Research Paper

Issues of Roma Education in Light of Interrelations of School Theories between 1978 and 1998

Peter Bogdan

Abstract

This study places emphasis on school theories, particularly on school models developed over the centuries. In consequence of that the starting points for this writing were the so-called school theories and school typologies, respectively that such publications were published by László Gáspár, Ottó Mihály and László Zrinszky, I had to start from their texts during the writing of my paper. According to the methodology used here it will be analyzed, based on the school theory (school typology) framework mentioned above, that between 1978 and 1998, in Hungary, what kind of education theory models were associated with different school types and how the models of education theory were represented in the different school types or in the “other” category (if the given educational phenomenon could not be categorized into a single school type). According to the results of the analysis: There were educational schools, work-oriented schools, traditional schools, progressive schools, revolutionary schools and market schools in Hungary between 1978 and 1998. The Kádár-regime supported the “socialist idea of man”, and thus it neglected to emphasize Roma children’s ethnicity. Still, besides the assimilating traditional school, the segregating educational school model based on black pedagogy, which took ethnicity into consideration practically, also prevailed. Moreover, the concept of integrative education, which is characteristic of market schools, also appeared in the public mind. This means that those who thought in strategies and theories of Roma education did not always follow (either in their writings or in practice)

According to the basic assumption of the research, I was referring to the people with a „Roma” label in that case, when they declared themselves belonging to the Roma ethnic group and when, at the same time, they were considered by the external environment too as Roma persons.

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the mainstream tendencies set by the administration, but deliberately turned against them. After the regime change, the integrative education model flourished while segregation still remained, suggesting that although the current state education policy accepts the concept of no segregation, reality fails to meet expectations under the democratic system just as it did in the socialist era.

**Keywords:** school theory, school typology, theory of education, education of Roma children
Introduction

The issues surrounding Roma education are represented in Hungarian pedagogical literature in terms of education theory, management, and sociology. Experts in education theory use experimental and theoretical methods to seek an answer to the question: how can we create an environment for learning and education for Roma people that is effective from the point of view of social and labor market integration? For this reason there have been written numerous pedagogical articles that describe Roma education development programs, school experiments, non-curriculum educational and teaching forms, but in this writing they will be ignored, because one the one hand I have already summarized them from the viewpoint of the alternativity in one of my papers with the title: Innovative endeavors in the Roma education in Hungary (In: Edit Bodonyi, Judit Györgyine Koncz (eds.), Modern alternative schools. p.120. Budapest, ELTE Eotvos Publisher, 2012, pp.93-112.), on the other hand, during my present research, I was interested in: what was the relationship like between the school typologies (forming the part of school theory) and the models of education theory from the aspect of Roma children, that is, It places emphasis on school theories, particularly on school typologies developed over the centuries, and investigates the following questions in light of the history of pedagogy: 1. In the conceptual framework of the state as responsible for education, which school types were supported or tolerated in Hungary between 1978 and 1998, according to the literature? 2. What was the image of Roma people in the school typologies preferred by the state? What framework was provided for the pedagogical and public education professionals who were aiming to find a solution for the problems surrounding Roma education? 3. How and to what extent did the offered or compulsory forms of schooling affect Roma people in the practice; that is were the officially recognized school types purely privileged, or could any school model that went against the official position also prevail?

Limiting this inspection to the 1978-1998 period is justified by the historical arc of Hungarian pedagogy spanning from the 1978 reformation of the curriculum through Ferenc Gazsó’s public education act, the democratic transition in 1989-1990 and the 1993 act on public education, to the introduction of the National Core Curriculum in 1998.

Due to the broad nature of the topic (the basics of the theoretical background and relevant information on Roma people can be found in pedagogical journals from the 20-
year period), the author limited the research framework as follows: The theoretical background is outlined for the 1978-1998 period, while the actual data comes from papers published between 1978 and 1987 in the journal *Public Education (Kozneveles)*. This journal was selected because it was operated by the Hungarian administration during this period, making it the forum for “semi-official” discussion regarding the education of Roma people. It is only considered “semi-official” as not only did the journal publish opinions rooted in public educational policy, but it also totally opposed “private” opinions. (This study, as an experiment of thought, is an integral part of a comprehensive and ongoing research (future dissertation) applying press history tools. At this stage of the research, the journal *Public Education (Kozneveles)* was a ministerial magazine publishing mostly quality publications that, in large number of copies, was accessed by all schools and - according to the feedbacks - was read in the “teacher rooms” in their own time. I assume rightly – and I certify it during the closing of the research – that its content proportions – according to the mission of the journal – necessarily represent the issues raised by the given years both in education policy and in education or as problems of the everyday practice, because 601 writings appeared in the columns between 1978 and 1998, which can be linked to the Roma issue in some form).

Chapter 1 – Literature Background

1.a. Literature of School Theory (School Typology)

In consequence of that the starting points for this writing were the so called school theories and school typologies, respectively that – in a philosophical narration - for the mentioned period and age such publications were published by Laszlo Gaspar, Otto Mihaly and Laszlo Zrinszky, I had to start from their texts during the writing of my paper.

The three authors did not directly address the issues of teaching and education of Roma children. In their educational policy writings these topics did not play a clearly marked role. They approached the reality on other abstraction levels, that is, they tried to formulate theoretical models for the whole history of schooling.

Despite the above mentioned facts, I consider this method to be a viable one, because in the center of the life work of all three authors were not only the struggle for equitable education and the theoretical thinking of equal opportunities, but their richly demonstrated commitment (which has also prevailed their practical and experiment leader work) as well both in terms of social solidarity, integration and multiculturalism. (Cf. Otto Mihaly, Opportunities for human quality – Pedagogical studies, p.486, OKKER Publications – Foundation for School Development, Budapest, 1999; Laszlo Gaspar, School issues, p.211, OKKER Publications, Budapest, 2003; Zrinszky, 2000).
However, it can also be stated, that the literature on school theories regarding school typology from the 1978-1998 period is remarkably poor. (Apart from the works of Otto Mihaly, Laszlo Gaspar, Laszlo Zrinszky, relevant writings are not very much found in Hungarian). The domestic books and papers on the topic outline school theories in purely general terms and do not provide any specific school typology. This only allows us to conclude the school types in an indirect way, based on individual cases as they describe a school model. Nevertheless, we can state that they did not consider the nature of their relationships with the strategies regarding the teaching and education of Roma students. Were they integrated in the general trends, or did they deviate from them? I also had to include the literature on Romani studies in order to interpret the era after the regime change\(^\text{25}\) (Forray R., Hegedus T., 1990; Szoke, 1998a; Szoke, 1998b; Takacs, 2009), as although these works do not focus primarily on school typology, they nevertheless suggested, expected and elaborated conceptions in school theory, the very core of which was: the Hungarian teaching and education system should be adapted in some way to the special characteristics of Roma children.

In this study, the analysis is based on the school typologies elaborated by Laszlo Gaspar and Otto Mihaly.

In his work written with Elemér Kelemen, the History of education based on problem history (Neveléstméret problematorteneti alapon), Laszlo Gaspar distinguishes three school models and provides the dates of their appearance: 1. instructional school (focusing on automatic teaching and the memorization of information), 2. educational school (taking the individual personalities of children into consideration, focusing on education rather than rote learning), 3. work-oriented school (aimed at teaching students to work).\(^\text{26}\)

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Instructional school & Educational school & Work-oriented school \\
\hline
The middle of the 17th century & The end of the 19th century – the beginning of the 20th century & The beginning of the 20th century \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{School typology of Laszlo Gaspar}
\end{table}

According to the classification given by this education expert, instructional schools emerged in the middle of the 17th century, and “they might have been “progressive” in the 17th-19th centuries, but by the 20th century they had become a hindering factor that limited the full development of human capabilities due to their unilateralism and rigidity.\(^\text{27}\) At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the formation of

\(^{25}\) In this paper the concept of „regime change“ means the elimination of the dictatorial and socialist regime, led by Janos Kadar, and the establishment of a democratic system between 1989 and 1990


the next school type, educational schools was most likely the consequence of this. According to Gaspar, this school model "conveys an extended - multi-faceted and differentiated pedagogical content rather than a narrow one. By organizing a comprehensive community life practice, it allows the students to learn (...) and to live together with others independently (...). Besides broadening knowledge, it includes skill improvement and the development of scientific attitudes (...) and the (...) organization of activities is not only flexible and based on the needs of the child but it premises – and evokes – self-motivated cooperation on the part of children, the pupils. Children take an active part in organizing their own school life." 28

Another reaction to the dysfunctionalities of instructional schools at the beginning of the 20th century was the emergence of work-oriented schools, where: "the core elements of the pedagogical content were organized around the requirement to 'learn to work'” 29, but the "active participation in work and collective activities, and processing together the work and life experiences gained this way" 30 was also important.

Otto Mihaly used a different approach to school typology than Gaspar, distinguishing not three, but four historical and theoretical school models. 31

Table 2. School typology of Otto Mihaly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The school as a “service station”</th>
<th>The school as a “greenhouse”</th>
<th>The school as a “device”</th>
<th>The school as a “market”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional school</td>
<td>Progressive schools</td>
<td>Revolutionary schools</td>
<td>Agora schools (schools based on negotiation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The child as an empty “vessel”</td>
<td>The child as a plant</td>
<td>The child as the agent of changes in society (the “architect of the new man”)</td>
<td>The child as a problem-solving “broker”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: authors’ own source

According to Otto Mihaly, traditional schools try to convey knowledge as well as traditional values and norms. The teacher gives a presentation, the student will respond and the pedagogue evaluates the amount and quality of the learned information. 32 Progressive schools are different in the way that they aim to evoke the desire for knowledge. Students learn according to their individual interests and authority is only minimally present. Decisions are made by consensus and problems are solved in a democratic way. Students choose their subjects and learning activities.

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29 Ibid. p. 76.

30 Ibid. p. 76.


32 Ibid. p. 132.
Students ask questions and teachers answer, with the whole point of the process being to fully develop the students’ abilities “within their personality”.\(^\text{33}\)

Mihaly states that the aim of revolutionary schools is to make changes in society, and one way to achieve this is through the students. Students learn the basic revolutionary doctrines, with the emphasis being on social and political self-awareness and on direct participation in the “revolutionary transformation of reality” as educational activities affecting the personality. The pedagogue is responsible for how indoctrinated his students will be.\(^\text{34}\) On the other hand, the *market school or the school of the agora* is built on cooperation and bargaining between adults and students, where the latter individually join activities that have been defined together with the pedagogue. This type of school is characterized by cooperation, mutual dependence and formal and informal norms. The community and parent are also involved in decision making.\(^\text{35}\)

1.b. Literature of School Typology and Education Theory

The literature on Hungarian school typology does not discuss issues of ethnicity, contrary to the radical critical literature on American pedagogy, which was closely connected to the idea of “revolutionary schools” for the education of African- and Latin-Americans.\(^\text{36}\) In light of this, the analysis of the relevant Hungarian literature revealed that the models and strategies of Roma education presented in *Public Education (Kozneveles)* need to be interpreted in the context of the theoretical and historical (school typology) models of Laszlo Gaspar and Otto Mihaly.

Based on the reviewed literature, *instructional schools* were no longer typical between 1978 and 1998 (even though *traditional schools* have a lot in common with them), while *educational schools* were present (Mihaly, 1999a), as were *work-oriented schools* – thanks to Laszlo Gaspar’s school experiment at Szentlorinc, which surpassed the failed “polytechnical” educational efforts of the Khrushchevian era (Torgyik, 2004). By their nature, *traditional schools* were part of the pedagogical practice due to the philosophy of the socialist power - essentially because of its regressive conservative pedagogical beliefs aimed at protecting the establishment. At the same time, *progressive schools*

\(^{33}\)Ibid. p. 133.

\(^{34}\)Ibid. p. 134.


(Kereszty, Polya, 1998), revolutionary schools (Takacs, 2009) and market schools\(^\text{37}\) (Takacs, 2009, Szoke, 1998a, Szoke, 1998b) were also typical between 1978 and 1998.

Regarding the management of Roma education, from the literature it can be concluded that between 1978 and 1998 we can talk about assimilation\(^\text{38}\), segregation\(^\text{39}\), progressive pedagogical reforms\(^\text{40}\), revolutionary pedagogy\(^\text{41}\), inter- and multicultural pedagogy\(^\text{42}\) as well as alternative pedagogy\(^\text{43}\), inclusion\(^\text{44}\) and integration\(^\text{45}\).

### Chapter 2 – Relationship of School Typologies and Models of Education Theory

Based on the characteristics and aims of the school types described above, the education model of assimilation mostly fits into the framework of the traditional school type, while the education models of inter- and multiculturalism and the education principles of integration and inclusion fit into the framework of the market school. The educational institutions applying progressive pedagogies – naturally – fit into the type of progressive schools, but between 1978 and 1998 there was a school for socialist education and work socialization as well, respectively there was a nationality school too for national renewal, which covered the type of revolutionary school.

*The education model of segregation* does not fit into the school typology of Otto Mihaly. We might believe that it belongs to the type of traditional school, but when there is

\(^{37}\) A note to the reader: when describing the model, the term “market” does not mean that school services are to be paid for; rather, it is a metaphor comparing the continuous bargaining between pupils and educators to the interactions taking place on a market.

\(^{38}\) In this paper the concept of „assimilation” means the dissolution of the Roma ethnic group in the non-Roma majority society

\(^{39}\) In this paper the concept of „segregation” means the artificial separation of Roma children from non-Roma peers by classes reserved only for Roma students

\(^{40}\) In this paper the concept of the „progressive pedagogical reforms” means the critique of the „traditional school” and means a pedagogical trend that innovates the teaching methods of the „traditional school” according to the principles of a reformer pedagogue

\(^{41}\) In this paper the concept of the „revolutionary pedagogy” means a pedagogical trend that includes radically new pedagogical approaches and the idea of a „new man”

\(^{42}\) In this paper the concept of the „inter- and multicultural pedagogy” means a pedagogical trend that teaches children of different cultural and socio-cultural backgrounds to appreciate each other’s culture, and it means as well, that this pedagogical approach puts the children into interactive relationships by its own teaching methods

\(^{43}\) In this paper the concept of the „alternative pedagogy” means the critique of the „traditional school” and means a pedagogical trend that (instead of the principles of a reformer pedagogue) innovates the teaching methods of the „traditional school” according to the principles and goals of other initiators (parents, teachers, NGOs)

\(^{44}\) In this paper the concept of the „inclusion”means a personalized, inclusive school education.

\(^{45}\) In this paper the concept of the „integration” means the integration of the Roma ethnic group into the non-Roma majority society in a form that preserves its original cultural characteristics
segregation, conveying knowledge is not as important as it would otherwise be. Therefore, however strange it seems, it mostly belongs to the line of educational it (with a strong ideology of commitment to socialization), but in a way – in this sense opposing Gaspar – that involves the application of black pedagogy.  

In light of this, and considering that no pedagogical concept focusing on economical production specifically for Roma students was established between 1978 and 1998 in Hungary, we may associate the education theories with the types of schools as follows:

Table 3. Pairing types with models of education theory between 1978 and 1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of traditional school</th>
<th>Type of educational school based on black pedagogy</th>
<th>Type of progressive school</th>
<th>Type of revolutionary school</th>
<th>Type of market school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>Segregation</td>
<td>Progressive pedagogies</td>
<td>Socialist education, work socialization, Nationality education</td>
<td>Inter- and multicultural pedagogy, inclusion, integration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: authors’ own source Snapshots – School typological trends between 1978 and 1998 in the Public Education (Koznevelé) columns

The next analysis is based on the data of two extracts from my dissertation (Bogdán, 2011, Bogdán, 2015), which originally approached the articles of the Public Education (Koznevelé) from an educational-theoretical point of view, but this is not the case here. According to the methodology used here it will be analyzed, based on the school theory (school typology) framework discussed above, that between 1978 and 1998, in Hungary, what kind of education theory models (assimilation, segregation, reform pedagogy, socialist education, socialization for work, nationality education, inter- and multicultural education) were associated with different school types (traditional school, black pedagogical school, progressive school, revolutionary school, market school, integration, inclusion) and how the models of education theory were represented in the different school types or in the “other” category (if the given educational phenomenon could not be categorized into a single school type).

School Typology between 1978 and 1982

Fifty-one papers were published between 1978 and 1982 in the journal Public Education (Koznevelés). From these, only three substantively covered theoretical educational models that can be interpreted within the frames of school typology. These three ideas focused on either assimilation or segregation, and only one of them strived to realize integration in a progressive manner. The remaining 48 papers are classified under the “other” category, but it should be emphasized that two of them were included in this

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46 In this paper the concept of the „black pedagogy” is the concept of Nadasi-Hunyadyne-Serfozo – according to which - it is a negative system affecting the children and hampering the original aim of the school: the harmonious personality development of the students

group as in certain respects they are equally characterized by the aim of integration and segregation. From the aspect of school typology, these models combine the features of traditional schools and educational schools based on black pedagogy.

Regarding these five years, we can also say that the demand for information regarding Roma people was relatively high among the readers of Public Education (Koznevelés), as 11 papers contained news and 14 papers contained information on Roma children. However, they hardly ever considered which form of schooling would be the most effective for Roma children. Still, we can reach two conclusions: 1. The emergence of the ideas of assimilation and segregation, typical of traditional schools and educational schools based on black pedagogy is unlikely to have happened by chance, as these were the two dominant school types in the socialist system between 1978 and 1987 (without counting work-oriented schools). 2. The upcoming regime transition can be felt in the contents of the articles, as besides integration, the demand for market schools is also stated. Moreover, two of these papers reveal that educational schools based on black pedagogy were no longer being challenged by traditional schools, but rather by agora schools.

Table 4. Quantitative data of the relationship of school types and education theory models between 1978 and 1982

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional school</th>
<th>Educational school based on black pedagogy</th>
<th>Progressive school</th>
<th>Revolutionary school</th>
<th>Market school</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>Segregation</td>
<td>Progressive pedagogy</td>
<td>Socialist education, work socialization, Nationality education</td>
<td>Inter- and multicultural pedagogy, inclusion, integration</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: authors’ own source

School Typology between 1983 and 1987

Between 1983 and 1987, 109 papers were published in the pages of Public Education (Koznevelés) that were in some way connected to the topic of Roma people. Figure 5. shows that in the “battle” between educational schools based on black pedagogy and market schools, the former was victorious, with its concept of segregation. In the meantime, integrative education theories were also gaining a foothold, and the preference for traditional schools was being neglected. It is important to mention that this picture is further elaborated in four articles that, like the two papers in the preceding five-year period, were also categorized as “other” because they represented a school model that did not exist in practice; namely, a combined concept of educational schools based on black pedagogy and market schools.
Table 5. Quantitative data of the relationship of school types and education theory models between 1983 and 1987

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional school</th>
<th>Educational school based on black pedagogy</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Segregation</td>
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<td>Socialist education, work socialization, nationality education</td>
<td>Inter- and multicultural pedagogy, inclusion, integration</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: authors’ own source


The data reveals that: compared to the period between 1978 and 1982, there was a slight increase in the interest in the question of how the education of Roma people can be successful (15 publications instead of three). However, it was still not a prominent issue, as the number of exploratory or informative publications also increased (14 news and 13 information specific to Roma children). Besides, it should be mentioned that while the concept of segregation was becoming more widespread, articles that treated Roma issues as ethnical issues were published in Public Education (Kozneveles) at the same time (in 14 cases). Between 1978 and 1982, these numbers changed in such a way that none of the 51 papers represented an “ethnical point of view”.

School Typology between 1978 and 1987

Summarizing the data from between 1978 and 1987, we can conclude that: traditional schools, that is, assimilative education strategies on the education of Roma people were largely excluded from the public thinking in those 10 years. There were two challengers; namely educational schools based on black pedagogy and market schools based on bargaining. This “battle” was won by the former because of the intensifying aspiration for segregation, and also because Roma issues were being increasingly treated on an ethnical basis.

Current experience shows that the educational schools based on black pedagogy held strong positions even after the regime change when looking for a way to educate Roma children. However, it can also be said that after 1989, there was initiative in progressive school at Csenyete and there was a revolutionary school at Pecs in the Gandhi High School and Dormitory, which did not aim the promotion of the communist idea of man, but rather to bring the strengthening and empowerment of Roma intellectuals within reach. We should also remember the (“unschooled” and extra-curricular) After School Place models established in the spirit of market schools.

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48 In this paper the concept of the „ethnical point of view” means the over-emphasis of the Roma cultural features
Table 6. Quantitative data of the relationship of school types and education theory models between 1978 and 1987

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional school</th>
<th>Educational school based on black pedagogy</th>
<th>Progressive school</th>
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<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>Segregation</td>
<td>Progressive pedagogy</td>
<td>Socialist education, work socialization, nationality education</td>
<td>Inter- and multicultural pedagogy, inclusion, integration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: authors’ own source

Summary

Answering the basic questions of the paper and according to the literature: 1. there were educational schools, work-oriented schools, traditional schools, progressive schools, revolutionary schools and market schools in Hungary between 1978 and 1998. The concept of work-oriented schools is irrelevant from the aspect of Roma education, as neither the literature nor the publications in Public Education outlined a work-centered school model targeting Roma people specifically. 2. The theories behind the school models (school typologies) that were preferred, supported or tolerated by the government – in the domestic context – did not offer any guidance on solving the problems surrounding the education of Roma people, and thus education- and public education experts were left to argue among themselves on this issue. School types offered a framework for the education of Roma children as well that was deep-rooted for centuries. 3. The resolutions and opinions of the administration published in Public Education, as well as the utterances of politicians, reveal that between 1978 and 1987, the Kadar-regime supported the “socialist idea of man”, and thus it neglected to emphasize Roma children’s ethnicity. Still, besides the assimilating traditional school, the segregating educational school model based on black pedagogy, which took ethnicity into consideration practically, also prevailed. Moreover, the concept of integrative education, which is characteristic of market schools, also appeared in the public mind. This means that those who thought in strategies and theories of Roma education did not always follow (either in their turned against them.

After the regime change, the integrative education model flourished while segregation still remained, suggesting that although the current state education policy accepts the concept of no segregation, reality fails to meet expectations under the democratic system just as it did in the socialist era.

Future Research Directions

This basic research can be a good starting point for the continuation of the investigations at theoretical level. It is an important conclusion, that according to the

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49 In this paper the concept of the „Kadar regime” means the period of the socialist dictatorship, led by Janos Kadar, from the 1956 Liberation War and Revolution until 1989
results of the present paper the domestic school typological literature is extremely poor, which means that we have to find other relating writings yet. It is clear as well that in Hungarian language – in the literature - the Roma aspects of the school typologies can not be found, that is, based on a broader literature and based on a broader Roma database, in the future, we have to describe how the school types affected the education theory content in the case of the Roma.

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