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Abstract: School failure can be considered both as a pedagogical failure of teachers as well as a problem of a student in realizing school duties. Kupisiewicz divides the causes of school failure into: socio-economical, biopsychological and didactical. The article highlights the important role of the family as an environment determining the child's success at school.

Key words: educational failure, family as an educational environment, the family as the source of the child's school success.

Introduction

The problem of school failures can be considered in two ways. One of them treats failures as a pedagogical failure of teachers, as lack of effectiveness of their efforts of educational, caring, compensational kind. Another considers them as a problem of a student, his/her difficulties in studying and doing school duties.

Definitions of a school failure differ with range or character, describing it as a state, process or dynamic phenomenon. The attention is also paid on the situational nature of the problem.

In the 70's Konopnicki [1966] described the problem as a state in which a child came up as a result of being unable to cope the school duties. In his opinion school failures as well as school success should be regarded inseparably as when one ends, another begins.

Sillamy [1994] says that failure is a subjective concept, and describes it as a lack of success in achieving the desired goal. Subjectivism of failure means that according to some students fail in learning are almost inevitable and learners always accompanied by some unknown, present in doing new and difficult tasks.

In the Okoń's opinion [1996] school failures are clear discrepancies between the goals of education and school achievement of pupils and the evolution of

the negative attitude of young people towards the requirements of the school. School failure is also the achievement by the student of at least medium-sized opportunities mediocre results.

Czarnecki [1998] treats failures as a discrepancy of assessments between efforts put into learning by students and his/her school success set by teacher's assessments.

Kupisiewicz [2000] by school failures understands discrepancy between didactic and educational requirements, and behavior and achievements of students.

In the typology made by Łuczak [2000], school failures are in the hierarchic model. She classifies failures as follows:

- School failures as a notion in regarding to both: teachers and students.
- 'Teachers' failures that includes failures of educational, didactic and organizational nature.
- Students' failure in regarding their behavior and learning process.

Okoń [2003] divided failures into open and hidden. The second ones are when teachers do not notice lacks of knowledge, skills and habits of their students, when these lacks are not reflected in bad rates. They can also take place apart of knowledge, skills and habits. Full attendance in learning process does not limit to these, but it is also development of cognitive skills, independence, right activity and taking care of what happens at school in general. Most often hidden failures become open ones. If the student does not master the curriculum and lacks can be observed and stated by the teacher, we can say about open school failures. It often results in negative ratings and repeating a year. Repeating a year is a negative phenomenon that has negative influence on most students by discouraging them to work, reducing their interests in learning, causing complexes of various kinds and disturbances in behavior.

School failure can be objective. This occurs when school shortages are a fact observed by the evaluators of level of educational achievements. Sometimes they have a subjective character, when the evaluation does not please the student or his parents. It happens that the cause of a subjectively perceived failures are too high in relation to the possibility of the student's parents' ambitions [Wojda 2001].

The most common causes of school failures

Lots of researchers on the subject points that causes of school failures are complex. Kupisiewicz [1996] among causes points these that are dependent on the student, as: laziness, reluctant attitude towards learning, bad behavior at school, and these that are relatively not dependent on student, as: long term illness or unfavorable atmosphere in the family. Kupisiewicz divides the causes into: socio-economical, biopsychological and didactical.

Socio-economical causes Kupisiewicz defines as: “totality of relatively stable material conditions that causes the unfavorable circumstances of children and young people, both in the family environment, as well as extracurricular”. The conditions are determined by living conditions, parents’ income, nutrition, clothing delivery, school equipment delivery.

Social situation of children and youth is determined by: education and occupation of parents, the position of a child in family and school and extracurricular environment, or taking part in works of any youth organizations at school or outside the school.

In turn, the cultural conditions of students living in a family environment and extracurricular depend on: the level of cultural needs of parents and peers, and opportunities to meet them, as well as the level of intellectual life of the family, general culture and language. Also depend on the needs of the aesthetic, social life, intellectual and moral authority of people from the immediate environment of students, technical culture, from access to the means of dissemination of culture, the level of intellectual and moral welfare of children and young people, exercised by parents or educators

Biopsychological causes Kupisiewicz described as both innate makings (eg. anatomical structure of the brain), as well as favorable conditions or inhibit the normal development of the makings [1970, p. 48]. The factors that affect the results of teaching is a student himself, or the state of his health, smack in the form of hereditary sensory organs functioning, the ability of the student, his specific temperament, as well as its overall development, which gained knowledge, experience, love life, character features, development activity, self-reliance, perseverance in pursuit of the goal, inquisitiveness, their respective interests and tendencies of self-education. A significant influence on the formation of school failure are the psychophysical development disturbances of student.

The development of educational failure are conducive to such:

- changes in the functioning of organs, mainly sight and hearing;
- somatic illness, injury accidents, random events,
- reduced level of intelligence,
- reduced intellectual abilities of student;
- changes in the functioning of receptors and musculoskeletal;
- various disturbances in the development of emotionality, motivation, attitudes, as well as the related social dysfunction.

All these factors combine to weave unfavorable learning conditions, and after a period of teaching failures it is difficult to tell what was the original source of difficulty in learning, and what is the consequence [Wojda 2001].

Didactic causes of school failure are many and varied. Among the most important Kupisiewicz [2000] mentions: content, forms, methods and means

of education and teaching, as well as the conditions under which educational – teaching work takes place, a certain level of professional qualifications of teachers and their social position. Among the reasons for failure of school teaching points the overly rigid, homogenous education system. It makes difficult the individualized work, condemning to failure of the weakest students, as well as not creating appropriate conditions for the development of the best students. The source of educational failure is also insufficient in terms of education work of teachers, various deficiencies inherent in their working tools, such as: teaching aids and textbooks, inadequate working methods of teaching – educational, excessive overload or lack of science students systematic monitoring of educational outcomes.

Another very important cause of failure can be a school itself, its housing conditions, equipment with teaching aids, the atmosphere prevailing in it, including the cooperation of the teaching staff, the organization of school life, student organizations, school extracurricular activities, contacts between students and interaction of peers. If these factors are disturbed, these are reflected in the behavior of the student, in his psyche, in his behavior. This favors the emergence of difficulties in reading, speaking solving mathematical problems [Wojda 2001].

The family as an educational environment

The family is the most common and the most appropriate educational environment of the child, because there are the biggest ability to provide him all-round development in it. Family introduces the children into normal social life, has a significant impact on the behavior of the child, both within the same family, as well as outside. Family environment teaches children social behavior, introduces the world of values, a system of norms and patterns of behavior. It is the family that affects the individual as long as possible and leave the deepest traces in it. In the family there are formed the first emotional ties, norms, ideas, feelings are born. Being one of the parts of the family child assimilates the knowledge of the surrounding world and gaining experience.

According Kawula family functions in general, and especially for its educational functions, should always be analyzed from two points of view, what is the family meet in relation to its members and the tasks to be met is to society. Danielewicz [1995] stated that the family educates children not only for itself and its happiness, but also for the general social good.

The family that successfully fulfills its parental tasks, provides a sense of security and ties each of its members. Gives meaning to their intentions, directions of activities, accomplishments and gives a sense of self-worth. Family is the intermediary between the child and the world, is a buffer mitigating collision with an unknown, dangerous to the child's world, and filter capturing information from a number of those that are accepted by the family

The purpose of the educational activity of the family is versatile (physical, mental, social, intellectual, moral and cultural) development of the child. According to Łuczak [2000], to prevent the development of school failure in children, the tasks of the parents are as follows:

- surrounding with loving care from an early age of the child;
- care for their proper physical development
- throughout the period of study taking care for the physical and mental health of the child,
- taking care of the right atmosphere for family life,
- paying attention to meeting the emotional needs, especially the needs of security,
- taking care of the proper relationship of the child with his peers and teachers,
- putting the child requirements appropriate to his/her capabilities,
- keeping constant contact with the school and the teacher,
- provide the child with the best possible conditions for doing homework and studying.

The functioning of a modern family is significantly influenced by the period of transition. The transformations that have occurred are due to the impact of a number of economic, social, moral. However, the changes that have taken place in the modern family is not always entail positive effects. In the new socio-economic circumstances more and more families cannot cope with numerous difficulties, hampering the fulfillment of basic functions. According to Tyszka [1999], on the dysfunctionality of families is affected by: the coexistence whole family, intrafamilial relations system, the efficiency of parental care, family and cultural life and educational awareness of parents.

The family is the first socializing environment that has a decisive influence on the future child's personality, so any disturbance in the functioning of families have an effect on the behavior of children and those showed by their attitudes. Each difficulty is a potential threat of behavioral disorders of children [Pytka, Zacharuk 1995].

A significant impact on the child's emotional functioning have mental features of parents. Obuchowska [1983] lists several types of mothers and fathers as a source of negative emotional functioning of the child.

In the typology of pathogenic mother, Obuchowska distinguished:

- Autocratic mother, which requires absolute subordination and obedience of the child, all the time directs the child and imposes its will. Child grows up with a sense of helplessness. He is afraid of his mother, feels dependent and desperately wants to meet her expectations.
- Pedantic mother, characterized by meticulous, tenacity and setting of high standards. A child, who is unable to fulfill her expectations, is afraid of the loss of her love.

- Fearful mother, which is overly protective, not appreciating the abilities of a child, to protect them from their peers, do not allow them to solve any problems, and therefore makes it difficult for a child to become independent.
- Mother unbalanced, called nerve, which most often is a woman tired of work, unable to find time for family, irritable, explosive.
- Mother unhappy, the most common is a woman disappointed with marital cohabitation. She is sad, bitter, rejecting a child, especially when it is related to his father. Sometimes she's overprotective, shedding all feelings of the child. And among types of pathogenic fathers there can be found:
 - Absent father, who is a reactive, unstable, insignificant, not at home, able to produce appropriate educational climate, because its authority is reduced to a minimum.
 - Rigorous father, which puts excessive demands to a child and enforces his/her, not taking into account the possibility of a child.
 - Father dangerous, with whom neuropsychiatrists often diagnose hostility and hatred for their own children. Such an attitude is typical for families with alcohol problems.

Growing up in a dysfunctional family is conducive to the emergence of learning difficulties, behavioral problems at home and at school. Children from dysfunctional families have troubles in gaining knowledge, with concentration in class, behave aggressively, often play truancy, and repeat a year.

Family environment and child's success at school

The home is the primary environment in which the child resides before the start of school education. In the atmosphere of a family home child develops physically, mentally, learns attitudes and habits. Although the right development of a child is supported by proper economic conditions of a family, the more important in prevention of school failure is meeting psychical needs of a child by providing at home the right atmosphere of warmth, love, tolerance.

As prof. Cudak states [1995], every family creates its own atmosphere of home life. It consists of: mutual relationships between spouses, parental love towards children, everyday behavior of all members of family, but also recognition of values, keeping traditions and ceremonies. Home atmosphere affects the process of socialization of children by unconscious teaching about social and economic reality as well as building systems of assessment, values and patterns of behaviors.

In the reference model the role of mother is to create proper climate, and the role of father is to help in creating hierarchy of values, self-portrait, forming ethical norms in the world of a child.

The proper atmosphere of bringing up means: low level of conflicts in everyday life, communicating skills, especially in critical situations, sincere relationships

between parents and children as well as familial community in which all are helpful and are full of understanding.

According to Obuchowska [1983], there can be distinguished few types of traumatical atmosphere in the family:

- tense atmosphere, meaning mutual distrust, insecurity and understatement;
- noisy atmosphere, characterized by constant quarrels;
- depressing atmosphere, which is characterized by constant sadness and depression;
- inert atmosphere, prevailing in the absence of emotional bond between parent and child.

Only the family, in which there is an appropriate educational atmosphere, has the potential for proper organization of family life, allowing the development of the child's activity, providing it with examples worthy of preservation, creation of conditions for receiving the corresponding lifestyle, stimulating the creation of personality adapted to current and future social and economic conditions.

Despite the fact that the family itself shapes its internal atmosphere, it is subject to certain social rights. The transformation that took place in our country significantly affects the formation of certain changes in the structure and functions of the family. The problem of unemployment, lack of prospects for housing for young couples, disparities in living standards, as well as the risk of job loss, interfere with the proper atmosphere in the family.

The results of the survey conducted among parents of 900 students from Lodz region, represented by prof. Cudak [1995, p. 14] showed that in almost all the surveyed families (93.6%) the atmosphere of family life is disturbed. The professor notes that the most common causes of conflicts in the families studied were: lack of money (38%), alcohol (28%), educational problems of children (18%) and incompatibility (10%). According to the parents the most common cause of crises in families is a difficult financial situation, associated with unemployment. Only 7% of the surveyed parents declare the ability to resolve conflict situations.

Conclusions

In addition to the unfavorable atmosphere in the family, causes of school failure are also believed to derive from the low cultural level of parents, in relations of parents to the child's schooling, as well as from school which the child attends. Professor Cudak stresses that the important thing is also a response of parents to the emerging problems in the child's school, for example for bad rates. Application of penalties, restrictions, prohibitions are not a factor increasing interest in the child's learning, and frequent giving of them only deepens their reluctance to schools and teachers, and causes a drop in motivation to learn. Better effects can be achieved by approval, recognition and application of praises. It is important

that when school problems arise, the child must not be left alone with them, but always can count on the support of loved ones.

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