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POLICIES AND PRACTICES
for prevention of Early School Leaving

**Policies and practices for
prevention of Early School Leaving**

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From Early School Leaving Prevention to Promoting Inclusive Systems of Concentric Spatial Relations of Assumed Connection[1]

Paul DOWNES

Abstract

In Europe, if not internationally, the past decade in early school leaving prevention research and policy can be characterised as involving an emotional-relational turn. Some key features of this accelerated emotional-relational focus previously documented include the need to address authoritarian teaching and teacher conflict resolution skills, to prevent students being alienated from school. It also involves stronger integration of health and education policy and research, including emotional counselling supports and multidisciplinary teams in and around schools. This emotional-relational turn is argued here to include four further pillars as part of an inclusive systems approach: children's voices, integrated bullying and early school leaving prevention supports, positive school climate, together with social and emotional education. This turn needs to bring a shift towards concentric relational spaces of assumed connection and away from diametric spatial systems of exclusion, assumed separation and mirror image us/them hierarchy.

Introduction

Features of the Emotional-Relational Turn for Early School Leaving Prevention

In Europe, if not internationally, the past decade in early school leaving prevention research and policy can be characterised as involving an emotional-relational turn (Downes 2018). Some key features of this emotional-relational turn were argued for previous (Downes 2011). These include a heightened awareness of the need to address authoritarian teaching and teacher conflict resolution skills, to prevent students being alienated from school. It also involves a stronger integration of health and education policy and research, including an acceleration of focus on emotional counselling supports and multidisciplinary teams in and around schools, to address issues of family support, as well as complex needs such as addiction. The EU Commission Eurydice report (2014) has explicitly addressed the issue of the need to overcome policy bifurcation, the diametric splits at system levels between health and education, including social services ministries.

This emotional-relational turn is built on four further pillars: children and young people's voices, recognising the influence of bullying on early school leaving, positive school climate together with social and emotional education. This is not to minimise the importance of macrostructural dimensions such as poverty impinging on early school leaving, including for child labourers (Bademci et al. 2016). Ecclestone & Hayes (2009) pit an emotional wellbeing focus against a poverty focus, seeing the former as a distraction from the latter. While this may be the case in a distinctive UK historical context, it need not be the case more widely (Downes 2018a). Nevertheless, it is to be emphasised that structural investment issues such as high pupil-teacher ratio may impact classroom climate issues in countries experiencing high levels of poverty. It is to be recognised that there is not one early school leaving problem and a myriad of reasons why young people wish to leave school early. That this emotional-relational turn addresses a previously largely neglected issue for research and policy for early school leaving prevention is not to suggest that it is the sole lens for this issue.

A key dimension to bridge health and education concerns is the need to bring public health models of differentiated need into analysis of early school leaving prevention, as well as its symbiotic research domain, school violence and bullying prevention. This distinguishes strategic levels of intervention for all (universal), some at moderate risk with a focus on group supports (selected prevention) and few at high risk with complex needs requiring individual intensive supports (indicated prevention). Esch et al.'s

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(2014) review of mental health dimensions to early school leaving offers notable findings relevant to this indicated prevention level. When adjusted for socio-demographic factors, mood disorders (e.g. depression) were significantly related to school dropout
Among anxiety disorders, after controlling for potentially confounding factors, social phobia was a strong predictor of poor educational outcomes, as indicated by early school leavers themselves, such as feeling too nervous in class and being anxious to speak in public, both representing symptoms of social phobia.

Bademci et al. (2015) highlight neglect and abuse experienced by Istanbul street youth, while Quiroga et al.'s (2013) research involving 493 high-risk French-speaking adolescents living in Montreal observed that depression symptoms at the beginning of secondary school are related to higher dropout mainly by being associated with pessimistic views about the likelihood to reach desired school outcomes. Quiroga et al. (2013) conclude that interventions that target student mental health and negative self-perceptions are likely to improve dropout prevention. Loneliness has emerged as a risk factor for early school leaving in a Norwegian study, being as significant a risk factor as educational attainment (Frostad et al. 2015). This emotional-relational dimension of loneliness is less at the indicated prevention level of chronic need but more at the moderate risk level of selected prevention.

That relationships matter is not something that has emerged in research recently. International research in education has previously emphasised the importance of caring relationships in schools (e.g., Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Moreover, Bronfenbrenner & Morris' (1998) accentuation of proximal processes, as microsystem interaction such as relationships offers an apt initial framework for further accepting this truism that relationships matter. Markussen et al.'s (2011) research on relational supports and expulsions is a stark illustration of the key role of system relational supports. Their longitudinal study followed a sample of 9,749 Norwegian students over a five-year period, out of compulsory education and through upper secondary education. Not unexpectedly, they observed that the higher the students scored on an index measuring deviant behaviour, the higher their probability of early leaving as compared to completing. However, within this group demonstrating problematic behaviour, Markussen et al., (2011) found that students with high scores on an index measuring seriously deviant behaviour were less likely to leave early than students with low scores on this index; this finding is explained by the extra resources, support and attention these students are provided with, making it less probable for them to leave. Cederberg & Hartsmar (2013) observed that those who were considering leaving school early, but changed their mind, reported that they did so after advice from a teacher or a social worker. The largescale EU funded study on early school leaving, RESL-EU, also places relationships central to early school leaving prevention (van Praag, et al. 2018), as does an EU Commission report on lessons from second chance education (Day et al. 2013). Likewise, school disengagement is in its very own terms of self-description an issue of relationships, a loss of relation to a school institutional environment often due to systemic factors (Rogers 2016).

Integrating Research and Strategic Responses for Early School Leaving and School Violence and Bullying Prevention

Bridging health and education has also involved a reconstruction of domains typically treated as largely separate from each other, such as early school leaving and school bullying prevention (Downes & Cefai 2016). Different problems may invite common integrated system responses. This ecological systems approach builds on Bronfenbrenner to also address system blockage (Downes 2014). While not necessarily the same individuals are at risk of early school leaving and bullying, possible responses show great similarities and therefore a common strategy may be useful, including common systems of supports, such as a transition focus to post-primary, multidisciplinary teams for complex needs (Edwards & Downes 2013), language support, family outreach supports and teacher professional development on issues relevant to preventing both problems, such as teachers' conflict resolution and diversity awareness competences (Downes & Cefai 2016). Direct and indirect effects of bullying on early school leaving relevant to perpetrators and victims include school absence, negative interpersonal relations with peers and conflict with teachers, low concentration in school, decreased academic performance, negative school climate influences, lower school belonging, satisfaction, and pedagogical well-being, with the effects of bullying exacerbated for those already at risk of early school leaving (Downes & Cefai 2016).

System blockages as a variant of authoritarian teaching include discriminatory bullying (Elamé 2013). This is a key issue in the context of increased migration in Europe and beyond. Elamé's (2013) research

on discriminatory bullying involved a sample of 1352 immigrant and Roma students as part of a wider sample of 8817 students across 10 European countries. The findings of Elamé's (2013) study regarding the fundamental importance of teacher influence on discriminatory bullying are of particular interest. Those immigrant and Roma students who think the teacher exhibits similar behaviour towards 'native' and immigrant and Roma children in the class are those bullied least in the last 3 months. In contrast, those immigrant or Roma children who sense a bias in the teacher's attitudes against different ethnic groups in their class are also those who have been bullied with the highest frequency during the previous 3 months (Elamé, 2013). Exclusion as systems of relational spaces, and more specifically of diametric spatial systems of exclusion, splitting and mirror image hierarchical inversions are to be contrasted with concentric spatial systems of assumed connection and relative openness for early school leaving prevention (Downes 2013, 2016).

European and International Policy Issues for Emotional-Relational Dimensions

Allied with the key EU2020 headline target of reducing early school leaving to 10% across the EU, a more recent EU policy development offers further potential for expanding this emotional-relational turn for early school leaving prevention. This is the new European Key Competence for Lifelong Learning of Personal, Social and Learning to Learn key competence (Commission 2018; EU Council 2018). This places personal and relational development issues at the heart of EU education policy.

The Commission's Thematic Working Group (TWG) report on early school leaving (2013) explicitly reiterates the importance of emotional supports, against the backdrop of a relational environment: those who face personal, social or emotional challenges often have too little contact with education staff or other adults to support them. They need easy access to teachers and other professionals supporting their educational and personal development.

Significantly, the EU Council Conclusions on reducing early school leaving and promoting success in school (2015) formally accepts the importance of these systemic dimensions:

> …factors such as an unfavourable school climate, violence and bullying, a learning environment in which learners do not feel respected or valued…or poor teacher-pupil relationships may lead learners to leave education prematurely

The Commission's School Policy Working Group report on early school leaving (2015) further recognises the need to bridge health and education sectors, as part of a multidisciplinary team approach:

> A 'whole school approach' also implies a cross-sectoral approach and stronger cooperation with a wide range of stakeholders (social services, youth services, outreach care workers, psychologists, nurses, speech and language therapists, guidance specialists, local authorities

Though the OECD was criticised for ignoring emotional and relationships for equity in education (Downes 2010, 2011), their more recent work, though not without its limits (Cefai et al. 2018), has at least recognised the key role of social and emotional education. Likewise PISA (2012) offers more than scrutiny of literacy and numeracy and includes a focus on School Belonging and Feeling Like an Outsider, including a specific focus on marginalised students (OECD 2012). The WHO (2012) has foregrounded not only the need for caring responsive teachers for student wellbeing but also explicitly raised concerns regarding authoritarian teaching so as not to publicly humiliate students.

As part of an overall multisector approach, the Global School Health statement for the Integration of Health and Education by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) and the International School Health Network (ISHN) recognises that:

> The health sector needs to seek integration within the education system—not education's adoption of health priorities. The health sector must find its cultural anchor within education and integrate its processes and outcomes.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child emphasises voices of children and young people, through Art 12 (1). However, the US is an international outlier in that it is the only country not to have ratified this Convention, now that Somalia and South Sudan have completed ratification. This has arguably had a negative impact on US based research on early school leaving prevention, as well as allied fields of school bullying and violence prevention, with regard to children's and young people's voices.

An Emotional-Relational Turn for Early School Leaving Prevention as Part of Promoting Inclusive Systems as Concentric Space

One shift in the past decade is to address the need to promote inclusive systems and not simply to prevent, whether early school leaving or school bullying. Our recent work, published by the EU Commission (Downes, Nairz-Wirth & Rusinaite 2017), has sought to develop a framework of ten key guiding principles for inclusive systems in and around schools, including action-guiding structural indicators for system change. These ten principles include a *systemic* focus on addressing system blockages as barriers and on system supports, a *holistic* approach recognising social, emotional and physical needs and not simply academic, cognitive ones (Downes 2013a); *equality and non-discrimination* acknowledges that different groups may need additional supports in a respectful environment free of prejudice. *Building on strengths* challenges negative deficit labels of vulnerable groups and seeks to promote growth rather than simply prevent. A principle of *representation and participation of marginalised groups* involves a distinct focus on processes and structures for their representation and participation. *Active participation of parents in school* requires a strategic focus on marginalised parents. A *lifelong learning* principle brings educational focus on active learning methodologies for issues of active citizenship, personal and social fulfilment, intercultural dialogue across communities, as well as on poverty and social inclusion, and employment. Other key principles already discussed include *children's voices*, *differentiation* of needs and *multidisciplinarity*.
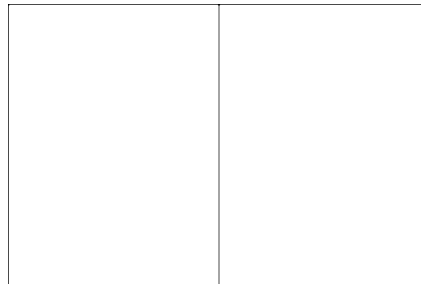
Fig. 1 Diametric Dualism
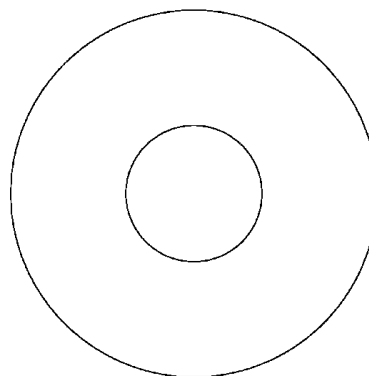
Fig. 2 Concentric Dualism

The inclusive systems framework seeks to expand upon the emotional-relational turn for early school leaving research, and to deconstruct resilience theory to move from the resilient individual and resilient systems to inclusive systems (Downes 2017, 2018b). The interdisciplinary theoretical framework of inclusive systems combines a health and education focus with a reconstruction of both the ecological systems theory of Bronfenbrenner in developmental psychology and Lévi-Strauss' structural anthropology in spatial relational terms of inclusive systems as concentric spatial systems (Downes 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017).

As Lévi-Strauss (1963, 1973), highlighted, a diametric spatial structure is one where a circle is split in half by a line which is its diameter or where a square or rectangle is similarly divided into two equal halves (see Fig.1). In a concentric spatial structure, one circle is inscribed in another larger circle (or square); in pure form, the circles share a common central point (see Fig.2).

Though Lévi-Strauss did not explicitly highlight this difference, it is evident that the inner and outer poles of concentric structures are more fundamentally attached to each other than diametric structures. Both concentric poles coexist in the same space so that the outer circle overlaps the space of the inner one. The outer circle surrounds and contains the inner circle. The opposite that is within the outer circle or shape cannot detach itself from being within this outer shape. And though the outer circle or shape can move in the direction of greater detachment from the inner circle, it cannot fully detach itself from the inner circle (even if the inner circle becomes an increasingly smaller proportion of the outer). Full detachment could conceivably occur only by destroying the very concentric structure of the whole opposition itself. In contradistinction, diametric oppositional realms are both basically detached and can be further smoothly detached from the other (Downes 2003, 2012). These conclusions operate for both structures, whether they are viewed as being two or three-dimensional. As structures in relational difference, this contrast is a relativistic one of degree.

A concentric relation assumes connection between its parts and any separation is on the basis of assumed connection, whereas diametric opposition assumes separation and any connection between the parts is on the basis of this assumed separation (Downes 2013, 2016). Concentric space offers a relation that allows for distinction between an inner and outer pole, while retaining an underlying connection. A concentric spatial relation is a structure of inclusion compared to a diametric spatial structure of exclusion.

Lévi-Strauss (1973) explicitly relates diametric structures to mirror image inversions between both diametric poles. He describes 'symmetrical inversions' (p. 247) in Mandan and Hidatsa myths:

> '[…] these myths are diametrically opposed … In the Mandan version … two earth women who are not sisters go to heaven to become sisters-in-law by marrying celestial brothers. One who belongs to the Mandan tribe, separates from an ogre, Sun, with the help of a string which enables her to come back down to her village. In revenge, Sun places his legitimate son at the head of the enemies of the Mandan, upon whom he declares war. In the Hidatsa version … everything is exactly reversed. Two celestial brothers come down to earth to be conceived by human beings and born as children. Sun's sister, an ogress, is joined with an earthborn character by means of a string. She makes him her adopted son and puts him at the head of the enemies of the Hidatsa'. (Lévi-Strauss 1973, p. 250)

A mirror image is not an identical one but a left-right inversion. Concentric structures of relation are not a symmetry as inversion. Rather they offer a different symmetry as unity, where the line or axis of symmetry brings the same pole rather than a mirror image pole in diametric structures (Downes 2013, 2016). Diametric spaces of mirror image reversals bring oppositions such as good/bad, above/below, us/them, norm/other, and lead to an implication of hierarchy, antithetical, for example, to students' voices in the system.

As relational spaces that are crossculturally meaningful, a distinctive focus on spatial systems as concentric relational spaces contrasts with fragmented, hierarchical diametric spatial systems in and around schools. Early school leaving prevention is envisaged as a shift from diametric oppositional, hierarchical, closed and fragmented systems to promoting concentric relational systems of assumed connection that are relatively more open.

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Early School Leaving and Parent-Professional Partnerships as a Response to Addressing Structural Barriers to Equity in Education

Carmel BORG
University of Malta
MALTA

This chapter foregrounds genuine parent-professional collaboration in schools as an antidote to hierarchical, expert-driven relations of power and in response to an ideological stance that has generated vast literature and empirical evidence that shows how schools have structurally and systematically reproduced social division, where macro socio-economic differences are confirmed and where children and youth from traditionally disenfranchised families are derailed and 'primed' for a precarious life characterised by material deprivation and social exclusion. Against such a backdrop, early school leaving is perceived as symptomatic of an exclusive, unjust and asymmetrical society and as a continuation of the 'symbolic violence' experienced by early school leavers within the formal, compulsory education system. It is the excesses of a neo-liberal economic arrangement, and the collateral damage of exam-driven, performance-obsessed standardized education systems that serve it, that this chapter seeks to address by critically understanding the world that is and by proposing educational social relations that can be.

Introduction

There is general consensus that Early School Leaving (ESL) or Early Leaving from Education and Training (ELET) is detrimental to the individual, society and the economy. The perceived pathology is based on the assumption that a successful country needs to collectively achieve a minimum level of formal education in order to guarantee universal access to personal, social and economic security. This chapter makes a case for authentic parent-professional collaboration in schools, in response to the vast literature that, for decades, shed light on how schools have structurally and systematically acted as sites of social division where macro socio-economic differences are reproduced and where children and youth from traditionally disenfranchised families are derailed and 'primed' for a precarious life characterised by material deprivation and social exclusion. Against such a backdrop, early school leaving is perceived as symptomatic of an exclusive, individualistic, competitive, anti-democratic, unjust and asymmetrical society and as a continuation of the 'symbolic violence' experienced by early school leavers within the formal, compulsory education system. It is the excesses of the savage, predatory, global economic system that generates inequalities, and the side effects of standardized education systems that serve it, that this paper seeks to address by critically understanding the world that is and by proposing educational social relations that can be. This paper revisits the concept of parental-professional communities of learning as one such form of proposed liberatory school-community action, with the view of promoting the concept as an opportunity for the reclaiming of authentic communal engagement for self- and collective transformation.

Early School Leaving and Schools' 'Symbolic Violence'

Education is an important institution of civil society and a contested terrain, situated at the interface of micro-, meso- and macro-economic, social, and cultural realities.

Empirical evidence has repeatedly shown how early school leavers, constructed as youth at risk, have been short-changed by education systems that often fail to listen to their social, cultural, emotional and cognitive needs. As a result, Borg & Calleja (2006) argue that while such students are often forced to be physically present in our schools, through punitive regimes and technologies of power, they play truant in mind or drift academically into a parallel world where underachievement is normalised if not privileged [1]. .

The technology of academic failure and emotional and social disengagement is vast, complex and varied. It includes: system-wide and school-based practices such as centralized and standardized curricula that often exclude many students in terms of their knowledge and experiences; processes of

selection and ranking systems that classify and label students as well as schools; differences between schools in terms of human and material resources; lack of or poor-quality support services; inadequate early childhood education provision that fails to address disadvantages in terms of cultural capital; strategies such as grade retention, special education and pull-out programmes that may actually dampen student engagement and learning opportunities while isolating students; assessment procedures that condemn and marginalise rather than enable students; school attitudes that transmit low expectations and confirm self-fulfilling prophecies; weak home-school links; and disjointed efforts at addressing students' personal and social needs.

Students who are symbolically excluded are often misread as incompetent, lazy and subversive. Victims are blamed and labelled for their predicament, and are often perceived as material for remedial work. The deficit-oriented approach to underachievement and underperformance within institutions of learning that often privilege performativity over genuine care reinforces the image of students as problematic. Such construction often puts students at considerable academic and social risk within the school environment.

'Self-sealing processes', the processes by which school assumptions of at-risk students become undiscussable are not only debilitating but also tend to shift the blame on disadvantaged students and their families and to block dialogues between school and home since parents are seen as part of their chiildren's problems. It is the reclaiming of the parental voice and the parent-professional dialogue and authentic collaboration that the rest of the chapter advocates for, in full awareness of the fact that collaboration is often victim of the collateral damage of a world that privileges individualism and competition over community and solidarity.

In an earlier piece, Borg and Mayo (2006) argued that in the present neo-liberal climate, community involvement, promoted as 'active democratic citizenship', is to be interrogated, particularly in political contexts characterised by a minimalist state and the seemingly unstoppable march towards the privatisation of basic services [2]. This chapter revisits the concept of parental-professional communities of learning as one such form of proposed community action, with the view of promoting the concept as an opportunity for the reclaiming of authentic communal engagement for self- and collective transformation.

Parent-Professional Partnerships in Perilous and Asymmetrical times

The hegemonic discourse of competitiveness that has dominated the global political agenda for many years (Borg and Grech, 2014), a value system that is soft on the accumulation and concentration of wealth and power to the detriment of the collective good and to the sustainability of communities in general, is eating into the ideal of solidarity and the common good [3]. Three years from the signing of the UN's Agenda 2030, meant to reclaim global solidarity through actions informed by social justice, evidence indicates that despite the concrete signs of economic recovery, profit-driven democracies continue to distance themselves from social justice, diluting their strength as an ideal public space for the affirmation of human-rights-based quality of life.

The social contract that many European states had negotiated and renegotiated with their peoples, starting soon after the second world war and successfully sustained for three decades, has been substantially eroded by a world economic order that has generated unimaginable wealth while weakening social cohesion and the value system that had supported it.   In the process, partially as a result of their softness and appeasement when faced by the ruthlessness of such an economic order, Borg (2017) argues, many states, to varying degrees, are facing a legitimacy crisis marked by increasing citizen frustration, exhaustion, distrust, antipathy, and indifference towards politics [4].

As loneliness bites into the general mental well-being of many European citizens, as difficulties faced by families are turned into objects of rehabilitation in highly specialised ecologies, and as the general mood continues to shift from universal solidarity to selective solidarity, the ideological, mental and emotional climate as well as the physical spaces for genuine partnership, based on mutuality and reciprocity, seem to be in decline, rendering collaborative, horizontal and collectivist initiatives that are truly inclusive, participatory and democratic more difficult to initiate and sustain.

While the public becomes more private, the collective more individual, the collaborative more competitive, and the solidarity more charitable and optional, de-socialising processes, glossed over by the rhetoric of client/student/patient/service-user centredness, feeds into the ideology of self-empowerment and self-help, reinforcing a do-it-yourself mentality rooted in fierce individualism, independence, autonomy and atomisation. Issues which are largely social, communal, interdependent and structural in nature become individualised, personalised, psychologised and pathologized. The era of multiple opportunities for collective consciousness, liberation and emancipation is becoming ever more distant and unrecognisable. The genes of community, solidarity and mutuality are steadily mutating into individual pathology on a chronic, privatised quest for costly professional advice and intervention.

Parent-Professional Partnerships and the Erosion of Solidarity

Partnership models that promote sincere, mutually respectful and participatory engagements within communities of learning are premised on solidarity among citizens. Solidarity implies communion with the other, mutual respect stemming from genuine care for the other and macro- and micro-social ecologies that structurally promote the common good.

The hegemonic ideological climate that informs many urban centres is perhaps the biggest obstacle to authentic parent-professional encounters and communities which are mutually liberatory in their conception, development and actions.

Informed by economic relations where growth is heavily dependent on rates of individual consumption, where equality is largely defined in terms of protecting individual and free choice within a global market and where the empowered citizen is mainly defined by his/her capacity to consume, increasing numbers of citizens are becoming ever more alienated from their neighbour, fellow worker, homeless, precarious labourer, disenfranchised migrant, and the socially-excluded and materially-deprived 'others'. Spaces, meant to be communal and collective, are becoming increasingly privatised in the name of delusionary or real consumption.

Rather than reaching out to the other, citizens are reduced to private consumers, competing with the known or 'unknown other' for visibility through consumption and through repeated, often uncritical reactions within a process that commodifies anything, ranging from education, health and prisons to relationships and one's own body. Such a context, informed by an ideology of consumption and characterised by multi-directional and omni-present bombardment of perceived needs and consumables as objects of desire, defies solidarity by emotionally and physically distancing human beings from one another, turning vulnerability into a distant spectacle that at best ends with momentary acts of charity that do nothing to challenge the asymmetrical status quo that is fuelled by individualism, competition, short-term gratification, liquidity and disposibility.

Focusing on the poor, the late Zygmunt Bauman (1998) remarks that to be poor in a consumption-oriented society is to be totally unnecessary [5]. Bauman's assertion that this construction of the 'poor other' as a metaphor for social exclusion is exacerbated by the fact that social-class consciousness and international solidarity have largely evaporated on many fronts, psychologically, ideologically, culturally and organisationally. The socially-excluded others are out on their own, frozen in material, emotional, psychological and social wilderness.

Unfit for the consumer treadmill, as cynically described by the polish sociologist and public intellectual, the humanity of the socially-excluded becomes disposable, bureaucratised and invisible to many. As the poor are dehumanised, in the political theorist Hannah Arendt's words, they become the responsibility of no one.

What is eroding solidarity even further, in Europe and beyond, is that neoliberalism (euphemism for savage capitalism) has not only made many poor parents poorer but has also simultaneously declassed vast numbers of middle-class families. Many traditionally-comfortable, middle-class families are consumed by the possibility of falling into the precarious trap. Promised dreams, based on the mantra "education, education and education", and glamorised lives reinforced by the corporate media, are shattered, on a daily basis, by a life of uncertainty, a career of definite contracts, programmed

redundancy and the inabilty to visualise one's life on a long-term basis; existential uncertainty and loneliness that divides the suffereres and turns life into a relentless struggle for survival.

Moreover, while millions are struggling emotionally, economically and socially, solidarity continues to be eroded by public and media-fuelled displays of paranoia where many, from the migrant person sitting on a bench next-to-you or persons taking pictures are construed as alien, potential criminals or terrorists. When people living in privatised bubbles, artificially connected through social media, approach the other with suspicion it is difficult for encounters of solidarity to materialise.

Parent-Professional Partnerships and the Ethical State

In a global reality where power is transnational and less transparent, the state has mutated from its status as promoter of personal and collective well-being to a prime strategic partner in the movement of private capital. As a result, less state, sold and indexed universally, as less bureaucracy is seen, promoted and assessed as good governance and as an important indicator of competitiveness. The invisible hand of the market has transformed the state from an ethics-inspired state into a market and for-profit-investment-oriented state that is intermittently called to pacify and stabilise industrial relations, recalibrate competitiveness and make good for private crises like the financial crisis.

In the paraphrased words of Manuel Castells, quoted in Baumen (1998), a state which makes room for poverty and precariousness but has no room for people who dream of its eradication; the state which fails not only at the level of distribution but also at the level of production of wealth by institutionalising practices such as the so-called 'activation policies' which force the unemployed into precarious work, for which the recomodified worker is often overqualified, in exchange for the receipt of benefits, allowing management practices that divide and isolate workers into outsourced, multiple, micro and loosely-connected production spaces, to mention one intentionally propagated and internationally diffused practice of maximisation of profit, at the producers' expense, and allowing the common citizen to absorb long-term the blast of the financial and job crises.

The role of the state in facilitating and in maximising accumulation of transnational wealth in a context marked by decreasing solidarity puts into question the state's intentions to shift responsibilities to the community in the name of subsidiarity. In response to this interrogation, this paper provides signposts for revisualising and reclaiming possibilities for authentic parent-professional partnerships in a post-Fordist world characterised by the erosion of community, solidarity and collective emancipation, concentration of wealth and the privileging of individuality, competition and privatisation.

Revisualising Parent-Professional Partnerships as a Possibility for Mutual Emancipation

A fundamental step in the direction of reclaiming a moral imagination that hosts an authentic parent-professional partnership, to be read as a geniuine act of communion of the state with the community, is based on the notion that human beings are in a continuous process of becoming, and that this process is communitarian, collective and organic rather than individualistic, competitive, hierarchical and fragmented. Within this framework, critically engaging the world and searching for multi-layered and rhizomic, possibilitarian encounters constitute two core activities in the process of becoming more human; a process that is transformative for the community and for the institutions that engage in such processes because it welds collective reading of the world with ongoing communal action for personal and social change.

Critical engagement with the immediate ecology of parents as a fundamental process of communal emancipation is key to challenging the 'culture of silence' (Freire, 1996) that characterises traditional professional-parent relationships; a culture reproduced through hierarchical pedagogical engagements and fuelled by the privileging and foregrounding of professional esoteric knowledge [6].

In transformative professional-parent contexts, active engagement of parents is promoted with a view to empowering parents to develop skills that enable them to engage in in-depth analyses of the impact of issues relating to social, economic, cultural, emotional and democratic realities. The curricular experience of genuine communities of learning, where professionals and parents are concerned with

mutuality and collective transformation as much as professionals addressing the individual needs of parents, provides ample opportunities for reflection, peer-tutoring, cooperative learning and action. Within such contexts, professionals and parents experience democracy and rediscover life beyond deficiency, consumption, performativity, competition, capital and the market place.

Learning communities which are truly participatory in nature allow for professional-parent partnerships to create possibilities for democratic citizenship, targeting organised non-hierarchical interactions, conversations, reflections and engagement on issues that are immediate and of common interest. Conversations that draw on experiential knowledge as much as they foreground professional knowledge; 'curricula of life' that reflect the quotidian commons, committed to advancing a deeper understanding of how struggles for cultural, social, economic and cognitive justice can transform the contexts of parents. Authentic professional-parent communities of learning are social spaces that support professional-parent initiatives as an antidote to vertical pedagogical experiences that generate submission and passive consumption of professional knowledge.

Parent-Professional Partnerships and Knowledge Production

Genuine communities of learning are based on the awareness that knowledge plays an important role in determining the power dynamics within the learning ecology. Authentic parent-professional learning communities are willing to challenge traditional ways of knowing, where popular knowledge tends to be devalued whereas specialized knowledge is foregrounded and transmitted to a largely passive audience of parents.

Genuine communities of learning challenge the legitimacy given within traditional professional-parent relationships to specialized knowledge at the expense of other knowledges, and question why official knowledge, perceived as robust, powerful, objective and scientific, does not include the quotidian experiences and cultural expressions of parents as valid ways of knowing. In addition, genuine communities of learning deconstruct how professionals in privileged positions have traditionally distanced themselves from the public, using specialised knowledge as a mark of distinction and as a means to reproducing their privileged location.

Liberatory communities of learning engage the politics of knowledge to question the arbitrary nature of what is considered as valid knowledge and to raise questions regarding the extent to which official knowledge reflects and reinforces asymmetrical power relations.

Genuine communities of learning, committed to ongoing interrogation and reconstruction of how knowledge is produced, what classifies as powerful knowledge and whose knowledge is foregrounded, are committed to creating curricular experiences that are built collectively, with themes for eventual exploration and discovery generated within the learning community, offering possibilities for co-production of knowledge rather than reacting to information transmitted by professionals who walk into educational sites with pre-conceived ideas of what parents lack in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes and experience.

Such communities respond to a fundamental tenant that parents are not 'tabula rasa', that they can actively contribute to the production of knowledge and that parents' role within the community of learning is that of co-participants, problem-posers, co-enquirers, co-investigators and co-discoverers. Parents perceived as net contributors to the learning community rather than passive consumers of professional knowledge.

Within such a curricular and pedagogical paradigm, knowledge dies as a product or commodity to be consumed by a recipient audience to resurrect as a communal experience dedicated to the generation of emancipatory power. The ordinary experience of many parents becomes an extraordinary moment of curiosity for the professional, translated into a dialogue with, rather than a lesson for the parents.

Qualities of Transformative Professionals and their Role within Authentic Communities of Learning

For authentic parent-professional communities to materialise, professionals are called to reinvent themselves as authoritative educators. For this to happen the authoritarian act of depositing knowledge has to be dispensed with and instead professionals engage with parents as co-subjects of learning.

Such a relationship is not to be misconstrued as laissez-faire pedagogy, an anything-goes stance on the part of the professional. On the contrary, the educator will continue to assume a directive role without, however, slipping into a prescriptive relationship with the parents.

In adult education circles committed to authentic communities of learning where horizontality is embraced and practised, dialogue is considered as a viable and coherent pedagogical tool. Freire (1996) describes authentic dialogues (as opposed to pseudo-dialogues where professionals pretend to be engaging in conversations with parents) as acts of human solidarity; acts of freedom that reject the image of superior and inferior, replacing the image with 'autonomy and responsibility' (Freire, 1996). Freire continues to describe authentic dialogues as acts of creation and recreation, negotiation and renegotiation, moments of critical discovery and hopeful enquiries; subject-subject experiences where the word is considered a human right uttered in communion with others. Authentic dialogues contribute to the resolution of the teacher-student contradiction where both are simultaneously teacher and student. Authentic dialogues constitute liberatory pedagogy because they are not interested in winning parents over, in invading their culture or in colonising their spaces. Authentic dialogues are processes of becoming, acts of consciousness-building, heavily dependent on the valorisation of parental knowledge.

Parent-Professional Encounters as Problem-Posing Moments

Dialogues will not materialise when a professional take on a problem-solving stance, that is, when the professional walks into an educational site with a bag of questions that s/he can solve on his/her own terms as a professional. Authentic communities of learning, with dialogue as the main pedagogical tool, adopt a problem-solving stance to professional-parent communication. In contexts defined by problem-posing, the primary goal is always conscientization, not as a one-way street but as an act of partnership where professionals and parents are willing to learn from each other, where dialogue is not always initiated by the professional, where parents, through conscientisation, understand the world, build connections with a view to eventually act on the world. Within authentic learning communities, parents who are no longer marginal to the educational experience pose problems that relate to their lives and respond by creating new understandings of their own world.

For an honest dialogue to happen, especially in contexts where parents have always lived on the margins of society or are just-arrived members of society, security and trust are of the essence. Silence thrives on situations that are read by parents as threatening, intimidating and humiliating. Silence also thrives on cultural insensitivity and the message that certain parts of the world, constructed as underdeveloped and inferior, have nothing to teach the developed world.
Oppressive silence is shattered by professionals who are humble, are willing to listen, respect others and are ideologically committed to igniting hope in situations which are defined by a hightened sense of fatalism, to producing light where there is darkness, to injecting life where necrophilism creeps in, and to committing themselves to act on the world as much as they are willing to critically read the world. Transformative professionals are willing to embrace dissent, live at the intersection of self and others (Kirkwood and Kirkwood, 2011) while creating the capacity for activism [7].

Within these community professionals are not merely the ones who teach, preach and dispense solutions. They are the ones who are taught in dialogue with the parents who in turn while being taught also teach. Parents and professionals, working within genuine learning communities are approached as creative critical thinkers engaged in continuous transformation through which they become authentic subjects of the construction and reconstruction of the knowledge and experience they were exposed to.

Roadblocks to the Formation of Genuine Learning Communities

Experience in forming professionals for potential engagement in such communities has provided insights into a number of roadblocks to building such communities within institutions.
Some of the major barriers include:
- authentic partnerships may not materialise within institutions which do not have a history of collaborative practices;
- such partnerships will not happen where fragmentation atomisation, insecurity and competition reign supreme;
- partnerships cannot happen where efficiency rules the waves;
- partnerships may not take root where relations within the institution are hierarchical in nature;
- partnerships cannot happen when the 'other' is seen as deficient or inferior…where there is mistrust…where the attitude is bureaucratic in nature…where regulations rule over enabling practices…where people are cynical or fatalistic…where there is a sense of helplessness…where peoples' ideas are viewed with suspicion.

Conclusion

Preparing professionals for authentic communities of learning as an antidote to an 'expert'-driven, hierarchical and non-reflective professional existence, is essential if the culture of parent-professional partnership is to flourish. Trainee professionals have to be presented with first-hand experience of working collaboratively with parents. Parents have to be present in all stages of the curriculum experience of professionals while in training - from the design to the development and evaluation of the programme. Parent-professional collaboration is a culture, a value system, a pedagogical approach, a curricular experience and way of acting on the world that needs to be cultivated within the institutions charged with training professionals. It needs to become second-nature within professional training if such an experience is to act as an antidote to the traditional ethos of verticality that is characteristic of traditional professional-parent relationships.

Carmel Borg is a former head of department and dean of the Faculty of Education, University of Malta. He lectures at the University of Malta and internationally, as honorary visiting professor and associate academic, in curriculum studies, critical pedagogy, sociology and politics of education, and community and adult education. He has presented internationally and published extensively in several languages around the foregoing issues. Professor Borg is a public intellectual and community activist, promoting education as a liberatory experience. He is the Director of the MRER Project and Chairperson of the National Observatory for Living with Dignity, a research entity within the President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society. Professor Borg is the founding and current editor of the Malta Review of Education Research (MRER) and of the Education Research Monograph Series (ERMS). His latest book (co-edited with Michael Grech) is entitled The Pedagogy Politics and Philosophy of Peace: Interrogating Peace and Peace Making, published by Bloomsbury in 2017.

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Social and Emotional Education:
A systemic, whole school approach[2]

Carmel CEFAI[A],
Paul BARTOLO[A],
Valeria CAVIONI[B]
Paul DOWNES[C]

University of Malta, Malta
University of Milano Bicocca, Italy
Dublin City University, Ireland

As schools strive to provide a quality education for the twenty first century, they are becoming more aware that children and young people need to develop not only cognitive but also social and emotional competences to help them navigate successfully through the tasks and challenges they are set to face in their pathway towards adulthood. A quality, meaningful education integrates both academic and social and emotional learning for an adequate and relevant education for the twenty first century. This paper presents the findings of a research report on the integration of social and emotional education in the curriculum, with a particular focus on the European context. It discusses the impact of social and emotional education on both socio-emotional and academic outcomes and identifies the key conditions necessary for effectiveness.

Introduction

Children and young people in the twenty first century come to school with a heavy social and emotional baggage which impacts their learning and psychological wellbeing. Long standing problems such as poverty, bullying, and family conflict have been compounded by more recent phenomena such as consumerism and media exploitation, technological addiction, academic pressure and stress, cyberbullying, loneliness and social isolation, migration, human trafficking, mobility and changing family and community structures.

Mental health problems in children have been increasing over the past decades, particularly amongst female children and adolescents, with depression being a top global health issue and suicide the third leading cause of death amongst adolescents (WHO, 2014). These increasing economic, social and psychological stresses in children's and young people's life today underline the need for schools to provide a broad based education which reflects and addresses these realities for it to remain meaningful and relevant. Indeed, schools are increasingly being held responsible for engaging in practices which promote children's social and emotional wellbeing.

Such practices go beyond performance indicators and academic achievement and focus instead on responding to and addressing the challenges faced by children and young people today. Academic achievement predicts only a small fraction of the variance in later life success, while social and emotional learning may be more predictive of successful active citizenship than cognitive skills (Kautz, Heckman, Diris, Weel & Borghans, 2014).

Social and emotional education (SEE), the educational process by which children and young people develop social and emotional competence for personal, social and academic growth, equips children and young people with the resources and tools to deal with the 'tests of life' and keep growing and thriving academically, socially, and emotionally. It focuses on two major domains, namely the Self (self-

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awareness and self-management) and the Others (social awareness and relationships), including such intra-personal competences as effective problem solving, responsible decision making, emotional regulation, making use of one's strengths, positive self-concept and self-determination, and interpersonal competences such as building and maintaining healthy relationships, understanding and empathising with others, collaboration and constructive conflict resolution (CASEL, 2003).

A strong evidence base

There is clear and consistent evidence, both longitudinal and replication studies that social and emotional education is related to increased positive attitudes, prosocial behaviour, and academic achievement and reduced internalized and externalized conditions, such as anxiety, depression, substance use, and antisocial behavior (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, & Taylor, 2011; Sklad, Diekstra, De Ritter, & Ben, 2012; Taylor, Oberle; Durlak; & Weissberg, 2017; Weare & Nind, 2011).

The authors of this paper have just carried out a meta-analysis of reviews of studies in the area, supported by a review of other key studies and other reviews related to the area. The meta-analysis included the major reviews carried out within the last ten years, including the seminal review by Durlak et al (2011) based on more than 200 studies, the reviews by Sklad et al (2012) with 75 studies and Taylor et al (2017) (82 studies), the review of reviews by Weare and Nind (2011) with 52 reviews, and the recent review by Corcoran et al (2018) with 40 studies. While most of the studies in the reviews are from the USA, there are a considerable number of studies from other countries as well. Weare and Nind (2011) and Clarke et al. (2015) are particularly focused on European studies, while the reviews by Sklad et al. (2012), Korpershoek et al. (2016), OECD (2102) and Sancassiani et al. (2015) include a number of studies from other countries across the world. More details on these reviews may be found in our report (Cefai et al, 2018).

Our analysis of these thirteen major reviews as well as additional reviews, studies, and research reports, clearly indicates that social and emotional education has a positive impact on social, emotional and academic outcomes across the school years. More specifically, SEE is related to enhanced social and emotional competence, prosocial behaviour, and mental health as well as to increased academic performance. On the other hand, it is related to reduced mental health difficulties in children and young people, such as anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and antisocial behaviour.

These positive impacts have been reported across the school years from early years through to high school, and across a range of geographical settings, cultural contexts, socio-economic backgrounds, and different ethnic groups. They also persist over time, with positive outcomes observed during follow-up studies undertaken six months to three years after initial interventions (Taylor et al, 2017). Longitudinal studies on the impact of SEE indicate various positive outcomes in important areas of adulthood, such as enhanced education, employment and mental health, as well as reductions in criminal activity and substance abuse (Dodge et al, 2014; Jones et al, 2015). Finally, these positive impacts apply to all children attending school, including those from marginalised backgrounds, such as those from ethnic and cultural minorities, from deprived socio-economic backgrounds, and those experiencing social, emotional and mental health difficulties. In this respect, SEE helps to reduce socio-economic inequality, and promote social inclusion and social justice.

Conditions for effectiveness

In our report we also examined the ways in which social and emotional education works in bringing about positive change in children's and young people's education and development. We identified nine major conditions for effectiveness, discussed in more detail in the following sections.

Balanced interpersonal and intrapersonal competences. SEE needs to provide a balanced curriculum, focusing on both intrapersonal (self-awareness and self-management, including resilience) and interpersonal domains (social awareness and relationships) (Durlak et al., 2011; Sklad et al., 2012; Taylor et al., 2017). It may be part of/include areas like health education and promotion, citizenship, moral education, sexual education, and drugs education, but the focus on the intra and interpersonal competences need to remain at the core of social and emotional education.

Curriculum. Social and emotional education needs to be structured and integrated into the curriculum, with explicit teaching and learning of SEE competences (Barnes et al, 2014; Durlak et al, 2011; Taylor

et al, 2017; Weare and Nind, 2011).The curriculum needs to employ a SAFE strategy, namely a structured, sequential approach with sufficient timetable on the table; an experiential, skills-based form of learning; focused on SEE competencies, rather than general health and wellbeing; and with explicit well defined learning goals and outcomes. (Durlak et al., 2011; Sancassiani et al., 2015). The curriculum may be implemented by trained classroom teachers and other school personnel, rather than external practitioners (Barnes et al., 2014; Clarke et al., 2015; Durlak et al., 2011; Sancassiani et al., 2015; Sklad et al., 2012; Taylor et al., 2017). This also ensures that SEE competences become integrated in the other content areas of the curriculum and the daily life of the classroom (Durlak et al., 2011, Weare and Nind, 2011). Culturally responsive, formative assessment is the assessment of choice, with a focus on assessment for learning and avoidance of competitive examinations and ranking.

Climate. Social and emotional education in the curriculum needs to be accompanied by a positive classroom and whole-school climate, with the active participation of the entire school community. In an integrated taught and caught (climate) approach, students are given an opportunity to transfer and apply their skills to other content areas of the curriculum as well as in their relationships and other social activities at school (Durlak et al., 2011; Korpershoek et al., 2016; Weare and Nind, 2011). A whole-school approach involving the whole school community in collaboration with parents and the community enhances academic and social competencies through more positive interactions amongst the members, and provides students with more opportunities to develop and practise SEE competences throughout the school and in other contexts such as the family (Jones and Bouffard, 2012; Oberle et al., 2016).

Early intervention. Social and emotional education is most effective when it starts from early childhood education (Durlak et al., 2011, January et al., 2011; Jones et al., 2015). Longitudinal study found that SEE in early years education is related to positive adjustment in adulthood, including higher levels of education, success at work, and less likelihood of mental health difficulties, substance use or criminality (Dodge et al,. 2014; Jones et al., 2015). With older students, school and classroom climates characterised by caring relationships and sense of belonging are particularly effective in promoting their social and emotional development and wellbeing (Domitrovich et al., 2017; Thapa et al., 2013).

Student voices. As key stakeholders in the school community, students need to participate actively in the planning, implementation and evaluation of SEE, including the development and assessment of the curriculum. Involving students particularly the older ones, in the design of programmes and resources is crucial for their active engagement in such programmes (Downes and Cefai, 2016; Rampazzo et al., 2016); such a process is also necessary to engage ethnically or culturally diverse students (UNICEF, 2012).

Staff's competence and own wellbeing. The social and emotional competence and wellbeing of teachers and other members of staff form part of a whole school approach to social and emotional education. Staff needs to feel comfortable and confident in implementing new programmes into their teaching schedules and are enabled to do so through continued training and support. Teacher education not only helps to ensure teacher commitment and quality implementation, but also contributes to teachers' own social and emotional competence. This enables them to create a classroom culture that promotes the learning and practice of social and emotional skills as a daily classroom process (Jennings et al., 2013; McGilloway et al., 2014).

Teacher education in SEE includes the development of such competences as empathy, conflict resolution, anti-discrimination, healthy relationships, and working collaboratively with parents, colleagues and professionals, as well as fostering students' SEE through explicit teaching and programme implementation and recognizing and responding to early signs of social and emotional difficulties (Askell-Williams and Lawson, 2013; Downes and Cefai, 2016; Jennings and Greenberg, 2009; Schonert-Reich et al.,2015). Teachers who feel competent in implementing SEE in the classroom report lower levels of stress and higher job satisfaction (McGilloway et al., 2014), and feel more confident and satisfied in their work (Oberle et al., 2016).

Parental collaboration. Parents' active collaboration and education is critical for the success of social and emotional education (Garbacz et al., 2015; Rampazzo et al., 2016; Weare and Nind, 2011). Parental involvement serves also to address parental resistance resulting from anxiety, prejudice or lack of information, whilst encouraging them to take an active interest in developing their own education and wellbeing through improved parenting and personal growth (Cefai and Cavioni, 2016). Longitudinal studies show that parents' involvement at school over time is related to an increase in children's social

competence and positive behaviour (Daniela et al., 2016). It is indicative that parental engagement in SEE is increasing (Mendez et al, 2013), but it is more likely to be effective if schools adopt an empowering and culturally responsive approach in seeking to engage parents and the community (Bartolo and Cefai, 2017; Downes and Cefai, 2016).

Schools need to be more responsive and empathetic to the diverse needs and views of parents, and both school staff and parents must share responsibility for SEE (Cefai and Cavioni, 2016; Garbacz et al., 2015). Flecha (2015) reported that educative family participation in school processes, where family and community members participate in students' learning activities as well as in educational programmes addressing the adults' own needs, had the greatest positive impact on children's learning outcomes when compared to other modes of family participation.

Targeted interventions. In this chapter we have been advocating for a universal SEE for all children at school. Universal SEE has been found to be effective for all children and young people, including those considered at risk in their development, such as students from ethnic and cultural minorities and from low socio-economic contexts (Clark et al, 2015; Durlak et al, 2011; Taylor et al, 2017). Universal programmes, however, may be more effective for children at risk when they are accompanied with targeted interventions as well, particularly for those with moderate or chronic needs who would benefit from extra support (Weare and Nind, 2011; Wilson and Lipsey, 2009). A combination of universal and targeted programmes is the most effective approach for children at risk or experiencing difficulties, forming part of a tiered intervention approach (Downes and Cefai, 2016; Weare and Nind, 2011). Targeted interventions are organised in and around school, with all partners concerned, including students, parents and teachers, while ensuring that they do not stigmatise the individuals and groups involved.

Quality implementation and adaptation. Recent research is underlining more and more the need for quality implementation and adaptation of SEE programmes (Clarke et al., 2015; Durlak et al., 2011; Sklad et al., 2012). Good planning, monitoring, and support, including adequate teacher education at pre-service and in-service levels and provision of financial and human and resources, are crucial for the feasibility and sustainability of SEE initiatives (Askell-Williams, 2017). Durlak et al. (2011) reported that in well implemented programs, the level of students' academic performance and reductions in emotional distress and conduct problems, were double those of students in low quality programmes. On the other hand, SEE programmes and interventions developed in other cultures need to be adapted to the needs of the context where they are being implemented. SEE programmes are more likely to be effective if they are sensitive and responsive to the schools' cultures and to the students' needs and interests, including linguistic, cultural, social and other areas of diversity (Askell Williams et al, 2010; Weare and Nind, 2011). Quality adaptation, thus needs to find a balance between preserving the integrity of the intervention whilst making it responsive to the needs of the context where it is being applied.

Conclusion

These conditions constitute a framework for a systemic whole approach to social and emotional education, with all partners including school staff, students, parents and the community, actively a collaboratively engaged in facilitating and promoting social and emotional education. It construes social and emotional education within a more socially-embedded perspective, underlining that children and young people are more likely to develop their social and emotional competences when social systems such as schools, provide the facilities, resources, opportunities and support required to make it more likely for every child to develop their potential in social and emotional development (Ungar 2012). When schools and other social systems, such as home, community and other macro level systems, such as society, work in tandem to create health-promoting spaces and systems which support children's and young's people healthy development and growth, long term positive outcomes are more likely to occur.

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Preventing ESL: Promising Practices and Challenges Ahead

Dr. Ciprian FARTUȘNIC
Senior Researcher

Institute of Education Sciences
ROMANIA

The article explores the promising practices in preventing early school leaving promoted within the Education Priority Area Project implemented since 2003 by the Institute for Educational Sciences in Bucharest. The project was a component of the national school attendance campaign "Hai la Scoală!", funded by UNICEF Romania. Based on an education priority areas approach, the project promotes an innovative blended learning in-service teacher training program that involved more than 4000 teachers working with students at high risk of drop-out. The paper introduces the context of the project, main areas of intervention and the key lessons learned during this process. At the same time, the article highlights the main challenges ahead in addressing the complex needs of these students.

Context of the intervention

Romania currently is the poorest country of the European Union, alongside Bulgaria, with 45% per capita income as % of EU28 average. Critical levels of material deprivation and economic exclusion are triggered by the scarcity of resources. At the same time, Romania faces the highest polarization of incomes, as the wealthiest 20% of the population earn 8 times more than the poorest 20%. According to UNICEF Situational Analysis Report (2018), Romania has the second most unequal distribution of incomes according to the Gini coefficient ranking, after Lithuania.

These indicators signal that many families with children in Romania are unable to fulfil basic needs, or in relative terms, as measured by the Eurostat at-risk-of-poverty indicators. Moreover, children under-18-year-old represent the most economically disadvantaged category throughout the last decades, irrespective of the methodology employed to measure welfare and poverty (UNICEF, 2018).

The Romanian Partnership Agreement for the 2014-2020 Programming Period highlights that 71% of the Romanian poor live in rural communities and children and youth in rural areas are facing important challenges in school participation. For example, Cost of non-investment study (UNICEF, 2015) indicates that socio-cultural factors seem to play a major role in this phenomenon (demand side), as well as the distance from children's home to school, high transport costs, precarious school infrastructure and material equipment, lack of qualified teachers (offer side). The same study indicates that often motivation for school participation is low, in a context where rural communities are struggling with a still underdeveloped economic environment, poor infrastructure and quasi-inexistent professional insertion opportunities for rural youth in their communities. This high discrepancy is also demonstrated when looking at social assistance services development and professionalization.

Education gaps by area of residence are persistent and significant across various indicators – enrolment rates, learning outcomes, teachers' level of qualification or school drop-out rates. For example, in the case of early school leavers, the value of the indicator in 2017 is almost four times higher in the case of rural area, compared with urban, according to National Institute of Statistics data.

Dropout rates are higher in the case of boys and increase in the case of lower secondary level in comparison with primary level. As a consequence, the boys of 11-14 years old living in rural areas currently face the highest risk of being out of school.

The proportion of qualified personnel in urban schools is significantly higher than in rural, indicating a potential gap in the allocation of public spending related to education personnel. This situation is reflected also in the learning outcomes disparities as average score resulting from the external evaluation of schools functioning in urban areas is with 10 % higher than the average score of the rural schools (State of Education Report, Ministry of Education, 2017).

Romania faces also important discrepancies between regions: 4 out of the 8 Romanian statistical regions are in 2017 among the 15 with the highest risk of poverty or social exclusion in the European Union. In the case of North-East we observe the worst situation, with a 46.3% rate compared with EU average. Also, as indicated in the UNICEF situational analysis report, 4 out of the 6 counties in the North-Est regions had the lowest GDP per capita (less than 6,000 Euro).

In the case of learning outcomes, national exam at the 8th grade in 2017, there are more than 25 p.p difference between the highest and lowest performers: Brăila, Cluj, București and Prahova counties (87%- 92%) and Giurgiu, Teleorman, Mehedinți and Caraș Severin counties (61%- 69%). The gap is maintained also in the case of the Baccalaureate (Matura) exam: Bacau, Sibiu, Iasi and Cluj counties have a high success rate (83%-84%) compared with Ilfov and Giurgiu counties significantly lagging behind (44%-52%).

Children with a social and economic disadvantaged background, Roma children and children with disabilities are categories of children face also a high risk of leaving the education system at an early age (Fartușnic, 2012; Varly et all 2015; OECD 2017).

Development of the intervention model

Priority Education Area (ZEP) project started as a pilot initiative in 2003, promoted by the Institute of Education Sciences and UNICEF Romania. With a country as seen in the introduction with a large part of the population in poverty or at risk of poverty, often the educational unsuccess is explain mainly through precarious economic conditions or parents' lack of interest in education. ZEP explicitly tackles school-related causes of absenteeism and drop out, acknowledging that school attendance is also influenced by the school culture, teachers learning strategies and behaviour in the classroom, school management policies. School factors are also very important, their influence being observed in the lack of integration/adaptation to school requirements, poor involvement in curricular and extracurricular activities and also a decreased motivation to regularly attend classes and a general level of underachievement (Jigău&Fartușnic 2015; Fartușnic 2014).

The pilot project was implemented in a primary and lower secondary school located in a poor neighbourhood in Giurgiu city, 60km South of Bucharest, near Danube and Bulgarian border. The school was selected given the high drop-out and absenteeism rates documented, as it lost 20% of the total students' population in two years. The implementation of the project took a full education cycle (2003-2006) and targeted various actors:

- teachers (subject-related and transversal teacher training courses, peer-learning activities, demonstrative lessons)
- school management team (training courses, coaching, transfer of experience)
- parents (information and training workshops, school-family activities organised in school and community level)
- support staff (in particular school counsellor and school mediator – training and resources development)
- representatives of local authorities (city and county level)

The dynamic model of intervention, main outcomes and specific tools developed were documented during (Balica, 2004) and after a full-cycle implementation of the project (UNICEF, 2006). Internal and external evaluation highlighted positive outcomes and UNICEF continued the support the testing in other schools from Giurgiu and also from Călărași county, including schools from rural areas (2006 to 2009).

ZEP program had a new start when it became part of the School Attendance Initiative (SAI), a national program explicitly targeting students at high risk of drop-out and absenteeism and addressing the vicious negative cycle created by poor educational results, leading to grade repetition, leading to drop-out. SAI was focused on improving key areas for students at risk: data collection and analysis on their risk factors, management planning and implementation, teacher support in development of individualised/adapted curriculum and promoting new classroom strategies, extra-curricular activities development and parent/family involvement (Fartușnic, 2015).

The new program started in 2010 and involved 24 schools located in socio-economic disadvantaged communities and with a dropout rate that exceeded 3 times the national average. In the following years more than 60,000 students (out of which 8000 of children at high risk of drop-out) and 3500 teachers, support staff and school managers were involved, from over 200 schools covering most of Romania's regions and counties.

Common features of the communities where ZEP project was implemented were not only related to the disadvantaged socio-economic status, but also involved a diverse multi-ethnic community, with a Romanian, Hungarian and Roma ethnicity represented.

The model of intervention was a refined version of the 2003 project, with a stronger emphasis on the "golden triangle" at the school level: teacher- parent- school management team. The overall goal of the intervention continued to be the prevention of early school leaving and decreasing absenteeism rates, with four operational dimensions (Fartusnic, 2015):

- Documenting scale-up conditions - better understanding the added value of the intervention and the conditions of transfer, creating a public policy response, based on an in-depth documentation of the short- and long-term outcomes of the project;
- Offering evidences for the importance of "upfront prevention" through targeted interventions, based on indicators that can predict how likely a student is to drop out: attendance, behaviour and course performance;
- Encouraging changes in schools' culture – encouraging schools to develop/expand effective activities focused on drop out and absenteeism prevention and monitor regularly the progress.

The project created learning contexts for all school actors: management team, teachers, counsellors, mediators. For most of the schools, the novelty, however, was the strong emphasis on promoting and cultivating the school-parents' relation, with various activities implemented aiming at attracting and involving the parents of the children at risk through diverse information, training and counselling activities.

Another intervention area relatively new to the schools involved in SAI concerns the early identification and profiling the children at high risk and developing individual/personalized activities in the classroom and outside the classroom for these children based on a systematic analysis of relevant data on the respective student (and family background).

The evaluation also demonstrated the role of the project in developing teachers' competences in designing, implementing and evaluating the impact of didactic strategies adapted to the learning needs of the students at high risk of drop out. At the same time, ZEP was praised for the simple, but effective ways of creating incentives for an active participation of parents in various school initiatives and for increasing their motivation and skills to support the education path of their children.

Learning from the students and the schools

Our intervention strongly believed that a friendly and supportive school environment offered to all students (including students at high risk or exclusion) is not only about adapted teaching strategies and learning materials, promotion of extra-curricular activities, new learning resources in school or better relation with the families. We understood early that student voice is essential in the success of our project because they are not only the mere beneficiary of the proposed changes, but they are also an important partner. So we look at the success of the project not only from outcome indicators as better attendance rates, higher performance in the classroom, increased transition rates to upper levels of education.

When many schools still are interested mainly in how the students should better adapt to school expectations and requirements, we have also reversed the perspective and tried to understand how should the teachers, the managers or the support staff should better adapt to students' expectations. Listening to students' voice facilitates the development of new pro-active approaches and new insights, even if often students' ideas are not sufficiently valued in traditional classrooms. These approaches successfully linked the taught curriculum with the students' life experiences, created new foundations for personalised approaches, offered ideas about extra-curricular activities (so important for students with fewer opportunities). Moreover, they offered important insights to the teachers and the management

team about how secure and friendly environment the school is, or what are the stereotypes and prejudice students are confronted with.

We have learned from the disadvantaged students that they question the purpose of learning at an early age and that their motivation to learn is directly impacted when they are not sufficiently involved in their own learning. Often life experiences of these children are forcing a rapid transition to adulthood and they are among the first to ask why going to school is important (in relation with other activities) and why is not possible to skip classes from time to time. Parent's views on the value of learning varies greatly and when a negative perception is created, children have the tendency to mimic this view. Concerns for the future educational and professional path are raised also at an early age and the search for an area of "expertise" is often expressed, as self-esteem is for the majority rather low. Regularly the issue of integration is also addressed, in many cases with opposing views: from the natural need of recognition and bonding with the peers, to the self-exclusion attitudes, triggered by the stereotypes and prejudices confronted with.

The experience of working together with the schools in School Attendance Campaign taught us also other important lessons:

- How important is to create a community of learning in the classroom and how disruptive are school cultures that fail to ensure that all members have an equal role; how every occasion of learning from each-other counts in building the sense of belonging and, on a long run, a purpose;
- Why is important to address adequately the issue of resources: create proper learning conditions, but disbelieving that state-of-the-art teaching materials/equipment are sufficient and solve all the challenges faced by children at risk; how a teacher with proper skills really makes a difference in creating and facilitating a community of learning,
- Why we need to strive to learn from our students, in particular students at high risk of exclusion and why their personal stories are so powerful and need to be heard; while there are still lower academic expectations from disadvantaged schools and students, we have discovered that these stereotypes act as a self-fulfilling prophecy; sometimes the most difficult persons to convince that individualised pedagogical practices can be effective and can make a difference in the case of underachievers (OECD, 2012) are teachers themselves.
- The responsibility of educators is huge and the focus on positive examples of students receiving timely and adequate support from their teachers (sometimes life-changing support) are excellent ways of introducing this topic in training and peer learning activities.
- There are no single causes creating the risk of exclusion and our results had a significant higher impact when the schools re-considered and re-built the link with their communities; in the first line are parents and local authorities representatives, but also other public, private or civil society organization made important contributions to grass-root interventions. Family is a resource we can't afford to waste but parent's contribution increases and becomes more meaningful when in happens in schools with strong links with their community.
- Skills are built step by step and there is no such a thing as constant learning process; a constant pressure from the teacher in reaching specific learning outcomes sends a negative signal just as much as indifference of disbelief in the capacity of a child to reach these learning objectives; as wisely explained by a school principal involved in the pilot project, all actors in the school succeed to demonstrate that they care when they adapt and adjust expectations adequately. On a contrary, an unproductive practice (i.e. giving heavy homework to students that have minimal or no conditions for learning home) negatively impacts students trust and well-being, expressing the feeling of not being understood.
- Cognitive skills are only part of the story so teachers need to explore and search more for an emotional engagement of every student (Eagan, 2008); educators should be encouraged to reflect and learn more about each and every student and better take into account their skills, interests and expectations.

In all these years we also became more aware of the importance of the attitude component of a competence, not only for students, but for teachers as well; as indicated in previous analysis (Fartușnic, 2015), a comprehensive support provided to teachers can be effective in changing or challenging the traditional way of interacting with students at risk and with their parents.

Conclusions

We expect that all school actors to co-operate and provide relevant, individualised and on time support to every student. As stated in the Second Declaration on Quality Principles (2013) promoted by the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education, the schools should contribute to "refining the concept of quality of education by including indicators that are relevant for wellbeing of a child and by development of institutional capacity of the school to be friendly in relation with student's needs."

However, the reality in the classroom is often very different. We have highlighted how important is to listen carefully and try to know as much as possible all the students. Taking advantage of a long-time co-operation with the schools included in the School Attendance Initiative, we had the chance of learning together with the actors in these schools, but in particular learning from the students, the core beneficiaries of all educational interventions.

In order to assure the sustainability of the outcomes, interventions similar to ZEP and School Attendance Initiative should have a priority in creating specific incentives for schools to become aware of the children at risk needs and to introduce in their daily routine targeted measures to address these needs.

If properly implemented at school and classroom level, the lessons learned presented in this chapter could have a direct positive impact on the outcomes of interventions aiming at reducing the risk of absenteeism, dropout and early school leaving. However, the rationality of our educational policy is not always straightforward. As pointed out in Apostu and Fartușnic (2017) education policies development process is based on various factors of influence, few of them fully rational. Therefore, the change is implemented in an incremental approach that aims at creating a more relevant curriculum and tailored-made teaching strategies, regular monitoring of every student progress, promotion of contexts fostering debate and reflection with all school actors for of relevant additional support for failing students and also contexts for questioning existing individual or group stereotypes related to the children at high risk of exclusion.

A solid knowledge base for proper monitoring the progress of each student in the classroom is needed. It is essential for understanding when and how a student should receive a timely, pertinent and efficient support. As soon as we invest more in exploring the ideas, opinions, expectations and perceptions of our children, more equipped we are also to address more their needs. Children at risk require the highest effort to be properly understood, but the investment has the highest levels of return.

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Attachment Based Eco-Systematic Approach in School:
Trauma Informed Practice

H. Özden Bademci, PhD
Maltepe University
Research and Application Centre for Street Children (SOYAÇ)
Turkey

Schools must provide inclusive services to all pupils. Adverse childhood experiences is associated with low academic achievement and school dropout. Children require a healthy attachment system from their parents and carers. Traumatised children with disruptive behaviour often face considerable periods of suspension and are more likely to drop out from school. Our intervention aims to making substantial contribution to the social-emotional learning of children who are at risk of school leaving. We provide an attachment based psychosocial support under the supervision of professors, university students (psychology, social work and nursing students) in collaboration with teachers and school management. Children's poor attendance, emotional distress, peer relationship problems and communication problems are addressed by developing a trusting relationship in which the child feel powerful and in control. Children who are at risk of early school dropout benefit from the attachment based psychosocial support programme provided by the university students. We argue that school children with experiences of violence, bullying and difficult life events would benefit from similar psychosocial support programmes provided by the universities .

1. Introduction

Schools are vital places where children's and young people's mental health can be promoted and supported. There is strong evidence of the associations between children's positive emotions and academic achievement (Valiente, Swanson & Eisenberg, 2012) [1]. In a democratic society, schools must provide inclusive services to all pupils, rather than focusing on those who are academically doing well and have access to privileged opportunities. Maltepe University Research and Application Centre for Street Involved Children (SOYAÇ) has been carrying out projects in schools in collaboration with the state run organisations to prevent early school leaving since 2010. Having years of experiences in working with street involved children and youth, we came to understand that early school leaving is the result of a long process of disengagement and alienation that may be preceded by less severe types of withdrawal such as truancy and course failures.

Adverse childhood experiences has damaging effects on education attainment and school completion (van der Kolk, 2005; Perry, 2009). [2] [3]Children with adverse childhood experiences consequently experiences an acute alarm reactions that triggers the body's stress response with long term damage to key neurological and psychological systems (Downey 2007, Rosen, Handley, Cicchetti, Rogosch, 2018) [4] [5]. The current literature makes significant associations between adverse childhood experiences, low academic achievement and school dropout. Blaustein and Kinniburgh (2010) [6] suggested that children who have experienced chronic and multiple stressors within a caregiving system suffer complex developmental trauma. The attachment theory (Ainsworth, 1985; Bowlby, 1988) [7] [8] has been written quite extensively. Children require a healthy attachment system from their parents and carers. Bowlby (1988) [8] argued that children who are brought up in a loving secure environment are better placed to cope with and are better at regulating emotional and psychological distress later in adult life. This is because they learn from care-givers the core emotional and cognitive skills necessary to tackle, for example, dissociation and hyperarousal reactions triggered by fears and difficult life situations.

Children with no loving parents or caregivers lack those skills that soothe negative emotions and stressful situations. Moreover, children who are exposed to trauma go on to develop anxious, avoidance and dissociative symptoms, and resort to utilising disorganised style of attachment. As traumatized children grow older, they demonstrate limited ability to tolerate others, or that the self of the traumatised child is perceived to have less impact on others so a sense of helplessness starts to dominate cognitions (Crittenden & Dilalla, 1988) [9]. Fonagy and Target (1997) [10] came to a conclusion that the child's most important success is the enhancement of self-regulation as the child grows. Children are not fully developed to have the ability to cope with or response to threatening situations and, therefore, need the support of parents and caregivers to develop such defensive mechanisms. Violence, negligence and

trauma damages children's natural developmental process. According to the current literature, if they are exposed to complex trauma during the formation and childhood stages, they are likely to develop a range of psychological problems, for example, emotional distress, poor concentration, substance misuse and disruptive behaviour (Blaustein and Kinniburgh, 2010) [6] , all of which have implications for their learning and schooling processes.

Traumatized children may dismiss school rules and regulations, such as simple health and safety regulations that are designed to protect them and others in the school. Teachers and school staff with responsibility for reinforcing curriculum activities and school rules may respond with hostility (Streeck-Fischer & van der Kolk, 2005), [11] creating a toxic school climate for both the traumatised children and school staff. Traumatised children struggle in school environment as the mistrust emerging from earlier traumatic experiences grows with them. They foster a psychological mechanism where they fail to identify with others' point of views (Fonagy and Target, 1997)[10]. Consequently, resorting to aggression as a way of coping with anxiety, fear and past trauma (Bademci, Karadayı, Pur-Karabulut, Bağdatlı-Vural, 2018) [12]. Traumatised children with disruptive behaviour often face considerable periods of suspension from supportive learning spaces such as schools. They are more likely to be absent from core lessons, eventually leading them to drop out and/or being expelled from school and educational activities altogether. Bademci, Karadayı, Bağdatlı-Vural (2016) [13] suggest that school leavers were pushed into child labour and criminal activities. They experienced further marginalisation and various precarious situations after they left school. Education could offer a powerful intervention opportunity for trauma affected students (Brunzell, Stokes & Waters, 2016) [14].

Schools and families must effectively address the emotional aspects of the educational process which can either facilitate or impede children's academic engagement, commitment and school success (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki,Taylor & Schellinger, 2011) [15]. Children who have been pushed out of education, are vulnerable students whose attendance is at risk. Push factors come from what is happening, or not happening, in school that makes students not want to be there (Bademci, Karadayı, Bağdatlı, 2016) [13]. While the education system priorities the academic achievement of the students, children with adverse childhood experiences struggling hard to adapt to even the basic school rules. Rudduck et al. (1996) [16] suggest that the least effective learners are most likely to be able to explore aspects of the systems that constrain commitment and progress; these are the voices least likely to be heard and yet they should be the most important. Unless school is a place where everyone feels they belong to and what happens is meaningful, children cannot engage with school activities, so the teachers. What is expected from them becomes just too much and left them with overwhelming feelings.

1.2. Trauma Informed Educational Practice: SOYAÇ Model

Feelings are critical. Children cannot learn well when they are scared, anxious or overwhelmingly miserable. Children with negative school experiences have made it clear that feeling "comfortable" in school was important. It can take efforts to feel comfortable in the school. Although they try to "fit in" sometimes this becomes too much for them and they might give up. SOYAÇ intervention aims to making substantial contribution to the social-emotional learning of children by working hand in hand with the school staff ensuring the involvement of the whole school with an eco-systemic approach. The project is carried out with community collaboration. Local municipality, local governor are among the stake holders that the community based work is realised. In order to understand and address needs of the children, we have a team consists of academics and students from related departments of the university. Besides, intersectorial collaboration, interdisciplinary collaboration is the important element of SOYAÇ intervention. Psychology scholars and students are compromised the core group of the SOYAÇ Team. Psychology students provide psychosocial and educational support by developing a relationship in which the child feel powerful and in control. Informal and playful attitude of students ease their relationships with the children. Their role is clear in the project. Psychology students are neither mental health professionals nor therapists, but do therapeutic intervention. Together with other students from the related departments (social work, nursing etc.) they create a therapeutic environment which also provide continuity and stability in the lives of children.

In addition, children received further health and social support from nursing and social work departments of the university. Nursing students and two faculty professors taught seven different subjects (hygiene, peer bullying, effective communication, healthy eating, use of harmful substances, first aid and body safety). The nursing students treated children who had injuries and wounds and worked in collaboration with a family health centre in the same neighbourhood in Istanbul, for example, by making referrals

where is needed. The Social work students coordinated the social work meetings between teachers, parents and children.

Relatedness is a basic human need in many theories. The sense of relatedness is developed with the university students by offering them choices, being interested in their experiences, providing feedback etc. (Guay, Denault, Renaud, 2017) [19]. In the project we match children with equal number of university psychology students to provide peer support and mentoring. The work is carried out in collaboration with the teachers, schools management and school counselling services. Building a trusting relationship in a supportive learning environment helps children to regulate feelings of anxiety, fear and unworthiness. With enhanced cognitive and emotional wellbeing, comes an improved learning opportunity and better chance of staying at school(Bademci, Karadayı, Pur-Karabulut, Bağdatlı-Vural, 2018) [12]. Psychology students are trained on mentoring children who are at risk of school dropout and expulsion. Mentors and pupils will meet once a week for the whole academic year. They provide individual and group support to containing their fear and anxiety through the provision of a psychosocial and secure attachment base intervention. Psychology students together with all other students are regarded as key workers working in the school settings are provided with regular supervision and training on psychosocial and trauma-based educational practice. In the supervision meetings of the psychology students, a student from other disciplines (nursing, social work vs.) is also represented to ensure effective the collaboration to assess and address the needs of the every child and family. On a regular basis whole group come together as well.

Trauma informed practice can be conceived from both a deficit perspective and a strength perspective. In SOYAÇ Project is it from a strength perspective. Strengths-based trauma informed-positive education approach proposes three domains of learning needed for trauma affected students. These are repairing regulatory abilities, repairing disrupted attachment and increasing psychological resources (Brunzell, Stokes & Waters, 2016). Positive youth development focuses on enhancing young people's strengths, establishing engaging and supportive contexts, and providing opportunities for bidirectional, constructive youth– context interactions.

In SOYAÇ intervention, each child receives individual and ongoing attention for therapeutic purposes. As well as educational benefits, a key focus is on developing trusting attachment relationships between children and university students and providing them with a safe emotional, social and physical environment. University students under regular supervision, contain their deep fears arising from their earlier traumatic experiences. University students' support makes the task more meaningful for them this in turn raise their hope. The fight-or-flight response (hyperarousal, or the acute stress response) physiological reaction occurs in response to perceived harmful event, attack, or threat to survival. In the flight response, children appear to be running away, not coping in free time, hyperactive, and hiding under table etc. In a state of flight, children are kept close by, making them feel safe and making things predictable for them. In the state of fight, they are appear to be angry, aggressive, demanding. In this state, they are given a role, supported socially, making sure that they experience unconditional love and acceptance by the group. Children also appear to be in a state of freeze. In this state, they stare into space and they look not interested, bored, confused, forgetful, not listening. Children find it hard to move through task. In this state of mind, students do the task together with them and making it smaller and more predictable. Showing empathy and connecting with them are all the key things in working with children.

2. Conclusion

In schools we see conflicted children struggling hard with their impulses and emotions trying to communicate them in the only way that they know how. Those children could not be contained by the education system. Instead, they are being pushed out of it. Institutional thinking, in general, is that early school leaving is a result of poverty, family problems and lack of students' academic talent, so that they cannot do anything about these things and the school is absolved of any responsibility. In parallel to the institutional thinking the vast majority of the literature on school dropouts focuses on individual and family factors, one of the most overlooked school factors is the quality of the relationship between teachers and students, especially at risk students (Davis & Dupper, 2008) [17]. Teachers working within schools with low levels of exclusion are less likely to attribute difficulties to external factors relating to social deprivation (Gibbs and Powell, 2011) [18].

SOYAÇ Model, provides a strong evidence for the importance of the quality of the relationship that the child has in school, together with the therapeutic environment created in school. It as an attachment based psychosocial support under the supervision of professors, university students (psychology, social work and nursing students) in collaboration with teachers and school management offered comprehensive and inclusive learning activities that were aimed to improve children's emotional and social development. Children's poor attendance, emotional distress, peer relationship problems and communication problems were addressed. The teachers and school staff generally agreed that creating supportive, equitable and inclusive school atmosphere is essential for the psychosocial and emotional development of children. As a result, violence behaviour and bullying decreased while connectedness and bonding became stronger. Children who were at risk of early school dropout benefited from the attachment based psychosocial support programme provided by the university students.

This shows that restorative approaches are more effective, especially when the school has built a sense of community. Children who feel a sense of safety, a sense of belonging, know people believe in them and see themselves as learners are more likely to be motivated to come to school. In addition, positive emotions open up neurological pathways to learning so students are able make the best of what is on offer. By equally empowering both the university students and children, have drawn them into collaborative activities, and has given them a unique opportunity to learn from each other as well as to become mutual role models. Besides, children are given the opportunity to learn not only from their school teachers but also from the University students and professors. Our years of experiences with children hard to reach (Bademci, Karadayı, Pur-Karabulut, Bağdatlı-Vural, 2018 ; Bademci, Karadayı, Pur-Karabulut, Warfa, & Kurt, 2017 ; Bademci, Karadayı, de Zulueta, 2015; Bademci, Karadayı, 2014; Bademci, Karadayı, 2013) [12] [19] [20] [21] [22] strongly puts forward that, universities should be more flexible to responding to the specific psychosocial needs of marginalised children in their locality, and beyond.

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H. Özden Bademci – *Assoc. Prof. in Clinical Psychology at Maltepe University, founding Director SOYAC*
Bademci obtained BSc degree in Psychology from Ege University(Turley). MA in Psychoanalytic Observational Studies from Tavistock Clinic and PhD from the University of Kent (UK). Following her PhD research on the phenomena of street children, Özden has played a leading role in the establishment of the first University Centre in Turkey that is dedicated to address the rehabilitation and protection needs of vulnerable children. Dr. Bademci carries out national and international research studies, consultancy work, teaching activities and practical projects which are intended to build on the resilience of vulnerable children and young people.

University-Community Partnership for Prevention of Early School Leaving With Attachment Based Eco-systemic Approaches, SOYAC good practices

Socio-Cultural Approach for Prevention of Early School Leaving

Esma Figen Karadayı

Maltepe University
Psychology Department

Abstract

The problem of early school leaving has been an interest area for researchers. Although it is a very crucial issue that underlies many psychosocial problems awareness of the problem is low in countries with high rates. The problem usually discussed with respect to socio economic conditions of the family and the district but the role of schools and teachers have been neglected. Responsibilities of schools and the teachers should not be only for successful students but also for those who struggle for adaptation to school. In this article sociocultural basis of Attachment based Eco-systemic Approach of SOYAÇ Model is explained as an intervention model for the prevention of early school leaving. Socio-cultural approach considers school environments as a whole system with many interrelated micro level sub-systems. Development, learning and well-being of students is dependent on the dynamic functioning within the systems and other parallel and higher level systems

İn order to achieve the goals of the intervention project 70 Maltepe University psychology students participated actively by developing attachment relationships with the disadvantages children one to one or in different group activities within the class and at play grounds during the breaks for a period of two school semesters one day of the week regularly.

Intervention model helped to create an emotionally safe, supporting, entertaining and encouraging atmosphere in school which resulted in strengthening attachment to school, socio-cultural learning positive behaviors and decreasing negative behaviors

***Keywords:** Disadvantaged children; early school leaving, sociocultural approach, supporting school climate*

1. Introduction

In the recent years early school leaving has received a considerable amount of attention in research and policies of some western countries. Basicaly they focused on inquiring the characteristics of the early school leavers and schools. However there are fewer studies exploring the process of this problem [1]. Although the researchers have different theoretical approaches on defining the problem with different concepts at different levels of analysis they have consensus about its influence on students' performance, achievement, anti social behaviour, psychological problems [2] . In Turkey even though the crucial importance of early school leaving has been realized by a few researchers in the field of education not much has been achieved at realization of a program in any unit of analysis at any level [3].

Eco-systemic approach emphasizes the importance of changing environment through the perception of individuals .This framework is explanatory of systemic influences on child development; however, its basic premise in the explanation of development itself is very useful. [4]. He argues that various immediate and distant forces affect an individual's development. These can be distinguished as five systems called microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems, and chronosystems which covers analysis on intimate, interfacing, community, cultural and time levels. Development means a

reciprocal and dynamic relationship between all these five systems, in which individual is under the influence of interaction between the systems. Eco-systemic framework is an exploration of inclusive education by identifying the different factors active within and between these systems, Thus it facilitates a better understanding of inclusive education as interconnectedness and development of different levels of systems and individuals like attitudes and values of teachers within these systems [5].This framework suggest change in paradigms toward a more comprehensive approach to the study of development and change in children and includes the identification of ecological niches; that is, unique regions in the environment that differentially influence children with particular personal characteristics [6].

Social, cultural and eco-systemic, environmental educational approach deal with events in different circumstances of space and time, cope with consequences, contribute to change, evaluate deficits and assets involved, with a participatory, experiential reflexive, and hermeneutic approach. Cultural holistic orientations provide subject and object relationship giving opportunity to reflect on children's own realities, engaging in new experiences, opportunities and finding new ways of dealing by integrating different disciplines foster development of children [7]. In this framework it is also essential to realise a comprehensive model of collaboration between the partners that integrates both transformative learning of dynamic of adaptive systems perspectives at all levels. Cooperation and collaboration between the partners support them for making connections and learning through collaboration. That emphasize either individual or social change, none of these has a primary focus on what happens between two individuals or institutions in the creation of new knowledge when a collaborative pair Is the context of transformation. Within a process that is collaborative at all phases collaborative reflection takes place [8]. Fruitful results of collaborative researches engendered community-based and collaborative pedagogies that combines communities and universities both expand and complicate recent calls for democratic civic engagement[9].

Sociocultural approach accepting some basic principles of eco-systemic approach suggests working in the micro level systems evaluating how interpersonal process is being transformed into intrapersonal processes and thus how the development process occurs in micro level systems under the influence of interaction with other systems [10].

1.1 Sociocultural approach

According to Sociocultural approach children's minds, skills, personalities develop in the activities they involve, with their experienced partners within the immediate environments they activate in their daily practices. Mediation with artefacts and interrelationship with other people within the zone of proximal development plays the most important role in psychosocial development of children [11]. Therefore sociocultural basis of the Soyaç intervention model for prevention of early school leaving aims to create a new safe and supporting sociocultural activity atmosphere for the children in order to provide them space where they can recover the insufficiencies at their previous cultural fields [12]. Within such a developmental context new artefacts, new cultural meanings, interpersonal relationship styles, use of language, rules and strategies are provided according to the needs of children discovered at the beginning of the intervention project.

Culture which is in mind, as a system of symbols, meanings, techniques, practices that are learned and be estimated before, they may result in behaviour differences, can be transferred as a whole from generation to generation, shared [13].

Over the past decades educational psychologist have developed an increasing interest in the ideas and works of Vygotsky and relevancy of his ideas in the area of education. The zone of proximal development provides a conceptual basis for explaining cooperative learning as positive interdependence, face to face interaction, individual accountability, small group and interpersonal skills and group self evaluation. According to Vygotsky children firs develop lower mental functions like simple perception, associative learning, involuntary attention. Than through social interactions with more knowledgeable others(peers or adults develop higher mental functions like language, problem solving, reasoning, memory schemas [14].

School climate refers to the quality and character of school life. School climate is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures. However, school climate is more than

individual experience: It is a group phenomenon that is larger than any one person's experience. A sustainable, positive school climate fosters youth development and learning necessary for a productive, contributive, and satisfying life in a democratic society. This climate includes norms, values, and expectations that support [15]. Importance of values in shaping thoughts, emotions and behaviors of teachers and consequently their relationship with their students makes their role crucial [16]. They also provide ideas and examples for exploring values in school with teachers,learning relationships, and school ethos and for creation of a emotionally supporting school environment [17]. Values can be looked upon and read in many different ways and can be interpreted in many different meanings by individuals [18] . This then can be seen as a global issue towards teaching and learning styles of each teacher. Issues and key ideas from local, national and international examples of values may guide schools and teachers to come to a conclusion as to what is a balanced way of considering values in schools today[19].

The school community is a space of identity developed through the idea and the perception of being part of a group of persons that believe in the same objectives and ideals [20]. The development of a community of teachers within a project is important prosocial learning for increased youth inclusion and academic achievement, allows us to analyse in depth the social and the pedagogical aspects that lies underneath the structure of a community. The teachers are the core elements and they must be guided by the project partners through the different steps of the community building: the sharing of the values, then the practices and finally the actions, in a path that will grant the fruitful growth of such community. Internalization involves individuals actively processing experience, integration it to his own way of thinking in such a way that the old one changes.

Social relearning within the created new environment which results in changes in cognitive representations of children and builds in new cognitive structures. calls for democratic civic engagement. Holzman who is the follower of Vygotsky reflects on her many endeavours over recent decades – her work in therapeutic settings, in schools, in after-school programs, in performance programs for adolescents, in organizations, and more. She locates the ways in which these endeavours build upon each other, the implicit and pervasive values they exhibit, and the growth in her own theoretical views over the years. Social therapeutic group process, the social therapeutic relationship, and applications to health care, alternative medicine, education and youth development has been emphasized. Vygotsky's scaffolding students as they learn new concepts. As the students develop skills in those areas, the supports are gradually removed so the student can accomplish a task with no assistance [21]

An analysis was conducted of contradictions within activity–memory– activity theory. A resolution of these contradictions should be sought within the framework of the activity approach and L.S. Vygotsky's cultural-historical theory of memory. They can be circumvented through a redefinition of the concept of memory that rests on the idea that memory is simultaneously an action and a product [22] It is important to involve in real life activities within meaningful contexts.

Learning and playing is important in sociocultural approach as a means of learning and development of relationships, and learning rules and exchanging culture in mind. Within the activities at zone of proximal development of children for a considerable duration of time interpersonal process becomes intra personal process. That results in developing new cognitive structures promoting motivation, interest for learning and coming to school by increasing knowledge of self worth, value and resiliency [23]. Vygotsky's scaffolding students as they learn new concepts. As the students develop skills in those areas, the supports are gradually removed so the student can accomplish a task with no assistance [24].The activity theory is expansive learning puts the primacy on communities as learners, on transformation and creation of culture, on horizontal movement and hybridization, and on the formation of theoretical concepts [25].

1.2 Impact of the socio cultural approach on children

Immediate social contexts in which children are involved in problem solving, in cooperation with others or in social arrangements of children's activities, thinking is important for their development Within such a developmental zone, new artefacts, new cultural meanings appropriate for the needs of children were discovered and arranged for the benefit of the children at the beginning of the intervention project. Within the created supporting safe school environment children began to internalize more positive thinking and

behaviours through social learning by taking university students as role models similar to the principles of social learning approach [23]. Following expressions from the interviews with the school personnel and observation notes show how the environment perceived.

> *How to speak with a child, how to play with a child, how to change the misbehaviours they show thee children. I wish everybody could do it. I wonder what children do if their older sisters or brothers were not around (personnel; woman)*
>
> *Fridays are holiday for children, they are very happy (personnel; woman)*
>
> *When I see the games they play, I thought to play with my students (teacher, woman)*

In the process of producing intersubjectivity among children and students or the teacher there are many relevant dimensions as teachers' role; cultural and/or intercultural dimension; the role of cognitive aspects; the role of social emotional dimension, and. finally, implications for future educational practices are important areas of development [26]. One to one and within group activities with the students arranged for the children help transformation of learning from interpersonal to intra personal process which in turn influences development of new cognitive structures and strategies of behaviours as below.

> *Students are making that good relationships with the children that they listen to what they say (teacher, men)*
>
> *At the beginning they were not talking with us when we were also talking to other children. There are more helpful towards their friend and obeying to the rules of the games (student, woman)*
>
> *Now we feel that they listen to us more, and are happy when they see us they come and hug(student, woman).*

2. Method

Intervention program explained in this article emerges from the project of SOYAC Center (Maltepe University Research and Application Centre for Street Children) that activates and conducts projects at different settings like detention centers, schools for working children and elementary and high schools for supporting and development of children. Soyaç Model of intervention bases on the combination of two disciplines; psychoanalytical approach and sociocultural approach. Also it emerges from eco-systemic approach which aims to coordinate and understand interactions within and between the sub-systems at different levels from a holistic perspective that play a crucial role on the development of children. Therefore Model has an interdisciplinary understanding of human development that combines the valuable works and efforts of academicians and university students from different areas as psychology, sociology, social work, nursing, education and the like.

Project was implemented on one day of the week by bringing together university student with first year and second year students with one to one and group activities. Students from other classes have jointed some outside play activities There were 70 students participated in the project and have taken supervision from their teachers immediately in the school before and after they meet the children. They wrote their detailed and reflective observation notes every week. Some university students worked in the classrooms some have taken some groups of children to support outside the classrooms. Different sub-systems within the school like psychological counsellor, teachers, administrators, other personnel and systems outside the school like family, coffee houses for men, institutions responsible for school children were invited for cooperation and coordination for the benefit of the children.

According to sociocultural method mediation of children with more experienced psychology students on emotionally supporting basis and creation of a inviting safe, warm school climate motivate children for coming to school and for learning. Mediation with artefacts (enjoying learning material) especially planned for the development of children in a recreated school environment.

3. Conclusion

Creation of a emotionally supportive cultural climate of the elementary school situated at a low socioeconomic district of Istanbul promoted the psycho social development of the children. Individual and group activities with scaffolding of university students have initiated motivation of children for coming to school and interest in learning. İnterpersonal relationship with children, social learning have increase their faith in their capabilities and skills. Consideration of school as a system also encourage other children and personnel for creating better relationships with children and parents. Social relearning within the created new environment resulted in changes in cognitive structure of children and helped building in new cognitive structures appeared in new strategies of thinking and behaving.

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Esma Figen Karadayı*, Associate Prof. İn Psychology Department of Maltepe University in İstanbul. Main interests are working with disadvantage children, their families, prevention of early school leaving. Studies combining theory and practice, working within the community with sociocultural approach*

Relational supervision as a tool to prevent early school leaving (ESL): Collaborative working to promote reflection and learning about oneself-in-role

Dr. Emma-Kate Kennedy
Tavistock & Portman NHS Foundation Trust
and
Psychologist in Private Practice
London, United Kingdom (UK)

In 2017, 66,000 people aged 16-17 years in the UK were not in education, employment or training (NEET). This was 5% of all 16-17 year olds. Studies that have explored preventing young people from becoming NEET emphasise the importance of consistent and positive relationships in programmes led by accessible, approachable and relatable adults. Many young people who leave school early or who are at risk of doing so are particularly vulnerable. This may be because of physical health problems, caring responsibilities, difficult family circumstances, mental health needs and/or special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). These young people's lived experience is often very painful for the staff working with them to bear. Supportive and reflective spaces for these adults to acknowledge and process distressing feelings that are stirred up when doing this work are required. However, the current turbulent social-political and professional context in the UK, along with the historical place of supervision for teachers, often means such spaces are rare. This workshop is an attempt to explore some of the challenges facing teachers, and to offer one potential approach to facilitate practitioners reflecting on their practice, to learn about themselves and the work they do and ultimately to be sufficiently supported to provide the kinds of relationships with young people that enable educational access, participation and achievement.

1. Introduction: Early school leaving in the UK context

In 2017, 66,000 people aged 16-17 years in the UK were NEET, 5% of all 16-17 year olds [1]. In terms of international comparison, the percentage of UK 15 – 29 year olds who were NEET was 13.2%, just below the OECD average of 13.9% [1]. Broken down further, however, the proportion of UK 15-19 year olds was actually above the OECD average (8.4% and 6.0% respectively). Given the range of medium and long-term outcomes of early school leaving, this should be a matter of grave concern for government policy-makers, researchers in pure and applied contexts, practitioners working in schools and community contexts and indeed for society as a whole. These young people frequently have no qualifications, and consequently can find it harder to find employment. They are also more likely to (i) become parents far earlier than their peers, (ii) engage in substance misuse, (iii) get involved with the youth justice system, (iv) have poorer physical and mental health and shockingly, (v) live less longer [2].

There are significant differences between groups of people who leave school early and those who do not. People with disabilities, defined in the UK as a physical or mental health condition, which substantially impacts on activities of daily living, are disproportionately affected. Of the 16-24 year olds who were NEET in 2017, 30% had a disability [1]. A far higher proportion were without any qualifications (25%) than those that had, say, GCSE-level attainment (10%), and 16% were from Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds. These data are broadly in line with existing information about the characteristics of those who become NEET across Europe e.g., in a European context, people with a disability are over 40% more likely to become NEET than their non-disabled peers, young people 'with an immigration background' are 70% more likely to become NEET and those with low levels of education are twice as likely to be NEET than those with secondary education [3]. It is therefore evident that to achieve a more just and fair society for all, we need to carefully consider and meet the needs of young people who leave school early, as well as reflect on and respond appropriately to their diverse backgrounds, circumstances and identities.

There have been an array of UK government policies intended to combat the factors contributing to NEET status, including encouraging young people to continue in education/training through:

- guaranteeing offers of a suitable place in education or training for all 16 and 17 year olds
- placing statutory duties on local government to encourage and assist young people to participate in education or training and
- requiring young people to continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday [1].

Support to improve the employability of young people has also been promoted, as well as helping young people to find employment through *Jobcentre Plus*. What seems less apparent are explicit policies that focus on those more likely to be NEET (e.g., those with a disability) at a more preventative and early intervention level (e.g., enhancing support for teachers so that they are fully equipped to meet these children's needs at the earliest identified age or stage). Instead, a rather disjointed systems approach appears to be in place with a lack of a unifying overview across the range of different contexts implicated. If, for example, schools are under significant pressure to 'perform' (occasionally imprecisely and inappropriately measured by a grade of outstanding from the schools inspectorate), the capacity and capability to meet the often complex needs of those in 'at-risk for NEET' groups can be significantly compromised. This fragmented approach has been highlighted by some researchers [4, 5], who also noted that increased social and political splitting has led to an absence of robust, holistic and accountable leadership of individual, community and societal level responses for this group.

1.2 At risk of becoming NEET: a failure to think systemically

In 2014, the Department for Education (DfE) commissioned the Institute of Education to identify the factors most likely to increase a young person's chance of becoming NEET [6]. They highlighted a 2010 Audit Commission analysis of Connexions data [7], which included 24,000 people and explored the risk factors associated with the chance of becoming NEET for six months or more. Unsurprisingly, a young person was 7.9 times more likely of being NEET if they had been NEET at least once before. Pregnancy or parenthood increased the chance 2.8 times, youth offending service involvement 2.6 times, disclosed substance abuse 2.1 times and carer responsibilities made NEET status twice as likely. From the IoE study, the most significant educational risk factor was low attainment at GCSE. This in itself was influenced by individual student's physical and mental health needs, including Special Educational Needs (SEN). (It should be noted that since the introduction of the DfE's statutory guidance Revised Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) 0-25 years in 2015, 'social, emotional and mental health needs' are one of the four categories of SEND that can apply [8]). Family dysfunction, including the removal of children from the care of their parent, was another significant personal risk factor.

The absence of shared systemic thinking, of a joining together of apparently disparate strands, is again obvious. There is more limited thinking about or discussion of the needs of teachers who teach these children with poor physical and mental health or SEND, or about how these teachers process the distress associated with knowing (and caring about) children who are involved in crime, who are using drugs, who are young carers or who have been removed from their family because of concerns about abuse and neglect. The key elements of programmes that keep young people engaged in education include consistent relationships with responsible adults, dependable dedicated leaders who are accessible and relatable and group support and mutual interest that comes from other young people [9]. Relationships are exactly that – relationships, systems of connection and patterns *between* people [10]. Focusing on individuals within systems (i.e., the needs of children and young people) without a complementary focus on others within their system (i.e., their parents/carers, teachers and other supportive practitioners) and how they relate and interact with one another would appear to be one of the major failures of policy and reform in this area for many years.

1.3 At risk of being unable to support those who are NEET

The current state of the UK public sector can in part be traced back to the economic crash of 2008, as well as to the cross-party pursuit of neoliberalism apparent in many industrialised countries for some years now. Austerity policies have meant real-term cuts to local authority services in England, including to those services that work with schools to meet the needs of vulnerable children and young people [11]. School budgets have also been significantly cut. The teacher's union NASUWT surveyed their members in 2017, with 1615 teachers responding to questions about the challenges they were currently facing in meeting SEND in the classroom [12]. 30% of those surveyed reported rarely or never receiving the

support they need to teach students with SEND, and 62% reported that the support for students with SEND had decreased in the last 5 years. 83% were adversely impacted by increased teacher workload as a result of cuts to local authority support services and 77% had their workload increase because of parental engagement issues. These teachers are working at a time when there appears to be a lack of trust in their professionalism, and where autonomy to make decisions about what works for them with their students in their own unique contexts is increasingly eroded. Unceasing educational reform, monitoring and endless (often experienced as mindless and ineffective) accountability systems have increased teacher's workloads to such an extent that the DfE itself more recently recognised the problem [13, 14, 15]. Ultimately, children and young people are not the only ones leaving education early. Surveys indicate that when asked whether they had considered leaving teaching, 59% of teachers had done so in the previous 6 months and 53% were considering leaving in the next two years; even the DfE's own school workforce survey shows the proportion of qualified teachers who leave teaching is increasing [16].

2. A psychodynamic view of what may be going on 'beneath the surface'

2.1 Group and organisational dynamic processes

Tolerating the fears and worries generated by uncertainty and change is a challenge for any organisation, and one from which schools are not immune. However, schools also have to reconcile the irreconcilable e.g., to be both safe, steady and reliable places for learning whilst bearing the unbearable anxieties about the future of students; to be both places that develop reflection, thoughtfulness and understanding while also being places of powerful passions, conflicts and desires [17,18]. Engaging in this 'impossible profession' inevitably stirs up a range of feelings in staff, students and parents/carers. Anger, guilt, shame, frustration, fear, anxiety – these can be quite overwhelming emotions and can lead to schools defending against them. Bibby gave the example of 'zero tolerance' policies as one such defence, where by refusing to tolerate non-compliance so completely, we literally prevent ourselves from thinking about what non-compliance may mean for the child concerned, their family, peers and staff [19]. In these kinds of school systems, it can become harder and harder to feel for and think about (and with) young people.

These kinds of organisational defences against anxiety are socially constructed and maintained. They can be noticed in a variety of ways e.g., minimising personal contact and connection, ritualistic following of rules, developing rigid hierarchies that require obedience to power and refusing to explore actual lived experience so that the shame of failing is kept out of mind [20]. Such defences have been analysed in the context of health and social care [21, 22, 23], with less attention in a schools context although there are some notable exceptions [24, 25, 26]. Bademci and colleagues study of staff in a youth detention centre has some resonance with organisational defences, in terms of their noticing the degree of danger and consequent psychological trauma experienced by the client group, and this 'getting in' to the staff group [27]. Poignantly quoting the latter *'we go where the wave takes us',* they highlighted the benefits that can come from providing a space for staff reflection through supervisory support. Containing the staff experience so that it could be felt and thought about aided the staff group in taking up their role more effectively within the organisation as a whole. The provision of the 'safe harbour' that contains such distressing 'waves' is a key systems-level component of better supporting staff to support vulnerable young people at risk, such as those who are or are likely to be become NEET.

2.2 Individual dynamic processes

At an individual staff level, Hulusi and Maggs identified particular patterns of interaction between students and teachers that are less able to contain or hold natural school dynamics [28]. Drawing on the work of Emil Jackson and others, they highlighted that because of the lack of space to reflect on these tensions and ways of adaptively coping with them, adults in schools may find themselves having uncomfortable emotions about children (e.g., anger, frustration, fear) and understandably feeling like failures for having such guilt-inducing emotions in the first place. This places them in a vulnerable position where their self-concept and sense of professional self-worth may be threatened, and which may be difficult to acknowledge and think about. Particular, implicit coping styles may then emerge to deal with this sense of vulnerability – e.g., adults can become more controlling/'in charge' or can withdraw/avoid students. They highlighted that *"where these feelings of vulnerability become too*

overwhelming they may result in either emotional fragility or omnipotent behaviour. Left unprocessed…teachers may then 'react' to rather than 'reflect' on subsequent challenges they face in their interactions with pupils, colleagues or the organisation" [p. 32]. Braxton noted that in the most extreme cases, "frightened staff can create an atmosphere that feeds the sense of things being out of control, starting with that very same staff" [29]. Braxton also recognised that in more hostile contexts, such fear can cripple staff, immobilise their energy and limit their reflective capacity. Thinking and feeling become split off from one another, leading to irrational and erratic behaviour that can potentially culminate in the most serious cases in abuse or neglect [29]. It is highly unlikely that in such circumstances, the needs of young people at risk of leaving school early can be effectively reflected upon and responded to.

Just as Bademci and colleagues found, providing containment or a holding environment for such feelings can be a way of appropriately supporting individual staff. What do we mean by containment? Drawing on psychodynamic perspectives such as that articulated by Bion regarding the parent-child relationship, we can think of one quality of the parental function to be a container. This is a thinker, as someone with the capacity not only to *care about* but vitally also to *think about* their baby's experience [30]. The parent-as-container tolerates the baby's feelings, taking them in and 'digesting' them, then returning them to the baby in a more manageable form. We can see this process in action when we observe a mother 'take in' her infant's distress at being hungry, wet and cold and helping him manage these through close physical contact, warm tone and gentle recognition of his feelings. Youell recognised that as young children grow and start school, teachers may take on elements of this containing function – dependable figures who can relieve some of the anxiety and vulnerability that comes with learning [31]. Analogously, adults also benefit from being contained and a key mechanism for this can be the provision of suitable models of supervision. Whilst this idea is unquestioned in professions such as social work, psychotherapy, medicine and psychology, supervision for teachers is a much neglected area in British education and something that teachers and other staff in UK schools do not routinely experience [32, 33, 34].

2.2 Supervision

Supervision in applied contexts can be defined as a work-based learning relationship characterized by relating and reflecting [35]. It is predicated on acknowledging one's own personal feelings, thoughts, values and attitudes, and developing an appreciation of how these may influence behaviours and responses when relating to others in role [36]. The capacity for reflection is itself predicated on the quality of supervisor-supervisee relationship [37], and it is for this reason that supervisory models foregrounding the relationships between supervisee and supervisor are particularly important in education. Contracting for a specific type of relationship is key – both parties must commit to:

- purposefully engage in learning from experience
- a psychological process that involves material entering into the supervisory space, for the processing of experiences and for outcomes to emerge from this
- beginning, maintaining and ultimately ending a relationship characterized by interpersonal connection, containment and challenge [35].

Supervision as a container for an individual's painful feelings about work – as a space to reflect on the emotional impact of teaching and learning, especially when working with more vulnerable students – is as noted less common in education. Some possible reasons for this have been highlighted – e.g., teacher's confusion as to what supervision means, or potential connotations of further scrutiny and monitoring of one's professional practice [32]. Roberts also noted that in schools, the term supervision can carry with it a link to the competency of staff and that leadership teams may not perceive a need for supervision where they feel the quality of teaching is good and teachers and support staff are proficient in undertaking their role. Other possible contributory factors may be those noticed elsewhere – e.g., Kraemer's finding in a hospital context that slowing down to reflect on what may be happening can actually be quite disturbing [38] and involves a concerted effort to confront the tiredness, pain and fear. Whilst on one level a lack of containing supervision may be lamented, it may also be superficially safer in the immediate term *not* to be confronted with one's own less comfortable and acceptable feelings.

3. Relational Model of Supervision for Applied Psychology Practice

One model of supervision that centres the supervisory relationship is the relational model of supervision for applied psychology practice (RMSAPP) (see Figure 1) [35].
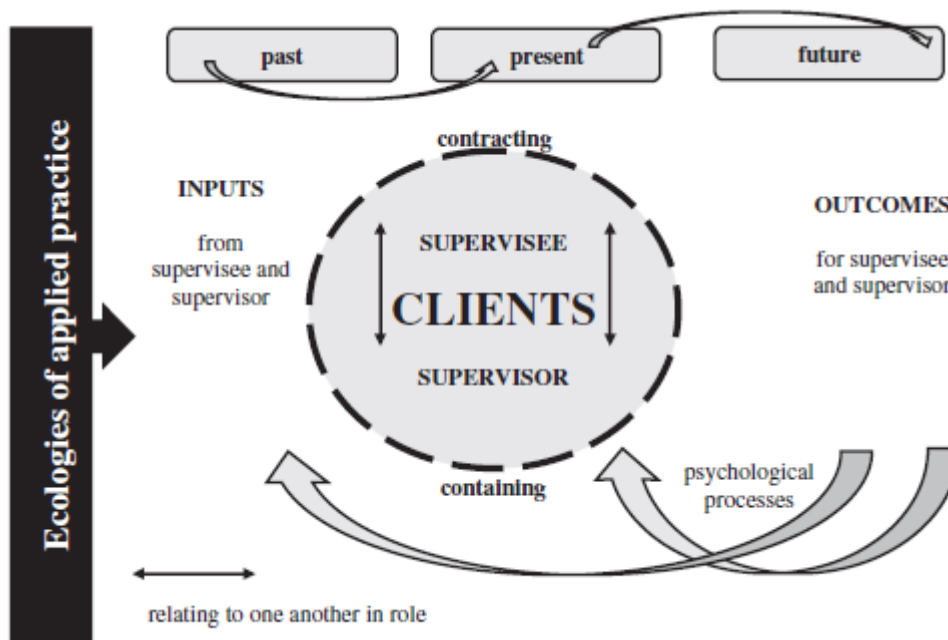

Figure 1: The Relational Model of Supervision for Applied Psychology Practice (RMSAPP)

The RMSAPP emphasises that all supervision take place within a specific micro- and macro-systemic context, represented on the left hand side as the ecologies of applied practice. For teachers in schools, these include the school's own vision, ethos and norms; pertinent local and national legislation and regulatory frameworks; wider societal attitudes towards learning and teaching and socio-political and cultural values. Within their own ecology of practice, the supervisee (the teacher) and the supervisor (another teacher, a psychologist) each bring inputs to the supervisory space, represented by the open circle of relating. Critical to this circle is the central prominence of the client – the child or young person (or the group or class of students) with whom the teacher is working. The supervisory inputs may be from the recent or distant past – e.g., the teacher's experience of engaging with a young person the previous week that led to confusion, conflict and confrontation, as well as their own personal experiences of what it means to be confused and confronted.

Our emotions, thoughts, beliefs and values all play a role in how we make meaning of the experiences we have in work and all can be usefully considered in the supervisory space. During supervision, the supervisee is sufficiently contained by the supervisor to acknowledge and explore their work. This could be through a range of different processes such as:

- validating and affirming the work that has gone on
- releasing tension in a cathartic fashion
- challenging appropriately and when beneficial, etc. [39].

Outcomes of a specific session or series of supervisory sessions may be new or transformed questions about the work with the student, about the teacher's role/task or about the self-in-role. There could also be plans of action or support identified for the student that can then be taken up by the supervisee outside of supervision (and come back to a subsequent session as a new 'input'). These outcomes influence the next set of inputs that come to the next supervision or set of supervisions and the supervisee and supervisor go through multiple cycles of experience, reflections on experience and curiosity about oneself-in-role-in-relationship with others.

The RMSAPP was developed by practitioners working in one mental health trust in the UK, which provides a range of continuing professional development opportunities for staff in education, health and

social care as well as direct clinical services for children, their families and adults. It built upon previous work undertaken at the trust by those providing initial training programmes for Educational Psychologists (EPs) – interestingly, at a time when the pre-requisite for such training was a teaching qualification and at least two years teaching experience. This meant that those involved initially and in the subsequent development of the RMSAPP had all had extensive experience of working in schools, either as teachers themselves or as practitioners working to support teachers and school systems. The model therefore had applicability for schools and community contexts more generally, and has been used in the provision of supervision to school staff (support staff, teachers and head-teachers) in both individual and small group contexts. It promotes attending to the unique contexts individual supervisees work within (their own personalised ecologies of practice), as well as to their unique inputs. This then facilitates applying the model in a developmental and progressive fashion (i.e., the needs of those who are newly qualified, in their early career or who are more experienced/in senior or leadership positions can all be considered). It also aids in thinking flexibly and creatively about the 'inputs' brought by the supervisee (and by the supervisor), and is broad enough in scope to accommodate any number of different supervisory techniques or approaches that the supervisee and supervisor wish to employ.

3.1 The RSMAPP in action in a school context

Roberts outlined the range of positive benefits that can come from school staff engaging in supervision. These included promoting feelings of appreciation, support and value; an enriched appreciation of roles and tasks across the school; more innovative and independent decision-making; better understanding of student need and reductions in stress and burnout [32]. This is encouraging, and opens up some potential avenues for researching the outcomes of using the RMSAPP in school contexts specifically. We are not yet at the stage of engaging in such evaluative studies as we work together on making use of the model and continually reflecting together on what is making a difference. At this early stage, some of the common themes arising include problem-solving regards individual students; challenges in working with families where there are disagreements about the nature of a student's difficulties (and what could be done to ameliorate these); as well as challenges in working in complex multi-team systems where roles, tasks and boundaries – as well as risk – is unclear. A commonly cited example may be a young person on the verge of permanent exclusion from school where there is also involvement from either social care or Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services. In such cases, school staff have brought as inputs to supervision (i) their own feelings, beliefs and values about their roles as educators versus the roles others may perceive them to have, (ii) confusions about who is better placed to address the needs of the young person and where their role ends and another's begin, (iii) questions about the most effective, evidenced-informed approaches to addressing the young person's needs and (iv) conflicts between their tasks as regards this young person and their responsibilities to other young people in the class/year group. Other aspects of working with vulnerable children, young families may also be brought – e.g., workload and stress management; the emotional impact of working with vulnerable children, young people and their families and team conflicts are regards what work could or should be prioritised.

Some other supervisory themes include the inherent tensions in being both a part of the school staff team as a whole and being somewhat 'separate' from it. This is particularly the case when the teacher-as-supervisee has a specific role or responsibility (e.g., those who are the designated lead for safeguarding/students in the care system), and where confidentiality prevents them from sharing certain concerns and availing of the usual peer support structures that others may have. For those in more senior positons, they are often the ones who have an overview of the full range of 'challenges' currently faced by the school: complaints against and by staff members, performance and management issues, budgetary constraints and shortfalls, safeguarding and risk management, forthcoming inspections or monitoring visits of some nature, etc. This can mean being more frequently drawn into situations with very high levels of negative emotional affect and the associated emotional labour [33]. Others have noted that the sheer array of tasks they are expected to undertake (e.g., as a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator or in a leadership and/or pastoral role), that then leads to feelings of incompetence or being de-skilled/lacking capability. The perceived lack of control over one's time has also been raised – the teacher who begins the day thinking they will be able to complete marking or planning/preparation but then gets drawn into dealing with a safeguarding issue or the management of a significant behavioural concern. Some very poignant issues brought to supervision (although not always explicitly) are concerns about:

- letting the positive, 'can-do' mask slip and actually bearing the somewhat unbearable distress that comes with teaching and learning
- being selfish – that they should be somewhere else doing something else, or that the supervisor's time could be better spent elsewhere and that they as the teacher don't warrant such attention.

The oft-cited analogy of flying and putting one's own oxygen mask on first before attending to children can be drawn upon in such times, with an emphasis on reassuring the teacher that them feeling sufficiently contained will ensure that they in turn are more able to contain their students.

There are a number of factors that have been noted to aid the provision of RMSAPP supervision in schools. These include leadership engagement and buy-in, especially as regards the perceived value of supervision for staff. This has been obvious in terms of how time and space for supervision to take place is protected in different contexts. Spending enough time on the contracting phase is also essential, to ensure that staff and supervisor are clear and explicit about intended roles, processes and outcomes. This is especially true where there is confusion about the term supervision, and supports addressing any misperceptions that may have arisen (e.g., that supervision is about further monitoring and evaluation, or conversely it is personal therapy). The frequency and spacing between supervisory sessions has been another factor. For an authentic relationship of sufficient trust to be established, the supervisor and supervisee need to meet frequently enough for the supervisee to feel there is structure, commitment and containment available from the supervisor. This needs to be balanced by the significant demands on teacher time and allowing time between sessions for the teacher to reflect on what was covered and how on-going meaning is made. A final beneficial factor has been the use of a supervisory relationship 'health-check', whereby feedback is sought from the supervisee at regular points as regards the process: e.g., do they feel listened to and understood by the supervisor, are they talking about what they want to talk about in supervision, is the work supporting their learning and development and so on. An open dialogue together about the strengths and enhancement suggestions allows the supervisor to continually adapt their approach to what is most helpful for the supervisee, as well as prompting the supervisee to consider what they themselves need to do to maximise the benefit of the sessions.

3. Conclusion

In this conference workshop, some sense of the scope of the early school leaving population in the UK was provided and some specific risk factors noted. Those factors that pertain to increased vulnerability - physical and mental health needs, complex family circumstances and special educational needs and disabilities – were identified, and thought given to the potential impact of these needs on the adults around them considered. Relationships, and their centrality to enhancing outcomes for students were are at risk of ESL or who are NEET, were highlighted. To provide such containing relationships for students, the need for containing relationships of one's own was also made apparent. One approach to

containment, supervision, was examined and a specific model with applicability for schools was explored. Further research on whether and in what ways supervision can reduce risk of ESL is essential, and the complexities of research design and methodologies suitable for 'messy' systemic contexts are acknowledged. However, the moral imperative is clear – we cannot continue to pressure teachers and schools to address the needs of these students without sufficiently respecting the demand this places on them (and leaves them at risk of 'failing' to meet these needs).

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Dr. Emma-Kate Kennedy *is the Deputy Director of Educational Psychology at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust in London. She initially trained and worked as a teacher in Ireland before moving to the UK in 2002 where she completed her Masters in Educational Psychology at University College London. She worked as an Educational Psychologist in local government and schools in inner London for 11 years, and completed her doctorate in Educational Psychology at UCL and post-graduate work in special and inclusive education at the UCL Institute of Education during this time. She is an Educational Psychologist in the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Lifespan Team at the Trust, as well as a psychologist in private practice. Her clinical and professional practice areas of interest include projective assessment, autism assessment, supervision and consultation.*

Learning Spaces on Early School Leaving

Ms. Eszter SZEGEDI
CroCooS and ESLplus project leader
Tempus Public Foundation
HUNGARY

Ms. Csilla SZABÓ
ESLplus project manager
Tempus Public Foundation
HUNGARY

Early school leaving (ESL) has been recognised as a pressing concern all across Europe for many years. The need for professionalizing the prevention of ESL and early leaving from education and training (ELET) is heavily felt in every country in Europe. The following knowledge portals (www.crocoos.tka.hu and www.eslplus.eu) would give practical help for those frontline practitioners who deals with early school leavers directly and who are in need in their profession. Beside them for those experts at policy level who are in charge of tackling ESL in their region. The portals contain freely available tools and professional materials and were developed as results of the following two projects:

*The **"CroCooS – Prevent dropout!"** project identified elements of a comprehensive institutional early warning system (EWS) and tested its applicability in national contexts. The **CroCooS Knowledge Centre** is a complex system linking closely the Resource Pool with a huge theoretical background, the **CroCooS Toolkit** with several tools could be used in the school to prevent dropout and the Guidelines to support the effective use of the Toolkit with thematic tags.*

*The **ESLplus – The European Learning Space on Early School Leaving** project offers a great deal of high-quality content and expertise that has been accumulated on ESL at the international, national, local, and institutional levels. The **ESLplus Portal** is to contribute actively to the reduction of the number of students dropping out of school without obtaining their qualifications by providing practical guidance to the professionals working with these students. The portal's linked and interactive functions support a deeper understanding of the broader context of the problem, users can also share their knowledge and experience.*

1. Summary of the projects

1.1 CroCooS – Prevent Dropout!

The Cross-sectoral Cooperation Focused Solutions for Preventing Early School Leaving (CroCooS – Prevent Dropout!) was an international project implemented between May 2014 and April 2017 financed by the European Commission, under the scope of Lifelong Learning Programme. The general aim of the CroCooS project was to contribute to the specification and the applicability of an institutional early warning system (EWS) for preventing early leaving from education and training, by identifying elements of EWS. It also tested its applicability with national pilots focusing on contextual factors affecting the evaluation.

Actual fieldwork was preceded by empirical and theoretical background research. Accordingly, the project products supporting the pilots were partly based on findings of a complex research activity including desk research, the creation of country reports and the comparative analysis of them, and study visit reports, the conducting of online questionnaires in the three piloting countries, and the making of interviews.

The methodology of the piloting was developed in order to support the introduction of an early warning system (EWS) for schools intended to be tested in 15 institutions in the piloting period. During the three years of collaboration, between September 2015 and December 2016, pilots were carried out in Hungarian, Serbian and Slovenian secondary schools. Piloting schools were supported by mentors in the building of EWS teams, and provided with an educational toolkit as well as institutional guidelines to facilitate the monitoring of distress signals, the creating of protocols for intervention on the school level, the use of personal development plans, and the enhancement of cross-sectoral co-operation.

The main, implicit aims of the development according to the regional needs were the followings:

- sensitising the staff of each school regarding the importance of the problem of dropping out;
- trying to get teachers to become actively involved in monitoring students and working with them;
- starting work on developing better relationships between students and teachers;
- patiently working on strengthening pupils' sense of belonging to the class and the school;
- developing relationships of trust by being supportive and ensuring a safe school climate.

The development activities covered the preparation of the Toolkit and Guidelines for the school level implementation. Research results were gathered in a Resource Pool, which 3 elements are linked by a massively coherent tagging system on the project website. The aim of these products was on the first place to feed the pilot process, nevertheless to contribute to awareness raising and knowledge management towards the wider public after the project. The Guidelines for schools on how to build and EWS on an institutional level and the online Toolkit and community supporting interventions on individual level are available in English and in the national languages (HU, SI, SER) on the project website. The online Resource Pool is also implemented to support academically the implementation of the pilot and to support the further development of early warning systems in schools after the project.

1.2 ESLplus – ESL Platform and Support Services

The ESLplus project aimed to reduce disparities in learning outcomes affecting learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, that were why the partnership planned to systematically collect, publish in a well-structured standardized form and to share knowledge, practices and applications related to the topic of reducing early school leaving at a European level.

Two main goals of the project were:
- to pool knowledge and experience and publish on a user friendly online portal (ESLplus Portal – European Learning Space on Early School Leaving) for knowledge sharing what enables the identified main target groups (practitioners: educational institutions, school leaders and teachers, as well as the administration staff of local authorities, service providers, municipalities, and policy makers) to learn from each other's good practices;
- to found a Europe wide network called the Alliance for Dropout Prevention in Europe (ADPE) by inviting practitioners, experts, relevant institutions, and professionals at policy and practical levels.

The methodology was to start by a needs analysis of potential end users of the portal and other stakeholders. The needs analysis was elaborated by project partners in their own country and at European level. All partners have close connection with practitioners or decision and policy-makers in the field of education. The focus of needs analysis was on identifying the portal's main target group and revealing their real needs and demands before collecting, selecting and structuring the good practices as well.

The primal outcome of the project is the realization that however ESL is a common problem in most of the European countries, the composition of reasons and the necessary interventions have to differ according to contextual facts. As ESL is a complex problem only complex help, structured and targeted information and cross-sectoral cooperation can be effective if we would help actors in need. Having studied the available European ESL-related literature, we managed to identify a market niche that could help us customize and configure the ESL portal on the practical level. The main target group is the practitioners who need practical solutions, and there is not enough relevant information for them on European level.

The literature review and the results of the needs analysis showed the **good practices can't be interpreted without knowing their contextual background**. Adaptability of a good practice depends on the educational system, the institutional circumstances and school leaders' and teachers' competencies as well as the teaching methods commonly used in local cases.

One of the main parts of the portal is a good practice repository that provides help mainly for frontline practitioners shared by their international colleagues. A standardized form for good practices has been

developed; the aim was to create a form that helps good practice uploaders publishing their practice embedded in the contextual background that means real help for end users.

The ESLplus Portal is dynamic, interactive and fresh designed platform in line with the latest trends for maximize the user's experience. The published professional materials as well as the provided services are linked by an open tag-system that makes the portal more users friendly and easy-researchable.

2. The CroCooS and ESLplus learning spaces

2.1 CroCooS Knowledge Center (Resource Pool, Guidelines and Toolkit)

The CroCooS – Prevent dropout! project identified elements of a comprehensive institutional early warning system (EWS) and tested its applicability in national contexts. The CroCooS Knowledge Centre is a complex system linking closely the Resource Pool (theoretical background in easy-to-understand language), the Guidelines (how to build an institutional EWS) and the EWS-Toolkit (several tools can be used in the school to prevent dropout).
Target groups of the CroCooS Knowledge Centre are teachers, school leaders, school care teams, teacher educators, schools, VET-schools.

2.1.1. Purpose of the toolkit/tool:
The general aim of the CroCooS project was to contribute to the specification and to the applicability of an early warning system on institutional level in the European countries. In the framework of the CroCooS project EWS on institutional level was understood as a systemic tool used by educational institutions, based on measurable data and observable phenomena, facilitating the timely identification of students at risk of dropping out and also the establishment and application of prevention measures on an individual level.

In order to reach this goal specific objectives of the project were the followings:
- identification of the elements of early warning system (EWS) based on desk research and empirical survey results;
- piloting the defined EWS in 3 European countries (HU, SI, SER) by using the developed online supporting professional materials (Guidelines and Toolkit and the Resource Pool materials);
- support the pilot schools supported by mentors on monthly bases as well as with small financial grant.

The development activities covered the preparation of the Guideline and the Toolkit for the school level implementation. Research results were gathered in a Resource Pool, which 3 elements are linked by a massively coherent tagging system on the project website. The aim of these products was on the first place to feed the pilot process, nevertheless to contribute to awareness raising and knowledge management towards the wider public after the project.

2.1.2. Description of each of the tools:
The Resource Pool of CroCooS offers a huge variety of professional materials, professional literature for professionals, experts and researchers about the key elements of preventing dropout and early school leaving explored during the project period of CroCooS.

The Guidelines for developing an institutional early warning system (EWS) is intended to help the work of schools who are about to build an early warning system for preventing and reducing dropout in their institution. The Guidelines supports the effective usage of tools in the Toolkit.

The CroCooS Toolkit provides practical tools that can be used in everyday school practice for teachers, headmasters and institutional level to succeed in dropping out of school, identifying students at risk and building up cooperation inside the school and on cross-sectoral level.

Title of the tools:
- Building rapport
- Bullying
- Communication basics – Teacher mentoring student
- Cooperating partners in supporting and keeping at risk students

- Creating a classroom code of conduct
- Cross-sectoral cooperation – mapping up partnerships, building cooperation
- Effective Communication Strategies for Teachers/Mentors
- Following absenteeism
- Getting to know the student in a complex way – data collection
- Helping discussion
- How to raise student's interest?
- IAMTool - Tool for effective and efficient communication
- Make one step forward – group exercise
- Managing team meetings
- No lose conflict solving
- Non-judgemental behaviour
- Partners' Roundtable
- Person-centred profile
- Points of view
- Selecting team members
- Setting up a Personal Development Plan (PDP)
- Steps of the case discussion
- Storytelling
- The actors, elements and system of student's support
- Tool for screening risk of dropout
- Weekly group discussion instead of form master class
- Well targeted data collection to prevent dropout
- Wish my teacher knew…

You can find related contents by using the thematic tags (e.g. absenteeism, bullying, classroom management, cross-sectoral cooperation, data collection, distress signals, getting to know students, grade repetition, low motivation, mentoring, non-violent communication, parents, social context of ESL, trusting relationship)

2.1.3. Type of indicators used in the identification of learners at risk of early leaving:
The mainly examined early warning signals in the project:
- Data gathering
- Absenteeism
- Grade repetition
- Deteriorating achievement
- Boredom
- Behaviour and school dropout
- Bullying, violence in school, harassment
- All are explained in a theoretical background material in the Resource Pool.

2.1.4. Type of guidance given to users:
Each part of the CroCooS portal has a short introductory text. The content of the Guidelines, the Toolkit, and the Resource Pool elements are linked to each other by thematic tagging, the list of keywords used for connecting the related elements.

2.1.5. Source of information of the different tools:
CroCooS - Prevent dropout! project was implemented in the framework of the EC proposal "Implementation of the European strategic objectives in education and training" (EACEA/04/13) under the Lifelong Learning Programme which target is to support innovative policy solutions to reduce and prevent early leaving from education and training (ELET).

2.1.6. Link/s to the toolkit/tools and further information:

www.crocoos.tka.hu
http://oktataskepzes.tka.hu/en/crocoos/knowledge-center

2.2 ESLplus Portal – European Learning Space on Early School Leaving

The ESLplus Portal set up in the framework of the ESLplus (ESL = early school leaving) project coordinated by Tempus Public Foundation (TPF) contributes actively to the reduction of the number of students dropping out of school without obtaining their qualifications by providing practical guidance to the professionals working with these students.

Target group of the ESLplus Portal are the practitioners (teachers, school leaders, administration staff), teacher educators, local and national policy makers, social workers, school care teams and other professionals.

2.2.1. Purpose of the ESLplus Portal:

The ESLplus Portal gives practical help, inspiration and deep learning opportunity for practitioners to support their initiation of enhancing equity in education and reducing early leavers from education and training. The ESLplus Portal is an international (4-language) interactive learning space where the users have a lot of possibilities to improve their ESL-related knowledge and skills:
- Play with the statistics module and the policy learning game;
- Learn from others' good practices and stories;
- Use and adapt the newly learned ESL-related knowledge; and
- Share their own ideas, experiences, cases.

The pages of the portal can be used effectively for sensitisation to the ESL issue; the portal provides inspiration for everyday work, for designing training programmes, selecting illustrative materials for training courses and preparing international comparative statistical analyses.

2.2.2. Description of each of the tools

The European Learning Space on ESL offers a wealth of high-quality content and expertise that has been accumulated in early school leaving at the international, national, local, and institutional levels. Visitors can find the most up-to-date information and the latest resources on ESL. The linked and interactive functions support a deeper understanding of the broader context of the problem.

What are the resources offered?
- **Good practice repository** – A structured database of good practices to identify and manage students at risk. The structure of the description and the strong focus on the contextual factors of good practices aims to support the adaptation of solutions and ideas that were piloted previously by others. It is not only possible to download but also to share good practices.
- **My stories** – Short videos and written cases about colourful and true stories of students and teachers to bring the problem closer and prepare emotionally for exploring real solutions. In this unique part of the portal individuals share their own stories, feelings and experiences about being a drop-out or working with students at risk.
- **Interactive statistics** – A structured and comparable ESL-related country data collection of Europe with an interactive visualization for researchers and policy makers. About 100 different variables are uploaded into 5 variable-groups (1. ESL/ELET and NEET variables, 2. Participation in education, 3. Youth indicators, 4. PISA variables, 5. Country background indicators) of European 34 countries. This section of the portal enables evidence-based analyses of the problem.
- **ESL-Library** – A collection of the ESL literature: European and national policy papers, research papers, booklets on ESL topic. The Library has filters by type of the documents, by author, title, publication year, language and country.
- **Glossary and the Tag-system** – The tag-system is a collection of keywords and definitions related to the professional background information on ESL. All the tag – and some other keywords on ESL – has a short explanation in Glossary. All the contents on the ESLplus Portal are tagged and the tags link the professional materials and the recommended further related elements are shown to the readers automatically.

2.2.3. Type of guidance given to users:

Using and explore the ESLplus Portal is very simple: the design and the architects of the portal are very user-friendly. The tags, the filters and the related contents help in navigating and find the most interesting parts for anyone.
A short promoting video on the opening page introduces the main portal functions.

2.2.4. Source of information of the different tools

The ESLplus project is implemented in the framework of the EC proposal "Key Action 3: Support for policy reform - Prospective initiatives, European Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects in the fields of education and training, and youth" (EACEA/33/2014) under the Erasmus+ Programme which target is to support innovation in practices and policies across educational and youth sectors.

The ESLplus Portal was developed by Tempus Public Foundation within the ESLplus project and all the partners contributed by providing contents to the Good Practice Repository, My Stories and ESL-Library. The original source of the Interactive Statistics variables and database are the Eurostat, the OECD PISA and EAG databases.

2.2.5. Link/s to the toolkit/tools and further information

www.eslplus.eu

Ms. Eszter SZEGEDI *– project leader of the Knowledge and Training Centre of Tempus Public Foundation*
Ms. SZEGEDI has been responsible for the coordination of multilateral and national projects related to the work programme of Education and training 2020. Ms SZEGEDI has 15 years of experience in education as a practitioner: teacher and trainer, she has experience in network building, organising national dissemination forums for experts, policymakers, and stakeholders for strengthening the crosscutting cooperation and facilitating communication in specific fields of education. Her main research areas are educational knowledge management and early school leaving.

Ms. Csilla SZABÓ *– project manager of the Knowledge and Training Centre of Tempus Public Foundation*
Ms SZABÓ is the project manager of the EU funded European ESL Platform and Support Services (ESLplus) project of the Tempus Public Foundation. Before her present position she had been responsible for the coordination of several EU programmes (Comenius of Life Long Learning programme, Strategic partnerships of Erasmus+ programme, European Language Label) and non EU programmes (Academy of Central European Schools) for the school education sector for 8 years.

Importance of School Social Work in
Preventing Early School Leaving of Romani Children

Narin BAGDATLI VURAL
Maltepe University
TURKEY

The Roma are a socially, culturally and economically disadvantageous ethnic group who face various enduring problems like poverty, unemployment, insufficient health and housing conditions, poor education, and negligence, exploitation and abuse of children as a consequence of systematic exclusions from social relationships, labour markets and cultural fields. In the field of education biases against, and stereotypes and stigmas on Romani people as expressions of discrimination and social exclusion bear impact on the reproduction of the social problems they experience. Along with poverty, social exclusion and discrimination are substantial facts which lead Romani students to early school leaving. Dropping out of school puts these children in a poverty cycle and in turn Romani children face new problems caused by early school leaving. Educators have important roles and responsibilities in preventing early school leaving and protecting children from the risks thereof. School social workers offer support to students under social exclusion risk and devoid of basic needs to cope with problems with their families and social environment as well as with school. They carry out a team work with all professionals in schools on a coordinational basis. Taking on the advocacy of right to education and assessing all needs of students, social workers direct them to various institutions to get support in a more specialized context.

1. Introduction

In Turkey, as almost everywhere on earth, Roma are on a low socio-economic level, devoid of employment opportunities, usually under the risk of social exclusion. They can not satisfy even their basic needs like shelter, food, health. Living in absolute poverty conditions Romani families strive at meeting their physiological needs [1]. They are forced to ignore the educational and psycho-social needs of their children. So early school leaving of Romani children is an immediate consequence of that inured poverty but with its far too many faces: Early marriages, obligation of caring for younger siblings and other domestic responsibilities, forced labour, lack of concentration due to malnutrition, lack of standard course materials. We may add some cultural/ideological factors to economic ones: Discriminative, otherizing treatments at school, and registration of many children to special educational institutions on reports received from counselling and research centers despite the fact that they have no mental retardation [2]. In one sentence: Poverty, social exclusion and difficulties in access to social rights are the basic causes of early school leaving and child labour among Romani children [3].

They are frequently confronted with social exclusion in school as well as in other areas of life [4]. Drifting away from school brings about the vicious circle of poverty and Romani children face with social problems brought forth by early school leaving. Children absent from school, with inadequate reading and writing skills although they are at higher grades of primary school or not being supported by their undereducated parents experience compliance problems. In cases where the family maintains a nomadic life children can not attend school regularly and have difficulties in registering and adapting to school [5].

Education plays an important role in the reproduction of the system of social relations as well as in the construction of an egalitarian social order which acknowledges the importance of fundamental rights and freedoms. The contemporary schools need professional teams (psychologists or psychological counsellors, nurses, social workers) to support children in bio-psycho-social dimensions for solving problems stemming either from students themselves, school environment or relationships between children-families and schools. As a part of those teams school social workers deal with situations or problems of the student on the basis of ecological system approach in multiple dimensions. [6]
As one of the prevalent paradigms of our age ecological system approach addresses the problems of children who face with poverty and all kinds of deprivation from an interactive and holistic perspective. Each system surrounding the child (school, family, circle of friends, neighbourhood, socio-cultural and

economic structures) influences each particular problem of them and thus one must to discover the disparities between children and their environment.

Ecological system paradigm sets forth that the child can not be the sole source of her/his problems and emphasizes the role of the systems surrounding the child or the discordances in interaction of the child with the environment. [7] Strengthening relationships of families with schools, helping families to understand their children's psycho-social development processes and their educational needs, coordinating institutions in order to provide children under school leaving risk and their families with necessary sources or lead them to relevant institutions, informing school managements and teachers about the factors effecting academic success, intra-school discrepancies and absenteeism, making them understand their roles and responsibilities in school leaving and stimulating them to cooperate against the problem, and maybe most importantly advocating children's right to education under the risk of school leaving can be described as more explicit and solider endeavours and interests of School Social Work. [8]

2. Method

The general aims of this workshop are to discuss the economic, cultural and social consequences like child labour, early marriages and delinquency awaiting Romani children under the risk of early school leaving with teachers as representatives and actors in educational system; to raise the the level of awareness about their own roles and responsibilities in school leaving fact; and to emphasize the place and importance of interdisciplinary school social work.

In the course of the activity the participants were separated into five groups according to five substantive titles: Teachers' roles and responsibilities in preventing early school leaving of Romani children; the social inclusion issues regarding Romani children; family oriented works and actions; roles and responsibilities of social workers; and the importance of inter-institutional relations to vindicate children's right to education and social policies proposed in the field of education. Each group is given questions intended to guide their discussions. Drawing from their own knowledge, skills and experiences the participants presented their opinions and proposals to other group members.
Questions projected to be the guidelines for group discussions are as follows:

Group 1: Teachers' roles and responsibilities in preventing early school leaving of Romani children
- Do the teachers have awareness about risks Romani children who leave/left school?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of teachers in preventing early school leaving?
- What sort of action can teachers effectuate for social inclusion of Romani children?
- What strategies can teachers develop when the students are not being supported by their families?
- Do teachers have a share in school leaving due to some exclusive or discriminative attitudes?

Group 2: Social inclusion of the Romani children into the school system
- How can teachers, counselling services and school managements work together effectively for an equalitarian education caring for cultural differences?
- What can be done to create in teachers the sense of belongingness to their schools?
- What can be done in schools to prevent othering (against the families as well as against students) and eliminate biases and stereotypes?
- What can be the reasons of the academic underachievement of Romani children?
- How can teamwork be created and encouraged in the school?

Group 3: Family-oriented Works and Actions
- What can be done to strengthen the interaction and communication between families, teachers and school management?
- What can be done to promote the interest of undereducated and/or illiterate Romani parents in their children's education?
- What can be said about the inefficiency of public education practices?
- What can be said about rarity of role models and the fact that teachers and the school environment doesn't present that opportunity to Romani children?
- How can the perception of the families (that their children are being excluded and not supported) can be transformed?

Group 4: Roles and responsibilities of social workers
- What can school social workers do to strengthen the belongingness of Romani children to school and to deal with absenteeism?
- What are the possible strategies for social workers to prevent social exclusion and promote a multicultural education?
- What contribution can the participation of social workers caring about fundamental human rights make to the school system?
- What can be done to reduce the 'peer effect' in preventing school leaving?
- How can we establish a solid basis for effective communication and coordination to put socio-political institution in action against early school leaving of Romani children?

Group 5: The importance of inter-institutional relations to vindicate Romani children's right to education and social policies proposed in the field of education
- What can be done for students under risks arising from poverty and deprivation?
- What are the transgenerational causes of the scarcity of Romani children attending schools and universities which could offer them professional specialization?
- What can be done for children who are not registered to school system or for those registered ones who don't attend to school?
- What can be done against early marriages of young girls and against the domestic/non-domestic exploitation of their labour?
- What can be done to prevent neglect and abuse of children and child labour?

3. Results

At the end of the workshop all ideas, opinions and proposals produced around the above questions throughout the work presented to participants were opened up for discussion; views about matters which might be missed during the sessions exchanged and a general assessment was made which aimed at to create an integrative perspective. We can summarize the proposals and discussions set forth in the course of work:

Disadvantage and marginalization resulting from poverty, neglect, abuse, peer victimization, disability, and discrimination and exclusion on the basis of race, class, gender, faith, and sexual orientation are the major causes of early school leaving. Students need preventive and protective implementations which aim to reduce or prevent the adverse effects of such backgrounds. To prevent early school leaving and protect children from the relevant risks, the interactions of all systems surrounding the child should be taken into consideration.

Teachers are among the most important agents in the school system as the focal ground of social and cultural construction processes. They facilitate processes like self-recognition, socialization, autonomy, and self-realization of students. Teachers' awareness of the importance of their roles as effective actors in these educational processes and their role in preventing early school leaving is thus a crucial aspect in efforts to prevent early school leaving. Teachers must be able to establish empathetic relationships with students from different cultural identities. A cultural environment caring for differences and aiming at social inclusion in accord with a multicultural sense of education should be created.

Measures must be taken against the practice of concentration of Romani children in certain areas, schools, or in certain classrooms of schools. Such practices tend to reproduce social exclusion within school environment and indeed, transmit the fact from one student generation to others. Instead of registration of Romani students to certain schools or classes they should be sent to different schools putting a transportation system in action if necessary for a solider integration process.

As for the cooperation between Romani families and school it is participants emphasize the significance of the will and willingness of the school managements. Teachers should be supported by them in their endeavours for integration of socially excluded students. Campaigns that reveal and publicize the impact of early school leaving must be conducted. Romani parents should be encouraged to participate in school activities and if necessary visits to their homes and neighbourhoods must be paid. Schools should properly carry out their intermediary roles in announcement and coordination for programs (vocational courses, literacy campaigns etc.) held by public education centers. Teachers and managers must be

watchful in their expressions about students when they talk to their families. Teachers may give supportive extra lessons for students with lower academic success paid by government.

Social workers who takes on the advocacy role for students under the risk of school leaving can design training programs for teachers aiming at adoption of multicultural education principles and techniques and elimination of stereotypes and biases. They can develop models and organize activities to promote belongingness of students and teachers to their schools. As an alternative to disciplinary penalties interventions to support students in psycho-social aspects can be made which strengthens their sense of worthiness and self-respect. In cases of neglect and abuse teachers as well as social workers must be determined and resolute in taking on the necessary measures.

Romani children must be directed to pre-school education in order to be adapted to school life and education experience. Pre-school institution should be free of charge and in the scope of compulsory education. Poor and disadvantageous families must be enabled to benefit from social welfare services. Social policies should be produced to increase the employment opportunities of Romani people. Inclusive urban transformation projects must be designed and implemented and spatial segregation against Romani people should be dissolved.

4. Conclusion

As an ideal the educational process is conceived as a tool to construct an egalitarian social order in which through consideration of cultural differences a qualitative transformation is aimed and rights and freedoms are cherished. Concretization of that conception requires efficient and proactive social policies: Ruling out factors of poverty, negligence and abuse, peer victimization, early marriage, forced labour; preventing virulent effects arising from identities of race, class, gender and religion.

Social, cultural and psychological characteristics of students at risk of early school leaving; identification of those who are under immediate risk; capacities, efficiencies and weak points of the state, social services and social institutions including schools; solution proposals based on teaching experience and vision to prevent early school leaving with a particular emphasis on the role of the teacher are the specific focuses of the study.

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Dr. Narin Bağdatlı Vural receives BSc, MSc and PdD degrees in Sociology from Mimar Sinan Art University. Dr. Bağdatlı Vural is an Assistant Professor at Maltepe University/ Department of Social Work since 2012. Dr. Bağdatlı Vural lectures on related subjects as social policy, gender, social and economic structure of Turkey, school social work, social work with families, social exclusion and discrimination. She has actively participated in the projects of Research and Application Centre for Street Children (SOYAÇ) at Maltepe University in Istanbul since 2014 at different settings in the area of school social work. for supporting disadvantaged children who are under the risk of school drop-out.

The Role of Nursing in The School Social Environment:
The Importance of Multidisciplinary-Multi-Sector Collaboration

Seher YURT
Maltepe University, School of Nursing
TURKEY

The aim of this paper is to discuss, the impact of multidisciplinary and multi-sector projects carried out in collaboration with nursing services on both school health and professional development. According to the 2014 statistics of the Turkish Statistical Institute, the school-age populations between the ages 5-17 make up 1/5 (21.2%) of the total population. This figure is the most significant indicator of the need for all professionals working in the field of public health to assert their presence in the schools. This easily approachable group of children and young people provide a good opportunity to ensure the wellbeing of healthy individuals and society through multidisciplinary and multi-sector collaboration. To achieve this, an awareness must be developed of the benefits that can be derived from the collaborative efforts of professionals and institutions in different fields. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has divided school health services into eight main components; health education, physical education, health services, nutritional services, counseling, psychological and social services, maintaining a healthy school environment, health education for employees, and the participation of families and the community. These components are all a part of the common area of interest of many professional groups that include nurses, doctors, psychologists, social workers, dieticians and teachers. As part of the Maltepe University SOYAÇ "We're in School" project, we plan to share with our audience examples of multidisciplinary and multi-sector projects that have been conducted in collaboration with nursing services as well as the knowledge and experience we have gained from such cooperative efforts.

Introduction

Schools have direct contact with more than 95% of nation's young people aged 5-17 years, for about six hours per day and up to 13 critical years of their social, psychological, physical, and intellectual development. Schools play an important role in promoting the health and safety of children and adolescents by helping them to establish lifelong health patterns [1]. According to the 2014 statistics of the Turkish Statistical Institute, the school-age populations between the ages 5-17 make up 1/5 (21.2%) of the total population [2].

The period of schooling is perhaps the most important time frame in a child's life and one that determines the course of future endeavours. Because of the opportunity they afford to reach out to children, adolescents and youth, schools are the ideal settings for promoting health. The target audience for improving health is not only students, however. Teachers working at the schools as well as administrative personnel also benefit from the health services that are offered and they also act as role models for students. The reason that there is a need for health promotion in the school setting is not only because of the density of the child population at these institutions but also due to the fact that adolescent and young people come into contact with a number of serious threats to their health in that environment. At the same time, the period in which adolescents and young people transition into adults is the time that behaviours and attitudes toward health develop. This is why the promotion of positive health behaviour in the school system is so important. Moreover, health promotion in the schools is made even more significant because it goes hand-in-hand with school achievement. It should not be forgotten that the knowledge and skills learned in school are instrumental in producing healthy adults. In particular, the child who receives health education at school as part of a program of health promotion has an impact first on his/her school, then on the family, the community, and finally on the whole of society. This model, which is also called the Ecological Model, has the student at its core [3].

Children spend a large portion of their time at school. The physical, social and cultural quality of the school environment should be one that supports the child's wellbeing and development in every way. Children should feel safe and secure in school and need to develop a sense of belonging. This sense of belonging that will develop in school is especially important for children of economically disadvantaged and impoverished families in the community. According to data in Turkey for 2008, there are 5.5 million

children under the age of 18 that live below the national poverty line. Poverty affects children in different ways compared to adults and in many cases, the consequences are more severe. Poverty is one of the most prominent obstacles standing in the way of a child's starting off on a healthy life.

A significant percentage of physically challenged, underdeveloped children and those with chronic diseases are poor. Additionally, economically disadvantaged children have few opportunities to receive quality care or attend preschool programs. Also, these children experience barriers to their access to education, their ability to purchase school materials or in finding a place to study and do homework. The Romani make up an important part of the impoverished population in the various cities of Turkey. It is estimated that their population totals between 0.5-2.5 million.

The large majority of Romani live in the unhealthy conditions of urban slums. Many of the children in this group work on the streets to contribute to the family income and the rate of dropping out of school is high [3.4.5]. This easily approachable group of children and young people provide a good opportunity to ensure the wellbeing of healthy individuals and society through multidisciplinary and multi-sector collaboration. To achieve this, an awareness must be developed of the benefits that can be derived from the collaborative efforts of professionals and institutions in different fields, working models must be created, the implementation of these working models must be evaluated, and those that are the most useful should be employed on a wider scale. One of the basic responsibilities of schools is to create an environment that is free of unwanted behaviour and unfavourable models [6].

Students should be taught how to manage their behaviour in such a way as to prevent resorting to violence. In focusing on violence in the schools, the issue of bullying among students generally comes to the fore [7] School health practices have been included in the scope of routine healthcare services in developed countries since the beginning of the twentieth century. One of the goals of the Health for All in the 21st Century policy of the World Health Organization (WHO) European Region has been stated as ensuring that young people are healthier by 2020 and making certain that they will be able to fulfil their roles in society in a state of good health [8].

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has divided school health services into eight main components; these are health education, physical education, health services, nutritional services, counselling, psychological and social services, maintaining a healthy and safe school environment, health education for employees, and the participation of families and the community. These components are all a part of the common area of interest of many professional groups that include nurses, doctors, psychologists, social workers, dieticians and teachers [9].

In the world of today, private sector partnerships and collaboration among nongovernmental organizations play a central role in global development strategies. With respect to children, it can be expected that effective collaboration that is in line with the common aims of all stakeholders will do much in the way of avoiding complexity and duplication of efforts. Working together on a multidisciplinary and multisector basis has the potential of building a wider scope of sensitivity and ownership in terms of addressing aims, policies and programs.

The aim of this paper is to discuss, in the context of the project entitled "We're in School" of the Maltepe University Implementation and Research Center for Children Living on the Streets (SOYAÇ), the impact of multidisciplinary and multi-sector projects carried out in collaboration with nursing services on both school health and professional development.

Results

As part of the Maltepe University SOYAÇ "We're in School" project, we share with our audience examples of multidisciplinary and multi-sector projects that have been conducted in collaboration with nursing services as well as the knowledge and experience we have gained from such cooperative efforts. Twenty-one nursing department students, under the supervision and consultation of 2 faculty members, taught 7 different subjects; hygiene, peer bullying, effective communication, healthy eating, use of harmful substances, first aid, and body safety to elementary school grades 1-2-3-4-5 and 6 two days a week. The nursing students intervened in school injuries, worked in cooperation with the family health center to resolve students' health problems when the need arose, and because the school was a

part of a significantly disadvantaged community, the students activated community volunteers to provide pupils with winter clothing such as jackets, uniforms, boots, scarves and hats.

Below are presented a few of the impressions of the school teachers and students who participated in the project and gathered together in a focus group to evaluate the effects of the multidisciplinary (nursing, psychology, social services) and multisector (universities, municipalities, district national education directorates, district governorships) efforts carried out:

"I think that every student of psychology should work on a project like this outside of the clinical setting before graduating. It made me think that although I'll be working in the clinics and hospitals after I graduate, this is a part of life that I need to know about." (Psychology Department Student)

"Multidisciplinary collaboration is theoretically a part of every field but it was good to see it in practice. In fact, I was so glad to hear that the nurses would be coming in; I was happy for the children. Their aim was the same. Everything is for the children. I'm not a nurse and I can't invade their boundaries. But having the nurses come in will be of much benefit to the children." (Social Services Department Student)

"I think our workload was lightened. Working in a multidisciplinary fashion lightened our workload. At the end of the day, I alone couldn't have provided the children at school with psychological counselling, social services and nursing care altogether. Working together allowed me to focus on my own responsibilities. It made my work easier." (Nursing College Student)

Conclusion

It is vitally important that these efforts that employ the resources of the university and the community are rendered sustainable. A need has been ascertained for the following multidisciplinary and multisector work:

- Bringing out the regulatory and policy reforms that will ensure health and nutritional support to all children at the schools,
- Creating equitable standards at the school facilities where there is a density of disadvantaged children (personnel, heating, hygiene, social environment, playgrounds, equipment, etc.),
- Activating social resources and maintaining sustainability for the promotion of health in the schools,
- Developing and sustaining coordinating mechanisms between health, education and local administrative institutions,
- Identifying the barriers that stand in the way of sustaining collaboration between institutions,
- Activating defence mechanisms to promote the education and health of schoolchildren,
- Increasing multidisciplinary and multisector research and sharing obtained results with the relevant institutions,
- Ensuring that institutions take into account the knowledge and experience gained from project efforts and maintaining sustainability in services,
- Appointing school nurses, psychologists and social service specialists to the schools, especially where there are disadvantaged pupils, and continuing multidisciplinary efforts,
- Besides providing support to students, making sure that teachers and other personnel in the school community as well as families are supported and encouraged to participate,
- Urging university students to take part in multidisciplinary projects in an effort to provide them with the skills needed in multidisciplinary collaboration.

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Seher Yurt *- She completed her doctorate at Marmara University Public Health Nursing. Since 2011, she is working as an assistant professor of Public Health Nursing at Maltepe University School of Nursing. Areas of interest; Public health, health of the school community, obesity, Development of health behaviour, project development, multidisciplinary studies for health and health education. She worked as a coordinator in the project on prevention of obesity-related social exclusion in school-age children. The subject she is currently working on is opening a "Healthy Living Practice and Research Center" for the University.*

Building Schools of Character: Supporting the social, emotional and mental health needs of learners at risk of exclusion or drop-out

Robert WHITE, PhD
School of Education, University of Aberdeen
Scotland, UK

Developing teacher lead initiatives to decrease early school leaving, drop-out and exclusion is paramount in supporting positive outcomes for all learners, which is the foundation for sustainable development. The positive promotion of social and emotional wellbeing in schools can be seen as a means to lessen the impact of social difficulties and behavioural problems on educational attainment. The Building Schools of Character (BSC) initiative is a teacher facilitated multiple component approach focused on enhancing engagement with learning, pro-social development and humanistic support to develop socially competent, resilient, independent learners. The three components of the initiative are; 1) pedagogical reform that embraces problem based learning within a Universal Design for Learning (UDL), 2) Restorative Processes facilitated when behavioural mistakes are made that hurt others and undermine trust within the learning community, and 3) School Support Center (SSC) that supports teachers and learners in the development of pedagogical sophistication, pro-social development, and engagement with learning within a trusting and caring environment. The Building Schools of Character initiative focuses on explicit and implicit Integrative Character Education (ICE) to support self-directed learner engagement with teacher lead problem based learning opportunities. The character education component also underpins the efficacy of restorative processes, which are facilitated to help learners develop empathy, responsibility and respect for others.

Introduction

Character Education initiatives within schools have gained both proponents and opponents over recent years and continue to garner mixed reviews. Proponents argue that the need is urgent and the increasing level of school disruption, anti-social behavior and violence requires a focus on values/virtues/moral education and claim this is synonymous with good practice in education. Opponents ask, whose values will be taught, while others claim that many initiatives embrace moral education delivered in a behaviorist fashion promoting control by other and lack a humanistic understanding of the pluralistic nature of modern society.

Epidemiological studies indicate that 12% of all children aged 5 to 16 in the United Kingdom are likely to be experiencing a mental health problem (Mental Health Foundation, 1999; British Medical Association, 2006) and that 20% of children and adolescents in the United States are experiencing symptoms of mental health disorders as defined by the DSM IV (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). In the United States, 5% of all children between the ages of 5 and 18 display mental health disorder symptoms severe enough to impair their ability to function effectively (US Department of Health Services, 1999). Among the 20 to 30% of children under the age of 15 in the United Kingdom likely to display behavioural problems (see Metzer et al., 2000; Office for National statistics, 2004), roughly half display symptoms of conduct disorder, and 10 to 12% of all UK children between the ages of 5 and 15 will experience clinically defined mental health problems.

The forecast of "increases in many psychosocial disorders among young people" by Rutter et al. (1989:89) was confirmed by Atkinson & Hornsby (2002:3), who indicated that the majority of research to date suggests "increasing numbers of children who are experiencing mental health problems." These unresolved problems have serious implications for both individuals and society, including negative physical, emotional, and social consequences and costs (Bell & Jenkins, 1993; Fitzpatrick & Boldizar, 1993; Schwab Stone et al., 1995).

These findings suggest that schools will continue to face mental health challenges and therefore need to develop and implement interventions to address these challenges effectively. A likely focus for such programming is implementing mediated learning activities designed to facilitate the development of self-regulation, social competency, and a cooperative disposition to help children acquire self-regulating strategies to effectively engage in the daily social interactions of the school and the broader community. Any school wide approach to positive behavioural support must address children's needs within an

inclusive and holistic framework that considers the underlying mental health needs of children experiencing difficulties.

The above research indicates, 10% of UK children and 20% of US children are likely to experience significant mental health problems that will impact on their ability to function effectively within the socially charged school environment. This means that in any given school year, a teacher in a typical US classroom of 25 children may have five children experiencing clinically significant problems coping with the daily challenges of life, and a teacher in a typical UK classroom of 30 pupils may have three pupils experiencing clinically defined mental health problems.

Although the above difference in the prevalence of these problems between the United States and the United Kingdom is likely to be more related to diagnostic than inherent differences, these problems negatively impact both countries in the same manner and are likely not to be addressed by the sanction and reward system of behaviour management found in both countries (Arthur, 2005), a system that may lead children to experience marginalization and exclusion from the school community. Indeed, 55% of all exclusions in the United Kingdom in 2004 were of pupils with special needs, an increase of 10% from 2000 (Finney, 2006). In the UK during the 2009/10 school year there were 279,260 fixed period exclusions from state funded secondary schools, 37,210 fixed period exclusions from primary schools and 14,910 fixed period exclusions from special schools.

Moreover, Pupils with Special Education Needs (SEN) with statements are around 8 times more likely to be permanently excluded than those pupils with no SEN (Department for Education, 2011). These data suggest that current approaches to behaviour management are failing to meet the needs of students across all educational settings and more disturbingly the above findings indicate that current behaviouristic approaches are failing to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children. Therefore, a full re-envisioning of teacher facilitated school-wide approaches to support prosocial development, pedagogical efficacy and support is needed.

Pedagogy reform & Character Education: Facilitated Cooperative Problem Based Learning to support knowledge construction, cooperation, social competency, and autonomy

The modern multicultural world demands a rethinking of teaching. The access to information is now at learner's finger tips and the drive for autonomy and individualism is at all times high, yet within the school many still rely on centuries old theories and instructor-based transmission on information; at times confusing opinion with knowledge. Therefore, for inclusion and equity to be reached within the learning environment educators need to consider the role of the facilitator in the process of knowledge construction. Instead of confining the learner to predetermined information the facilitator moves beyond instructing, beyond teaching to the facilitation of learning.

This frees the learners to engage with a large array of information to construct knowledge for their needs. With this approach the facilitator focuses on six key process that underpin the learning process. The six key processes the facilitators develops in the learners are; 1) How to access information related to a problem under investigation, 2) how to critically assess the information accessed for reliability, validity and trustworthiness, 3) how to synthesis large amounts of disparate information, 4) how to form a testable hypothesis/solution to the problem under investigation, 5) how test the hypothesis/solution under consideration, 6) how to disseminate the new knowledge gained form reliable and valid information and hypothesis/solution testing.

The above approach to classroom learning facilitation is further supported by embedded Integrative Character Education (ICE) into the classroom management processes. In short, facilitated cooperative problem-based learning will be more successful if learners are supported by a classroom that is respectful, responsible, fair, caring, honest and trustworthy. These six characteristics are the foundations of a successful community of learners. It is also of paramount importance that all members of the learning community embrace these characteristics and that all members see them as authentically valued. In other words, administrators, teacher, and learners must be respectful, responsible, fair, caring, honest and trustworthy. For this to be accepted by learners the school behaviour management policy must also embrace these six characteristics. Therefore, it is recommended that after embedding integrative character education into the learning environment that restorative processes are embedded to support learners when a social/behaviour mistake is made.

The use of restorative processes allows a focused approach to support the development of empathy and overcome the hurt caused when one or more learners are disrespectful, irresponsible, unfair, uncaring, dishonest, or untrustworthy. Restorative processes also help learners accept responsible for their action and the associated consequences. Restorative process also provides a voice for the offended and provides avenues to manage the shame associated with being disrespected.

Restorative Processes: Embedding Procedural Justice to support the development of empathy and inclusion

The restorative process for school behaviour management may provide schools with an approach to meet the needs of all children experiencing social, emotional and behavioural challenges. This investigation suggests that restorative process implemented in schools is best placed within the framework of procedural justice. This process is a key component in building relationships based on respect, responsibility, trust, honesty, fairness, and caring. By introducing effective school-based restorative processes, schools can provide an avenue for children to develop intrinsic responsibility and an obligation to be fair, caring, responsible, respectful, trustworthy, and honest when relating to others.

By establishing a commitment to socially justice behaviour legitimacy of adults within the school for developing a cooperative learning environment is gained. This legitimacy can then be embedded at both the school-level and the individual-level; with all members of the learning community developing a commitment and adherence to socially competent and cooperative interpersonal interactions. This shared responsibility empowers both staff and students to accept their role in developing a caring, fair, and just community (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003a) and supported by intrinsic motivation at the individual level.

Many school-based behaviour management practices use zero tolerance policies, deterrence and punitive actions to address anti-social behaviour in the belief that this will establish pro-social behaviour. For example, Nagin (2007) discovered that threatening and/or delivering sanctions is often effective in shaping rule-following or law-abiding behaviour. Moreover, several other studies suggest that people are less likely to engage in illegal behaviours when they think that they might be caught and punished for infractions (Nagin & Paternoster, 1991; Paternoster, 1987, 1989; Paternoster & Iovanni, 1989; Tyler, 1990; Tyler & Tonry, 2003). However, in contrast, several studies highlight the limitations of the deterrence and punishment approach and the factors that undermine the effectiveness of this approach in developing self-regulation.

This research has consistently found that the deterrent effects, when they are found, are small in magnitude. In a review of studies related to illegal drug use and deterrence strategies, MacCoun (1993) found that only around 5% of the variations in drug-use behaviour can be explained by variations in the expected likelihood and/or severity of punishment. Nagin (1999) argued that the perception of the certainty of punishment, rather than the severity of punishment, has the most impact on behaviour. Several researchers (Ellsworth & Gross, 1994; Tyler, 1990) point out that a certainty of punishment is associated with heavy surveillance and visible policing, the thought of which in schools, and in democratic societies in general, is distasteful. Since the probability of being caught when breaking many laws is low, deterrence based on the probability of being caught for wrongdoing is generally a poor strategy.

Moreover, since the deterrent and punishment model places responsibility for control on others rather than self it undermines intrinsic prosocial development. Another consideration is that people may follow the rules while under surveillance but engage in wrongdoing when no authority figure or camera is watching, even when they consider the imposed rules to be legitimate.

In contrast, approaches that focus on restorative processes aim to facilitate the development of pro-social attitudes that lead to the development of self-regulation allowing schools to move beyond the use of surveillance, punishment, and rewards (Author, 2010). In addition, the factor essential to the punitive and deterrence approach is the use of sanctions. The major consequence of over-reliance on sanctions and the deterrence approach in schools in general is the troubling level of disengagement, marginalization, disaffection, and exclusion. This can lead to transgressive attitudes and behaviour and

an increasingly negative relationship with authority figures that can persist throughout the life course (Haney & Zimbardo, 1998; Tyler, 1997, 1998; Tyler & Huo, 2002).

The implementation of restorative processes within schools is built from a diversity of intellectual perspectives providing a coherent understanding of how restorative justice can be beneficial within the school community. The implementation of restorative justice is embedded within the philosophy that schools can benefit greatly from an effective strategy for developing a commitment to pro-social attitudes and compliance with pro-social behaviour that does not depend on sanctions/incentives-based behaviour management. The goal is the development of social situations in which people will act in socially responsible and cooperative ways for rational and ethical reasons, not due to fear of punishment for wrongdoing (Sherman, 1993, 2003; Sherman, Gottfredson, MacKenzie, Reuter, Eck, & Bushway, 1997; Tyler, 1990; Tyler & Tonry, 2003).

In building an understanding of the mechanisms underpinning the restorative approach in relation to promoting a climate of social responsibility within schools, two broad concepts of restorative justice must be considered: the values-based concept and the process-based concept. The values-based design focuses on accountability to authority underpinned by a commitment to a socially situated and culturally constructed set of values or principles. On the other hand, the process-based design focuses on bringing together all affected by harm or rule breaking as well as healing and restoration from a humanistic perspective (Tyler & Tonry, 2003; Tyler, 2006).

A process-based restorative approach often begins with a face-to-face meeting that includes a discussion facilitated by a mediator concerning what harm occurred. This meeting provides an opportunity for all parties to describe how the interaction affected them. The process concludes with a consensus as to what reparation would address the harm, redress the wrong and repair the relationship. The focus of the process is to reintegrate both the offended and offender(s) back into the school community in a way that resolves any shame experienced. This in turn provides a path for pride and shame management, reintegration and the prevention of future maladaptive or anti-social behaviour.

The process-based restorative perspective envisions the path toward a civil society as one that invests in and values social capital. It is argued that individuals must feel ties to their school community and a personal commitment to good character for restorative processes to operate to their full potential. To this end, the practice of restorative processes is a key factor in transforming conflict (i.e. regulative discourse) into teachable moments (i.e. instructional discourse). The highly emotionalized nature of these teachable moments enhances the attachment children feel toward their previously verbalized commitment to act in accord with pro-social standards of conduct (Author, 2010).

By focusing more on harm than rule breaking, the process-oriented restorative approach has the potential to repair interpersonal relationships through the management of intrapersonal dissonance. Therefore, the approach can be used to address intrapersonal, interpersonal, intra-group, and intergroup conflict, providing a powerful avenue for schools to strengthen attachment and build social capital among all members of the school community.

The restorative process embedded in procedural justice focuses on the mechanisms associated with a personal commitment to act in accord with rational and ethical judgement, decision-making, problem-solving, and conflict resolution by promoting the personal responsibility necessary to suspend self-interest and to do what is just and ethical. Therefore, a properly conceived school-based restorative process uses conflict as a teachable moment to create dissonance. This dissonance is then mediated until reduction can occur and consonance with commitment of prosociality regained. The process focuses not only on the harm done to relationships but also to intrinsic motivation, supported by self-image, aiding one in acting in accord with one's commitment. This process is particularly important during the socialization of children, as it has the potential to develop socially competent and cooperative school communities. Sunshine and Tyler (2003b) explain, if the goal is to develop a commitment to a just (i.e., legitimate and moral) standards of conduct, authorities (schools in this case) should pursue policies consistent with promoted and accepted values.

Schools should assume responsibility for providing learning opportunities and activities based on respectful, responsible, fair, trustworthy, caring, and honest procedures when children fail to act in accord with their commitment to pro-social behaviour. It is in this way that children will understand and legitimize the exercise of authority when necessary. As indicated in this study the restorative process

within schools should strive to activate the commitment to act responsibly, respectfully, honestly, and fairly in a caring and trustworthy way during all interpersonal interactions to overcome anti-social behaviour.

According to Tyler and Blader (2005), people view interventions that adhere to their same standards of conduct as just (i.e., moral and legitimate). Sunshine and Tyler (2003b) contend that the ways in which authority figures exercise their authority confirms to others whether they share the same values or level of commitment to pro-social standards of conduct, as they promote for the behaviour of children. It should be noted, during the socialization of children into the ideals of good character and high standards of pro-social conduct, the internalization of this commitment can be undermined if people in positions of authority do not adhere to the same standards and commitment.

Furthermore, restorative processes have the potential to provide school staff with a framework to demonstrate that they share the same standards of conduct and commitment to the standards of socially just behaviour by acting in ways consistent with the ideals of good character. By teaching children to use rational and ethical judgement to resolve conflict and solve problems in a respectful, caring, fair, honest, trustworthy, and responsible manner, the standard of conduct is seen as legitimate, allowing the shift from external to intrinsic regulation. Tyler (2004) further suggests that when people see authority figures following a procedurally just course of action, they attach a higher degree of legitimacy to the process. Tyler (2004) highlighted that this legitimacy, once conferred, promotes compliance and pro-social standards of conduct. Applying the theory of dissonance to the process of procedural justice provides strategies for activating intrinsic commitment and legitimacy so that responsible adults or more competent peers can guide a restorative process that supports the commitment to act in accord with pro-social standards of conduct.

Merging restorative justice with education to effectively establish, support and maintain intrinsically regulated pro-social behaviour

In conclusion, the use of restorative processes within schools should be aimed at empowering all school stakeholders to take responsibility for building emotionally stable and healthy relationships. The promotion and expectation of accountability is a major aspect; all members of the school community should support each other as they learn to be socially competent and cooperative while holding other members accountable for their actions. This process is argued to have the potential to provide the links required for children to learn that all actions have logical consequences; positive, pro-social behaviour leads to positive consequences and negative, anti-social actions lead to negative consequences. For young children, this connection to action and consequence is seen to support the development of the routines and habits required for establishing pro-social attitudes.

If this connection is removed or negative actions are rewarded with positive consequences (e.g., a pupil who displays disrespectful behaviour during a maths lesson is offered the chance to complete one division problem and then have time on the computer), children can become confused as to what behaviour is appropriate. This in turn can lead them to rely on inappropriate actions in the attempt to have their ego-centric needs met without consideration of the needs of others (Lewin et al., 1939).

Based on this study, it is suggested that beginning with their earliest contact with the school and throughout their school years, children should be engaged in restorative processes/ proactive learning opportunities that facilitate positive pro-social development. This consideration is a key factor for improving educational and life outcomes, as it is recognized that by actively facilitating pro-social development, schools can break the growing cycle of maladaptive anti-social behaviour increasingly reported by school staff and other community members.

The grounding principle of school improvement is seen as the use of firm, consistent, and fair approaches to support the development of pro-social and cooperative development and decrease anti-social behaviour by implementing restorative processes. Restorative processes are argued here to be an effective behaviour management strategy for addressing the relationship-harming behaviour of children who lack the necessary commitment to the pro-social standards of conduct required to become socially competent and cooperative learners.

The restorative processes are used to address and enhance social responsibility and shame management when harm occurs. It is the development of; 1) pride in attachment, 2) acknowledgement of shame, and 3) shame management that supports the effective use of restorative processes. By implementing these strategies, anti-social behaviour can be reduced, and a cooperative learning environment can be developed to enhance success for all members of the school community.

School Support Centers: Supporting all teachers, learners, and parents

The School Support Center (SSC) is an on-site center that supports teaching professionalism and efficacy, learner self-regulation, engagement and efficacy, parental engagement and school-wide social competency. The SSC is an embedded support initiative that enhances teacher efficacy by providing direct professional support and development through team teaching opportunities, facilitating continued professional development opportunities and mentoring and coaching. The center also provides direct support to learners by providing individualised education plans (IEPs) for all learners needing additional support.

The additional support can be focused on academic development for those learners that are academically gifted and seeking additional learning opportunities or those leaners who need additional support to engage and be successful with the required curriculum and academic activities of the classroom. In addition, the SSC offers additional social, emotional and behaviour support for those learners experiencing difficulties engaging with the social aspect of the learning environment. Therefore, the School Support Center facilitates the restorative processes when the severity of the social and/or behavior mistake warrants and additional character educational support when required to support prosocial engagement within the learning environment.

It should be recognized that the SSC is not a venue in which to confine pupils in a segregated classroom. Learning and development are the key factors associated with a properly conceived SSC, not control and containment. The emphasis should be on meeting the learning and developmental needs of children experiencing difficulties in working cooperatively with others in a socially responsible manner. Therefore, the SSC is envisioned as the access point of support for all members of the school community when difficulties arise that overwhelm a learner's level of intrapersonal resiliency or persistent mental health problems continue to challenge the learner's ability to maintain a commitment to pro-social standards of conduct.

The properly conceived SSC should not be a venue in which children can avoid challenges and difficulties but rather a venue that facilitates the support necessary for children to master the knowledge, understanding, and skills required to overcome their challenges and difficulties. By overcoming these difficulties, children can build and maintain the intrapersonal resiliency necessary to become productive members of society capable of socially competent and cooperative interpersonal relationships within the broader social world beyond the school setting.

Summary of the Building Schools of Character Initiative

The BSC initiative is designed to provide universal (school-wide), targeted (classroom-based restorative processes), and intensive (the SSC) learning support to address the concerns discussed above in a cost-effective manner. This approach may allow all schools to meet the needs of all children, even those experiencing intensive and chronic behavioral problems or mental health difficulties or who are at risk of doing so. Recognizing Vygotsky's (1978) argument that learning precedes development, the BSC pedagogy is based on socio-cultural theory underpinned by a social constructivist framework that provides a preventative pathway for educators and other community mental health professionals to work together to meet the needs of all children, including those with persistent, chronic, and intensive behavioral difficulties, without stigmatizing, marginalizing or isolating those who are most vulnerable.

Even though children with special needs constitute 20% of the school population, 55% of all school exclusions in the United Kingdom in 2007 involved pupils with special needs, up from 44% in 2003 (Garner, 2007). The primary objective of the BSC initiative is providing community schools with a cost effective and sustainable tool kit‖ stocked with approaches for facilitating character development and restorative processes through the implementation of SSCs for all children to facilitate the development

of the pro-social attitudes and behavior necessary for children to become socially competent and cooperative. This competence and cooperation provides the resiliency or —strength of character‖ required to effectively address and ameliorate childhood difficulties and their consequences: disruption of learning and teaching, marginalization, disengagement, exclusion, and disaffection.

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Policies and practices for
prevention of Early School Leaving

Conference proceedings

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