A content analysis of the articles published in the journal Sociální pedagogika / Social Education from 2018-2020

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Abstract: This study analyzed the status and trends of research in the field of social education, by applying the method of content analysis to examine the articles published in one of the representative journals of the field, Sociální pedagogika / Social Education, from 2018-2020. Several articles were retrieved from the relevant database and examined based on seven themes, which include frequently used keywords, general aims, research type, research method, data collection methods, sample, and data analysis methods. The data obtained were recorded and analyzed using frequency and percentage. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that the prospects and shortcomings of the analyzed studies should be harnessed to expand the frontiers of knowledge in the field of social education in the future.

Keywords: social education, Sociální pedagogika / Social Education journal, content analysis

Obsahová analýza článků publikovaných v časopise Sociální Pedagogika / Social Education v letech 2018–2020

Abstrakt: Tato studie analyzovala stav a trendy výzkumu v oblasti sociální pedagogiky, přičemž pomocí metody obsahové analýzy zkoumala články publikované v letech 2018–2020 v jednom z reprezentativních časopisů oboru – Sociální Pedagogika / Social Education. V příslušné databázi bylo vyhledáno několik článků a ty byly prozkoumány na základě sedmi témat, která zahrnují často používaná klíčová slova, obecné cíle, typ výzkumu, metodu výzkumu, metody sběru dat, vzorek a metody analýzy dat. Získané údaje byly zaznamenány a analyzovány s použitím četnosti a procentního zastoupení. Na základě výsledků studie bylo doporučeno využít perspektivy a nedostatky analyzovaných studií k budoucímu rozšíření hranic poznání na poli sociální pedagogiky.

Klíčová slova: Sociální pedagogika, časopis Sociální Pedagogika / Social Education, obsahová analýza

1   Introduction

The field of social education is primarily geared towards meeting the unique and diverse needs of people who are dealing with various degrees of socio-pedagogical issues, such as bullying, neglect, social marginalization, and intimidation. In a like manner, social education provides support for youths who are dealing with various issues in the criminal justice system. The purview of social education also covers provision of better services for people living with disabilities, and provision of interventions to promote the wellbeing of people. Social education is a multidisciplinary field, which is primarily based on the educational development of individuals in the society, especially children and youths who are exposed to various degrees of social deviations or risks, through the use of various counselling techniques, leisure activities, home-school interventions, conflict management techniques and a host of other methods. In order to effectively design, develop, implement and evaluate the contents of social education curricula across various levels of the school system, social education research plays a seminal role in the formation and development of social education practices. The published literature of social education, such as monographs, conference proceedings, books, journal articles and a host of other forms, reflects the past, present and future trends of research findings and presents a broad view of the policy and practice of the field of social education. Given that journal articles are widely considered to be a valuable knowledge bank for any discipline or field of study, the field of social education is saturated with various academic journals. For instance, the International Journal of Social Pedagogy is also published by ThemPra in the United Kingdom, so as to promote scholarly discourse and the dissemination of information in the field of social pedagogy. Likewise, the Ibero-American Association of Social Pedagogy is responsible for the publication of the Journal of Research in Social Pedagogy.

In the Czech Republic, Sociální pedagogika / Social Education is published by the Faculty of Humanities, Tomas Bata University in Zlín. Sociální pedagogika / Social Education is an internationally recognized journal in the field of social education, which was first published in 2013 to facilitate the effective development of social education as a scientific field through the publication of research articles, book reviews and a broad spectrum of information on the field of social education and other related fields, such as sociology, social work, social pedagogy, special pedagogy and a host of other fields. Essentially, the journal reflects the historical development and trends in the field of social education in Central Europe, as well as in the global community at large. By promoting the development of theory and practice in the field of social education, the journal is internationally recognized as a medium for the dissemination of knowledge, research and scholarly opinions on various issues that are related to the development of individuals in various developmental periods. Sociální pedagogika / Social Education is published biannually and disseminated in several academic databases, including CEEOL, DOAJ, Research Gate, and OAJI.

In line with global best practices in the field of academic publishing, the journal operates an open access policy and provides CrossMark (CrossRef), DOI, and Similarity Check for published papers. Given that the field of social education is dynamic and broad, the trends of research being conducted by experts in the field of social education, which is published in Sociální pedagogika / Social Education from time to time, are increasingly being determined by the nature of individuals and the various issues that they have to deal with. Therefore, it is germane for various stakeholders who use the body of information published in the Sociální pedagogika / Social Education journal, for one purpose or another, to understand the general trends of the research articles, especially when analyzed based on germane components of research articles, such as keywords, general aims, research type, research method, data collection methods, sample, and data analysis methods. The present study, therefore, is a content analysis of the articles published in Sociální pedagogika / Social Education from 2018-2020.

1.1 Concept and direction of social pedagogy in the Czech Republic

In an attempt to address the diverse challenges posed by several forms of risk across various schools in the Czech Republic, the law is very clear about the inclusion of a school prevention methodologist or specially trained teacher, who is primarily tasked with the provision of effective counselling services in schools, as well as in educational counselling centres. However, the unprecedented development of Czech society in the 21st century, which could be attributed to technology, globalization, migration, and the provision of better welfare packages for citizens, along with the rapid transformation of the school system, has significantly changed the nature of children and youth in the school system and the associated risk behaviour in the school environment and in society at large. Hence, the work of a school prevention methodologist alone, as well as the duties of other professionals in the Czech school system, such as school psychologists, school counsellors and special needs teachers, cannot cater to the diverse needs of diverse groups of people in the Czech educational system, which, in turn, creates a need for the work of social pedagogues in Czech schools (Procházka, 2020).

The field of social pedagogy, which has been in existence for decades in the educational systems of many nations, such as Poland, Russia, Slovakia, and Germany, has been part and parcel of Czech schools for about twenty years, and is more appropriate and much-needed for the academic, psychosocial and motor development of school-aged children and youths (Čech, 2020). However, what social pedagogy specifically entails is highly debatable, and thus there is a growing debate on the exact definition or meaning of social pedagogy among schools in the Czech Republic, as well as a lack of consensus among stakeholders in the educational system of the Czech Republic on the job specification and exact duties of social pedagogues in the schools. From the perspective of Čech (2020), social pedagogy as a field is concerned with facilitating the effective socialization of children and the youthful population in a society, especially in relation to the prevention and management of risk behaviours. Kraus (2008) viewed social pedagogy as a very important part of the school system, one which is tailored towards fostering the psychosocial climate of the school for the optimal success of students. Thus, the scope of social pedagogy in schools covers the nature and dynamics of relationships between and among various stakeholders in the school, such as students, teachers and administrators, and other professionals, such as social workers, counsellors, and even the parents and community members.

For his own part, Hladík (2020) noted that the social pedagogue in the Czech Republic is a professional who has been trained to help students deal with varying degrees of risky behaviour and other factors in the social milieu of the school. Lending more credence to the foregoing, Hladík (2020) enumerated the professional responsibilities of social pedagogues in the Czech Republic to include educational activities, socio-educational and preventive activities, support, intervention and protection activities, counselling and mediation activities, re-education activities, analytical-diagnostic and screening activities, and coordination and organization activities. Čech (2007) also noted that the work of a social pedagogue is primarily based on promoting a healthier school environment for students, while forging comprehensive solutions to several academic and psychosocial issues in the school system. In the Czech Republic, various stakeholders and professionals have made concerted efforts to harness the potentials of social pedagogy to meet the changing and diverse needs of various citizens across different levels of the educational system. The Association of Educators in Social Pedagogy is the umbrella organization for several professionals and various institutions responsible for the certification and professional development of social pedagogues in the Czech Republic. In order to gain an appreciation of the importance attached to the work of social pedagogues in the contemporary Czech educational system, there is a need to point out that the Association of Educators in Social Pedagogy published the job specifications and specific responsibilities of social pedagogues in 2020. Thus, social pedagogues are professionally tasked with the responsibility of performing a plethora of diverse but related tasks in the school system, especially tasks related to pupils, school administrators, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents/caregivers, experts from counselling centres, members of the community, and significant actors in the society, such as police officers, authorities involved in the legal

and social protection of children, social workers, and experts in educational and psychological counselling centres and child- and youth-based organizations, along with a host of others. The Association of Educators in Social Pedagogy is also an organization that regulates and oversees the implementation of the social pedagogy programmes at several universities in the Czech Republic. Thus, the nine universities offering social pedagogy as a degree programme in the Czech Republic have one or more representatives in the association.

1.2   Review of literature

The development of knowledge in a given discipline is primarily a function of the published literature, which significantly shapes the discipline itself by reflecting the relevant research trends, patterns of scholarly communication and ideas, and indeed the overall historical development of the field. Thus, just as it is obtainable in other fields of study, the vast and ever-growing body of research in the field of social education is commonly published in journals as articles (Chang et al., 2010; Lee et al., 2009; Sökmen, 2021). Such articles, therefore, are vital platforms for scientific collaboration and the communication of ideas, and for the much-needed exchange of ideas, knowledge, wealth of experience and current developments in the field of social education. In other words, for the furtherance of research in social education, journal articles play a key role in the dissemination of research findings among scholars and other people, especially in view of the fact that journals present a broad view of the current trends in the body of knowledge in a given field (Tiryakioğlu, 2014). Social education journals are, therefore, vital vehicles for the publication of various ideas, theories and current practices, as well as formal mediums of communicating the ideas and works of various scholars among various people. Generally, various methods are used for data collection in qualitative studies, including interviews, focus group discussions, observations and document analysis (Creswell, 2013). In a like manner, content analysis is a widely used method of document analysis, which is often employed to extensively define the essence and hidden meaning of data based on some stipulated rules and summarized categories. Content analysis is, therefore, a systematic method of presenting a text based on pre-determined rules or smaller categories of contents. Likewise, content analysis is a comprehensive summary of published data intended to explain the previous studies and shape future studies (Gülbahar & Alper, 2009).

Content analysis has also been defined as the reduction of data into specific concepts, which makes it much easier for researchers as well as readers of research to succinctly describe, quantify, understand, and analyze a phenomenon in well-defined terms characterized by various conceptual systems, models or categories (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Schreier, 2012). Content analysis also refers to a pre-determined classification of a body of information in an objective and systematic manner, which facilitates the effective drawing of well-informed inferences from the salient points in a broad spectrum of verbal or written materials (Neuendorf, 2011). By so doing, content analysis ensures the further breaking down of a body of information into specific units, which could be better understood by the readers when viewed based on specified criteria. Thus, content analysis is essentially carried out in a series of independent but related steps, which comprise data collection, definition of the unit of analysis, development of a particular coding scheme and categories, consistent assessment and coding scheme for a text, making of inferences based on the coded data, and reporting of the findings (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). Content analysis also refers to any attempt made by researchers to make sense of qualitative data by identifying key meanings and consistencies, which are also known as themes or patterns. Content analysis, which is a widely employed research method in qualitative studies, includes the planned, systematic and thematic analysis of a body of literature based on identified categories, intended to facilitate a broad understanding of various studies or research conducted on various concepts and issues in a specific field or area (Camnalbur et al., 2013; Khakpour, 2012). Content analysis also implies the presentation of published works in concise categories that are essentially premised on pre-determined or specified rules (Cavanagh, 1997).

Broadly, there are three types of content analysis: meta-synthesis, meta-analysis and descriptive content analysis (Çalık & Sözbilir, 2014). All in all, the extant literature has generally analysed the contents of various journals by focusing on selected input or output factors. The input factors of journals focus specifically on authorship patterns, such as author affiliation and the number of authors. On the other hand, the output factors are based mainly on the methodologies employed in the articles, the length of the articles, and a host of other factors (Cooper & Schindler, 2008). In view of the importance of content analysis to past, present and future research efforts, various forms of content analysis have been carried out by different scholars in different fields. For instance, Sökmen (2021) carried out a content analysis of various articles related to the field of social education. Specifically, the study made an attempt to analyse content including authorship pattern, year of publication, research methods, purpose of the study, data collection methods and sampling techniques. The findings of the study indicated that interview was the most utilized method of data collection, while the commonest sample group was secondary schools students. In another study, Tiryakioğlu (2014) examined a total of 85 studies published within the period of 2004-2013 in the Ankara University Special Education Journal and found that most of the articles were theoretical in nature, while the qualitative method was employed for conducting most of the studies considered.

For his own part, Chu (2017) carried out a content analysis of various social studies textbooks that were published over a period of twenty years and concluded that even though the quality of the textbooks has significantly improved over the years, there are still various methodological issues touching upon the selection of sampling strategies, psychometric properties of the coded variables, data collection and analysis techniques. Yalçin (2016) analysed the contents of 358 articles published in the selected measurement and evaluation journals and found that the most commonly studies concept was differential item functioning, while the R software was extensively employed for data analysis of the covered articles. Jordaan et al. (2013) also carried out a content analysis of the articles published in the South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences from 2004-2010 and reported that about 20% of the articles were written by international authors; a quantitative research design was widely employed, while non-probability sampling designs were largely employed in the selected studies. Eğmir et al. (2017) analyzed the contents of articles published in the International Journal of Instruction and concluded that most of the studies were carried out using quantitative research methods and purposive sampling techniques, while data were collected using scales and analysed with descriptive statistical tools. Based on the foregoing, it appears that there is a paucity of related studies in the field of social education, especially those that specifically focus on content analysis of articles published in the Sociální pedagogika / Social Education journal from 2018-2020. In order to fill the identified gap in the literature, the present study seeks to investigate the articles published in Sociální pedagogika / Social Education from 2018-2020.

2   Methodology

This study focused on a content analysis of articles published in the Sociální pedagogika / Social Education journal from 2018-2020. Generally, the journal publication is broadly categorized into various areas, which include the editorial section, article, interview, review, information, newsletter, discussion, and social pedagogy as a study programme. However, the present study focused on the studies presented in the articles section from 2018-2020. Specifically, five articles were published in volume 6, number 1 of the year 2018, while three articles were published in volume 6, number 2 of the year 2018. In the year 2019, three articles were published in volume 7, number 1, while six articles were published in volume 7, number 2. Likewise, nine articles were published in volume 8, number 1 of the year 2020, while eight articles were published in volume 8, number 2 of the year 2020. Taken together, a total of 28 articles were published from 2018-2020. However, 20 articles were selected for the present study, because of their relevance to the focus of the work. The method of content analysis was employed to analyze 20 studies published in the Social Education journal from 2018-2020.

The study was conducted using content analysis, because it presents a panoramic view of the vast volume of literature and trends of research in the field of social education, so as to provide a relevant reference point for future research. A Research Classification Form, which contains seven components, such as keywords, general aims, research type, research method, data collection methods, sample, and data analysis methods was used for data collection. Thus, a total of 20 research articles on social education published in the Social Education journal from 2018 to 2020 were selected from several electronic databases, such as Research Gate and EBSCO. Thus, relevant articles published in English and Czech were analyzed. The data collected from the Research Classification Form were transferred to SPSS, and a descriptive statistical tool (percentage) was used to analyze the various themes.

2.1   Research questions and hypotheses

The main purpose of this study is to analyse the contents of articles published in the Sociální pedagogika / Social Education journal from 2018-2020. Thus, this study sought answers to the following questions concerning these articles:

1. What are the frequently used keywords?
2. What are their general aims?
3. What are the types of research used?
4. What are the research methods used?
5. What are the data collection tools used?
6. What is the sample group used?
7. What are the data analysis methods used?

3   Results

As indicated in Table 1, a total of 103 keywords were used in the articles published in the Sociální pedagogika / Social Education journal from 2018-2020. Frequently used keywords were broadly categorized into specific groups, including special-education-based (12, 12%), psychosocial-based (26, 25%), work-based (12, 12%), research-based (8, 8%), internationalization-based (5, 5%) and others (20, 19%). Typical examples of special-education-based keywords in the articles include inclusive education, child with special educational needs, person with disability, work integration of people with disabilities, inclusion, students with disabilities, and inclusive environment. Therefore, one could deduce from the foregoing that the field of social education in the Czech Republic focuses on special-needs students in the school system and in society at large. To this end, several studies have been carried out to explore the prospects and challenges of special-needs education in Czech schools and society, especially from the perspective of critical stakeholders such as school principals, parents, social workers, and experts in inclusive education.

Table 1
Percentage distribution of articles based on keywords

Keywords	N	%
Special-education-based	12	12
School-based	16	16
Home-based	4	4
Psychosocial -based	26	25
Work-based	12	12
Research-based	8	8
Internationalization-based	5	5
Others	20	19

In the Czech Republic, concerted efforts are currently being made by experts and professionals to make sure that the social pedagogue becomes an official member of the school personnel. In light of this, it is not surprising that most of the keywords in the published articles are school-based. For instance, school principal needs, school principal attitudes, English, preparation for school, primary school, social work students, academic performance, pupils, career choice, education, school, alternative school, and family-school co-operation are commonly used in the studies as school-based keywords. This implies that the trends of research in the field of social pedagogy in the Czech Republic are increasingly being tailored towards an examination of the wellbeing of various actors in the school environment, such as pupils, teachers and school administrators. This line of thinking is supported by the view of Hladík (2020), who noted that social pedagogues in the Czech Republic are professionally tasked with the responsibility of making sure that school-aged children are able to effectively deal with a plethora of academic and non-academic issues, especially children who are prone to risky behaviours.

Furthermore, one could infer from Table 1 that some of the keywords used in the articles are based on the psychosocial development of children and adolescents in the Czech Republic and other nations. In this regard, some of the keywords include self-efficacy, attitudes, prejudices, fear, psychological capital, narcissism, psychopathy, violence, crime, physical and mental strain, self-concept, self-esteem, socialization, socio-pedagogical interaction, pedagogy of tolerance, spirituality, empathy, sociocultural capital, and motivation for education. Therefore, this implies that the field of social education in the Czech Republic currently focuses on the effective socialization of pupils and adolescents in the school and in society. This is in line with the view of Kraus (2008), who averred that a social pedagogue in the Czech Republic plays an integral role in the school system, especially with regard to the provision of a healthy psychosocial climate for the students and of other human resources in the school system. Based on the foregoing, it could be concluded that the field of social education in the Czech Republic is being developed to cater to the psychosocial development, economic viability and international mobility needs of special-needs students and regular students in the school system, as well as other individuals in the society. Therefore, it goes without saying that the trend of research in the field of social education in the Czech Republic, Central Europe and indeed across the world would tend to be based on topics related to the identified keywords.

Table 2
General aims of the articles

The general aim
Outline the perspectives of social workers on self-efficacy in the field of the current care system for children at risk.
Determine the most common difficulties with home preparation experienced by children from families consisting of partners who come from different cultures.
Investigate the needs and attitudes of school principals concerning inclusive education in regional networks of schools.
Study parents' experiences with inclusive education.
Examine the prevailing attitude of Czech society toward integrating people with disabilities into working life.
Study the barriers to the inclusion of social workers in multidisciplinary teams.
Study the personal traits of students under the conditions of an inclusive educational space.
Reflect on the study abroad process and experience for three Czech social pedagogy students from the Faculty of Education at Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic.
Investigate the relationship between psychological capital and the academic performance of social work students.
Measure the relationship between environmental literacy and selected variables (gender, grade and leisure activities).

Study the learning process and outcomes in Grand Challenge courses, and the role of Global South partners in influencing such processes and outcomes.

Examine the differences in Dark Triad traits with respect to students´ professional intentions.

Analyze the socio-cultural diversity of organizations in education.

Analyze the validity of data on the prevalence of children's deaths that are alleged to be directly related to alcohol use by the caregiver.

Examine changes in clients' self-concept during adventure therapy in therapeutic communities for drug addicts.

Examine the social and pedagogical aspects of the development of inclusive education.

Present partial results of the project "Towards Gender-Sensitive Education".

Investigate the spirituality of pedagogues in traditional and alternative schools.

Examine the parental perception of the primary education of pupils of Russian and Ukrainian origin.

Find out why seniors study in U3A courses at selected faculties of Charles University.

As can be deduced from Table 2, all the studies have general aims, most of which cover different areas of social education and other related fields. All in all, all the general aims are focused on various issues and concepts concerning specific and broad aspects of the educational process as well as the wellbeing of other people in out-of-school settings.

Table 3 shows that 11 (55%) of the articles employed a quantitative research type, 8 (40%) of the articles used a qualitative research type, and one (5%) of the research studies was carried out using mixed methods.

Table 3
Percentage distribution of articles based on research type

Research type	N	%
Quantitative	11	55
Qualitative	8	40
Mixed methods	1	5

Table 4 indicates that the most-used data collection method is survey (15, 75%); other data collection methods include case study (3, 15%), experimental (1, 5%) and combined (1, 5%).

Table 4
Percentage distribution of articles based on research method

Research method	N	%
Survey	15	75
Case study	3	15
Experimental	1	5
Combined	1	5

Table 5 shows that the most-used data collection tool is the questionnaire; other tools used for data collection include interview (4, 20%), published documents (3, 15%) and combined tools (5, 25%).

Table 5
Percentage distribution of articles based on data collection tools

Data collection tools	N	%
Questionnaire	8	40
Interview	4	20
Published document	3	15
Combined tool	5	25

Table 6 indicates that most of the studies (8, 40%) sampled a group of students. 3 (15%) were carried out on family members, 2 (10%) on social workers, 1 (5%) on principals, 1 (5%) on citizens, 1 (5%) on non-government organizations, 1 (5%) on clients, 1 (5%) on published documents, 1 (5%) on teachers, and 1 (5%) on caregivers. This implies that social pedagogues in the Czech Republic have to perform many separate but related functions for various individuals in the school system and in the society, which includes students, family members, teachers, school administrators, NGOs, caregivers, social workers, and a host of others. This finding is supported by the view of Procházka (2020), who noted that social pedagogues in the Czech Republic work with other school professionals to make sure that students are not socially at risk, both in the school and outside the school environment.

Table 6
Percentage distribution of articles based on sample group

Sample group	N	%
Social workers	2	10
Family members	3	15
Principals	1	5
Citizens	1	5
Students	8	40
Non-governmental organizations	1	5
Clients	1	5
Published documents	1	5
Teachers	1	5
Caregivers	1	5

Table 7 indicates that nearly half of all the articles used thematic analysis (8, 40%). Also, as one can easily deduce from Table 7, inferential (4, 20%), descriptive (2, 10%), mixed (3, 10%), trend (1, 5%) and content analysis (2, 10%) are the preferred data analysis methods in the published articles.

Table 7
Percentage distribution of articles based on data analysis methods

Data analysis method	N	%
Thematic	8	40
Inferential	4	20
Descriptive	2	10
Mixed	3	10
Trend	1	5
Content	2	10

4　Discussion

Journal publications play an integral role in the formation, development, dissemination and continuation of research in the field of social education. Therefore, the present study was done to analyse the various contents of articles published in one of the most widely read social education journals. Thus, Sociální pedagogika / Social Education was selected for the present study because it has been active for many years, and a plethora of research studies have been presented through the platform of the journal by several authors from the Czech Republic and in several nations around the world. Indeed, gaining an insight into the trends of the contents of the journal over the years will provide a concise picture of the research trends and development of the field, especially in view of the fact that various areas of social education are increasingly being studied by numerous researchers from time to time. This study focused on the articles published in the Sociální pedagogika / Social Education journal between the years of 2018 to 2020 from the perspective of the utilized keywords, general aims, research type, research method, data collection methods, sample, and data analysis methods. The findings emanating from the analysis of the contents of the various articles indicated that the most frequently used keywords are related to special education, psychosocial issues, work, research and internationalization. This implies that this set of keywords represents the various areas of research that have been covered by different researchers in the field of social education within the period under consideration. Moreover, this finding suggests that special education is a unique aspect of the field of social education, which has been under the spotlight of research for years in the Sociální pedagogika / Social Education journal.

This finding is in line with that of Barthel and Seidl (2017), who studied the keywords of various articles in the natural and social sciences in the Scopus database and concluded that an examination of keywords facilitates the discovery of the salient meaning and characteristics of published literature in a field of study or discipline. The findings also indicated that the field of social education is increasingly faced with a broad spectrum of issues and challenges, which invariably precipitates related general aims in various studies. Thus, it can be said that the general aims of the analyzed articles are in line with the general aims of social education, namely to raise responsible citizens who are capable of being functional members of society. When the result presented in Table 3 was examined, it showed that most of the studies were quantitative in nature. This finding could be attributed to the various advantages of conducting quantitative research, which makes it easier for researchers in the field of social education to resort to its use in their studies. This finding concretizes that of Eğmir et al. (2017), which concluded that quantitative research methods were employed for the conduct of several studies in the International Journal of Instruction. However, it should be noted that some of the studies were also carried out using the qualitative research type, which facilitates the gathering of in-depth data in the field of social education, thereby making up for the various shortcomings of quantitative research. This finding is in tandem with that of Sökmen (2021), who found that the qualitative research type was widely used in various articles published in the field of social studies education from 2016-2019.

Based on the finding, it is therefore necessary for future researchers in the field of education to employ the use of more robust research types, such as the mixed research type, which has the merits of the quantitative and qualitative research types, while making up for the demerits of both forms of research. When the studies were examined based on the theme of data collection method, it was observed that the survey methodology was the most commonly used method, while others methods included the case study, experimental, and combined methods. It therefore follows that the survey method is popular among the various researchers and scholars who have conducted different studies in the field of social education as published in the Sociální pedagogika / Social Education journal from 2018-2020. Furthermore, the findings indicated that the questionnaire is the most used data collection tool. Given that most of the analysed articles were quantitative studies of the survey type, it is not surprising that questionnaires were widely used for data collection, since the questionnaire is one of the most used data collection tools in survey studies. The results also indicated that students were the most utilized sample unit, while others included family members, NGOs, clients, published documents,

teachers and caregivers. This therefore implies that students were preferred as samples by various scholars in the field of social education from 2018-2020. One could, therefore, speculate that students were sampled by the various studies because they are generally perceived to be the most convenient and easily accessible to the researchers. Table 7 indicates that nearly half of all the articles employed the use of thematic analysis (8, 40%). Also, as one can easily deduce from Table 7, inferential (4, 20%), descriptive (2, 10%), mixed (3, 10%, trend (1, 5%) and content analysis (2, 10%) are the preferred data analysis methods in the published articles.

4.1 Conclusion

This study analysed the contents of various articles in Sociální pedagogika / Social Education from 2018-2020, especially in terms of frequently used keywords, general aims, research type, research method, data collection methods, sample, and data analysis methods. Based on the findings, it was observed that most frequently used keywords were related to special education and other areas which represent the contemporary aims of social education. In addition, most of the studies were surveys, and were quantitative in nature. Furthermore, it was observed that student sample groups were most commonly included in the studies. Moreover, it could be concluded from the findings of the study that various data analysis methods were employed in the sampled articles.

4.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the present study, the following recommendations are proffered: (i) future researchers in the field of education should focus on the wellbeing of special-needs pupils and students in the school system, especially the psychosocial development of school-aged children; (ii) the publishers and editors of the journal should continue to encourage and motivate authors and researchers to conduct studies in the field of social education. Such studies should facilitate the understanding of the current research trends in the field of social education and, consequently, the expansion of knowledge in the field of education as a whole.

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