

# THE ATTITUDE OF PARENTS TOWARDS CHILDREN IN RELATION TO SCHOOL AND THE APPEARANCE OF SCHOOL PROBLEMS AND UNADAPTIVE BEHAVIOURS IN CHILDREN

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## Abstract

*The fluttering rhythm of life, the daily stress, the economical drawbacks, the instability of the income and of the workplace, all the continuous changes in our country have fundamentally changed the solid role of the family, bestowing new roles and destinations. Consequently, one can notice a diminishing in the importance of the family as an institution, a restructuring and a redimension of the fundamental structures and functions of a family. All these changes in terms of structures and functions lead towards favouring the appearance of deficient families, and those, in turn lead to families in which the socializing and educative roles do not work efficiently, if they work at all.*

**Keywords:** parental attitude, behaviour, school, schooling problems.

## INTRODUCTION

The role of the family and the familial environment are essential for the growth and development of the children, as well as in the socializing process. Socialising is a process of transmission-assimilation of attitudes, values, concepts or behavioural models that are specific to a group, in order to form, adapt and socially integrate a person. (apud. Zamfir and Vlăsceanu, 2003).

Within the family, children get an answer to an entire series of questions from the first years of their childhood and a series of pieces of information that helps them form certain skills, capabilities and even abilities. The manners of communication and the intellectual and affective capabilities are determined in grand terms by the influences exerted by the parents. The educogenous environment of the family has very strong influences upon the formation of the child's personality, upon his or her behaviour, and these maintain their educational force sometimes for the duration of the child's life.

The basic condition of the family's cohesion, of the *realisation of its internal cementing* – after Szczepanski's expression – constitutes the convergence of the actions of all the members of the group in the realisation of a common goal, i.e. the normal, harmonious development of the life of the group. (Szczepanski, 1973).

Nursing and educating the children represent tasks and responsibilities that are extremely important to the family, regardless of economical difficulties or of any other nature. The attitude of the parents towards the children is essential, their attitude towards their children's school and towards the problems that appear along the children's development. In deficitary families, this thing does not happen, the educational role of the parents being highly diminished. The parent's attitudes (absence, neglect, isolation, aggression, terrorization), the unpleasant experiences in childhood have as consequence emotional and behavioural disorders- the decrease in the child's self-esteem, emotional instability, low performance in school, behavioural disorders and even delinquency. The children with a low self-esteem feel that they are unvalued and often have negative emotional experiences. The deficiencies in the emotional development and the lack of trust can make the reference to others difficult, just as the development of healthy social relationships would be. Without security in the relationship there is the possibility for the youngsters to not understand the reference to norms, the attribution of guilt, and especially of responsibility, the reference to relationships.

Herseni considered that family, as a social institution that is organized and sanctioned through rules found in customs, norms, and laws, has two functions in particular: raising children and the socio-economic addendum of the spouses/partners in order to form an efficient social unit (Herseni, 1969). Dimitriu mentions a complexity of basic functions of the family, among which there are those with biological, legal, economic, cultural and educational character (apud. Dimitriu, 1975). A family in which the parents are attentive to the child's basic needs (love, respect, acceptance, understanding, emotional support, flexibility, correctness, patience, time), in which the parents communicate constructively both among each other, but also with the child, in which they dedicate time to the child, in which they get involved and consequently follow the child's behaviour, have an assertive attitude towards the children and practice a positive disciplinatio, the children develop harmoniously, will be able to develop harmoniously, will manage to successfully adapt to the familial and scholar demands and will become adults that are socially adapted with a fulfilled life. The parent's attitude towards their children and the manner in which they approach their education plays an important role in their scholarly success. A parental attitude/ approach which combines flexibility with parental support (guidance, advice, support in emotional adjustment, rewards) will facilitate obtaining scholastic success. Neamțu cited by Stănciulescu sustains that the parent's attitude is favourable to the acclimation and the scholastic success of the children when the parents (Stanciulescu, 2003, 105):

- Formulate requirements depending on the child's capabilities
- Facilitate the learning when the child is confronted with difficulties
- Express few anxiety feelings, especially around scholastic failure
- Stimulate the child's thinking process
- Reward

- Show hostile states towards the child on extremely rare occasions
- Attribute a precise significance to the answers of the child and manifest a greater esteem towards him or her
- Express easily a disagreeable states which result from the activity
- Pretend and/or offer a justification/ explanation for the child's answers
- Leave initiative for the child during learning activities
- Furnish the child a standard of performance
- Offer few corrective feedbacks
- For the child's success it is important that there is a congruence between the parents, about their attitude towards the child and his or her scholastic trajectory.

The parent educates not only through their guidance, but especially through the example it sets for the child. It is common that a child will tend to identify him or herself with his or her educators, to tend to see his or her educators as a model, an ideal to reach. It is common and it is necessary. The child does not know how to choose, looking left and right, the human qualities that are the best for him to try and combine in a personality that is worthy of realisation. The optimal development, balanced, physical mental and moral of the children constitutes the main indicator of the parent's endowment with parental skills. If education is deficitary and the child has managed to show dysfunctional behaviours in school and not only, and one can easily manage to get to pre-delinquent and even delinquent behaviours. Scholastic success is the result of a collaboration between the family's role (attitude, involvement in the relationship with the child and his or her education) and school (the functionality of the school as an institution, the process of socialising in school and the educational process as a whole).

The role of the teacher and of the educator, or even of the support teacher in the case of children who come from dysfunctional families must be centered firstly on the control of the issue of violence and abuse: causality, symptoms, ways of manifestation, concrete possibilities to guide and solution the abuse situation. In terms of the educational style that is approached, one wishes for this to be centered on "non-violent education". Each person has the natural tendency to try to presents his or her own attributes, behaviours or point of view as being better than anyone else's. Everyone tries to "step outside", to impress, to win – but in the scholastic environment a responsible attitude towards value in general and valuing in the group, especially what goes both ways (with the support of professors, of course) the adequacy towards its own results and a better contact with his or her reality.

In this sense the social interventions don't only limit the effects of inadequate behaviours, but also prevent the appearance of violence and of abuse through a genuine education of the parents and educators, which can sensitize them both towards the needs of the child. For this, the first step would be to identify the fragile families in order to be able to activate, in need, secondary preventional

dispositions. In the case of interventions on collectives or groups, this form of action is more pertinent and operational than the primary prevention initiatives which take place without a precursory selection of the population, and whose results are hard to evaluate.

### **Objectives**

The general objective of the study is highlighting the existent relations between the type of attitude parents express towards school or the scholastic problems of their children (consequent attitude/ interest vs inconsequent attitude/ disinterest) and the development of scholastic issues and/ or the appearance of aggressive behaviours (physical, verbal violence, hostility).

### **Hypotheses**

Hypothesis 1. If the parents manifest an inconsequent attitude, disinterest towards the children's schooling, the chances for them to develop school problems (absenteeism, abandonment, low results in school) is quite high, which can also favour the appearance of aggressive behaviours (physical, verbal violence, hostility).

Hypothesis 2. As the children present scholastic problems (abandonment, absenteeism, low results in school) the more chances there are for aggressive behaviours to make an appearance (physical, verbal aggression, hostility).

### **Sample**

The subjects that were present in the study are 100 students from classes VII and VIII, from three classes in which the teachers and headmasters have signaled the existence of several scholastic and behavioural issues (aggression, violence, hostility). To these ones one can add, for each student, at least one parent who answered a short questionnaire that targeted their attitude towards school and the scholastic issues of their children. With regards to the existence of scholastic problems and of aggressive behaviours, the presence or absence of them has not been established on a psychological testing basis, but through direct observations and an evaluation in the form of an interview with the subjects, their teachers and headmasters.

## **RESULTS**

**Testing of hypothesis IPI** In order to statistically test the relationship between the parent's attitudes towards the schooling of their children and the appearance of scholastic problems that lie at the basis of the encouragement of certain issues in the children was defined through the following indicators:

- An indicator of scholastic problems which includes the schooling abandonment, absenteeism or low results situations. Thus, the indicator has two values: the existence of scholastic problems (value 1) and the absence of scholastic problems (value 2)

- And indicator of the parent's attitude towards their children's schooling in whose structure one included the attitude towards schooling that the parents have. Thus the indicator has two values: consequent attitude (interest) and inconsequent attitude (disinterest). It is to be mentioned that for the questionnaires that targeted the parent's attitude towards schooling we have an answer per student, from just one parent.

**Table no 1. The parent's attitude towards the children's schooling and the children's scholastic problems**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
interest/ consequent attitude	20	20.0	20.0	20.0
disinterest/inconsequent attitude	80	80.0	80.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

#### *Scholastic Problems*

**Table no 2. Table that evidences scholastic problems**

	No of students
Absence of scholastic problems	22
Presence of scholastic problems	78
Total	100

Given the fact that the value of the correlation coefficient ( $\chi^2=7.143$ ) and the level of trust (asyp. sig) is smaller than 0,05, we can say that the scholastic problems can be found in children that come from families in which the parents manifest an interest towards the children's schooling, and from the families in which the parent's attitude towards their children's schooling lacks interest, but is significantly more frequent in the children whose parents have a disinterested attitude towards their schooling. Hence, one can accept the hypothesis of the research, which is: if the parents manifest an inconsequent attitude, disinterest towards their children's schooling, the chances for them to develop scholastic problems (absenteeism, abandonment, low results) is high, which can also favour the appearance of dysfunctional behaviours in school.

**Testing of hypothesis IPI** In order to statistically test the relation between the children's scholastic problems and their aggressive behaviour, we defined and

indicator of scholastic problems that includes the situations of abandonment, absenteeism of low results in school. Hence, the indicator has two values: the existence of scholastic problems (value 1) and the absence of scholastic problems (value 0).

**Table no 3. Children's scholastic problems and aggressive behaviour**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage
Absence of scholastic problems	22	22	22
presence scholastic problems	78	78	78
Total	100	100.0	100.0
Without aggressive behaviours	40	40.0	40.0
With aggressive behaviours	38	38.0	38.0
Total	78	78	78

From the sum of students with scholastic problems (78 students), 38 manifest aggressive behaviour (a percentage of 65,3%). We can thus say: the more the children present scholastic problems (abandonment, absenteeism, low results) the more there is the chance for aggressive behaviours to appear. The presence of aggressive behaviours can be explained through the existence of an insecure attachment of the child towards the parent or towards both of the parents, conflictual relationships, cold or distant between the children, and also the presence of violence in the sphere of the family.

Conflicts due to poverty, familial or socio-economical instability, but also the lack of education and information generate contexts of private life in which violence is a tolerated behaviour, even an accepted one, it being picked up by the children and reproduced as a frequent and common way of interpersonal behaviour. Violence has become a theme that is recurrent to the entirety of society, necessitating a new take on the position in terms of the entire social body, and the development of investigation, prevention and control strategies was, at the current moment it is a method of human communication.

Children grow in a dysfunctional environment where arguments, beating, terror, sexual abuse, rape and sometimes murder are part of the relationship, where they do not manage to discover the true sense of love and intimacy and where it thus becomes common to have aggressive behaviours, as the only way to relate.

## CONCLUSION

The parent's attitude towards their children's problems, in general and especially towards the scholastic ones, represents an indicator of their solutioning and even of their lack of happening. A proactive attitude of the parents, manifesting the interest towards the problems that may appear in the life of their children signify for the child a sense of involvement, interest, valorization and leads to a better relationship, to an increase in the responsibility of both sides for education and for positive results. On the contrary, a negative attitude, the manifestation of disinterest of the parent towards the child's problems will lead to the understanding of certain negative senses about the child's persona, about his or her own value, about the importance he or she has as a person. A dysfunctional attitude of the parental role constitutes a premise for the appearance of dysfunctional behaviours in children.

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