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PARENTS – PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

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Abstract

This article concerns the nature of relations between kindergarten – family, educator – parents, educator - child. For a good socio-emotional development of preschool children, the teacher’s activity with children should include activities or items that pre-schooler children interact with adults. By attending the kindergarten, the child is faced with new situations, changing his way of life according to the new requirements, here the child will find more complex and better organized educational support. However, the family has a fundamental role in raising and educating the child by finding and choosing the most effective and qualitative education systems that will be molded on their own children. The educator – parent relationship is a primary direct impact on child development. The relationship between parent and educator will influence the pattern of behaviour that the child will admire and imitate. Micro research aimed to capture the way that parents appreciate / do not appreciate the quality in preschool institution. Also looking into the importance of partnership in kindergarten through the goals, objectives and activities to encourage child development. Questionnaire-based survey helped us collect sufficient data for the chosen sample.

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Keywords: Partnership, kindergarten, preschool development, parents, quality.



1. Introduction

1.1. Romanian education, especially pre-school, always looking to weld connection between kindergarten and family for efficiency and effectiveness. In order to better kindergarten-family collaboration, can be distinguished at least two major issues, exactly: common interests and knowledge of the educator – parent relationship, parent – educator respectively.

Research and the studies of specialty have demonstrated / showed that the preschool period is the first period training complex relationships and attitudes in the field of child development. Age and individual particularities of children are prints of education received in the family and institutional environment.

Personality is the most complex and often most dramatic reality that we are going contact and influence her, so improve or to change it: her personality is the main guide in shaping the concrete man. Only knowing his sides, structure, purpose we will be able to select and use the most appropriate means, methods, processes influencing education (Zlate, 2000).

The natural axis of human development, child goes through various processes of development such as: cognitive, physical, socio emotional, attitudes, language / communication, learning ability, etc.

As the child is integrated in the community, he evolves, he increases his desire for knowledge and the need a for better connections with others. Now, feelings begin to form over the other, begin to realize the approach / the loss / the estrangement of a person from him after a enjoyable / unpleasant activities.

"Kindergarten is the first institution dealing with institutional child extent, the aspirations, motivations and its possibilities. It's living environment suitable for child development just gone through before kindergarten; It contributes to vocational, moral and behavioral training of the child; here and now lay the foundations of scientific and moral thought, the premises of written language are acquiring, it is diversifying and enriching the child images, fundamental and necessary acquisitions for its fulfillment as a person and personality "(Golu, 2009, p.16-17).

Kindergarten is the primary stage and the overriding national education system which, throughout its evolution, fulfils, especially different social, educational, and instructive-educative functions and at the same time, pursued many general and specific objectives that targets cognitive plan, affective attitudes and psychomotor.

Regarding the involvement of parents in the instructive-educative process in kindergarten, it must be understood that this involvement is not limited to the payment of food, buying supplies, occasional participation in some activities, but rather strengthen positive relationships between them and educators, a beneficial effective action on the child. For a child, the main actors in the scenario all activities undertaken by it are the parents and the educator, his maximal desire is to see them best friends. A strained relationship between them will make the child feel helpless or guilty of this. The safety that comes in kindergarten is reflected from family collaboration (his first contact at the birth) and educator (essential physical and mental development model of the child), so: the networking manner between parents and educators influence so much the child development.

„All reponsible parents of newborn baby have hopes for her/his future. Intuitively, most people feel that the process of a child`s learning through education is linear. It start from birth and slowly but surely makes progress towards the ultimate aim. This is not true. Learning and education should be seen as organic.

Education is like sowing a seed and making everything one can to create the best possible for the plant to flourish. This process is interdependent on many different factors” (Kangaslahti, 2012 p.146).

As it Florinda Golu said "Due to multiplication living environment components, during this period, the child comes into contact with countless requests from family environment, social, kindergarten, new social situations and personality development training infant. The link between child and adult acquires new forms: activities carried out jointly with them are gradually replaced by fulfilling indications independent adult " (Golu, 2004).

The environment in which the child lives have an impact on mental development and shaping of personality traits. Mental development in the preschool period will reach a maximum intensity. This development takes place under the pressure of the social, cultural, media influences and by attending preschool institutions where child contacts the multiple requirements of autonomy and adaptation to life.

Safe and caring learning the environment, in kindergarten, each child should feel safe and preserving the emotional well-being of everyone in the school is the ultimate aim during any moment and action. Bullying is not tolerated. (Wagner, 2012).

1.2. Key concepts definition

Partnership = is the system that associates partners in political, economic and social way.

Educational Partnership =the system that is associating the social partners for the performance of the education system. Nowadays there is a desire for change, modernization, education accessory and the educational partnership seems to be the key of contemporary pedagogy. It is a concept and attitude in the field of education (Ciofu, 2003). A partnership suppose to:

- To allow all ideas / options and understanding them
- providing opportunities for participation in a joint educational activity;
- Effective communication between participants.

2. Problem Statement

The problem of this research are based on the fact that in Romania parents find the necessary kindergarten-family relationship only from prism the involvement of parents in the involvement of parents in the instructive-educative process in kindergarten, it must be understood that this involvement is not limited to the payment of food, buying supplies, occasional participation in some activities, but rather strengthen positive relationships between them and educators, a beneficial effective action on the child. For a child, the main actors in the scenario all activities undertaken by it are the parents and the educator, his maximal desire is to see them best friends. A strained relationship between them will make the child feel helpless or guilty of this. The safety that comes in kindergarten is reflected from family collaboration (his first contact at the birth) and educator (essential physical and mental development model of the child), so: the networking manner between parents and educators influence so much the child development.

3. Research Questions

- a. How much does the institutional relationship of kindergarten-family matter to parents?

- b. To what extent do parents appreciate the quality of the activities from the kindergarten? But quantity?
- c. Which are the main factors and the helpful elements in successful formation of the educational partnership between family and kindergarten?

4. Purpose of the Study

4.1. Purpose: Micro-research sought to assess how parents perceive the quality in preschool institution, optimized through a partnership of quality with the goals, objectives and activities designed to encourage the harmonious development of the preschool children.

4.2. Micro-research objectives: to assess the partnership between kindergarten – family for a better development of activities in kindergarten, but especially to promote an environment in child development.

4.3. Hypothesis: If the parents of children, the main beneficiaries, assess and evaluate the quality of kindergarten, there are important prerequisites for ensuring a good quality education act and a partnership based on transparency and mutual aid.

4.4. Variables: regarding variables, there is a delimitation between the independent and the dependent ones.

- The dependent variable: child development (mental, social, moral, intellectual, emotional, physical, language / communication and playful).

- The independent variable: type of kindergarten, employment status, teacher experience, origin, family model, the number of children in the family.

4.5. Sample: Micro-research was held in the Kindergarten no. 274, sector 6, Bucharest. There were interviewed 52 parents of pre-school groups, level II (table 01 and table 02).

Parents:

a. Age

Table 01. Age parents

| Number of subject | Age range | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|-------|-------|----------------|
| | 20-30 | 31-40 | 41-50 | Above 50 years |
| 52 | 31 | 16 | 5 | 0 |

b. Graduated education:

Table 02. The level of preparation of parents

| Levels of study | Father | Mother |
|-------------------|--------|--------|
| With no education | 0 | 0 |
| School general | 0 | 0 |
| Middle school | 5 | 4 |
| High school | 19 | 16 |
| University degree | 28 | 32 |

5. Research Methods

Methods of investigation: survey based on questionnaire

The questionnaire was self-applied and it included 13 questions (closed, opened, mixed, with different choices) who aimed:

- the main reasons that determined them to register their children at this kindergarten;
- the identification of the features factors that maintain the relationship between child and governess from the child's perspective;
- how the kindergarten's director provides the kindergarten's management;
- the main elements that provides communication kindergarten – family;
- the aspects of the child's evolution in that educational unit.

6. Findings

Table 03. The quality of the kindergarten's organizational environment – parents perception

| Indicators | very important | | Important | | Relatively important | | Less important | | Unimportant | |
|--|----------------|--------|-----------|--------|----------------------|------|----------------|--------|-------------|--------|
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| It's the only kindergarten from the area | 23 | 44.23% | 0 | - | 13 | 25 % | 11 | 21.15% | 5 | 9.62% |
| It's near home | 43 | 82.7% | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 | - | 9 | 17.3% |
| It's near work | 29 | 55.77% | 8 | 15.38% | 5 | 9.62 | 0 | - | 10 | 19.23 |
| They own positive information | 45 | 86.54% | 7 | 13.46% | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 | - |
| The governess conducts interesting activities | 47 | 90.38% | 5 | 9.62% | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 | - |
| The elder child's governess | 29 | 55.77% | 9 | 17.3% | 0 | - | 0 | - | 14 | 26.93% |
| Weekly schedule | 21 | 40.39% | 6 | 11.54% | 0 | - | 0 | - | 25 | 48.07% |

The kindergarten's choice for parents is often very difficult. It faces many reasons, surroundings and situations that influences in a way or another the finale decision. In table 03 are written the main reasons why the parents chosen that kindergarten for their children. The scale helps us to notice and too analise the parents preferences about the decision to bring their children at the kindergarten that they attend. The most of the parents chose the kindergarten because they own positive information about that institution (86,54 %), they heard and know that in the kindergarten unfolds interesting activities - from the educational offer (90,38 %). The kindergarten must be near their home (82,7 %) and near their work (55,77 %). The kindergarten's schedule is also important, for examples the weekly schedule that allows the parents to leave their children there to sleep overnight or if not, to take the children home over the regular schedule, 19:30 o'clock.

Most of the times, the parents prefer to register their children at the same governess to whom they had a children before (55.77 %). This thing shows the gratitude for the provided services, but also for the great functionality of the educational process of the group level.

The educational act itself brings with it some aspects that crosses beyond class threshold and it influences in a way or another the parents perception about the services provided by the kindergarten. The

parents appreciate or not the elements that are not necessarily related to the instructional and educational process. They focus on the way that the staff relates whit the children. The parent stars to gain trust in the governess when the children feels good, by having the necessary conditions for his development on different fields: mental, social, moral, intellectual, emotional, physical, language/ communication and ludic.

Table 04. The relationship child-teacher

| Indicators | Very high | | High | | Medium | | Low | | Very low | |
|---|-----------|--------|------|--------|--------|-------|-----|-------|----------|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| The child is well- received by the governess | 48 | 92.3% | 4 | 7.7% | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 | - |
| The child comes with pleasure at the kindergarten | 43 | 82.7% | 6 | 11.54% | 2 | 3.84% | 1 | 1.92% | 0 | - |
| The child is encouraged and positively motivated | 39 | 75 % | 8 | 15.38 | 5 | 9.62% | 0 | - | 0 | - |
| The child is well –received by the classmates | 39 | 75 % | 8 | 15.38% | 4 | 7.7% | 1 | 1.92% | 0 | - |
| The child comes home happy after what happened at the kindergarten | 35 | 67.31% | 13 | 25 % | 3 | 5.77% | 1 | 1.92% | 0 | - |
| The child has full confidence in the governess, cherishes her | 50 | 96.15% | 2 | 3.85% | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 | 0 |
| The child continues to play at home with the governess (imaginary) | 35 | 67.31% | 10 | 19,23% | 7 | 13.46 | 0 | - | 0 | - |

The above table (table 04) clears that a positive stable relationship between governess and children leads to a better adaptation of the children in the kindergarten. The children come with excitement at the kindergarten (82,7 %) being well-received by the governess (92,3 %) and by their classmates (75 %). In the educational activities developed, the children are focused and they enjoy because they go home very excited after what happened at the kindergarten (67,31 %). The children are encouraged and positively motivated (82,22 %) and this means an increase in self-esteem and a good mental development. Sometimes the link between governess and children becomes a very powerfully one for the children, and even at home the children continues to play, speak at the phone (imaginary) with the governess.

Regarding the parents satisfaction about the children’s development from the moment that the child started the kindergarten and until present, they are very pleased. The child’s levels increased significantly, the parents are satisfied in proportion of 86,66% about the child’s evolution comparative to himself at the beginning. 62,22 % of the parents are very pleased about the child’s evolution in relation to his classmates. The game’s appreciation as the main learning method by finding used by the governess (93,33 %) leads to new useful knowledge about the social life (88,88 %). The growing and the evolution’s elements (88,88 %) bring with them emotional self-control (71,11%) but also psychomotor coordination in daily activities (62,22 %).

Table 05. The director’s management

| Indicators | Very high | High | Medium | Low | Very low |
|--|-----------|--------|--------|-----|----------|
| Availability to talk with parents | 60% | 26.66% | 11.11% | 0 | 0 |
| The availability of the new, positive changes | 68.88% | 24.44% | 6.66% | 0 | 0 |
| director is honest about the disciplinary measures | 80% | 17.77% | 2.22% | 0 | 0 |
| The effectiveness of the results obtained | 77.77% | 22.22% | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Regarding the kindergarten’s management about the director’s flexibility, the questioned parents appreciate the director’s availability to sit and talk frequently with the parents (60 %), availability to new, to positive changes (68,88 %). The kindergarten’s rules are respected in proportion of 80% given the fact that the director is honest about the disciplinary measures. Also, a very big percentage is represented by the efficiency of the results (77,77 %) (table 05).

Table 06. Elements that ensure communication between kindergarten and family

| Indicator | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|-------|--------|-------|-----|---|
| organization of the meetings with parents | 73.33 | 17.77% | 6.66% | 2.2 | - |
| Written communication and telephone | 88.88 | 6.66% | 2.22% | 2.2 | - |
| Dialogues and discussions with teachers | 84.44 | 13.33% | 2.22% | - | - |
| Organization of extracurricular activities | 64.44 | 26.66% | 8.88% | - | - |

The table 06 clears the level of the parent’s satisfaction regarding the organization of the PTA’s (73,33 %). The governess communicates with the parents through posters or phone calls (88,88 %), maintains harmonious relationships based on dialog (84,44 %). Regarding the organization of extracurricular activities, the answers divided in a very high level of satisfaction (64, 44 %), high lever (26,66 %) and a medium level of satisfaction (8, 88 %).]

7. Conclusion

In respect of checking the hypothesis: „If children's parents, as main beneficiaries, appreciate and assess the quality of the kindergarten, there are then important premises for ensuring a proper educational act and a partnership based on transparency and mutual help.” The quantitative results regarding the questionnaire addressed to parents show that if the relationship between the educator and the child is a beneficial one, then the child's accommodation with the kindergarten becomes easier. Therefore, after receiving the answers, we may summarize: „Children come to kindergarten willingly (82.7%), being welcomed by their educators (95.55%) and their colleagues (66.66%). Within the educational activities of a group of children, they are attentive and they like the activities, as they return home happily after going to kindergarten (75.55%). Children are encouraged and positively motivated (82.22%) which translates into a raise of self-esteem and a proper mental development.”

Parents also appeared to be satisfied with: their child's evolution since he attended kindergarten, the activities from the kindergarten, the principal's administration of the kindergarten and the effective communication between the kindergarten and the child's family.

The relationship between the family and the kindergarten/educator must represent a priority on the list of educational partnerships. A family that gets involved in the educational process will manage to correctly understand the importance of collaborating with the kindergarten. If the educator properly handles the situation and heads it to transparency, loyalty and safety, then the partnership will be a solid one, based on trust and mutual respect, and all these in the interest and advantage of the pre-school child's physical and mental development.

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