

## FORMS OF SCHOOL DEVIANCE AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE SOCIAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

Maria PESCARU

Assoc. Prof., Ph.D., University of Pitești

E-mail: [mariapescaru@yahoo.com](mailto:mariapescaru@yahoo.com)

**Abstract:** *Man is an active human being evolving through his relationships with the world. School is one of the main factors influencing, through its specific attributions, the achievement of the human education. The purpose of the school is to contribute to its physical development, to teach it, to develop skills and appropriate behaviour in society. It has well-trained teachers, creates a suitable environment for optimal physical and intellectual development of students and has the specific endowments for learning to be as effective as possible. The difficult problem currently facing the general education is that of ensuring school success for all students. Thus, school must ensure and prepare students' school success, ensure optimal learning conditions, form future adult society, prevent and combat forms of school deviance. Of course, school success or failure depends on the requirements of school rules. Students with difficulties in adapting to school requirements and curricula - difficulties arising from school outcomes and inability to adapt to school rules - require increased attention from the school.*

**Key words:** *school deviance, abandonment, violence, school success*

### Introduction

Today, the school faces multiple forms of school deviance from absenteeism, school dropout, verbal, physical and psychological violence to the worst forms that are sanctioned by law. The actors involved are students, teachers and parents, as well as other people with whom they come in contact in different ways.

Currently, the present Romanian society faces many social problems that have a negative influence. Thus, one of the most serious problems is the behavioral deviance among students, as evidenced by official statistics and the media.

The multiple socio-economic problems that have affected society have led to an increase in the incidence of juvenile delinquency in Romania. Poverty is a sad certainty, and the precarious economic situation affects the stability of families, this overflowing with children, generating various behaviors that are manifested by aggression and behavioral disturbances. The imbalance

produced within the family stimulates and supports the development of deviant behaviours in children.

After 1989, a lot of social, economic and political transformations took place in Romania, which led to the creation of a social environment that favored the development of the delinquency phenomenon in general, but especially of the juvenile one, which is a reason for concern for our country.

School is one of the most important institutions of a society because it transmits knowledge, skills, and develops the skills necessary for each individual to be able to manage independently in the future.

It is the institution in which education takes place in an organized manner and is an essential factor in the formation of individuals capable of contributing to the development and good course of society. The process of education offers the school the essential function in the formation of generations (Cristea 1996: 96).

Most studies in the field of school deviance that analyze the importance of the family on child development place a great deal of emphasis on the relationship between family and school cooperation. From this point of view it is considered that the interest of parents towards school is an important factor in the school adaptation of children (Neamțu 2003: 80). Thus, constant control over the child's behaviour lies with both the family and the school, because the process of forming the personality, socializing the child is a permanent process.

### **I. School abandonment**

School abandonment is the condition of failed social integration in the sense that the possibility of self-realization in the conduct of legal activities decreases. The reasons for school abandonment are numerous, as a result of a double inadequacy, namely: an inadequacy of the pupil in the activities of the school environment, but also extra-curricular one and a failure of the school to biological, psychological, socio-cultural and socio-economic factors (Neculau and Ferréol 1999: 251-252).

Zamfir E and Zamfir C (1996: 167) define the school abandonment as a retraction of the pupil in the school system because of the loss of motivation or interest in learning and engaging in independent learning activities, or because of the lack of economic resources for continuing their education.

School abandonment is the end of attending the activities of the education system before obtaining a full qualification or before completing the studies started. As a result, those who decide to drop out of school are no longer accepted in the same school unit and are not enrolled in an alternative schooling program (Neamțu 2003: 199).

“School abandonment arises as a consequence of social, family or school failure, following an individual decision, by external constraint or by the mutual rejection process between the student and the school, with the most serious consequences, ranging from inability to adapt to society until engaging in negative actions directed against one’s own person, family and society” (Pescaru 2014: 78).

From a statistical point of view, the world abandonment rate is difficult to obtain because few countries collect data about those who decide to drop out of school. The highest rate of abandonment occurs among the gypsy population. It is estimated that the attendance of the education system among this population is 4 times lower than the national average. Children, especially girls, are most affected by illiteracy and school dropout.

Many school abandonment studies have failed to show just one reason why children drop out of school. Every teenager who decides to leave school has his / her own reason, and the causes found among those who have abandoned school are numerous (Lerner și Hultsch 1983: 371).

Neamțu (2003: 205) refers to each student’s reaction to school failure and to the conflicts he has with his teachers. Labeling him as a low-school pupil reduces the student’s self-esteem and undermines his attempt to gain a positive social identity. Many students do not have the resources to mobilize to overcome these difficulties and seek to be valued outside school, sometimes through school abandonment.

In determining the school failure, the student is exposed to depressive states that will disorganize and inhibit him intellectually. These states occur in some conflicting and frustrating situations the student faces (Rudică 2005: 220).

Even though the abandonment is not fully assimilated to the educational climate, there is an important correlation between negative managerial processes that result in the depreciation of the educational climate and school abandonment. Inappropriate climate in the student class can be a stimulating factor for the student in the decision to leave the school (Iucu 2000: 166). If teachers and other college students who are in a school abandonment situation do not support them but rather blame them for the situation they are in, they feel misunderstood and drop out of school much faster.

Families lacking financial resources, have difficulty in providing adequate clothing to children, sometimes need help in farming, at home, or direct their children to work (Voicu 2010: 23). Due to the precarious financial situation faced by some families, children help with household chores or agricultural work to overcome the situation they face.

School abandonment is dependent on economic status and is measured by variables such as parental education levels, father's occupation, family-owned earnings, and living standards. Some families do not have the resources to pay for the shuttle, the school supplies, the clothes needed for the student. Instead, other families, even if they have the necessary resources to educate the child, do not support him, especially if he or she was receiving some income-generating activities (Neamțu 2003: 203).

## **2. School violence**

At present, violence is an object of research for many natural and social sciences: physiology, psychology, psychiatry, sociology, political science, etc. All these disciplines have made interesting contributions to studying the mechanisms of violence. The issue of violence is recent. It is only in the nineteenth century that the concept begins and the roots and forms of violence are analyzed (Alan Newcombe 1978: 798-817 apud Ioan Mihăilescu 2003: 124).

Researches on both academic and official violence can often be treated either for a certain type of violence or for a single discipline. Although they go in one direction, many of them are very clear about some aspects of violence.

In the school environment, violence occurs through verbal aggression, sharpening, pushing, slapping, stabbing, intimidating, hitting objects, refusing to give help, etc. This kind of violence can be directed against students, teachers, institution representatives.

If teachers used to be violent towards pupils in school, the situation has now changed, reversing.

Debarbieux, (1996: 45-46), a scholar, defines violence as the "brutal or continuous disorganization of a personal, collective or social system, and which is translated into a loss of integrity, which may be physical, mental or material. This disorganization can be operated by aggression, by using conscious or unconscious force, but there can also be violence only from the point of view of the victim, without the aggressor having the intention of doing harm.

The relationship between aggression and violence builds on the consequences of each of them. If violence involves the use of force resulting in

an individual's physical, mental or economic harm, aggression becomes harmful only if certain limits are exceeded. Therefore, if most of the manifestations of violence take the form of behaviors that are subject to legal norms, only a part of the aggressive behaviors come to be classified as delinquent. (Balica 2009: 58).

Specialists in certain areas have developed various studies that demonstrate that there is a relationship between aggression and adaptation, starting from their analysis in the animal world, a second orientation is the relationship between adaptation and aggression in human society, and the ultimate approach is the relationship of these at the level of the individual, being known interventions that analyze this relationship from a psychoanalytic perspective. (Balica 2009: 51).

Regarding the violence among students, the main causes are the family environment, the social environment, the media. This type of violence often takes place during breaks, and verbal violence is most often encountered.

The second category, pupil violence against teachers is a situation faced by schools in Romania. This is manifested by: indiscipline, absenteeism, verbal aggression, ironic behavior towards teachers, refusal to accomplish school tasks.

It should also be borne in mind that there is also the type of violence shown by teachers on pupils, but its presence is lower than in other cases. This is manifested by ignorance, hitting, exclusion from classes, subjective assessment, offenders.

In Romania, according to the statistics published in "Child Abuse and Negation" (done in 2001 by ANDPC, World Bank and WHO), 47.2% of parents say they use beating as a method of correcting the child, and 84% of children say that they are beaten by parents. The highest proportion of physical punishment is held in rural areas. Thus, 87% of parents who live in villages and have children aged 3-5 years and 78% of those who have children aged 6-7 years have stated that they use physical punishment in educating children. In urban areas, things are a bit different, with physical violence having a lower share: 52.6% for children between 6-7 years and 50.2% for those aged 3-5 years.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>[http://www.salvaticopiii.ro/upload/p0002000100000002\\_Studiu%20%20abuzul%20si%20neglijarea%20copiilor.pdf](http://www.salvaticopiii.ro/upload/p0002000100000002_Studiu%20%20abuzul%20si%20neglijarea%20copiilor.pdf) , accesed on 3.6.2016, 18.30

Thus, according to the same study, violence is reported in 75% of schools, and 48.1% of students say they are being punished by teachers. In the study conducted by the Bucharest School Inspectorate in December 2005-2006, 60% of students are physically and verbally bullied in school and in the family.

Even though Romania is one of the few countries where the law prohibits the application of physical punishment to the child, it seems that specialists believe it is still working on this chapter, because a large part of the Romanians consider that “the beating is broken from the Heaven”, according to a Romanian proverb.

In conclusion, it can be said that the school plays an important role in preventing and combating the school violence, as its source is in school and not only. Thus, when a child comes from a tense and conflicting family environment, the school may be a second family for the child, and if he does not receive support, he will be totally disoriented and discouraged, often taking inappropriate behavior. Students must be helped and encouraged to overcome feelings of inferiority, gain confidence in their own skills and abilities, and the teacher has the obligation to plan their activities in such a way that each student can do something successful. Also, in both teaching-learning and assessment activities, it must take into account the individual peculiarities and potential of each student, without making any difference between them.

### **3. The role of the school in preventing deviant behaviors in children**

School is the place where pupils are trained, the place where relationships are established, conditions for optimal moral, emotional and cognitive development of children are created, values are promoted. Classroom is the place where students depend on each other, help each other, feel the approval or disapproval of the class, acquire a position within the group. Each group claims certain types of behavior from its members, even the teaching-learning process is a relationship-based process, and the management of these relationships falls into the so-called class management. Thus, Vettenburg, N. (1999: 286) defines classroom management as “the set of activities through which the teacher promotes the student’s appropriate behavior and eliminates inappropriate behavior, develops good personal relationships and a positive socio-emotional climate in the classroom and maintain an efficient and productive organization of the class”.

School is one of the most important factors of education that influence the development of the pupils’ personality. No profession requires from the practitioner so much dedication, such as the teacher, because in no other profession it is working with something more delicate, sensitive, precious and

complicated. The teacher, the teacher, the teacher educates, educates, educates, corrects, evaluates and continuously perfects the process of training the qualities necessary for the future adult.

However, the school is not only about skills, but also about habits, including behavior in a society that is characterized by respectful and civilized behavior: the skills to write, read, self-service turn into a habit. Of course, the realization of these transformations can only be achieved through the instructive-educational process.

The school is the only institution that aims to support and develop pupils through planned and organized learning processes, so for better results it is necessary to establish a partnership with the family and social group in which the child develops (Vrășmaș 2002: 141).

According to Neamțu (2003: 329) “any effective approach to a behavioral problem starts from the teacher’s belief in the need to give the pupil a positive, rewarding and motivating school experience, and less negative and punitive experiences”. From this we deduce the need for the teaching staff to use those means and ways to create the conditions for a formative and attractive means of learning, eliminating those educational mistakes that affect school education and, moreover, that may favor the emergence of deviant manifestations.

The school is not just about the activities that take place inside it, it refers to the states lived by the members involved in carrying out these activities. These experiences greatly influence the evolution and good course of school, constituting the school climate.

This social and educational institution plays a significant role in preventing deviant behaviors in children as it transforms and influences the lives of individuals, shapes human behavior by imposing certain rules whose non-compliance is sanctioned. It is also the institution that produces learning and stimulates progress. However, as mentioned above, for school progress to be visible, it is absolutely necessary to involve parents in school by supporting and helping the child in school activities and by maintaining a permanent connection with the teachers.

## **Conclusions**

School plays a significant role in preventing deviant behaviors in children because it is the institution that transforms and influences the lives of individuals that shape human behavior by imposing certain rules whose non-compliance is sanctioned.

Prevention is a rather difficult task because it involves concrete interventions that reduce as far as possible the phenomenon of behavior deviance in pupils by actions designed to reduce or eliminate as far as possible the causes of adopting deviant behavior.

Measures applied at school level by hiring a person to supervise student behavior or by applying more severe sanctions to those violating the regulation will not yield returns if community-based de-mitigation measures are not implemented.

Concluding, we can say that preventing the adoption of deviant behavior would improve by:

- Establish clear school regulation;
- Organize regular meetings with police officers;
- School counseling to prevent violence;
- Counseling parents;
- Psychological evaluations, but the most used are the following measures: rebuke in front of the class, individual rebuke, reduction of the note to the wearer, written reprimand, expelling for a definite or definitive period.

Of course, these preventive measures can be joined by many others, but I think that the primary role in preventing deviant behaviors in the school environment belongs to those who interact with them most. Thus, teachers can influence through their personality the appearance, prevention or diminution of deviant behaviors. However, of course, the intervention is not only done by the teachers but also by the specialized people who collaborate with them constantly. Thus, the school psychologist or social worker (if there is a school), based on the information received from the teachers, establishes a personalized intervention program in which the teacher has a well-established role.

I also add that many of the manifestations of school deviance cannot be eliminated or at least diminished as long as no measures are taken in the family environment, at the community level and even at the level of society to combat it.

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