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DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS

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Abstract: *In Social and emotional development is the foundation of realities and interactions that give meaning to the experiences of children at home, from kindergarten, in the community. It also significantly influences children's success in life, but also at school. That is why the educational process must be oriented towards human knowledge and understanding, towards the development of civic, aesthetic and moral sense and behavior. Interpersonal relationships are a difficult and complex process, not only in kindergarten and school, but also in the family and in society. A correct human relationship presupposes a partnership in which those involved respect each other, offer and receive alternatives.*

Keywords: *socio-emotional skills, relationships, children, community*

JEL Classification: *A31, I20*

1. Introduction

The foundation of relationships and interactions, when we talk about emotional and social development, significantly influences children's experiences of success in the community.

The studies of contemporary pedagogy promote originality, creativity, promote the initiative and involvement of the teacher. That is why educational actors must organize their activities according to the methodology, apply new methods and solutions, consider the importance of good communication, unnatural formalism and excessive discipline that leads to behavioral disorders and school failure. "A modern educator must know very well the group of children, beyond belonging, to be interested in the feelings, attitudes and feelings of children in relation to the problems of school and extracurricular life" (MECTS, 2016).

Thus, according to the Guide to Social and Emotional Development in Students, published in 2020, "the development of social and emotional skills occurs through specific activities of self-knowledge, based on correct identification and management of emotions, empathy development, constructive conflict resolution (conflict management and of the conflict). problem solving), cooperation with others (teamwork) etc" (Opre, 2020).

Emotions are those that do not influence the way we interrelate with the environment, with society, the way we make decisions, the way we communicate. Therefore, if, as human beings, we manage not to control our emotions, we can control any situation that arises. In this context, social and emotional development becomes at least as important in adolescence and emerging adulthood as in the early years of schooling. Numerous scientific studies and recent reports "have shown long-term effects of social and emotional development, not only in terms of academic achievement, but also in terms of biological and mental health, financial stability and even the rate of delinquency in adulthood" (Opre, 2020).

2. Development of children's socio-emotional skills

According to Vaida (2021), Development Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process of developing socio-emotional skills, by providing an appropriate environment and learning experiences." The term education was first used by Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592): "I condemn any violence in the education of a young soul" (Bârsănescu, 1969).

Cristea (1998), in Dictionary of pedagogical terms, considers that "education as a psycho-social activity designed at the level of pedagogical aims aimed at achieving the function of formation-permanent development of human personality through a pedagogical actions structured at the level of the subject / educator-object / educated correlation, carried out in an open pedagogical field."

In a general sense, education is "the process (action) through which the formation and development of the human personality is realized. It is a necessity for the individual and for society ". As a result, it is a specifically human activity, realized in the context of human social existence and, at the same time, it is "a specific social phenomenon, an attribute of society, a condition of its perpetuation and progress" (MECTS, 2016).

Emotion (in French *émotion*, Italian *émione*, English *emotion*) is defined as "an affective reaction of medium intensity and relatively short duration, often accompanied by changes in the body's activities, mirroring the individual's attitude towards reality. Emotion can be classified as a defense

system, because psychologically, emotion affects the attention, ability and speed of reaction of the individual, but also the general behavior. Physiologically speaking, emotions control responses to certain situations, including facial expression, vocal tone, but also the endocrine system, to prepare the body for certain consequences” (Vaida, 2021).

The Oxford Dictionary defines emotion as “any mental, sentimental, or passionate agitation or disorder; any acute or tense mental state.”

Daniel Goleman, in his book, "Emotional Intelligence", the third edition, from 2008, is “of the opinion that emotion represents a feeling and the thoughts that it entails, in psychological and biological states and to the extent that we are inclined to act” (Goleman, 2018).

Due to research in 2004 by researcher Haggerty on resilience and prevention, but also due to the interest of established authors in the field, on the development of multiple intelligence or emotional intelligence, such as Gardner, Goleman, the concept of socio-emotional development was developed.

Thus, the development of socio-emotional skills has its origins in theories in the field of emotional intelligence and represents “improving emotional knowledge and optimizing the social behaviors necessary to obtain desirable and sustainable results. At the same time, it represents a personal capacity to face the challenges of the environment”(Vaida, 2021). That is why the educational process must be oriented towards human knowledge and understanding, towards the development of civic, aesthetic and moral sense and behavior.

Preschool age is characterized by accelerated development on all levels: physical, cognitive and socio-emotional. These plans are in close interaction and it must be taken into account that each child has his own pace of development, is unique, and learning must be done holistically, so that each area influences the others and none has how to operate independently. That is why there has been a lot of research by some authors who investigate various cognitive aspects, and follow this in close relation with socio-emotional functioning, talking about social cognition, respectively cognitive functions in the service of social adaptation. Each teacher can make his class of students a real laboratory for testing and discovering the efficiency of teaching-learning-assessment methods and procedures.

Preschool is the most appropriate period for the development and optimization of emotional and social skills, during which the child develops fundamental skills in cognitive, emotional and social essential for adapting to adult life. There is an indestructible link between social and emotional education, between the social and emotional development of the child most often at the base of a social behavior is an emotion, at the base of a desirable behavior is a positive emotion, and an emotion Negative behavior can lead to unwanted behaviors, such as aggression or even violence.

“Emotion involves an assessment by the subject of the significance of an event or situation. In other words, emotion depends on how a person evaluates and analyzes. Through emotions we judge the world as pleasant or unpleasant, good or bad, so according to a system of values” (MECTS, 2016).

According to Daniel Goleman, “optimism is an essential skill for emotional intelligence; he talks about manipulating negative thinking through optimism. A good mood that will impel the person in a moderate style and will make him successfully perform the proposed tasks” (Goleman, 2018)

Emotional development refers to the ability of children to perceive and express their emotions, to understand and respond to the emotions of others, and the development of self-concept, very important for this area. Children learn and are socialized with the emotional aspects from the beginning of life. New research in this area shows that gender differences in emotional life (experiencing, expressing, recognizing emotions) depend most on education, socialization or context. Emotions are important for children because they ensure survival, decision making, setting boundaries, communication and unity, so it is very important for them to experience them in their social environment.

Emotional and social skills developed until the age of 6, in preschool education, are the main element for performance and school adaptation. In this sense, great attention must be paid to gender differences in personal development. The issue of gender differences often arises when the proper development of children is brought to the fore, because it has the main role in how their emotional and social skills are formed. The ages of 3 and 5 are the strongest evolution in the development of the ability to recognize emotional expressions.

Emotion, as defined by many researchers in the field, is "a person's experience of an important event." There are many emotions of all kinds, with various variations, changes and nuances or there are much more subtle emotions than the words that could define them. According to some hierarchies, emotions can be positive (joy, contentment) and negative (anger, sadness, dissatisfaction). Thus, the following are proposed as primary emotions: anger, anger, sadness, joy, love, shame. And emotions such as jealousy, hope, courage, forgiveness, certainty, self-control, according to some other researchers are also feelings, emotions of the individual.

According to these specifications, emotion involves an assessment by the subject about the significance of an event or situation. Until childhood, children were taught not to express their emotions, especially in public, because this is a form of immaturity or on the contrary, we show how vulnerable we are. Following new research in this area, it has been found that emotions can be educated and that the benefits of this process are huge. Thus, the child, from an early age, will learn to be honest with his emotional feelings, not to hide, not

to avoid them, because this only makes him frustrated and hence the anxiety, depressive and neurotic states.

Over time, scientists have observed that “the main predictor that ensures adaptation to adulthood is not school grades or high cognitive potential, but the ability of children to establish relationships with others. Researchers show that the period of time in which a person laughs, smiles, talks to others is much longer between friends, than when individuals do not know each other. Studies show that the exchange of information and skills becomes much more efficient when children make friends, intertwine with each other and feel less vulnerable when expressing difficulties.

The development of children's emotional skills is important for the following reasons:

- Because it helps to form and maintain relationships with others;
- Because it helps children to adapt to kindergarten and school;
- Because it prevents the occurrence of emotional and behavioral problems.

Awareness of the purpose of teachers is to identify the emotional problems that children face, the causes that generated these problems and the way of intervention, depending on the age of each of them. Thus, awareness is the motive for designing in the education system some activities that, through complementarity, aimed and achieved the objectives by relating to the fundamental landmarks of social and emotional development, provided in the curriculum for preschool education.

Thus, people with well-developed emotional skills are more likely to be satisfied in life, to be effective in more professional or personal areas, to manage their thinking style to be productive, to communicate effectively with others in order to maintain appropriate relationships. For people who cannot control their emotional life and often have feelings of frustration, anxiety and worry will not be able to communicate effectively, will not be able to recognize and interpret emotions correctly, which can lead to problems of maladaptation.

Ştefan and Kallay, in 2007 defined social competences as “the ability of children to form functional social relationships with other children and adults in their lives” (Vaida, 2021). In other words, social skills facilitate positive interactions, corresponding to cultural norms, in such a way as to allow the achievement of one's own goals and at the same time the observance of the needs of others. According to the above definition, any social behavior is the result of a process of learning what is valued by society; for example, greeting or introducing ourselves to strangers are considered polite ways to initiate an interaction. These behaviors help us achieve certain goals, while allowing us to initiate and establish a relationship with someone else. The basic social competencies described in the literature are:

- interpersonal skills: initiating and maintaining a relationship;
- intrapersonal skills: integration into a group.

“The cultivation of personality traits, although present as an objective in the consciousness of each teacher, gradually passed into the background. Moreover, unlike cognitive skills assessed on the basis of test results and specific examinations, socio-emotional skills are often considered difficult to measure as a result of their development in educational contexts. Despite these educational priorities that favor the cognitive profile and methodological limitations in terms of the accuracy of the objective assessment of socio-emotional skills, the importance of the latter for personal development and for the academic and professional development of children and young people can no longer be underestimated. question mark. In the context of the dynamics of contemporary change, they have (re) acquired their due significance” (Opre, 2020).

3. Conclusions

Emotional skills have a special role in everyone's life, because both parents and teachers who take part in educating their children must be informed about the issue of gender differences, but also about the need to compensate or capitalize on these differences in preschool, because this period represents the starting point of socio-emotional acquisitions. All educational actors involved in the educational process, together with parents, can support and offer children opportunities to help them develop their emotional skills correctly by carrying out educational projects and partnerships created with the child and for the child. Social and emotional skills play a central role in achieving school success and well-being, and social and emotional disabilities are associated with negative outcomes both at school and on a personal level.

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