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**THE ROLE OF SCHOOL EDUCATION IN PREVENTING  
DEVIANT BEHAVIORS IN CHILDREN**

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*Abstract*

The difficult problem currently faced by general education is that of ensuring school success for all pupils. School success is a permanent objective of pedagogy, faced by teachers every day in their work. Today, school faces multiple forms of school deviance day by day, absenteeism, school dropout, verbal, physical and psychological violence, theft to the worst forms that are sanctioned by law. The actors involved are students, teachers and parents, but also other people with whom they come in contact in different ways. The purpose of this paper is to point out that the phenomenon of deviance is not at all a simple one, but rather a complex one; to identify the causes that lead to such behavior; to determine the role of the school in its prevention, as well as to identify the appropriate means of prevention, control, therapy and recovery of deviant behavior. In most cases, school failure results from a double inadequacy, namely: the child at school and the school at the child's environmental factors, ie the family and school environment. Thus, constant control over the child's behavior lies with both the family and the school, because the process of personality training and socialization of the child is a permanent process. Adopting deviant behavior in school, and beyond, becomes a hindrance to the student's affective and intellectual development - which will have negative effects for him both now and in the future.

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**Keywords:** Children, school education, deviant behavior, socialization.



## 1. Introduction

The school has to ensure and prepare students' school success, ensure optimal learning conditions, form future adult society, prevent and combat the adoption of deviant behaviors within the school. Knowing the conditions that determine school success, as well as identifying the causes of school failure or the causes that lead to the emergence of deviant behaviors, guide the activity of the teacher who can take certain measures to increase intellectual capacity and to prevent school losses especially. Training and educating students in the spirit of co-operation and pro-social behavior is one of the main concerns of teachers.

Thus, educational activities aim at bringing learners closer, teaching them to work as team members, developing them attitudinal and emotional, cooperating in finding solutions and developing positive behaviors. Students with difficulty adapting to school requirements and curricula - difficulties arising from school results and inability to adapt to school rules - require increased attention from the school, which results in the development of special and individualized psycho-pedagogical requirements aimed at restoring the balance between student and school and, of course, preventing the adoption of deviant behaviors.

## 2. Problem Statement

Stănişor (2008) claims that it is difficult to make an absolute classification of the causes that cause the child to adopt deviant behavior, because personal evolution, which guides him to deviant behaviors, is explained in each case by a specific condition, which fits into one's own life experiences and basic patterns in which each child develops: family, entourage, and school.

Mitrofan (2003) explains some of the causes that lead to the occurrence of children disorders, namely:

- "Inappropriate child education that is achieved through over-exaggerated freedom or vice versa, too authoritative;
- Personality disorders of educators, here finding educators with either emotional instability or too rigid;
- The unfavorable conditions of the external environment;
- Genetic factors", but in this case the role is not yet clear. It was noted that some of the children with deviant behaviors manifested themselves shortly after birth without a regular and easily irritable program.

When we make a school deviance analysis, we note that it is a particular case of deviant behavior, but which manifests itself in the school environment. Thus, school deviance includes all behaviors that deviate from the norms provided by the school environment. These rules are specified and presented in the internal and school regulations.

Cusson (1990) made the typical portrait of the deviant: "He is a boy grew by a rather busy single mother, who spoiled him, yielded to his whims but did not develop enough love for work. He studies in a vocational school where teachers without much experience make school failure easier for him.

However, contrary to these approaches, sociologists claim that school deviance is a normal phenomenon, behaviors that violate the rules are attempts by students to resist the specific school situations they find themselves in.

### **3. Research Questions**

Education is the way to organize the influences of the socio-human environment on individuals. Therefore, the child becomes a social person only through education. With the education's help, he acquires: language, moral behavior, forms a world conception and prepares to integrate socio-professionally.

The child benefits both from a spontaneous education that acts habitually on it, as well as an organized education - carried out by specialized institutions, school being the most important of all. That is why it is so important for the educational factors to know the personality of the child, his potential, his / her educational level very well, and on this basis to determine the whole educational process. Thus, heredity may or may not offer the psychophysiological development potential, the environment does or does not provide certain conditions, and education through the learning process directs the harmonious formation of personality, being the determinant factor.

For the complete success in "diminishing the abandonment and absenteeism, the socio-educational worrying phenomena due to legal, economic and cultural consequences, school sees itself compelled to identify, maintain and fully satisfy the learning needs of children, pre-adolescents and adolescents" (Văideanu, 1996).

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

In order for classroom atmosphere to be conducive to learning, and for the results of the effort made by the teacher to be visible, it must establish very clearly from the rules to be respected and the sanctions in case of rule violation. The teacher must also create conditions for a dialogue with students, identify the reasons for adopting deviant behaviors, and keep in touch with the parents, and if the family is the determining factor in the deviant behavior of the child, to make the case known to the institutions empowered to protect and promote the child's rights.

The aim of the research is to notice the students with deviant behavior in their relationships with colleagues, and the objectives pursued for this purpose are: the analysis of the parents' interest in the school situation; identifying the education level of the student with deviant behavior family; analysis of the school situation.

### **5. Research Methods**

In our study, we formulated the following working hypotheses: if a pupil exhibits a deviant behavior, then the relationship with colleagues will be more difficult; if the level of parental education is low, then the child will be open to adopting deviant behaviors; if the pupil exhibits deviant behaviors, then he / she will have poor school results. This is why we conducted a sociometric test with two questions, asking students to indicate two names of colleagues for each question. These questions refer to various aspects or areas of interest: participation in professional and free time activities.

Because many children with deviant behaviors are bothered to talk about this subject, or most of the time they do not want to admit it, we thought the sociometric test would be welcomed to 5th grade students. During the research, we wanted to see the attraction and rejection group degree to these children both in and outside the class. The class consists of 13 students, 2 of them with deviant behaviors. Restricted by the

small number of individuals, small groups are most suited to a complex and multilateral study based on observations and even experiences that are inconceivable at the level of society as a whole. Researching such social groups allows for accurate data.

The test was completed by each child, choosing two names of colleagues in the class in order of preference. The test questions were as follows: 1 A If you are in the position to work with other colleagues on a given topic, who would you like to work with? 2 A If you are in the position to work with other colleagues on a given topic, who don't you want to work with? (Table 01). 1.B In your free time who in the class would you want to be a friend with? 2.B In your free time who in the class don't you want to be a friend with? (Table 02). The sociometric test data is recorded in a Table where, vertically, we wrote down the students we numbered from 1 to 13.

Here are the scores tables for attractions and rejections: The first colleague nominated for the first question gets +2 points and the second +1 point. The first colleague nominated for the second question receives -2 points and the second -1 point.

On the horizontal, at the head of each table we wrote down the columns: "attraction" with notes 2 and 1; "rejection" with notes 2 and 1; "score" with + and -, as well as the column where we calculated the "Preferential Status Index" (IspX). The higher the value, the more individual is integrated into the group.

$$IspX = \frac{nA^+ - nA^-}{N - 1} \text{ where, X= individual/person/student}$$

$nA^+$  = the number of positive choices (+)

$nA^-$  = the number of negative choices (-)

N = number of group members

To complete each table, we calculated the score. For this:

- we searched the column where the attractions are listed and we identified the number of times and the position chosen. For example, in question 1.A, the student number 9 (P.C) has 5 choices (on the first position of the sociometric test) of 2 points and 2 choices (in second position) of 1 point. We multiplied 5 with 2 and 2 with 1, with the accumulated score of 12 points, which will be entered in the "SCORE" column under "+". On rejections, the student has only one rejection with -2 and no rejection by -1, the score at the rejection field, the column "-" being -2. The two scores, 12-2 = 10, with 10 as a final result, was considered "TOTAL" at "+". Finally, we calculated the "Preferential Status Index" (IspX) using the formula above (score 0.83).

**Table 01.** Who the students would like to work with

Name	Attraction +		Rejection -		SCORE		TOTAL		IspX= $\frac{nA^+ - nA^-}{N - 1}$
	2	1	2	1	+	-	+	-	
1. B.R	2	0	0	0	4		4		0,33
2. C.P	0	1	1	0	1	2		-1	-0,083
3. F.D	0	0	6	4		16		-16	-1,33
4. H.I	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. J.C	0	0	0	1		1		-1	-0,083
6. J.F	1	1	0	0	3		3		0,25

7. M.I	0	1	2	3	1	7		-6	-0,5
8. N.C	0	0	0	2		2		-2	-0,166
9. P.C	5	2	1	0	12	2	10		0,833
10.P.V	3	3	0	0	9				0,75
11.S.B	2	1	1	0	5	2	3		0,25
12.T.A	0	4	1	0	4	2	2		0,166
13.V.E	0	0	1	3		5		-5	-0,416

**Table 02.** Who the students would like to spend their free time with

Name	Attraction +		Rejection -		SCORE		TOTAL		ISpX= $\frac{nA^+ - nA^-}{N - 1}$
	2	1	2	1	+	-	+	-	
1.B.R	2	1	0	1	5	1	4		0,333
2.C.P	0	2	1	1	2	3		-1	-0,083
3.F.D	0	0	5	4		14		-14	-1,166
4.H.I	1	0	0	0	2		2		0,166
5.J.C	0	0	0	2		2		-2	-0,166
6.J.F	1	2	1	0	4	2	2		0,166
7.M.I	1	0	3	0	2	6		-4	-0,333
8.N.C	1	0	0	0	2		2		0,166
9.P.C	3	1	1	0	7	2	5		0,416
10.P.V	1	5	0	0	7		7		0,583
11.S.B	3	0	0	0	6		6		0,5
12.T.A	0	1	1	2	1	4		-3	-0,25
13.V.E	0	1	1	3	1	5		-4	-0,333

## 6. Findings

The next stage is based on the score tables which leads to the research conclusion regarding the relational system within the experimental group. The informal leader is being traced. This is the topic with the highest positive score in the Scoreboard. In our case, in the 5th grade, P.C. is the sociometric leader, because he/she has the highest positive score (+12) and is chosen by 7 of the total 13 students. As we can notice, P.V. plays an important role too, being among the “favorites” of the group, summing 9 points, being elected by 6 people out of 13.

As far as F.D. is concerned, he/she records (-16) points out of 10 rejections registered against him/her from the total of 13. This is why we can conclude that the F.D. is rejected by the group of students. The main reason for which he/she is rejected is that he/she is a student who has deviant behavior, being aggressive with colleagues and rude to the teaching staff. There have also been reports of cases in which he/she appropriated things that did not belong to him/her.

From the discussion we had with the headmaster, we found out that his/her family recently had a divorce, he/she belongs to a single-parent family with a precarious material situation.

In this case, Huditaneanu’s statement (2001), according to which the student passing through the experience of parents’ separation becomes confused, is guilty of what is happening around him/her, the school activity deteriorates because he/she does not have: a strict program, the peace of mind to concentrate on study, the support of the mother who becomes more demanded, either with the job or with the domestic

activities. In the case of F.D., the hypothesis is confirmed: “if a student has deviant behaviors, then the relationship with colleagues will be more difficult.”

Another student with deviant behaviors is M.I. who recorded (-6) points out of 5 registered rejections out of a total of 13 children. At the same time, by analyzing the number of rejections he/she recorded in the question, “Who in the class don’t you want to be a friend with in your free time?”, we notice that he/she receives 3 replies from the total of 13. From the discussions with the other students and with the teachers, we found out that M.I. is a student who has behavioral disorders, but most often he/she manifests this behavior in relationships with colleagues during pauses (pushing, hitting, spitting). During classes, he/she is a quiet student, but sometimes refuses to perform the assigned tasks. He/she belongs to a Roma family whose parents have a low level of education, not interested in schooling. In this case the hypothesis is confirmed that “if the level of education of the parents is low, then the student will adopt a deviant behavior”, thus considering parents’ interest in school is an important factor in school adaptation of children, because the process of forming a personality and socializing is a permanent process.

Kulcsar (1978) claims that school inadaptability can not be reduced to a single causal factor. The student does not become inadequate simply because he/she is “latent” or “forgetful”, “lazy” or “slow”, as it is sometimes said.

Regarding these students, besides the fact that both of them exhibit deviant behaviors, we can say that they may experience difficulties in school integration and because they have very poor results in learning.

Referring to the leader of the group, P.C., who has scored (10) points out of seven, we can say that he/she is highly appreciated by his/her colleagues and teachers for the very good results recorded in education, belonging to a solid family.

Regarding J.C., we found out that he/she comes from a single-parent family and that his/her father did not care about his/her school situation, and this is also the reason for poor learning score.

Student N.C comes from a concubinage relationship, to which his/her father has no interest. This could be a reason for his/her isolation retreat, explaining why he/she was not chosen by his/her colleagues.

## **7. Conclusion**

At school, group members have preferences on learning and behavioral criteria, while these criteria remain valid largely in their spare time. It is normal for most students to work or be part of the best team. It is worth noting that the two students and others with deviant behavior were not elected in school and leisure activities and recorded a large number of rejections in both types of activities. Thus, we can see that students with deviant behaviors face difficulties in school integration (this includes integration into spare time activities, appreciation from teachers).

Applying the test at different stages will show us in which direction the group evolves, increases cohesion, stagnates or regresses. The phenomena that can lead to such changes are numerous, therefore, it is not only advisable, but it is also necessary to periodically apply the sociometric test and, implicitly, to compare the results and to identify the factors that produced the respective changes.

We also recommend that these children with deviant behaviors in the school environment be involved in as many group activities as possible, and be assigned tasks with other colleagues. Thus, their integration and socialization can be achieved in the group, but also in society later.

In our opinion, if there is a closer collaboration between the teacher, the psychologist / school counselor and parents, these children would be more easily integrated into the classroom because they would feel more secure and supported. Regarding the results of the sociometric test, we noticed that in all cases, students with deviant behaviors were rejected both in school activities and in leisure activities. Therefore, their acceptance and integration depend heavily on the behavior they show in school, and also on the school results they have.

It is worth noting that the informal leader comes from a solid family, parents are actively involved in schooling. Hence the importance of maintaining a close relationship between school and family, as well as the active involvement of parents in the activities of the child in order to have a harmonious development and ensure a quality future.

Therefore, in view of the above, we consider that a major concern of the school should be directed towards educational actions of influencing students with the aim of acquiring social behavior in accordance with the social norms, thus giving children possibilities for adapting to school requirements.

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