

DETERMINING FACTORS OF EDUCATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND SUCCESS

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Abstract: The school of all levels and degrees is considered the most important factor of permanent education, by its contribution in delivering education to the young generation by training and educating personalities within the spirit of current education. The issue of educability, that is, of receptivity of the human being to educative influences is one of the most discussed and problematized aspect, as there appeared, with time, various theories in such respect.

School efficiency – the assembly of school performances made by a school group, pupil or student in a certain period (cycle, year, semester, subject etc.) for an educational finality which employs all the educative resources of society at institutional and non-institutional level, in a formal, non-formal and informal framework.

Keywords: efficiency, conceptualization, success, causes, strategies.

The human society has improved with time a mechanism for the diminution of the unpredictable and for increasing control on the human development. This role is fulfilled by education. Education may be defined as a specialized activity, specifically human, which mediates and diversifies the relations between human and environment, enabling the development of the human through the agency of society and of society through the agency of the human. Out of such perspective, education is the connection between the potentiality of (hereditary) development of the individual and the offer of opportunities offered by the environment. A successful educative action harmonizes what might to what offered. The offer needs to be an incentive, slightly over the possibilities from a certain point of the individual, therefore, to be placed in the “zone of proximal development” (Vâgotski), and it in order to determine the development of the human being, their evolution. The role of education is to

act on all the components of personality, without taking into account the extent of their genetic enablement, compensating those with a weaker genetic sub-layer and stimulating the harmonious development of personality.

Educability is the specific particularity of the human to shape and develop under the influence of the environmental and education factors, basing on the hereditary potential and is manifested in the educator-educated report being an assembly of chances to be effective as educator and to take advantage of the educational relation to the educated, according to the stimulation of their personality development. The educator enters this relation with generally human competences (biopsychic balance, personality attributes, knowledge and life experience, availability to relate). The educated enters this relation with generally human competences (biopsychic balance, knowledge, affective and willed reporting capacities), with a knowledge experience in progress of establishment, with a native and acquired receptivity for knowledge, with internal and external motivations, with the availability to communicate and to answer to demands, with the capacity to receive, process and integrate the experience transmitted, with physical and mental health particularities.

The chances to be efficient depend on a series of conditions: mutual acceptance, psychological compatibility, type of authority imposed by the educator, the individual capacities of the educated. Therefore, educational successes depend both on the biological and personality capacities of the two human factors involved, and on the existence of a stimulating environment.

Academic efficiency expresses the efficiency of the teaching process – learning at a certain point and at the end of the schooling period, being marked out by the estimation of the relation between the didactic outcome projected in the school documents and the didactic result awarded in youth training. It is marked out by the evaluation of theoretical and practical training as consequence of the appreciation of the relation between the content of education (curriculum), syllabus, handbooks and knowledge including the theoretical and practical capacities acquired by pupils. This relation presents a quantity variation from 0.1 to 1. When such report is 1 there shall result a maximum positive academic efficiency. Efficiency is considered as optimum in the cases the report is between 0.7 and 1, the relation of 0.5 and 0.6 defining an average efficiency, and then the report presents variations from 0.1 to 0.4 the efficiency is negative, unfavorable. Academic efficiency is outlined by the evaluation

of the pupils' personality in all its sizes and highly outlined by the evaluation of psychic and intellectual, memory, imagination, thinking capacities, creativity, motivations, skills and aspirations. Getting a superior efficiency in the instructive-educative activity at the level of the demands of curricula and education finalities related to the development of motivation, development of skills, assimilation of ethic value, development of intelligence and creativity. Academic success represents the concordance between pupil's skills and interests on the one hand, academic exigencies formulated and presented to the pupil by various instructive-educative methods, on the other hand.

Success has a first sense — that is of success, victory in the competition being the result of self-fulfillment, with large efforts, with sacrifices, assiduous work, from the need to self-express and self-fulfillment, from the need of prestige. School success is the validation of the expression capacity, by learning performances, capitalizing at a maximum biopsychic skills and availabilities. It is manifested by maximum results at examinations, competitions, Olympic competitions. School success assumes compulsorily the conduct of the purpose, self knowledge, awareness of forces, mobilizing in order to go beyond obstacles, perseverance in going beyond them. Self fight, interior conflicts, defeating own limits are part of the fight for success, school success hides giving up pleasant activities, restlessness and fear of failure, specter of failure.

Success is part of the category of values able to get attention when materialized, but not less in the case it is in default, in which case failure is established. In the educative action (although the fact is valid for all types of action), interest for failure is explained, actually, by the desire to avoid it, not to allow it to configure, that is, by the intent to enable success for all the categories of persons engaged within the training. Inside the unlimited universe of renewals from the manifestation scope of the educated and educator, they become or, in any case, propose to become, but it is significant to withhold, they constantly regard the becoming into success and not into failure; success is represented as a synthesis of the good, truth and beauty.

Success, like its opposite, failure, depend on many social-objective factors, factors related to individual structure. The social-cultural environment creates the general environment of school policy, the fundament of respect for this institution. It creates opportunities for the human fulfillment through school. Family environment prepares and

keeps the respect spirit for school, prepares and maintains the learning effort. The extra-family group, friends, with pro-social, pro-academic aspirations, influence school and professional aspirations. Internal factors have a special weight in school performances and in performances validated as success. The general health status conditions biologically the learning success. The intellectual qualities (perceptive, memory, thinking and imagination) and abilities (skills, aptitudes) are those highly determining academic performance, school success being determined by intellectual and non-intellectual factors of educational success.

Intellectual factors of the education success

Academic intelligence with purely operational value designate in the perspective of J.Piaget's conception the dynamic balance between the assimilation of school requirements and accommodation to them, to various schooling levels. School intelligence is a specific, particular type of intelligence, which is differentiated from the general, global, verbal, practical intelligence etc., especially by the specificity of its content, but in the same time, object of the general laws of mental development. Defining academic intelligence is only possible in relation to school activity, it expressing the adaptation degree of the pupil to the requirements of the school type activity. Academic intelligences is therefore an excellent relative notion, which depends in the same time on the permanent variations of school, of academic tasks and pupils' personality.

Academic success is not an indication of the value of the pupil's general or global intelligence, as school adaptation capacity depends on their school intelligence. It is formed in the schooling process, as a result of structuring mental potentialities of the child according to the nature and repertoire of school activity, enclosing in its structure the pupil's attitude to the conducting activity of school age. However, it does not mean that school intelligence might be the only determining factor of academic success. School intelligence is not an absolute psychic value, its efficiency is conditioned by the organizing degree of the whole personality, especially by the affective-motivational and willing-character features of the pupil.

Obviously, school results can be "altered" both by non-intellectual internal factors, and by external factors as well, or even by their mixed influence. Therefore, school intelligence neither reflects academic success. School intelligence is bipolar and multifactorial dimension of the pupil's personality. Intellectual performances may be laid in a hierarchy in various degrees, mental efficiency levels.

The most valid criterion of knowledge, diagnosing intelligence is intellectual performance which expresses the "capacity to do" something. This "savoir faire" is an essential aspect of intelligence. The learning success does not indicate best the efficiency of the pupil's school intelligence, due to the fact that it represents only one determining factor of the learning outcomes. The safest way of knowing the functional level of school intelligence consists of exploring the role and contribution of intellectual mechanisms of the pupil in fulfilling certain school efficiency. The analysis of the operating method of school intelligence highly regards the search of explaining effects, intellectual school outcomes. Functional analysis is as difficult as it assumes the identification of personality non-intellectual factors role in determining the performances performed in various problematic school situations.

Nonintellectual factors of school success

School intelligence is not an absolute psychic value. Its efficiency is always conditioned by the whole life of the pupil, especially by the affective-motivational and cognitive particularities of their personality. There is a tendency to increase the role of nonintellectual personality factors in determining the school success along with going from one grade to the next. As well, emotions and feelings are organically integrated in the personality structure, forming its dynamic and energetic aspect. The maturity degree of the personality highly depends on the emotional-affective maturity. The development level of will, the self-adjustment capacity reflect on the entire activity of the pupil. It is not enough, for school success, to only detect the pupil's personality features, as it needs to be performed next to the information of the pupil and formation of internal conditions, of psychological premises of academic success. "Learning success depends not only on the level of intellectual development - A.Chircev shows - but, in a great measure, on the nature of personality features of pupils, which imposes the need of knowing and positive influencing such features".

The psychic development of the pupil has an "individual history", fundamentals of which are performed from the family. The child, raised in a certain type of affective and intellectual climate, shall assimilate easier those social and cultural values it repeatedly and directly gets into contact with from the conduct models of parents. Family fulfills, by its function of child socializing, an extraordinarily important role in making the hierarchy of individual values. The families with a high aspiration level, oriented towards successes and performances, award a special importance to the child's academic success. In such type of family, fulfillments are at the base of motivation of joy or sadness, successes or failures, in a word, self-evaluation. Trust itself noticed at the pupil is the "mirror" of encouragement and trust awarded in family and school. Based on the systemic evaluation of school efficiency, the child self-evaluates him or herself more and more realistic, which turns, into a level of aspiration of the child. Knowledge and affectivity are tightly connected. They develop simultaneously, in mutual report. The affective factor, including the attitudinal factor, is particularly, the main actuating force of school activity. Successful school activity strengthens, consolidates the affective factor.

Next to aptitudes, temperament, character, upon determining the conduct and success of the pupil, motivation contributes as well. Motivation means the totality of internal mobiles of conduct. The reasons can be learned or not. At the beginning, motivation is extrinsic when the activity leads directly to satisfaction. The relation between reasons and school cannot be treated univocally. The reason becomes efficient however only in the moment it is established at the level of personality, investing in an attitude. They usually start from rich and varied motivational sources, but in the end, the attitude to school activity is contoured. In general, the connection between attitude to school activity and school success is extremely solid. Progresses in the development of school aptitude are as obvious as positive the attitude of pupils to school activity and as this activity has a higher significance.

School success is influenced as well, more or less indirectly, to the aspirations of the social group (family or school group) the pupil is part of. They cannot be "isolated" from the social environment they develop their activity and under influence of which they make their self awareness, in default of which, there is no aspiration level. Pupil's aspirations usually evolve based on social interactions, towards getting closer to the higher aspirations of the members of the reference group (like "class", "school" group), but without such tendency

towards "uniform" erasing individual differences related to the size of the aspiration level. If the aspiration level is exceeded by the performance, the aspiration level is exceeded by the performance level, the pupil may anticipate, as a purpose, a school outcome superior to the previous performance. The aspiration level and the performance level may therefore be ascendant, under the mobilizing influence of performance need, therefore leading to self-exceeding.

Concomitantly to the formation of the image of self, the pupil knows more realistic their capacities, plans more efficient their effort, progressively adapting to the school environment and activity, opening the way towards new satisfactions – dissatisfactions, delights – nuisances, social approvals – disapprovals. In the background of such effects of the adaptation degree, which adjusts the pupil's conduct, the aspiration level is formed. The changes of the aspiration level in changing school performance outlines the self-adjusted character of the pupil's activity, naturally based on a check performed according to a reporting model. As related to their will (self-adjustment), the self-knowing capacity of the pupil expresses by their aspiration level.

As a conclusion, the factors concurring to academic success or failure are internal and external and present a functional interdependency. The factors involved in promoting academic success are interacting, and they are: family, psycho-physiological factors, pedagogical factors.

The strategies of educational success related to the familial nature include: active presence of the familial group; familial relations based on guiding and instructive-educative exigencies based on cooperation, respect, understanding and mutual help; favorable life conditions, food, clothing, hygiene etc.; conditions for enabling teaching and culture – place for study, sources of information, handbooks, compilations with exercises etc; stimulating the independence and initiative spirit, removing exaggerated authoritarianism; support in settling learning related difficulties, including mediations without leading to overloading.

The psycho-physiological determinants in the educational success regard: Assuring a proper environment, medical treatment in case of sensorial and motor deficiencies due to a long learning effort; stimulating intellectual, affective and willing activity favorable to elevated and efficient learning activity, performance of the psycho-medical treatment by

psychopedagogical counseling, for the removal of states like impulsivity, lack of adaptation, depression, attention and memorizing deficiencies, behavioral disorders etc.

As related to the pedagogical promotion factors of academic success, we outline: quality of school organizing; quality of teachers (for psycho-pedagogical training); use of modern strategies which determine the active participating and heuristic character of pupils; concomitantly to the frontal treatment of pupils, also individual and differential treatment should occur in order to make the learning and its reflection by high performances more efficient; organizing school competences.

School failure

School failure may be defined as the lack of fulfillment by pupils of the compulsory requirements from the curriculum, this being the effect of a difference amongst exigencies, possibilities and outcomes. The conduct of failure is deplorable, it prejudices the ambiance of relationship with others. The attitudes expressed due to failure are either challenging, helpless or aggressive revolt, or heavy resignation. Normally, they tend towards escaping failure, rehabilitation or compensation. The persisting negative phenomenon school faces is failure. It is reflected in the faulty efficiency of learning, below the level of requirements and objectives and, sometimes, below the level of their own capacities. Academic failure is manifested in two aspects: being left behind or school retard and school failure in two forms: dropout and repetition.

The psycho-pedagogical causes of academic failure may be psycho-physiological, socio-familial and pedagogical. The psycho-physiological cause is related to somatic, neurological, endocrine disorders; age disorders; language and writing disorders (dyslalia, acalculia etc.); insufficient intellectual elaboration; subliminal school intelligence; psychomotor instability; psychological order retard (1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th degree retardate). The socio – familial causes regard: disorganized families; stressed environment within the family; low level of intellectual and cultural development (mistaken systems of value); faulty attitudes of parents. The pedagogical causes assume faults of the teacher in the didactic act related to various aspects: presentation in a non-attractive and non-stimulating method of the lesson; unjust subjective evaluations; treating children as the „outcast” of the grade; authority without compensation; poor and formal collaboration and working together with family;

failure of incentives from teachers for pupils' performances; lack of pedagogical tact and mastery in teaching– learning etc.

Academic failure is the severe form of school failure and is manifested by dropout and repetition, sanction of failure to fulfill school obligations. School failure, with all its types of manifestation, represents the assembly of school losses, effects of which are negatively shown on the social and professional integration and on the cohabitation relations with others. Amongst the indicators usually used for the appreciation of existence of a stabilized situation of school failure, we mention: early school dropout; gap between the personal potential and outcomes; leaving school without any qualification; incapacity to reach pedagogical objectives; failure to final exams (or competitions); lack of adjustment in school etc. Simply reading these indicators leads to the fact that there are two types of school failure, having as common denominator, the notion of inefficiency:

a) Cognitive school failure, which regards the failure of pupils to fulfill pedagogical objectives. This type of failure certifies low level of competences to the concerned pupils leading to weak results at examinations and school competitions, and resits, repetitions. These low level of competences are explained either by intellectual retardation or by a series of motivational, volitional and operational drawbacks, like:

- a very low level of aspirations and expectations in relation to the academic activity and the self;
- low voluntary (will) availabilities needed to formulate the learning objectives and to go beyond obstacles (difficulties) which appear inherently along the learning activity;
- absence of systemic working skills and habitude of the pupil to self-evaluate school outcomes from the perspective of objective criteria, promoted by the school;
- faults at the level of logic-abstract operations of thinking, like: language incompetence (answering briefly, or discussing largely, teacher's questions); incapacity to connect information (to put them in varied and flexible contexts); absence of dialectic thinking method, which shall alternate pros and cons; weak capacity to concretize a phenomenon or principle learned in class; incapacity perform a hypothetical deductive step, needed to draw conclusions or generalize; absence of critical thinking spirit, indispensable to attitudes to received ideas and elaborating own valuable judgments.

b) Non-cognitive school failure, related to the pupil's lack of adjustment to the exigencies of school. This type of failure regards, more precisely, lack of adjustment to the rigors of a pupil's life, to normative exigencies assumed by the proper operation of each and every school or school collectivity. The unadjusted pupil resorts to dropout, leaving school too early, in favor of a less coercive environment, usually, the streets or groups of uncontrolled youngsters. The causes of such lacks of adjustments consist either in individual affective problems (as for example, fear or repulsion towards school, arisen as consequence of severe punishments or of repeated conflicts with parents, teachers), or in congenital psychoneurotic determinations (as for example, hyper-excitability, emotional imbalance, autism, excessive impulsivity).

The frequency "school failure" occurs in the teaching facilities and, especially, the aspect of permanent phenomenon they may often acquire determines us to look at them with responsibility. A chronicized school failure is dangerous, as it determines negative effects both in an individual psychological plan, which is, alteration of the concerned pupil's self, which shall lose more and more their confidence and shall get to develop a fear of failure, and socially, as a permanent school failure „stigmatizes,, , induces a social marginalization of the concerned pupil, that is, a limitation of the pupil's right to a genuine professional qualification and to exerting appreciated social roles validated as capitalizing for their personality.

Conclusions: Education success or failure is the result of a series of pupils' experiences in their families, at school and outside school, together with other pupils and friends, teachers and other adults, and therefore it cannot be understood as static, but as an evolving phenomenon composed from many social interactions. The evaluation of the results of this dynamic process is difficult precisely due to the richness of interactions they cover, and teachers, parents, friends or pupils themselves unilateral responsibility for the failure to fulfill their learning potentiality is as frequent as unproductive.

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