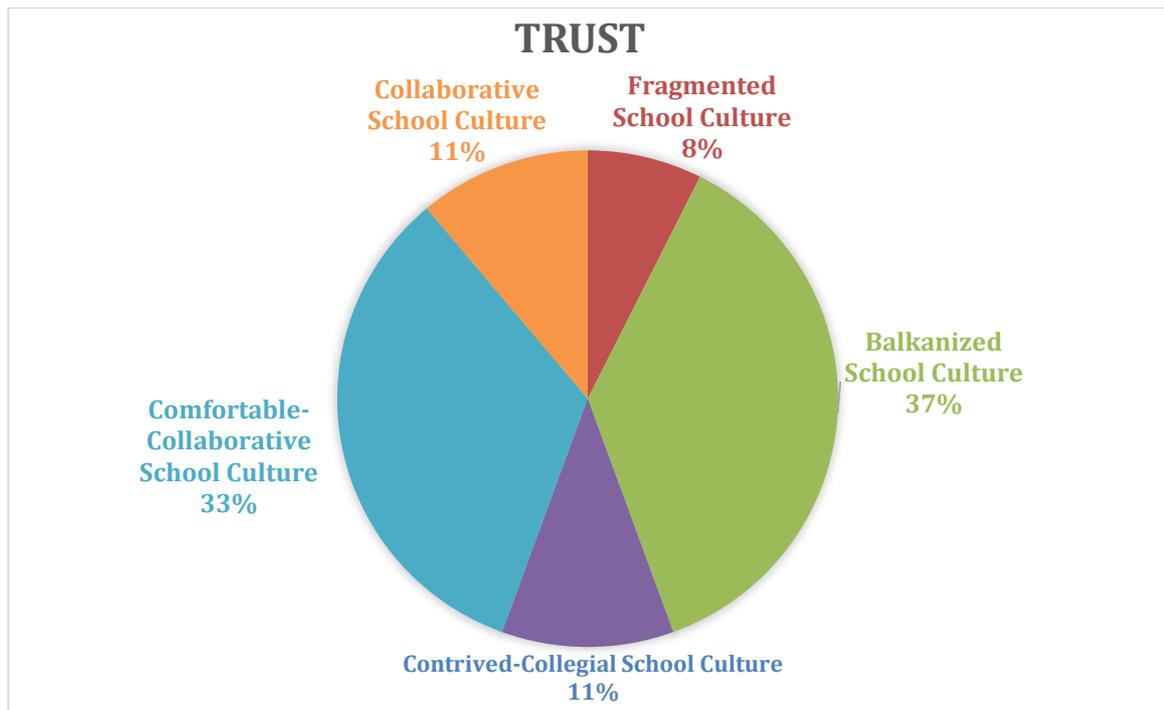
Graph number 4: Decision-making

The fifth aspect of the school culture was related to risk-taking. The research was focused on the degree of the teachers' experimenting with new ideas with the student. Again, all offered nuances of the different school cultures were chosen by some teacher. Nine teachers agreed with the nuances of the fragmented school culture (33%), six teachers considered the balkanized culture as the closest one (22%), five teachers identified with comfortable collaborative school culture (19%), four teachers chose the collaborative school culture as the proper one (15%), two teachers are aligned with the nuance of the contrived-collegial school culture (7%), one teacher was for the toxic culture (4%). Three most frequent responses chose the fragmented school culture, balkanized school culture, comfortable collaborative school culture. Risk taking is not a very strong aspect at the faculty in comparison with the decision-making. The results of the fifth aspect of the school culture are present in Graph number 5:



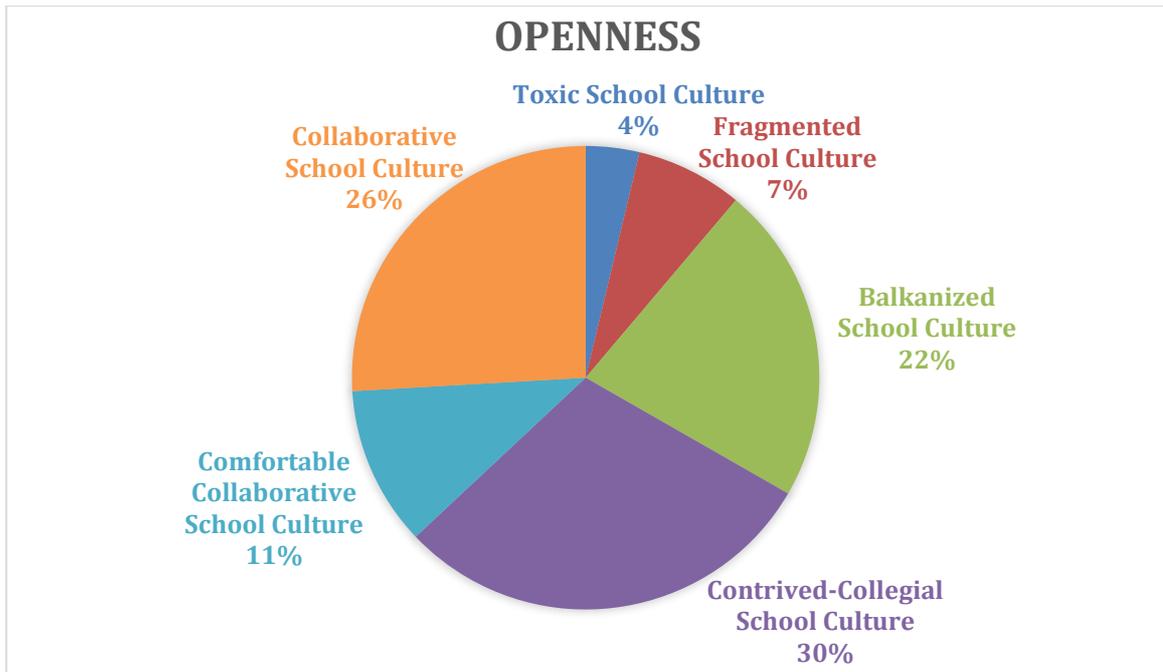
Graph number 5: Risk Taking

We considered trust as the sixth aspect of the school culture. We aimed at the level of exhibited trust among the teachers and between the teachers and the leadership at the particular faculty. In this case, the teachers chose only five suitable school cultures out of six. The balkanized school culture was the most suitable school culture regarding trust, it was chosen by ten teachers (37%), the second most suitable school culture was the comfortable-collaborative school culture preferred by nine teachers (33%), three teachers were in line with the collaborative school culture (11%), other three teachers were for the contrived-collegial school culture (11%). Two teachers were for the fragmented school culture (7%). There was no response for the nuance of the toxic school culture, which we considered very positive. Two most repetitive school cultures were the balkanized school culture and the comfortable collaborative school culture. The results of the sixth aspect are provided in the Graph number 6:



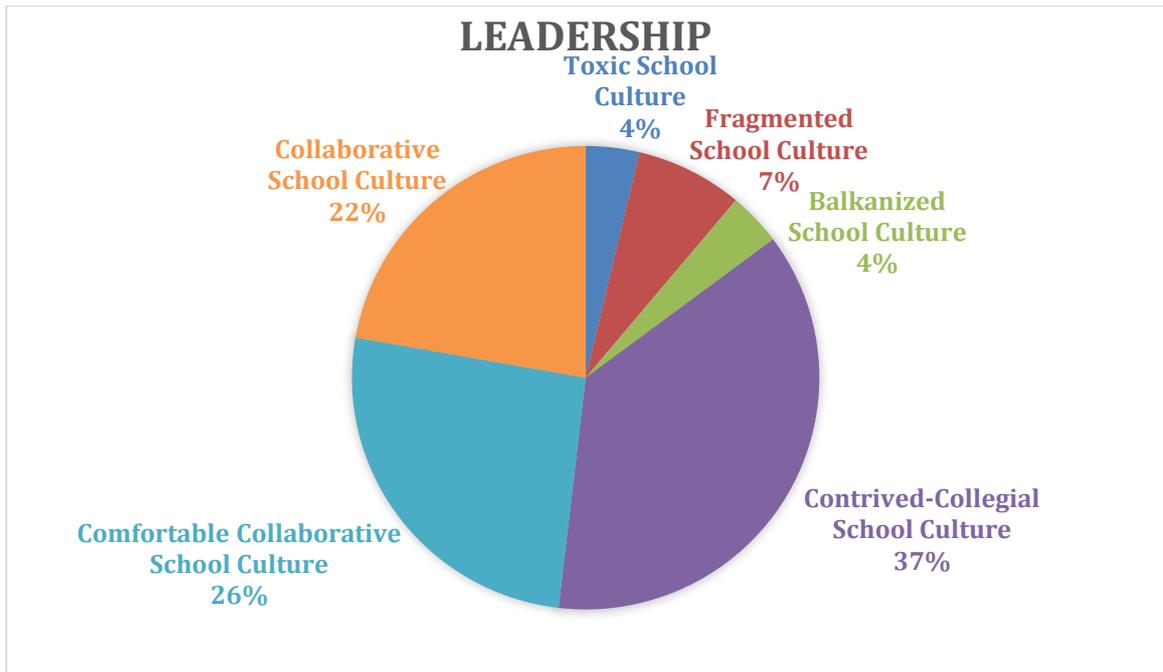
Graph number 6: Trust

We decided to consider openness as one of the aspects of the school culture to reveal whether a culture is merely comfortable or truly collaborative and ready to provide constructive criticism. Again, all offered nuances of the school cultures were chosen by some teacher which could reflect prevailing subjective perception of the teachers at the faculty. Openness was perceived by the eight teachers on the level of the contrived-collegial school culture (30%), seven teachers agreed with the level of openness of the collaborative school culture (26%), six teachers were for the balkanized school culture (22%), three teachers were aligned with the comfortable collaborative school culture (11%), two teachers held the view that fragmented culture is the closest one (7%), one teacher thought the toxic culture is the present level of openness at the faculty (4%). Three most frequent responses were nuances of the contrived-collegial school culture, the balkanized school culture, and the collaborative school culture. The results showed that a current culture has a really high level of openness. The results are given in Graph number 7:



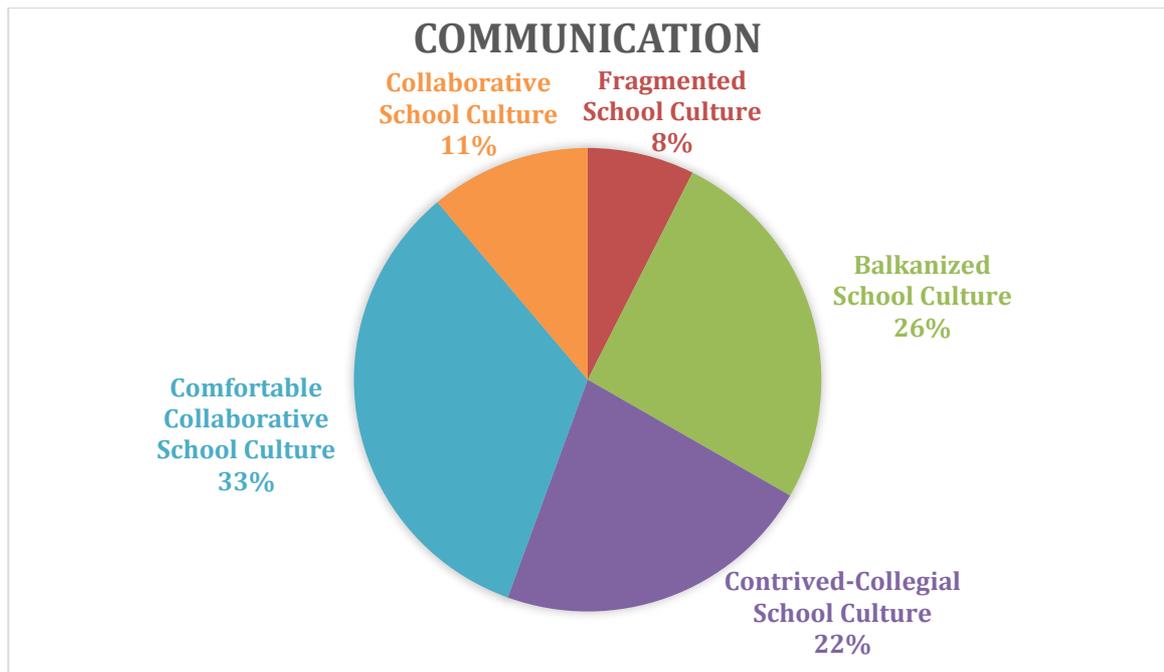
Graph number 7: Openness

In eighth aspects of the school culture we referred to the leadership at the faculty and its impact on the overall faculty improvement. The majority of the teachers, 10 teachers agreed with the nuance of the contrived-collegial school culture (37%), seven teachers chose nuance of the comfortable collaborative school culture (26%), six teachers identified with a nuance of the collaborative school culture (22%), two teachers were for the fragmented school culture (7%), one teacher held the view of the balkanized school culture (4%) and only one teacher thought about the toxic school culture (4%). Again, the responses showed that subcultures are present at the faculty as all possible school cultures were chosen by some teachers. But as we can see, the majority of the teachers agreed with nuances of three top school cultures, which is positive. We can conclude that the leadership at the faculty is perceived in a really positive way in relation to the overall faculty improvement by the majority of the teachers. The results of eighth aspects of the school culture can be seen in Graph number 8:



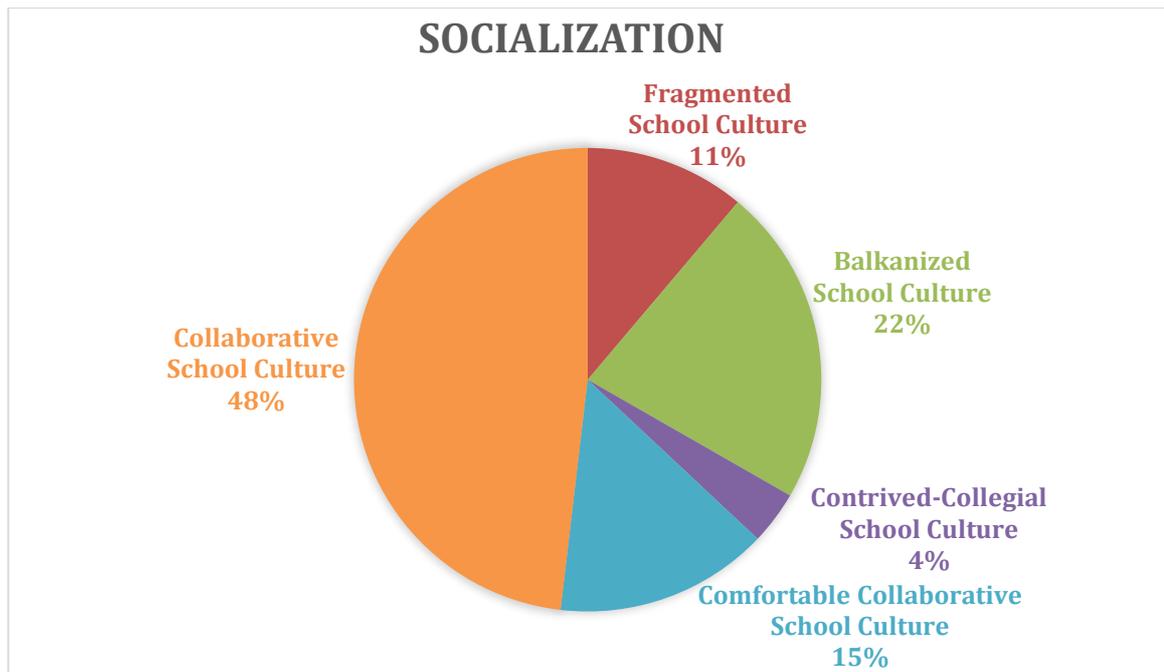
Graph number 8: Leadership

Aspect number nine referred to the communication among teachers and between teachers and the leadership. Nine teachers decided for the nuance of the comfortable collaborative school culture (33%), seven teachers were aligned with the nuance of the balkanized school culture (26%), six teachers agreed with the contrived-collegial school culture (22%), three teachers were for the collaborative school culture (11%), two teachers perceived the fragmented school culture as the closest one (8%). We can conclude that in this case, the option of the toxic school culture was not chosen, which is very positive. However, the most frequent responses were found between the balkanized school culture and comfortable school cultures, which we still consider very positive, but it showed a room for improvement as well. The results of the eighth aspect can be found in the Graph number 9:



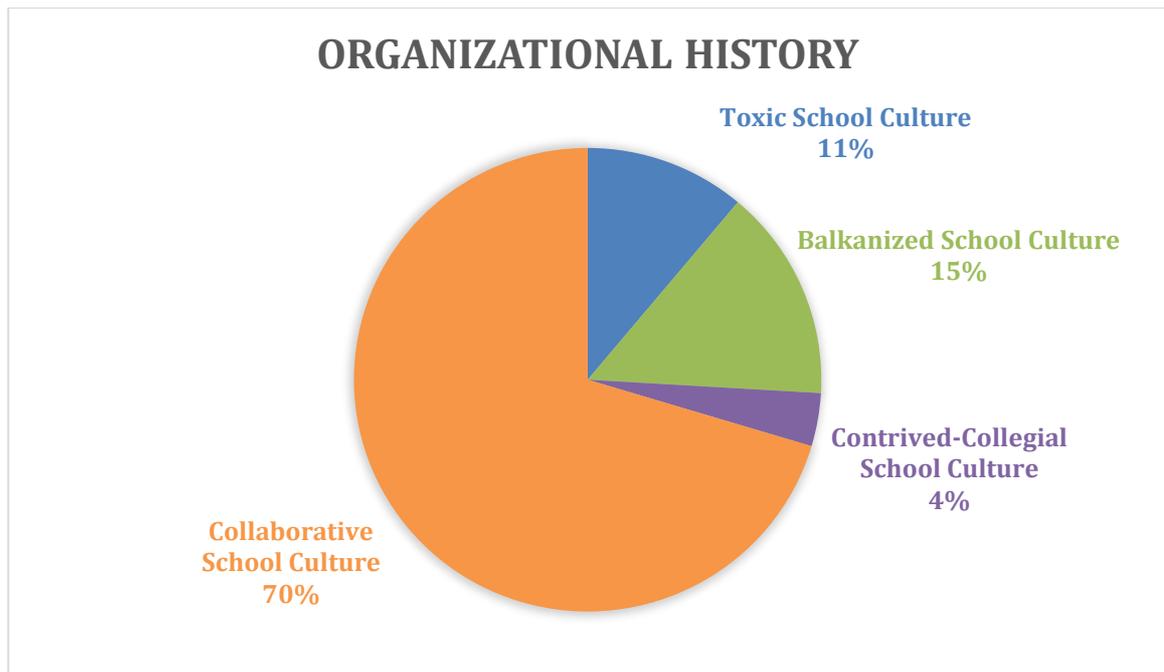
Graph number 9: Communication

The tenth aspect of the school culture was related to the socialization of new teachers. Thirteen teachers agreed with the nuance of the collaborative school culture (48%), six teachers identified with the balkanized school culture (22%), four teachers chose the comfortable collaborative school culture (15%), three teachers were in line with the fragmented school culture (11%), one teacher was for the contrived-collegial school culture (4%). In the aspect of socialization, the toxic school culture was not chosen, which is really positive. The highest number of teachers agreed with the ideal school culture which is also very positive. We can also notice that the most frequent nuances were chosen out of the collaborative school culture and the balkanized school culture. Between these two school cultures, there are two other school cultures which show that communication at the faculty depends on the particular subculture. The results of the tenth aspect are included in the Graph number 10:



Graph number 10: Socialization

The eleventh aspect of the school culture referred to organizational history. We examined how the past events and long-gone members of the school community have been influencing the present and future culture at the faculty. In this case, the majority of the teachers, which represented 19 teachers, elected collaborative school culture (70%). It represents the highest number of all the chosen responses in this Cultural Typology Activity. This number of teachers showed that the past events and the long-gone members at the faculty have had a really good impact on the faculty culture. Other four teachers were inclined to think that the balkanized school culture was the closest one (15%). Different three teachers agreed with the nuance of the toxic culture (11), one teacher identified the contrived-collegial school culture (4%). To sum up, we can see that the unbalanced faculty culture was conditioned by different subcultures referring to different professional orientation, different departments at the faculty, different age or gender of the teachers. In the aspect of organizational history, we can observe the clarity of the responses. Out of six possible options only 4 school cultures were chosen, which is really positive. The results of the aspect of organizational history are given in the Graph number 11:



Graph number 11: Organizational history

#### 4.1 Conclusion of the Cultural Typology Activity

Overall, we can conclude that there are different subcultures present at the faculty, as the responses have shown in the Cultural Typology Activity. The results showed a variety of subcultures present at the faculty which could be reflected by different departments at the faculty, different professional orientation, different age or gender. As we could see in the majority of the aspects of the school culture, the responses varied between the strongest and the weakest school cultures at the same aspect of the school culture which could point out the subjective perception of the teachers. But generally we evaluate the responses we received from the teachers very positively because the responses on different aspects of the school differed which showed the credibility of the responses.

The most frequent response was the collaborative school culture which was chosen by teachers 77 times in the Cultural Typology Activity, the second most frequent response was the comfortable collaborative school culture which was chosen by teachers 69 times in the Cultural Typology Activity, and the third most frequent response was the balkanized school culture which was chosen by teachers 65 times. We assume the results showed that the present culture at the faculty is at high level. However, there is difference of three cultures present between the collaborative school culture and the balkanized school culture which can refer to different subcultures at the faculty.

Considering the three strongest school cultures, the summarized results showed that the most frequent responses of the strongest school cultures were included with the following aspects of the school culture – leadership (23 responses), decision making (22 responses), organizational history (20 responses). As it is evident from the research, these 3 aspects of the school culture are in its best condition at the faculty at the moment.

Considering the three weakest school cultures, the summarized results showed that the most frequent responses of the weakest school cultures appeared with these aspects of the school culture – student achievement (13 responses), collegial awareness (16 responses), trust (16 responses) and openness (12 responses). We conclude that these 4 aspects of the school culture need more attention in order to improve the culture at the faculty.

The faculty has to pay more attention to those aspects of the culture which were identified with the high numbers of nuance of the toxic school culture such as – student achievement (3 responses), collegial awareness (5 responses), organizational history (3 responses). Two of these aspects, student achievement, and collegial awareness, correspond with the results from the previous paragraph from the high number of responses regarding the weakest school cultures. Faculty really needs to focus more on these two aspects to improve the student achievements and collegial awareness at the faculty. Moreover, an interesting fact was revealed – the collaborative school culture received the highest number just in the organizational history aspect but at the same time, the toxic culture received a high number in the organizational aspect as well, which showed the variety of different subcultures at the faculty.

#### **4.2 Recommendations for the school cultural change**

We consider culture as one of the key elements which has an impact on the organization performance, and also on student achievements. Furthermore, culture is conditioned by human factors as well as the overall institutional framework of the Slovak education system. Considering the above-mentioned factors along with the findings and identifications of the school culture through the Cultural Typology Activity at the Faculty of the Applied Languages, we provide the following recommendations for the school cultural change:

1. We identified that the school culture at the Faculty of Applied Languages has different subcultures varying across different departments, different professional orientation, different age or gender. We recommend administering Cultural Typology Activity to the particular departments to be able to focus on weaknesses of the particular group of people in order to manage it well.
  
2. We identified three strengths of the aspects of the school culture at the Faculty of Applied Languages – leadership, decision-making, and organizational history. We recommend building on these strengths. The majority of teachers consider the leadership of the faculty as one of the strongest aspects of the overall school improvement. We recommend continuing with the current school improvement, and we even recommend bringing new ideas and solutions for school improvement. The majority of the teachers expressed their satisfaction with the current leadership. The majority of the teachers expressed their satisfaction for being sufficiently involved in the decision-making regarding students. It shows that they perceive themselves as a part of a team at faculty. We recommend building on this aspect and involve teachers even more in the debates and discussions regarding the students. Moreover, the majority of teachers are content with the current status quo of the past events and long-gone members of the school community who have been influencing the present and future culture, and so the direction of the faculty. We recommend paying more attention to the events that have been happening at the faculty and honour people who are responsible for organizing the events and ceremonies.
  
3. We identified four weaknesses of the aspects of the school culture at the Faculty of Applied Languages – student achievements, collegial awareness, trust, openness. We recommend starting to work with these aspects as well. It shows the lowest scores compared to other aspects of the school culture. Regarding the student achievement, we recommend putting the emphasis on the self-reflection and self-evaluation of the teachers' practices. In case of collegial awareness, trust and openness, we recommend creating space in the form of regular meetings for teachers that would be aimed at sharing their best practices, professional struggles and learning to provide constructive criticism.

4. We identified three strengths (leadership, decision-making and organizational history) and four present weaknesses (student achievement, collegial awareness, trust and openness) of the aspects at the school at the Faculty of Applied Languages. We recommend that faculty would take both the strengths and weaknesses into consideration when dealing with the mission and vision at the faculty which are crucial in terms of cultural change of any organization.

## Conclusion

As humans, we are made to create culture. The way we perceive life, define relationships, communicate with others, treat family, lead, and think are all products of the cultures we come from, or the cultures we have worked to build around us. Culture is the result of learned behaviours that are driven by values. Values are the manifestation of the way that we view and experience life through our personhood.

The aim of the diploma thesis is to define values and their effects on school system in Slovakia. We focus on school culture present at the Faculty of Applied Languages at the University of Economics in Bratislava.

The first chapter dealt with the term of values. We introduced the meaning, the fields of its usage and exploration of values. We provided value classification by Mrs. Kučerová as well as the selection and the realization of the values. Also, we dedicated to norms and value ladder of an individual.

The second chapter dealt with culture in education. We defined culture and education system in Slovakia. We provided difference between school culture and school climate. We explained six different types of school cultures created by Mr. Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) and Deal and Kennedy (1999). We introduced elements of the school culture as well as the aspects of school culture.

The third chapter provided insight to the mission and vision of the University of Economics in Bratislava as well as the Faculty of Applied Languages.

The fourth chapter was the practical part of the thesis, we focused on analysing culture at the Faculty of Applied Languages in order to identify what type of culture is present at the Faculty of Applied Languages with the intention to improve the school culture and provide some recommendations. The analysis was made by the Cultural Typology Activity created by Mr. Gruenert and Valentine. The activity was targeted on teachers who teach students at a particular faculty. In total, 27 teachers out of 38 teachers participated in the Cultural Typology Activity.

Overall, we can conclude that there are different subcultures present at the faculty, as the responses have shown in the Cultural Typology Activity. The results showed a variety of subcultures present at the faculty which could be reflected by different departments at the faculty, different professional orientation, different age or gender. As we could see in the majority of the aspects of the school culture, the responses varied between the strongest and the weakest school cultures at the same aspect of the school culture which could point out the subjective perception of the teachers. But generally, we evaluate the responses we received from the teachers very positively because the responses on different aspects of the school differed which showed the credibility of the responses. We identified three strengths - leadership, decision-making and organizational history, and four weaknesses student achievement, collegial awareness, trust and openness of the aspects present at the school culture at the Faculty of Applied Languages. The faculty should take into consideration the results of analyses when dealing with the mission and the vision of the faculty because culture does not lead, people do. The mission and vision should be clearly defined on base of the current results to see changing culture as an advance for the faculty.

## Resumé

V dvadsiatom prvom storočí sa zdá, že organizačná kultúra nie je dôležitou témou. Čas plynie rýchlo, a preto vedenie uprednostňuje zamerať sa na iné veci, aby si udržalo dobré výsledky, než aby sa zameralo na kultúru. Organizačná kultúra je však dôležitým faktorom, ktorý ovplyvňuje výsledky organizácie. Kultúra sa prejavuje nielen rozhodovaní, riadení a strategickom plánovaní, ale aj vo všetkých podnikateľských funkciách a aktivitách, ktoré sa podieľajú na dosahovaní výsledkov organizácie. Na pracovisku ľudia často hovoria o organizačnej kultúre a organizačných hodnotách, ktoré odrážajú pracovné prostredie. Organizačná kultúra je súbor hodnôt, postojov, noriem a vzorcov správania v organizácii, ktoré významne ovplyvňujú výkonnosť a dlhodobý úspech organizácie. Kultúra v organizácii dopĺňa pracovný prospech každého zamestnanca a všetkých zainteresovaných strán. Pracovné vzťahy a pracovné procesy závisia aj od kultúry.

Cieľom diplomovej práce je definovať hodnoty a ich vplyv na školský systém na Slovensku, v práci sa zameriavame na školskú kultúru prítomnú na Fakulte aplikovaných jazykov na Ekonomickej univerzite v Bratislave. Práca je rozdelená do štyroch kapitol.

Prvá kapitola je zameraná na hodnoty. Definujeme význam a pôvod slova. Uvádžeme využitie hodnôt v rôznych oblastiach, klasifikáciu hodnôt podľa Kučerovej. Taktiež vysvetľujeme metódy výberu hodnôt a ich realizáciu v praxi. Môžeme konštatovať, že čokoľvek môže byť pokladané za hodnotu. Osoba, ktorá koná, aby uspokojila svoje potreby a je schopná ohodnotiť čokoľvek vo vzťahu k svojim potrebám, koná na základe svojich hodnôt. Hodnoty jednotlivcov ovplyvňujú ich správanie, konanie a vytvárajú kultúru okolo nich.

Druhá kapitola sa zaoberá kultúrou. Uvádžeme hodnoty európskeho vzdelávacieho systému, ktoré boli prijaté všetkými členskými štátmi v Európskej únii. Definujeme rozdiely medzi školskou klímou a školskou kultúrou. Opisujeme šesť druhov školských kultúr. Venujeme sa základným prvkom školskej kultúry a jedenástim aspektom školskej kultúry. Zameriavame sa na víziu, ktorá je kľúčovým faktorom pre zmenu kultúry v akejkoľvek organizácii.

V tretej kapitole opisujeme misiu a víziu Ekonomickej university v Bratislave, a taktiež misiu a víziu Fakulty aplikovaných jazykov na Ekonomickej univerzite v Bratislave.

Štvrtá kapitola je praktická časť práce, v ktorej analyzujeme školskú kultúru prítomnú na Fakulte aplikovaných jazykov so zámerom zlepšiť školskú kultúru a poskytnúť odporúčania. Výskum prebieha medzi učiteľmi formou dotazníka. Výsledky ukázali rozmanitosť subkultúr prítomných na fakulte podmienené rozličnými katedrami prítomnými na fakulte, odlišná profesijná orientácia, vekový rozdiel alebo iné pohlavie. Výsledky ukázali, že vo väčšine aspektov školskej kultúry boli rozličné odpovede. Odpovede kolísali medzi najsilnejšími a najslabšími školskými kultúrami v rámci jedného aspektu školskej kultúry, čo môže poukazovať na subjektívne vnímanie niektorých učiteľov. Vo všeobecnosti však hodnotíme odpovede, ktoré sme dostali od učiteľov veľmi pozitívne, pretože odpovede na rôzne aspekty školskej kultúry sa líšili, čo ukazuje na dôveryhodnosť odpovedí. Identifikovali sme tri silné stránky (vedenie, rozhodovanie a organizačnú históriu) a štyri slabé stránky (úspechy študentov, kolegiálne povedomie, dôvera a otvorenosť) aspektov, ktoré sú prítomné na Fakulte aplikovaných jazykov. Fakulta by mala brať do úvahy výsledky analýz pri riešení misie a vízie fakulty, pretože nie kultúra nás vedie, ale ľudia. Misia a vízia by mali byť jasne definované na základe súčasných výsledkov, aby sa kultúra zmenila na pokrok fakulty.

V závere diplomovej práce sú zhrnuté všetky kapitoly a výsledky z výskumu. Pri spracovaní kapitol využívame uvedenú odbornú literatúru a dôveryhodné internetové zdroje.

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# Attachment

Cultural Typology Activity developed by Mr. Gruenert and Mr. Valentin:

	TOXIC	FRAGMENTED	BALKANIZED	CONTRIVED COLLEGIAL	COMFORTABLE COLLABORATIVE	COLLABORATIVE
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT	<u>3x</u> Many teachers believe that if students fail it is the students' fault	<u>2x</u> Teachers usually do not discuss issues related to student achievement	<u>8x</u> Most teacher discussions related to student achievement are restricted to within departments, cliques, or close friends	<u>5x</u> Teachers are given time to discuss student achievement and are expected to use it for that purpose	<u>7x</u> Teachers are given time to discuss student achievement but spend most of this time giving one another advice	<u>2x</u> Teachers are given time to discuss student achievement and spend this time critically analyzing one another's practice
COLLEGIAL AWARENESS	<u>5x</u> Many teachers do not care about the effectiveness of other teachers	<u>0x</u> Most of the teachers are unaware of what other teachers are teaching	<u>11x</u> Most teachers are aware of only what their friends in the school are teaching	<u>0x</u> School leaders expect teachers to know what their colleagues are teaching	<u>7x</u> Teachers occasionally observe and discuss what their colleagues are teaching	<u>4x</u> Teachers seek out opportunities to observe and discuss what other teachers are teaching
SHARED VALUES	<u>1x</u> Values that many teachers share don't fit students' needs	<u>3x</u> There is not much agreement among teachers concerning educational values	<u>4x</u> There are small groups of teachers who share educational values	<u>3x</u> School leaders provide teachers with a list of school values	<u>13x</u> Teachers generally agree on educational values	<u>3x</u> Teachers strongly agree on educational values
DECISION MAKING	<u>2x</u> Decisions are easily made because many teachers don't care what happens	<u>1x</u> Teachers are usually not interested in participating in decisions that concern students	<u>2x</u> There are small groups of teachers who attempt to control all decisions concerning students	<u>4x</u> School leaders expect teachers to participate in all decisions concerning students	<u>5x</u> Teachers occasionally show an interest in decisions made concerning students	<u>13x</u> Teachers are expected to participate in decisions concerning students
RISK TAKING	<u>1x</u> Many teachers protect their teaching styles from "innovation"	<u>9x</u> Most teachers typically do not experiment with new ideas	<u>6x</u> Innovations are usually initiated within a single grade or department	<u>2x</u> School leaders mandate that teachers try new ideas	<u>5x</u> Teachers occasionally like to experiment with new ideas	<u>4x</u> Teachers are constantly looking for new ideas
TRUST	<u>0x</u> Teachers talk behind their colleagues' backs	<u>2x</u> Trust among teachers is not considered necessary	<u>10x</u> There are teachers who only trust certain colleagues	<u>3x</u> Teachers are placed in situations where they are required to trust each other	<u>9x</u> Trust among teachers is assumed and not a critical issue	<u>3x</u> There is strong interdependence among teachers
OPENNESS	<u>1x</u> Teachers who are committed to students and to learning are subject to criticism	<u>2x</u> Teachers usually are not interested in suggestions concerning instruction made by other teachers	<u>6x</u> Teachers usually keep their opinions about instruction among their friends	<u>8x</u> Teachers are expected to contribute to discussions about effective teaching at meetings	<u>3x</u> Teachers are occasionally open to giving or receiving advice concerning instruction	<u>7x</u> Teachers are very interested in their colleagues' opinions concerning instruction
LEADERSHIP	<u>1x</u> School leaders are seen as obstacles to growth and development	<u>2x</u> School leaders are not very visible in the school	<u>1x</u> School leaders frequently visit or praise the same teachers	<u>10x</u> School leaders monitor teacher collaboration	<u>7x</u> School leaders encourage teachers to give each other advice without being too critical	<u>6x</u> School leaders challenge ineffective teaching and encourage teachers to do the same
COMMUNICATION	<u>0x</u> School policies seem to inhibit teachers' abilities to discuss student achievement	<u>2x</u> Communication among teachers is not considered important	<u>7x</u> It is difficult to have productive dialogue with certain groups of teachers	<u>6x</u> Communication is dominated by top-down mandates	<u>9x</u> Warm and fuzzy conversations permeate the school	<u>3x</u> Any teacher can talk to any other teacher about teaching practice
SOCIALIZATION	<u>0x</u> New teachers are quickly indoctrinated by negative staff members	<u>3x</u> Teachers quickly learn that the school has an "every man for himself" culture	<u>6x</u> New teachers are informally labeled, then typecast as belonging to certain teacher cliques	<u>1x</u> There are many mandatory meetings for new teachers to attend	<u>4x</u> New teachers are encouraged to share their experiences with other faculty members	<u>13x</u> All teachers assume some responsibility for helping new teachers adjust
ORGANIZATION HISTORY	<u>3x</u> Teachers are quick to share negative stories about the school	<u>0x</u> "Teachers asking for help" has traditionally been considered a professional weakness	<u>4x</u> Some grades, departments, or teams consider their successes as separate from the whole school	<u>1x</u> School leaders have established strong control over much of what goes on at school	<u>0x</u> The school is known for its constant celebrations	<u>19x</u> There is an understanding that school improvement is a continuous issue
TOTAL:	Column A: <u>17x</u>	Column B: <u>24x</u>	Column C: <u>65x</u>	Column D: <u>43x</u>	Column E: <u>69x</u>	Column F: <u>77x</u>