

## **5. Lucia Sedlakova**

### ***“The corruption in the system of education in Slovak republic (special focus on corruption in Universities)”***

#### **Introduction**

My aim of this writing is to show the causes, continuities and results of the corruption in the system of education as well to formulate the frame proposals which have been provided to avoid this phenomenon. This writing is based on experiences and knowledge of the situation, statistic information and figures and statements of students.

The corruption in the system of education at the same time can not only be understood in the caste penalty-legal form, but in the broadest sense also as having advantage over individuals with detriment of other groups of inhabitants.

This writing consists of introduction, three chapters and conclusion. In the first chapter I describe relative briefly the system of education that is used in Slovak Republic. I find it necessary for the easier understanding of the problem of the corruption in the system of education in its broadest continuities.

The second chapter deals with corruption, its demonstrations and different ways of its use.

In the third section I present the solutions and alternatives of avoiding or reduction of corruption in the system of education of Slovak Republic.

#### **I. chapter**

If we want to know, where are the main roots of corruption in system of education from, we have to know how the system of education in Slovak Republic works.

The system of education in SR consists of three degrees. The first degree are basic schools, whose graduation is compulsory for all citizens of SR. The second degree are high schools which are divided into general schools and educational establishments. The general schools prepare students for studying on universities. Educational establishments prepare students for their jobs, e.g. as butcher, hairdresser, dressmaker etc. Of course, also these students after their graduation have chance to study on universities.

Universities are the highest degree in Slovak system of education. Students graduated on high schools have possibilities to announce and study on universities. Present legislative notices enable to give several applications for study on different universities. But real possibilities of universities enable to satisfy applications of all students interested in that specialisation of study. In this case, every university and their faculties organise entered exams, in many cases as tests. Students who passed these exams, become students of University.

We can see that these entered exams become the cause of existence of corruption. First of all, the big interest in study on universities and their too little capacities are assumptions of enlarging of corruption. More about demonstration and ways of using of corruption is described in the next chapter of my writing.

#### **II. chapter**

This chapter busies with concrete demonstrations of corruption in system of education. I tried to describe it on the base of statistics figures, newspaper articles and students' experiences.

General public can see demonstrations of corruption especially on universities. But we could not be surprised because there were about 96 thousands of applicants and only 32

thousand of them passed entered exams and were received for study on universities. About 2/3 applicants are unsatisfactoried. It means, if parents want to be sure that their children will be received for study, they “insure” it with money. So, money become an ordinary implement of enlarging and exercising of corruption.

The real existence of corruption in system of education is following. The new case from this year: somebody gives 100.000 Slovak crowns for receiving, but in spite of this he or she was not received for study. This information is from Ministry for education.

The other case: Ministry for education got a complain letter in which were names of people who sold tests before entered exams. It is very usual, we can find advertisements in newspapers in which somebody sells these tests (e.g. Tests on Faculty of law in Bratislava = 1.190 crowns, Faculty of law in Banská Bystrica = 1.290 crowns, Faculty of economy in Bratislava = 790 crowns, Faculty of economy in Nitra = 890 crowns).

These are only two well-known cases from this year. Ministry do not know about more cases, but it is known that parents give money to the “right person” and their children are received for study. I know it because these children brag with it. By this way we know the “price” of some specialisations of study □ from 10 thousands to 100 thousands. The best and most expensive specialisations in Slovak republic are economy, law and medicine.

Next demonstration of corruption is, when students who “payed to right person” get on the entered exams tests with marked right answers. Many people had chance to see it, I was one of them.

This is not only one way of existence of corruption. I read one newspaper’s article in which one american profesor described his experiences. He met In his 20-years pedagogical practice in USA only with 6 cases, when students wanted to corrupt him. When he come in Slovakia, he was shocked, when he found out that there is corruption extremly enlarged. He was there only 6 months but he met there with more than 10 cases of corruption.

These are only few latest cases of corruption. Me and all around know about it, so in the next chapter I tried to outline some ways how to avoid it or reduce it.

### **III. chapter**

In Slovak legislative notices corruption is defined as a criminal act. If police prove it, there will be next sanctions:

- if it is a little amount - the sanction could be finance penalty or 2 years in prison;
- if it is a bigger amount - the sanction is 5 years in prison.

Let me affirm, that this act is very imperfect. The difference between little and bigger amount is not fixed. Also there exists possibility of manoeuvring.

Almost everybody know about corruption on entered exams on universities but almost nobody avoids it. I suggest some alternatives:

Only a team of two or three persons should know questions which will be on the tests. In present time, it is the team of minimum 10-15 persons which is in my opinion too much. Minimum one member of this team can be corrupted, it is easier than if the team is of 2 or 3 persons.

The other suggestion is that the tests should be anonymous. When applicant comes on exam, he gets a number and this number will be also on the test. No name, only the number. Nobody will know this number, only the applicant. The teacher will not know whose test is controlled, and could not “help” to get a better results.

The other possibility is, when applicant writes a test, he should have the chance to see, how somebody corrects it. I think, the applicant should have the chance to control who corrects his test. After the correction, he should be satisfied because he could see that his test

was corrected right. But there also exists another problem - persons who control tests have to be very reliable and trustworthy.

Some faculties (about 5) do it by this way but it is too little, if we know, that there is more than 50 faculties in Slovakia. We, I mean students and also inhabitants of Slovak republic, should fight for the system of anonymous entered exams for study on universities which I suggest. We should try to make present system more honest and just and of course without corruption.

Some students are members of Senate of faculty and they have the chance to exert influence upon the system of entered exams. I am a senator of Faculty of political sciences and international relations, Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica and I can say that our system of entered exams is quite fair. Exams on Faculty, where I am a student, are anonymous, what is the first assumption of fair exams without corruption. But there are too many people in the team who prepare entered exams. The main aim of students and also other members of Senate of Faculty is to reduce this team which means to reduce the corruption.

## CONCLUSION

Corruption in present time does not know border of its extension. We can find it all over: in business, industry, architecture and also in system of education. It becomes a part of our daily lives. This negative phenomenon is unacceptable and we can not ignore it. It concerns the whole society and it is necessary to talk about it, but first of all we have to fight against it and try to avoid it. Of course, it is a long-lasting process and we should find its roots first of all in us. We should do it in the way we realise what is correct and what means are necessary to achieve it. It is never going to be ideal but in any case without corruption it will be more honest and just.

The worst of all is that people always perceive the corruption as current part of system, against which is unreal to fight by any way and to which is better to adapt for getting something, on what they have right without getting a graft (everybody has right on free education; education is accessible for every inhabitant of Slovakia □ Constitution of Slovak republic).

The problem of corruption does not mean that guilty are only persons who receive the graft. But guilty are also persons who give the grafts. If there is not an offer, there will be not an inquiry. It works also on the other hand: if there is not an inquiry, there will be not an offer. Simple rules of economy which are also the basis of existence of corruption.

On the basis of this, Slovakia is perceived as a country with intensiv corruption and clientelism. It will be never changed, if somebodies were offered and somebodies were inquired by the grafts. The system of checks and balances.

In my opinion, it is our moral duty to reduce extension of corruption and do it not only in the system of education, but also in whole parts of our lives.