The Beautiful Stranger –
Szekler Teenagers' Role Models

Orsolya Gergely

Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Romania
gergelyorsolya@uni.sapientia.ro

Exemplis discimus (Phaedrus)

Abstract. The social learning theory emphasizes that model giving or guiding has always been one of the most powerful means for transmitting values, for demonstrating and accentuating the expected attitudes, habits, thinking, and behaviour (Bandura, 1986; Crosswhite et. al., 2003). Studies have shown that a role model could motivate a teenager's sporting habits and performance in a positive way. They also found that the top athletes, those celebrities who appear frequently in the media, can become role models. Do Szekler teenagers have role models? Do they choose their role model from their physical environment or the international popular media stars or mediatized persons become their idolized model? We wanted to find out who those teenagers are from our region who choose as their role model a star, a famous person, a media celebrity – a well-known person but still a stranger for the teenagers of Szeklerland. If so, who are their icons and role models? Who are those people that have an exemplary behaviour in their eyes? To whom they would like to compare themselves when they grow up? And what are those characteristics which have decisive roles in choosing as role model a person they have never met before? The analysis is based on three important surveys conducted among teenagers from Romania (Covasna, Harghita, and Mureş counties). The surveys took place in the springs of 2012, 2014, and 2016. About two thousand pupils in the 7th and 11th grades were involved each time. On the basis of variables, such as age, gender, and type of residency, we will present general profiles and general types of Szekler teenagers regarding the role models of their choice.

Keywords: role model, media star, teenagers, stranger

1. Model Following

Several fields of science emphasize the importance of socialization. Thanks to this, in the last few decades, several pedagogical, psychological, and sociological studies were written about the role of socialization, which influences social

development – about the process, the mechanisms, and the potential actors. As it is well-known, the socialization process is determined by three main socialization backgrounds. The first and most important one is the family and the close community, the second one is the school and the peer groups, and in the last decades there appeared a third one: the mass media as a socialization medium (László, 1999; Berta, 2009). The media plays an increasing role, which even might de-emphasize the role and the impact of the family and school (Dubow et al., 2006: 405). Consequently, the social norms and rules, acquired through socialization, could or might replace or overwrite the messages from the media. Literature on socialization also emphasizes that in the process of socialization observational learning, model selection, and model following play a very important role. Model following enables individuals to acquire new behaviour elements, to explore new combinations of personal behavioural repertoire, and to recognize the consequences of others' actions (Kósa, 2005: 96). At the same time, observational learning is also an important time-saving method: one does not always need a personal empirical experiment. A major part of our knowledge and learning is not based on personal experiment – we still have the knowledge (Gerbner, 2000, in Berta, 2009).

Role models could have an important positive impact on children's and youth's personal development – states cognitive psychology. According to the social learning theory (social cognitive theory), model giving or model guiding has always been one of the most powerful means for transmitting values, for demonstrating and accentuating the expected attitudes, habits, thinking, and behaviour (Bandura, 1986, in Crosswhite et. al., 2003). Studies suggest that if a strong social marketing message, such as the dangers of smoking, drinking alcohol, or taking drugs, is presented by a media or a sports celebrity, rather than by a parent, teacher, coach, or other "regular" adult, it could be much more effective (Latiff et al., 2011: 14). As studies have shown, a role model can motivate both a teenager's sporting habits and performance in a positive way. For example, top athletes, those celebrities who appear frequently in the media can become role models. But not only those athletes can become role models who have very good and high performances. The more common, "everyday people" can also become role models, especially if the pupils find commonalities, similarities with that person (Crosswhite et. al., 2003). Special performances are respected and idealized by the crowd; athletes, sports celebrities have been seen as role models since ancient times. Due to technology, sports achievements (and music performances as well) can be traced from anywhere (Jones-Schumann, 2000, in Bush et al., 2004: 108). Sports activities are "readable" and "watchable", but the athletes' personal lives are likewise. Thanks to the media, a well-known sportsman or a famous singer can become a "hero" and role model for teenagers. Previously, before the new media era, ordinary people could get only filtered

news, but nowadays we can almost constantly track others' lives (László–Danó 2015: 192). Their attitude and private lives become accessible for quasi anyone thanks to the media, the social networking sites, and famous people's Facebook posts. The more appearance has a famous person in the media, the more easily can s/he become the role model for teenagers. For female individuals in particular, role models may show and give solutions and answers as to how to reconcile the conflicting demands of work and home roles (Nauta–Kokaly, 2001, in Kennedy et al., 2003: 40).

A role model can be a person who is considered exemplary or "worthy of imitation" (Yancey, 1998: 254; Crosswhite et al., 2003). An individual who has valuable quality or qualities in that other person's eyes, who will consider it good for imitation, an outstanding achievement, which "inspire[s] and motivate[s] others to do as well" (Zain et al., 2014: 294). Role model could become any individual "whose life and activities influence another individual in specific life decisions" (Basow–Howe, 1980: 559), a person "who is worthy of imitation in some area of life" (Pleiss–Feldhusen, 1995: 163), or a person who can be perceived as being a standard for one or more roles (Kennedy et al., 2003: 40). Role models could have a relevant impact on career decision-making (Nauta–Kokaly, 2001; Kennedy et al., 2003: 40). A research was conducted among university students in the U.S.: they had to identify the single role model most influential in their academic and career decisions. According to the results, parents and peers were the most influential, after whom the teachers, coaches, media and sports figures were frequent choices. An interesting result: the influence of the same sex role models appeared in both cases: males and females as well (Nauta et al., 2001) – boys usually chose a male role model, while girls a female one.

Who can become a role model? First of all, parents and other family members, friends, teachers can be classified as possible role models. In a research, half of the surveyed high school students named a family member as their role model (HAA, 1999: 40). But it is not necessary that individuals know their idol, the role model personally. For example, a historical or famous figure as Abraham Lincoln or Albert Einstein can also become role models. Some studies show that parents' influence on teenagers' behaviour is more significant than the influence of the media or sports celebrities (Martin-Bush, 2000). Other research conclude that the influence of strangers' (entertainers, media stars, sports celebrities) personality as role models has a certain amount of influence but not greater than that of the parents. Although mothers' influence remains determinant, fathers' influence can be diminished by the entertainers, athletes, etc. (Latiff et al., 2011: 14).

In this paper, we present the data from these three surveys regarding the role model issue. The questionnaires included each time three questions about models and model following: we wanted to find out whether the pupils from our region have a role model, and if so, who their idols and role models are, who are the

ones that have an exemplary behaviour in their eyes, to whom they would like to be similar to when they grow up. We were curious to find out what kind of role models Szekler teenagers have. Who are those who can become role models for them? Do they choose from their psychical environment, from "regular" human beings, or they opt for a mediatized person, an iconic but a strange person seen in the media? What are those main attributes and characteristics which they were chosen for as role models?

2. Methodology

In the spring of 2012, an important first survey research took place among Hungarian pupils in the 7th and 11th forms, regarding media use, knowledge about the media, user skills, and so on. In our research, 2,122 pupils were involved from urban and rural areas from Covasna, Harghita, and Mureş counties. The pupils responded to the self-completed questionnaires, which contained 49 questions. In 2014 and 2016, we repeated the survey. The research was conducted by a research group formed of colleagues and students of Sapientia University, Department of Social Science (Miercurea Ciuc), and was accomplished in partnership with the International Children's Safety Service (Budapest). The surveys took place during March and April 2012, 2014, and 2016.[1]

Table 1. Presentation of the sample

		2012	2014	2016
Number of respondents		2,122	2,208	1,824
Number of schools		63	72	67
Age	13 years	1,088	1,165	896
	17 years	1,034	1,043	928
Gender	Male	920	1,052	852
	Female	1,190	1,152	958
Type of residency	Rural	630	744	580
	Urban	1,492	1,464	1,244
County	Harghita	1,240	1,269	1,086
	Covasna	725	793	738
	Mureş	157	146	–[2]

---

1   The major parts of the findings – regarding the role model topic – were published in several academic papers (see: Gergely 2013, 2014, 2015a, 2015b, 2016).

3. Who Needs a Role Model?

In 2012, only half of the 2,122 respondents gave a relevant answer and named a person, while in 2014 and 2016 two-thirds of them did so. According to the chi-square test, there is a strong significant rapport in each year between the age and the existence or non-existence of a role model: pupils in the 7th form usually have a role model in bigger proportion than pupils in the 11th form. Gender was a significant factor 4 years earlier ($p1 < 0.001$) but neither in 2014 ($p2 = 0.1$) nor in 2016 ($p3 = 0.285$). So, we cannot say anymore that boys have a role model more frequently than girls. In turn, the urban–rural differences are still dominant: among those pupils who live in a rural area, the number of those who choose a role model is higher than among town kids.

Table 2. Socio-demographic profile of those who have a role model

Have a role model		2012	2014	2016
Form[3]	VII.	72.4	73.7	72.3
	XI.	54.1	62.3	56.2
Gender[4]	Male	68.5	70.1	65.5
	Female	59.7	66.8	63.2
Residency[5]	Urban	65.5	66.8	61.7
	Rural	58.6	71.4	69.5
Father's educational level[6]	Basic	66.7	67.4	62.8
	Middle	62.4	68	65.3
	High	72.1	75	70.5
Mother's educational level[7]	Basic	59.1	70.3	63.8
	Middle	64.5	67.7	63.3
	High	70.7	70.9	70.1

The biggest difference can be observed in 2016: among the pupils living in town, 38.3 per cent do not have a role model – this proportion was 34.5% in 2012 and 33.2% in 2014. In our first survey, we concluded that the younger, 7th-grade

---

2   Due to financial issues, in 2016, the survey was focused only on Harghita and Mureş counties.
3    $p1 = p2 = p3 < 0.001$. ($p1$ – the level of significance in 2012, $p2$ in 2014, $p3$ in 2016).
4    $p1 < 0.001$, $p2 = 0.1$, $p3 = 0.285$.
5    $p1 = 0.002$, $p2 = 0.03$, $p3 = 0.001$.
6    $p1 = 0.002$, $p2 = 0.021$, $p3 = 0.05$.
7    $p1 < 0.001$, $p2 = 0.377$, $p3 = 0.052$.

boys who live in town have a more clear idea about who they want to be like, whose model they want to follow (Gergely, 2014: 111). But this had changed by 2014, and this tendency is still captured in 2016 as well.

Regarding the educational level of the parents, we could not identify such significant differences; there are only mild differences in the cases of pupils whose parents have a higher educational level. While among all respondents 17.21% of the pupils have fathers with a higher educational level and 20.10% of the pupils have mothers with a higher educational level, among those who have a role model these ratios are slightly higher: 18.88% in the case of fathers and 22.16% in the case of mothers have a higher educational level. The survey in 2014 brought along only partial novelties: the earlier statistical correlations became minimal by increasing the number of those who named a role model. The latest research data show that the parents' educational level is becoming less and less significant in this matter.

Based on the responses to the open question "Who is this person you would like to be similar to in adulthood?", we created 17 categories[8] in 2012. These categories were labelled according to the information provided by the respondents, what they said about the person whom they had named as a role model. Parents are on the top of the list: in 2012, more than one third of the teenagers wants to become similar to their mothers, while in the following years even more: 44.5% in 2014 and 43.9% in 2016.

Since these 17 categories are a bit hard to deal with in statistical terms, we tried to group them. We got inspiration from certain Hungarian colleagues' work: they had 5 categories: *parents*, *peer-group*, *acquainted adults*, *media-persons*, and *other famous people* (László–Danó, 2015: 202). According to their grouping method, we managed to close up our 17 earlier categories in 6 categories: 1. *Parents*, 2. *Peer-groups*, 3. *Acquainted adults*, 4. *Actors, singers, musicians*, 5. *Sportsmen*, and 7. *Other* (see *Table 3*). In the first one, of course, there are the mothers and fathers as role models: each year, at least twenty per cent, mainly girls (in 2012, 20.1%, two years later 23.2%, and in the last year 22.4%) wanted to become like their mothers. Likewise, fathers as role models were opted for in 17.9%, 21.3%, and 20.5% in each survey resp., mainly by the boys (Gergely, 2016b: 113). In the second group, there are those role models who have quasi the same age as the respondents: siblings and best friends. The third one includes the group of grandparents, great-grandparents, godparents, aunts, uncles, and other relatives but teachers, coaches, and neighbours as well. As we can see, every year, two-thirds of the role models were chosen from the physical reality of the pupils.

---

8   The categories are: 1. Mother, 2. Father, 3. Sibling, 4. Grandparent, 5. Relative, 6. Pedagogue, priest, coach, 7. Acquintance, 8. Close friend, 9. Movie actor, 10. Singer, musician, 11. Football player, 12. Sportsman, 13. Formula 1 driver, 14. Media star, 15. Movie character, superhero, 16. Writer, theatre actor, artist, 17. Other famous people.

Table 3. Idol categories

	Idol categories	**2012**	**2014**	**2016**
A. Acquaintances	1. Parents	38.1	44.5	42.90
	2. Peer-group	7.7	6.9	8.54
	3. Acquainted adults	20.0	18.6	17.80
B. Strangers	4. Actors, singers, musicians	16.0	11.2	12.10
	5. Sportsmen	12.6	12.8	11.80
	6. Other	5.6	6.0	6.73
		100%	100%	100%

4. "The Whole World – Theatre"

In 2012, 16 per cent of the pupils chose a movie actor, a singer, or a musician as their role model. In the following two surveys, the group of the movie and music fans is a bit smaller. We can encounter names from known TV series or top music hits. There are evergreen names and stars, but once in a while there appear younger yet not so popular names as well. In 2012, Rihanna was very popular among girls as a role model, while in 2014 nobody mentioned Rihanna, but a lot of girls named Selena Gomez as their idol.

Among movie stars, singers, and musicians, almost all the names are from the international movie and music industry. Among singers, there also appear Balázs Havasi, Zoltán Mága but mainly foreign stars.

Table 4. Actors, singers, musicians as role models (2016)

Hungarian singers/musicians		
	Male	Zoltán Mága (1)
	Female	Andi Tóth (3), Mary Nótár (2), Gabi Tóth (2), Dóra Szinetár (1), Gigi Radics (1), Reni Tollvaj (1)
Hungarian actors		
	Male	–
	Female	Izabella Varga
International singers/musicians		
	Male	Eminem, Justin Bieber (4), Snoop Dog (1)
	Female	Selena Gomez (9), Rihanna (2)
International actors		
	Male	Ryan Gosling (4), Jason Statham (3), Brad Pitt (1), Johnny Depp (1), Orlando Bloom (1)
	Female	Angelina Jolie (1), Cameron Diaz (1)

Chuck Norris, an Eternal Hero?

While traditional role models (like scientists, artists, great historical persons) are hardly ever named as role models by teenagers, there is no research on the topic of role models without Chuck Norris, Bud Spencer, Sylvester Stallone, or Arnold Schwarzenegger (László–Danó 2015: 205). Even if their "splendour" was vivid two-three-four decades earlier, in each year, these persons appear as role models for a couple of boys.

Table 5. Eternal heroes

	2012	**2014**	**2016**
Chuck Norris	20[9]	4	2
Bud Spencer	2	5	3
Arnold Schwarzenegger	5	3	3
Sylvester Stallone	5	2	1

5. "Citius, altius, fortius"

The data tables reveal that many pupils have named an athlete as their role model: one out of eight students wants to look like a sportsman, and every seventeenth of them wants to be like a football player in their adulthood. Of course, mainly the boys specified such role models. In 2012, 12.65% of the 13- and 17-year-old pupils chose an athlete as role model, while in 2014 12.87%. In 2016, two-thirds of those who chose an athlete as role model were 13 years old. With football players, this is even more accentuated: only one out of five teenagers is 17 years old. It seems that younger pupils like much more to compare themselves to a well-known sportsman.

Table 6. Choosing an athlete as role model (Gergely 2016b: 116)

	2012		**2014**		**2016**	
		%		%		%
Football player	76	48.41	93	48.95	84	60.9
Formula 1 driver	18	11.46	5	2.63	5	3.6
Other sportsman	63	40.13	92	48.42	49	35.5
Total	157	100	190	100	138	100

---

9   See also: László–Danó 2015: 205.

As we can see, the popularity of football players is stable, but the popularity of the Formula 1 drivers has decreased: only 5 pupils named a race car driver as their role model. Michael Schumacher is still on the top of the list, while Sebastian Vettel appears in every year among the role models.

Table 7. Formula 1 drivers as role models

2012		2014		2016	
Michael Schumacher	5	Kimi Raikkönen	2	Michael Schumacher	2
Fernando Alonso	4	Fernando Alonso		Ayrton Senna	
Travis Pastrana	3	Adrian Newey	1	Sebastian Vettel	1
Ken Block	2	Sebastian Vettel		Jenson Button	
Jenson Button Petter Solberg Sebastian Vettel[10]	1				
Total	18		5		5

And what kind of other sports filter into the teenagers' minds thanks to role models? Basketball, body-building, hockey, cycling, and handball are the most popular ones.

Table 8. Sports and sportsmen as role models[11]

	2012	2014	2016
1. Athletics[12]	–	4	3
2. Basketball[13]	13	15	8
3. Body-building, fitness[14]	6	13	7
4. Biathlon[15]	2	–	1
5. Combat sports[16]	5	9	6
6. Cycling[17]	6	7	1

10 Among the pupils whose role model was a Formula 1 driver, there was only one girl whose favourite was Vettel and who also wanted to become a race car driver in her adulthood.

11 Some examples who appeared as role models in each category (see also Gergely, 2016b: 117–118).

12 Krisztián Berki (HU), Usein Bolt.

13 LeBron James, Michael Jordan, Mátyás Lokodi (RO), Candace Parker, Kobe Bryant, Derrick Rose, Samantha Prahalis, Ildikó Vass (RO), Stephen Curry, Botond Héjjas (RO).

14 John Cena, Frank Zane, Dexter Jackson, Jay Cutler, Lazar Angelov, Alexandra Béres (HU), Réka Rubint, Alexandra Kocsis, Randi Orton, Michelle Lewin.

15 Éva Tófalvi (RO)

16 Badr Hari, Fedor Emalienko, Yuri Boyka, Róbert Flórián Pap (RO), Éva Csernovcki, Andrei Stoica, Daniel Ghiță (RO), Rafael Aghayev, Jigoro Kano.

17 Martin Soderstorm, Matt Macduff, Dakota Roche, Steve Peat, Peter Sagan, Kris Holm.

	2012	2014	2016
7. Equestrian sports[18]	2	3	1
8. Fishing[19]	3	1	–
9. Handball[20]	4	15	5
11. Hockey[21]	8	9	7
12. Swimming[22]	–	4	1
13. Table tennis[23]	1	2	2
14. Tennis[24]	2	–	–
15. Others[25]	13	10	9
Total	63	92	55

Anyway, football is the most popular sport among Szekler teenagers, and football players are the most popular role models in the sportsman category. Football players as role models appear rather among the thirteen-year-old (seventh-grade) boys – younger boys and especially those who live in rural area. In 2012 and 2014, pupils living in villages chose more often a football player as role model than those living in town. But in 2016 more boys living in urban areas chose a football player as role model. The most popular football players among Szekler teenagers are the world's best players: six of the players below are among the top ten football players in the world.[26] Each year, two dozen of 13- and 17-year-old pupils (boys) named them as role models. In 2012 and in 2014, neither a Hungarian nor a Romanian professional football player's name did appear on this list. But in 2016 there were already three Hungarian players: Balázs Dzsudzsák, Béla Fejér, and Róbert Ilyés, each of them receiving one "vote".[27] We can also observe that

---

18   Lajos Kassai, Katalin Ferencz (RO), Ingrid Klimke, Reed Kesler, and Katalin Ferencz appear as role models each year.
19   Gábor Döme.
20   Anita Görbicz, Edit Józsa, Katalin Pálinger, Gabriela R. Nagy, Luc Abalo, Nicke Groot, Botond Ferenczi, Nicola Carabati, Luc Abalo, Mikkel Hansen, László Nagy, Eduarda Amorim, Roland Mikler, Gábor Császár.
21   Sidney Crosby, Patrick Roy, Ilya Covalchuk, Árpád Mihály (RO), Alexander Ovechin, Patrick Polc, Stephen Curry.
22   Dani Gyurta, Katinka Hosszú.
23   Timo Boll.
24   Maria Sharapova, Roger Federer.
25   Shaun White (snowboard), Nils Jansons (roller skate), Paul Moldovan (dance, RO), Dominik Guehrs (skate board), Sofia Boutella (street dance), Michaela Schifrin (ski), Cameron Hanes (hunter).
26   Messi, Ronaldo, Neymar, Neuer, Iniesta, Bale. See: http://www.ranker.com/list/best-current-soccer-players/ranker-sports.
27   We have to highlight that the survey took place in March–April 2016, a few months before the UEFA 2016 games. We think that if the survey had taken place after the summer, a lot of Hungarian names would have appeared on the list of football role models since they did

all these footballers who appeared as role models are European players, or, if not, they usually play at a well-known European football club.

Table 9. Football players as role models

	2012	2014	2016		2012	2014	2016
Lionel Messi	23	33	23	Marcelo Viera	1	0	0
Cristiano Ronaldo	22	28	23	Zinedine Zidane	1	0	1
David Beckham	5	1	1	Xavi Hernandez	0	4	0
David Villa	4	0	0	Ronaldinho	0	2	0
Iker Casillas	4	6	1	Steven Gerrard	0	2	0
Fernando Torres	3	6	1	Angel di Maria	0	1	0
Ricardo Santos	3	0	0	Andres Iniesta	0	1	0
Victor Valdes	2	1	0	Philip Lahm	0	1	0
Didier Drogba	1	0	0	Robin van Persie	0	1	0
Ryan Giggs	1	0	0	Manuel Neuer	0	0	2
Miroslav Kose	1	0	0	Douglas Costa	0	0	1
Frank Lampard	1	3	0	Balázs Dzsuzsák	0	0	1
Sergio Ramos	1	1	2	Béla Fejér	0	0	1
Wayne Rooney	1	0	0	Gareth Bale	0	0	1
Neymar da Silva	1	2	18	Robert Ilyés	0	0	1

6. Because He/She Is Talented, Funny, or Good Looking?

Why is this person your role model? The justification of the choice also varied. However, if we compare the answers of those pupils whose role models are their parents, their relatives, their friends with the teenagers whose role model is a football player, we will find some differences. For those who chose a footballer as a role model, physical structure, outlook, sportiness, outstanding performance, and achievement are more important. And they rarely or never articulate a behavioural value or quality such as helpfulness, patience, honesty, or modesty. Compared with those who would like to become like their parents, their relatives, or their close friends, these pupils emphasize rather the look of the football players, actors, or singers.

What are those internal or external characteristics for which you have chosen this person as your role model? We received plenty of answers to this question,

very well at the championship. The next survey will take place in 2018, which will perhaps demonstrate this.

which are very hard to analyse and group. Each year, we obtained much more characteristics than respondents: almost every pupil enumerated a few characteristics. We tried to group this, and based on our Hungarian colleagues' practice we classified the most frequent answers into 6 groups (László–Danó 2015: 207). In 2012, every sixth-seventh pupil characterized his/her role model as a sympathetic person (our label – chosen from the characteristics). 16.4 per cent of the pupils of 7th or 11th grades say one of the following about their role models: kind-hearted, helper, fostering, attentive, or sympathetic. In 2014, this was the most frequent group of characteristics, but in 2016 this was only in the 3rd place. For the pupils who responded in 2016, it was a bit more important their role model to be *friendly,* sweet, cute, funny, and have a good humour. As we can see, being smart is not the most important thing, but in 2012 9.3% of the pupils emphasized this characteristic as being the most important one in choosing their role models.

Table 10. The motivation of the role model choice

	2012	**2014**	**2016**
1. SYMPATHETIC (kind-hearted, helper, caring, fostering, attentive)	16.4	18.6	13.7
2. DETERMINED (perseverant, resolute, purposeful, confident, optimistic, hard-working, strong, brave)	15.1	11.6	14.2
3. FRIENDLY (sweet, cute, charismatic, good-humoured, funny)	15.0	15.1	17.0
4. SMART (intelligent, wise, educated)	9.3	8.6	6.3
5. THE BEST (talented, successful, clever, the best in his/her profession, handyman, resourceful, famous)	7.7	4.9	4.7
6. GOOD-LOOKING (beautiful, handsome, rich, athletic, muscular, shapely, pretty)	6.4	9.7	5.2

Being the best seems to be very motivating – mainly in case of the "stranger" role models but even in the case of parents and other adults. A group of pupils would like to become like a football player because, for example, "he is the best footballer in the world", "the best goalkeeper in the world", he has "the best leg", "there has been no better than him since I was born" etc. or to become like a good movie actor. A very strong message: some teenagers would like to become the best at something.

7. Conclusions

Every second 13- and 17-year-old respondent named a role model in 2012, in our first survey, while in 2014 and 2016 already two-thirds of them said they had a person who they would like to become similar to in their adulthood. The others did not have any or did not want to have a role model, mostly because they did not want to influence their "uniqueness" (Gergely, 2014: 117). The majority of those who named a role model have chosen a role model from their immediate environment: they named their parents, siblings, grandparents, relatives, or close friends. In every third teenager's role model choice, the influence of the media is present: they have not met their role model in person, they have not talked to him/her, and they only know a little about their role model. A lot of boys named athletes as role models, and the most popular are the football players: Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo are the most popular football idols. Apart from football, a few other big names appeared as well, and also some Hungarian sportsmen entered the idols' category. We may also find here – in a very small number – local sportsmen every year: Éva Tófalvi, Katalin Ferenc, and Mátyás Lokodi are representing the local idols, who have become role models for a few teenagers. In 2016, there appeared new names as well: a few boys would like to become like Balázs Dzsudzsák, Béla Fejér, or Róbert Ilyés.

Limits of the Analysis

The role model question is only a small part of the survey, and because of this there is missing contextual information which could help us to give a more detailed picture. If we had data concerning the teenagers' lifestyle, their values, their consumption habits, the analysis could become more elaborate regarding the media impact of the role model choice. Furthermore, a survey cannot draw a detailed picture about a teenager's role model only by having a name: a more qualitative method is needed to get a closer look at the teenagers' level of role model engagement as to whether pupils give only a name or this model following is very accentuated. Similarly, even the nature of the role model's achievement should be analysed in order for us to understand their popularity. But with such immense data sets this is almost impossible. Even this could be fulfilled within a smaller-scale qualitative research such as case studies and focus groups that would be carried out to complete the analysis and to have a more complex view of the issue.

References

Berta, J. (2008). A szocializációs ágensek hatása a példaképválasztásra. *Új Pedagógia Szemle* 58(6–7): 64–78.

Bush, A. J.–Martin, C. A.–Bush, V. D. (2004). Sports Celebrity Influence on the Behavioral Intentions of Generation Y. *Journal of Advertising Research* 44(1): 108–118.

Crosswhite, J. J.–Wilde, K.–Vescio, J. A. (2003). The Relevance of Sporting Role Models in the Lives of Adolescent Girls. *ACHPER Australia Healthy Lifestyles Journal* 50(3–4): 31–36.

Dubow, E. F.–Huesmann, L. R.–Greenwood, D. (2006). Media and Youth Socialization: Underlying Processes and Moderators of Effects. In: Grusec, J.–Hastings, P. (eds), *The Handbook of Socialization*. New York: Guilford Press, 404–432.

Gergely, O. (2013). Hasonlítani? Kire? Példaképkérdés a székelyföldi tanulók esetében. In: Biró, A. Z.–Bodó, J. (eds), *Internethasználat vidéki térségben. A média hatása a gyermekekre és fiatalokra*. Miercurea Ciuc: Státus Kiadó, 55–65.

(2014). New Media, New Idols? *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Communicatio* 1: 109–120.

(2015a). Új média, új ikonok? In. Biró, A. Z.–Gergely, O. (eds), *Kihívások és megoldások. A média hatása a gyermekekre és fiatalokra*. Miercurea Ciuc: Státus Kiadó, 43–51.

(2015b). „Olyan akarok lenni, mert ő sikeres." Székelyföldi tizenévesek példa-képeiről. *Erdélyi Társadalom* 13(2): 65–83.

(2016a). New Media, New Idols? Teenagers' Role Models in Eastern Transylvania. In: Boldea, I. (ed.), *Globalization and National Identity. Studies on the Strategies of Intercultural Dialogue. Communication and Public Relations and Journalism Section*. Târgu-Mureş: Arhipelag XXI Press, 176–190.

(2016b). New Media, New Idols? About Hungarian Teenagers' Role Model along Three Surveys. In: Olah, Ş.–Roşeanu, G.–Bodogai, S.–Coturbaş, L. (eds), *Current Challenges in Social Sciences*. Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 108–123.

Horatio Alger Association. (1999). The State of our Nation's Youth. http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED433922.pdf (26 February 2017).

Kennedy, J.–Drennan, J.–Renfrow, P.–Watson, B. (2003). The Influence of Role Models on Students' Entrepreneurial Intentions. *Queensland Review* 10(1): 37–52.

Kósa, É. (2005). A szocializáció elméleti kérdései. In: Vajda, Zs.–Kósa, É. (eds), *Neveléslélektan*. Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 46–113.

László, M.–Danó, Gy. (2015). Akik példaképek és akik nem. In: Kósa, É.–Berta, J. (eds), *Médiaszocializáció*. Budapest: Wolters Kluwer, 179–226.

László, M. (2010). *Példaképkutatások 2000–2009.* Budapest: Alkalmazott Kommunikációtudományi Intézet.

László, M. (1999). Példa-kép. A tizenéves korosztály értékválasztásai és a média. *Jel-Kép* 3: 33–47.

Latiff, A.–Saleem, S.–Abideen, Z. (2011). Influence of Role Model on Pakistani Urban Teenager's Purchase Behavior. *European Journal of Economics, Finance and Administrative Sciences* 31: 7–12.

Martin, C. A.–Bush, A. J. (2000). Do Role Models Influence Teenager's Purchase Intentions and Behaviour? *Journal of Consumer Marketing* 17(5): 441–454.

Nauta, M. M.–Kokaly, M. L. (2001). Assessing Role Model Influences on Students' Academic and Vocational Decisions. *Journal of Career Assessment* 9(1): 81–99.

Pleiss, M. K.–Feldhusen, J. F. (1995). Mentors, Role Models, and Heroes in the Lives of Gifted Children. *Educational Psychologist* 30: 159–169.

Zehndorfer, E. (2012). Are Elite Athletes Role Models? Exploring the Phenomenon in the Context of Role Model Theory. https://radar.brookes.ac.uk/radar/items/ a94446c1-4cd5-f48d-632b-b7bab48d3caf/1/.

Zain, O. M.–Chong Yew, S. T. (2014). The Relationship of Role Model Perceived Image on Teenagers' Purchase Behavior in Klang Valley, Malaysia. A Comparative Study. *International Review of Social Sciences* 2(8): 291–308.