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## **Advances in Education Sciences**

**Volume 2, Issue 1, 2020**

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## **THE VIEWS OF PUPIL ON TEACHER UNDESIRABLE BEHAVIORS IN THEIR APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**

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### **Abstract**

At the beginning, it is found in most of the countries that offer teacher education are not concerned with the current need and development needed for the school and the industry (real life), rather they just design the curriculum as per the decision of members of the board or senate. Generally, the board does not want to discuss exactly with the nominees or experienced teachers and the school manager. Results are in a big gap for the education operators especially, nominee teachers, too. Preparing a suitable training program and job ready teachers we need nominee teacher perceptions on their trainers and teacher. In this content, in an undesirable environment for pupils' perceptions are very essential. Undesirable environment for practice is defined as the environment that has behavior which is not suitable for the situation or the environment, but it is acted consciously in it. In this study, it is aimed to determine the views of the pupil on teacher undesirable behaviors in their apprenticeship program. The population of this research is 370 students who study in NEÜ Education faculty 7th-semester

students in the academic year 2017-2018 in Konya. This paper that tries to find the ways on the grounds for synergetic partnerships between the faculty of education and industry for a win-win situation for both the sides revealed that pupil perceptions are ranged in two groups between “strongly disagree” with the interval 1.00-1.80 and “disagree” with the interval 1.81-2.60.

**Keywords:** faculty of education-school collaboration, theory and practice, partnership, student perceptions, Undesirable environment

## 1. Introduction

In Turkey, Faculties of educations were established with the restructuring in 1982. To minimize problems associated with teacher training, faculties of education classified their teacher training programs in two groups as "elementary school teacher" and "the teacher of secondary education". Each teacher training program has courses with proportions of, the professional knowledge and skills of 50-60%, 25-30% of the pedagogical knowledge and skills, 15-20% of the general culture. After completing courses on professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills, all pupils in schools have to join a one-semester internship/application program (Demirel and Kaya, 2012).

In Turkey, the Turkish Science and Technology Institute (TÜBİTAK), in its recommendations to the nation before a couple of years has advocated for the establishment of synergy between teacher education and creativity. (Tübitak, 2013). The most important thing in creative education is that it has to be should be supported by an invoking environment in which the mind power has to tie up with the networking power in the schools facilitates sufficient opportunities for the pioneering brains of the young creative teacher nominee students.

Undesirable environment for practice is defined as the environment that has behavior which is not suitable for the situation or the environment, but it is acted consciously in it. According to that definition, all environments that have behaviors which interfere with the educational efforts in schools and stajs can be characterized as inappropriate behavior (Sağlam et al, 2007). While mentioning about inappropriate behaviors encountered in educational environments, the first thought is the inappropriate behavior of students. However, teachers might show different inappropriate behaviors and those behaviors could lead to negative consequences on learning and behavior of students (Bonfield 2003; Dolin 1995; Toale 2001). At the same time, those behaviors decrease total self-confidence and learning skills of them. Particularly, the undesirable behavior of teacher among the inappropriate educational environment prevents student learning and their creativities either directly or indirectly (Kearney et al. 1991).

“Undesirable behavior” is defined as defamatory behaviors of the teacher on students such as using derogatory language, embarrassing or insulting student within his colleagues and verbal harassment to students by using inappropriate language. The verbal undesirable behavior of teacher reduces the student to develop a positive attitude toward learning so that behavior prevents the learning of students and it creates hostile emotions on students against learning subjects (Bekiari et al. 2005). Some surveys conducted by Gözütok (1993), Memişoğlu (2005), Tor and Sargın (2005), Cobanoglu and Senturk (2005) showed that 30% of the teachers are working to ensure discipline in the class by showing the behaviors that could be characterized as negative behaviors (hair pulling, slapping, insulting, threading by class mark, taking student to the principal or throwing chalk). Maurer and Wallerstein (1984) statistically investigated the effects of teacher’s negative behavior on learning. They examined the relationship between failure and the negative attitude of the teacher in 50 public

high schools and they concluded that increasing the negativity of teacher's behavior decreases the success of students.

Students want to be valued by teachers in educational environments and to be treated carefully. Students expect directed interest, curiosity, and anxiety on them. from their teachers beyond academic support. If the teacher is perceived as a person that is interested in students personally, the student gets the higher motivation to participate in class activities or toward learning (Phelan, Davidson and Cao 1992).

It is important for the student whether the teacher-student relationship is healthy or not. A conducted research showed that the learning aspiration of students is negatively affected by teachers who cared neither students nor their study (Phelan, Davidson and Cao, 1992). Additionally; in Sheets' study (2002), students complained that teachers did not listen to them, they did not make any effort to communicate with students and there were no friendly relations between students and teachers.

The educational environment is not only a place where learning-teaching activities maintained but also it is a place in which student develops a self-perception and their creativity by interacting with his teacher and friends. Also according to Açıkgöz (2005), teacher as a person that has the most intimate and long-term interaction with students, should undertake functions such as being a role model and making guidance to the student in addition to his main function of "learning facilitation". It is not possible to talk about the quality of the education system and industry collaboration in the absence of a qualified teacher. Therefore, this study aims to determine the views of the pupils on the undesirable behavior of teachers in their apprenticeship.

### ***1.1. The Purpose of the Study***

In this study, it is aimed to determine the views of the pupil on teacher undesirable behaviors in their apprenticeship. For synergetic partnerships between the faculty of education and industry for a win-win situation for both the sides and progressing education program, the question that “According to pupil’s perceptions, in what extent their teachers show undesirable teacher behaviors?” is determined as the problem sentences.

## **2. Method**

This research tries to determine the views of the pupil on the undesirable behaviors of the teacher. This study is descriptive research since it is aimed to state directly the existing conditions on the issue and the general scanning model was used among the scanning models in this research. Scanning models are the research approaches that aim to describe a situation which happened in the past or still exist with its all contents (Karasar, 1995).

### ***2.1. Sample of the Population***

The population of this research is students who study in NEÜ Education faculty 7th-semester students in the academic year 2017-2018 in Konya. It is not possible to access the entire population of the pupil so sample selection was applied by using asymmetrical selection model. Because 370 students filled the questionnaire as requested and the sample of the population was comprised of 430 students.

### ***2.2. Data collection tool***

In the study, “Undesirable Teacher Behavior Scale” developed by Erben Keçici, S., Beyhan, Ö. & Sönmez Ektem, I. (2013, a) was used as a data collection

tool. The scale is Likert-type scale and has 22 questions in the first factor that is “undesirable behaviors of teacher” (Table1). The scale KMO value is 0.923 and Bartlett sphericity test result is also significant for [ $\chi^2=7229/sd=703$ ,  $p<0.000$ ] found (Scherer, 1988). The eigenvalue of factor analysis be taken 3.00 and two factors, eigenvalue larger than 3.00, were determined (Büyüköztürk, 2002). There are significant ( $p<0.01$ ) middle level positive linear relationship( $r =.642$ ) between scale factors. Each dimension Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale are 0.91 and 0.92. Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient is 0.94(Kline, 1994). Confirmatory factor analysis  $\chi^2/sd$  rate is 2.52. GFI value is 0.79, AGFI value is 0.76, RMSEA value is 0.06, CFI value is 0.85, NFI value is 0.78 and PGFI value is 0.69, respectively. The scale of the data in perfect harmony with the values, even if not acceptable limits (Jorokog & Sorbom, 1993; Brown, 2006).

After Applying the scale, the ordinal scale was used for data analyses. Each range coefficient for five options scale is (4/5) 0.80. 1.00-1.80 ranges represent “strongly disagree”, 1.81 - 2.60 ranges represent “disagree”, 2.61-3.40 ranges represent “neutral”, 3.41-4.20 ranges represent “agree” and 4.21-5.00 ranges represent I “totally agree”.

### ***2.3. Analysis of the data***

The data were computerized and analyzed by using SPSS 25 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) computer program. The arithmetic means and standard deviations of views of students on undesirable behavior of teacher were determined

### 3. Results

The problem sentence is that “according to pupil’s perceptions, to what extent their teachers show undesirable teacher behavior?” In table 1, according to pupil’s perceptions, undesirable teacher behaviors on those issues are listed depending on mean values and standard deviations. When table1 is analyzed, it is seen that the grading scale of students’ views is ranged in two groups between “strongly disagree” with the interval 1.00-1.80 and “disagree” with the interval 1.81-2.60.

**Table 1. The statistical data on undesirable behaviors of teacher.**

	<b>The inappropriate behavior of teacher</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
1.	<i>He/she thought that I was not suitable for the school.</i>	370	1,84	1,349
2.	He/she used to say that I was psychologically ill.	370	1,56	1,069
3.	<i>He used to say that I did not have adequate reasoning ability.</i>	370	1,82	1,264
4.	<i>He/she would mock my failures or mistakes in the lesson.</i>	370	2,05	1,430
5.	<i>She used to mock my outer appearance (A physical characteristic)</i>	370	2,09	1,437
6.	He/she used to mock my name.	370	1,75	1,257
7.	To exclude me from class activities, he/she used to assign tasks that were impossible for me to do.	370	1,59	1,106
8.	He/she used to behave as if I did not exist.	370	1,61	1,088
9.	<i>He/she constantly interrupted me and did not allow me to speak.</i>	370	1,91	1,302
10.	<i>When I raised my finger to get a permission to speak, he/she did not use to let me.</i>	370	1,99	1,350
11.	<i>Whenever I wanted to talk to him/her, he/she avoided speaking to me by making up an excuse.</i>	370	2,04	1,331
12.	He/she intentionally kept me waiting for a long time.	370	1,75	1,157
13.	<i>He/she used to say negative things about me when I was absent.</i>	370	1,86	1,252

14.	<i>He/she used to reveal things related to my private life.</i>	370	1,98	1,441
15.	<i>He/she used to attack my private life.</i>	370	1,83	1,330
16.	<i>He/she used to tell the principal and other teachers negative things about me.</i>	370	1,83	1,299
17.	He/she used to tell my family negative things about me.	370	1,80	1,255
18.	<i>He/she used to send me to the principal even in the case of the smallest problem.</i>	370	1,90	1,337
19.	He/she used to criticize my works and homework.	370	1,77	1,240
20.	<i>He/she used to give bad marks without informing me about the reason.</i>	370	2,15	1,418
21.	<i>He/she used to give punishments arbitrarily</i>	370	2,09	1,394
22.	<i>He/she used to shout, insult and curse for no reason.</i>	370	2,17	1,447

Students give their opinions as “strongly disagree” for the following questions (second, sixth, seventh, 12th and 17th) with the highest given arithmetical average values(1,80) “He/she used to tell my family negative things about me” and the lowest given arithmetical average values (1,56) “He/she used to say that I was psychologically ill”.

Students give their opinions as “disagree” for the questions in italics in table1 with the highest given arithmetical average values (2,17) “He/she used to shout, insult and curse for no reason.” And the lowest (1,83) “He used to say that I did not have adequate reasoning ability”.

#### **4. Discussion**

Undesirable behavior problems do not occur alone, when the problems of undesirable behavior in the classroom are understood, the reason for the formation of inappropriate behavior problems can be identified. To correct those problems not only the target students’ behaviors but also the teachers’ behavior must be taken into consideration.

For synergetic partnerships between the faculty of education and industry for which use teachers graduate from it a win-win situation for both the sides education faculty needs enough datum for progressing education program. The more information we have about the creative and suitable education environment the more educated and ready teacher for real conditions.

There are not many kinds of research on that issue in our country. While talking about inappropriate or undesirable behaviors, mostly student aggression is the focus point. This research is important in this regard since we tried to investigate the effects of inappropriate teachers' behaviors on students.

This study was conducted on pupil .in their apprenticeship program. The results show that in the extent of the question "According to pupils' perceptions, to what extent their teachers show undesirable teacher behavior?", the findings were not much high statistically. The effects of undesirable teachers' behavior could be high even if the action is repeated rarely. For example, the study of Dolin (1995) supports this judgment. Even teacher shows undesirable behaviors rarely, those effect students in a negative way such as decreasing the participation to the in-class activities, decreasing the desire of learning and decreasing to behave in an appropriate way. This type of behaviors negatively affects cognitive and effective learning of students and they increase the resistance of the negative behaviors of students.

The results obtained in this research are not consistent with the result of other research in that field. Many kinds of research tell that teachers could show undesirable behaviors in class and those behaviors lead to negative effects on students' learning and their creativity, and as a result of the undesirable behavior of teachers, the students show undesirable (Dolin 1995; Toale 2001). Undesirable teacher behavior is one of the reasons that affect learning and in-class behaviors of student unfavorably. Besides, it is stated that that kind of behaviors is

performed commonly among teachers (Memişođlu 2005, Roberson and Doebler 200, Sheets 2002, Bekiari et al. 2005, Bulu 2006). The reason of not to get a similar result with previous studies in this study can be concluded that high school (or elementary school) students could be under the influence of the events of this period more than the adult students in university or college. The reason for encountering more cases in this period might be results of contradictions between adolescence period of students and authoritarian conceptions of the teacher.

## **5. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The Undesirable behaviors in the education environment should not be overstated and the teacher should avoid hardcore reactions. The Undesirable experiences in class cause students to develop a negative attitude toward school and teachers so that triggers the failure of students. At the same time, undesirable behaviors kill students' creativity.

The teacher training institutions should consider those cases and institutions should add similar case studies to their curriculum to give different examples to teacher candidates. If teacher candidates have enough information about situations encountered in class, they will be prepared for the situations and so better decisions on class management can be applied.

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## **INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRAIT ANGER AND ANGER EXPRESSION AND SUBMISSIVE BEHAVIORS IN ADOLESCENTS**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between anger, anger expression styles and submissive behaviors in adolescents. The study group of the research consisted of 445 high school students selected by random sampling method. The participants consisted of 250 (45.9%) men and 295 (54.1%) women. In the research, State-Trait Anger and Anger Expression Style Scale, Submissive Behaviors Scale and Personal Information Form were used to determine the anger and anger expression styles of adolescents. In the analysis of the data; t-test, one-way variance analysis, Pearson Correlation Coefficient and regression analysis were used. According to the research findings, a significant difference was found in favor of female students in trait anger and anger-out sub-dimensions of trait anger and anger expression styles of adolescents according to gender variable. In the anger control sub-dimension, a significant difference was found in favor of

male students. According to the grade variable, the anger-in subscale dimension, which is one of the state-trait anger and anger expression subscales, was found to be significantly higher in the 10th grade students than the 9th grade students. As a result of the correlation analysis conducted in the research, a positive and moderate relationship was found between the adolescents' scores from submissive behaviors and the anger-in sub-dimensions. As a result of the regression analysis conducted in the research, it was concluded that submissive behaviors were a significant predictor of adolescents' anger-in. According to the findings of this study, it can be suggested that school psychological counselors conduct anger control group guidance for 9th and 10th grade students.

**Keywords:** submissive behavior, trait anger, anger expression style, adolescent.

## **Introduction**

Anger can be expressed as a normal emotion that can be encountered frequently in daily life, from small disappointments to intense bursts of emotions, and can be experienced in different processes and intensities, and that is accompanied and affected by physiological and biological changes. The best time to learn to deal with emotions and control behaviors is childhood and adolescence (Hollenhorst, 1998). One of the most important problems faced during adolescence is anger. Feeling of anger may be associated with various psychological problems in adolescents and adults from time to time. (Dodge, Price, Bachorowski, and Newman, 1990). Anger is sometimes beneficial for individual in terms of its consequences when it is for short-term, and has a moderate severity; and sometimes it can have longer-lasting, violent and destructive consequences. In terms of its results, it is generally considered as a negative emotion for both the individual and the society (Balkaya, 2001). Anger

can be considered as a negative emotion in terms of social evaluation. When young children are angry, they are often punished by adults, such as parents or teachers. However, for each individual, anger is a subjective experience in expressing her/himself (Averil, 1983). Understanding and controlling anger is an important skill. Learning this skill in childhood and early adolescence is critical for the individual's socialization and life after adolescence (Duran and Eldeleklioglu, 2005).

It is very important to gain positive interpersonal problem-solving approaches in reducing adolescents' uncontrolled anger behavior (Arslan, Hamarta, Arslan and Saygin, 2010). Social support from teachers and family provides positive contributions to the individual in adolescence in expressing anger. (Arslan, 2009). Anger management, on the other hand, refers to the ability to manage negative situations in the process of experiencing anger. Humanity's concerns about controlling anger date back to ancient and middle ages (Hollenhorst, 1998). Anger is considered as a multidimensional concept with emotional, cognitive, physiological and behavioral elements. The emotional dimension of anger is associated with the power of emotional responses to situations causing anger. Cognitive dimension is related to the negative schemes that the individual has regarding the environment in which s/he lives; and, behavioral dimension includes positive or negative coping mechanisms used in expressing anger (Boman, 2003). Every person feels anger against a target at various times. Conditions that can be considered negative such as the presence of disturbing situations, the effect of stress, and the inability to fulfill wishes cause the individual to feel anger. In cases where anger is felt, approaching behavior is generally displayed to reflect anger rather than an avoidance behavior towards the target (Berkowitz and Harmon-Jones, 2004).

Unrepressed anger often indicates that the level of anger is high. Anger that is not properly expressed is likely to have consequences such as assault, insult, threat, or swearing at individuals and objects (Spielberger, Krasner, and Solomon, 1988). Anger expression is the export of the anger verbally or by pouring it into behavior. Unrepressed anger can also be considered as a defense response to stress (Starnner and Peters 2004). A person with a high anger level can get angry quickly. Most people know to control their anger, but people who cannot control their anger immediately are often described as 'angry' among people; because there is no need to make much effort to annoy these people (Burger, 2006). Gilbert and Allan (1994) state that individuals with submissive behaviors can sometimes afford to lose the respect of people in their environment for the sake of a profit. Generally, the way anger is evaluated and handled has many positive and negative effects on other behaviors. The person needs to get to know her/his own anger and develop appropriate approaches (Soykan, 2003).

Submissive behavior can be defined as inability to express oneself in situations involving tension, and being shy, remaining passive, and refraining from expressing oneself in situations where interests are to be defended in mutual relations (Gilbert and Allan, 1994). It may be thought that the presence of a risky situation is effective in order for submissive behavior to occur (Kaygısız, 2019). Submissive behaviors can be considered as a response to an event. People may tend to show submissive behavior from time to time, as they respect authority or rely on authority's actions. When an individual feels conflict in her/himself about submissive behaviors, s/he can overcome this conflict situation by reasoning (Morris, 2002). High level of submissive behavior may cause more extreme stress, depression and other personality and behavioral disorders in the person. Pressure and threats to children and adolescents in the family may increase the likelihood of submissive behavior in the future. The person who displays

submissive behaviors would prefer to accept the accusations s/he may encounter instead of defending her/himself. Because individuals who show submissive behaviors can generally aim not to offend the opposite (Gilbert, Cheung, Grandfield, Campey, and Irons, 2003).

Submissive behavior can be considered as preventing the reaction against social threats or conflict situations. As a result, the person may experience excessive tension and humiliation. In addition, submissive behavior may sometimes cause a person to lose her/his reputation and to become a laughing stock in social settings (Gilbert and Allan, 1994). It was concluded that submissive behaviors are often associated with symptoms of stress and depression and some other mental disorders. Submissive behaviors are a significant predictor of depression. Because the repressed anger and lack of self-expression paves the way for submissive behaviors (Allan and Gilbert, 2002). Environmental factors, rather than heredity, have more impact on the formation of submissive behaviors. Family environment and social environment are the most likely environmental factors to affect submissive behaviors (Gilbert and Allan, 1994).

People who display submissive behaviors tend to hold themselves accountable and take responsibility for what happens when things are not working well in their social life. In addition, they can accept to be dominated by others by belittling themselves and suppressing their feelings. As a result, they may experience disappointment (Akin, 2009). The fact that children display submissive behaviors makes parents' and teachers' work easier from time to time, so that adults think that they can control the children more easily. Whereas, in a healthy human relationship, respect must be dominant, not submissive behavior. In this sense, it can be said that submissive behaviors contradict healthy human behaviors (Yıldırım, 2004).

## Method

The study group of the research consisted of 545 students (295 females, and 250 males), studying in 5 different high schools in Meram, Selçuklu and Karatay districts of Konya. The research was carried out in the academic year of 2018-2019, and the study group consisted of students studying in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades of high schools in these districts.

**Table 1. Socio-demographic Characteristics of Participants**

<b>Variables</b>	<b><i>N</i></b>	<b><i>%</i></b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	295	54.1
Male	250	45.9
<b>Grade</b>		
9	233	42.7
10	312	57.3
<b>Mother's education status</b>		
Primary school	187	34.4
Secondary school	119	21.8
High school	138	25.3
University	101	18.5
<b>Father's education status</b>		
Primary school	107	19.7
Secondary school	95	17.5

High school	150	27.4
University	193	35.4

In Table 1, the distribution of the participants constituting the study group by gender is seen. Females make up 54.1% of the study group with 295 people, and males make up 45.9% of the study group with 250 people. 9<sup>th</sup> grade high school students make up 42.7% of the study group with 233 people, and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students make up 57.3% of the study group with 312 people. Mother’s education status of 187 people, who make up 34.4%, is primary school; 119 people, who make up 21.8%, is secondary school; 138 people, who make up 25.3%, is high school, and 101 people, who make up 18.5%, is university. Father’s education status of 107 people, who make up the of 19.7%, is primary school; 95 people, who make up 17.5%, is secondary school; 150 people, who make up 27.4%, is high school, and 193 people, who make up 35.4%, is university. Participants are between 14-17 years old and the average is 15.46 years.

### ***Data Collection Tools***

In the research, “Trait Anger Scale and Anger Expression Styles Scale”, “Submissive Behaviors Scale” and “Personal Information Form” were used to collect data.

#### *Trait Anger Scale and Anger Expression Styles Scale (TAS and AESS)*

The adaptation of Trait Anger and Anger Expression Styles Scale, whose original name was “State-Trait Anger Scale and Anger Expression Scale” and developed by Spielberger, Jacobs, Russel and Crane, was carried out by Özer (1994).

The scale, consisting of a total of 34 items and evaluated by the four-point Likert technique, has four sub-scales. Ten of the items constitute the trait anger sub-scale. Anger Expression Styles Sub-Scale consists of three sub-scales, eight items from each sub-scale and 24 items in total. These are repressed anger, unrepressed anger and anger management sub-scales. There is no reverse matter in TAS and AESS. From the trait anger sub-scale, individuals can get 10 points as the lowest, and 40 as the highest. They can get 8 points as the lowest, and 32 as the highest from each scale total in the anger expression styles sub-scale (Özer, 1994).

#### *Submissive Behaviors Scale (SBS)*

Submissive behaviors scale was developed in 1991 by Gilbert and Allan. Its original name is known as “Submissive Acts Scale (SAS)”, and it was adapted to Turkish as Submissive Behaviors Scale by Şahin and Şahin (1992). SBS is a 5-point Likert-type scale with 16 items. In each item, it is asked how well the person is described by the behavior (Şahin and Şahin, 1992).

The scale is intended only to measure social behaviors. Therefore, emotional expressions are not included in the scale. SBS was developed to measure the level of submissive social behaviors. The scale consists of 16 items, and in each item, it is asked how well the behaviors mentioned describe the person. SBS is a self-rating scale and can be applied to adolescents and adults (Şahin and Şahin, 1992).

## Results

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and t-Test Results of Adolescents' Trait Anger and Anger Expression Styles Scores by Gender**

	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	t	p	n <sup>2</sup>																																
Trait Anger	Female	295	24.70	5.90	2.259	.024*	.009																																
	Male	250	23.59	5.47				Repressed Anger	Female	295	18.80	4.22	1.544	.123	.004	Male	250	18.23	4.35	Unrepressed Anger	Female	295	18.99	5.04	2.477	.014*	.011	Male	250	17.98	4.49	Anger Management	Female	295	19.31	5.32	-2.928	.004*	.015
Repressed Anger	Female	295	18.80	4.22	1.544	.123	.004																																
	Male	250	18.23	4.35				Unrepressed Anger	Female	295	18.99	5.04	2.477	.014*	.011	Male	250	17.98	4.49	Anger Management	Female	295	19.31	5.32	-2.928	.004*	.015	Male	250	20.61	5.05								
Unrepressed Anger	Female	295	18.99	5.04	2.477	.014*	.011																																
	Male	250	17.98	4.49				Anger Management	Female	295	19.31	5.32	-2.928	.004*	.015	Male	250	20.61	5.05																				
Anger Management	Female	295	19.31	5.32	-2.928	.004*	.015																																
	Male	250	20.61	5.05																																			

\* p < .05

Trait anger and unrepressed anger sub-scales of the female students were found to be significantly higher than the male students in the adolescents' trait anger and anger expression styles scores according to the gender variable. Anger management scores were found to be significantly higher among male students than female students. Repressed anger scores did not differ significantly between female and male students.

**Table 3. Descriptive Statistics and t-Test Results Regarding the Trait Anger and Anger Expression Styles Scores of Adolescents by Grade Level**

	Grade	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	t	p	$n^2$
Trait Anger	9	233	24.06	5.80	-.354	.724	.001
	10	312	24.29	5.72			
Repressed Anger	9	233	18.05	4.28	-2.295	.022*	.011
	10	312	18.90	4.28			
Unrepressed Anger	9	233	18.12	4.79	-1.651	.099	.008
	10	312	18.80	4.81			
Anger Management	9	233	19.55	5.34	-1.438	.151	.006
	10	312	20.21	5.14			

\*  $p < .05$

According to the grade variable, repressed anger score, which is one of the sub-scales of trait anger and anger expression styles, was found to be significantly higher in 10<sup>th</sup> grade students than the 9<sup>th</sup> grade students. There was no significant difference in trait anger, unrepressed anger and anger management scores.

**Table 4. One-Way Variance Analysis Results Regarding Whether Adolescents' Scores from Trait Anger and Anger Expression Styles Sub-Scales Differed According to Mother's Education Level Factor**

	Source	KT	Sd	KO	F	P
	Inter-groups	45.271	3	15.090	.454	.714
Trait Anger	Intra-group	17840.385	537	33.222		
Total Score	Total	17885.656	540			
	Inter-groups	72.332	3	24.111	1.304	.272
Repressed	Intra-group	9932.377	537	18.496		
Anger Total	Total	10004.709	540			
Score						
	Inter-groups	42.761	3	14.254	.607	.611
Unrepressed	Intra-group	12613.513	537	23.489		
Anger Total	Total	12656.274	540			
Score						
	Inter-groups	82.617	3	27.539	1.008	.389
Anger	Intra-group	14677.875	537	27.333		
Management	Total	14760.492	540			
Total Score						

According to the results of one-way analysis of variance, regarding whether the scores obtained by adolescents from trait anger and anger expression sub-scales differ according to the mother's education status factor, it was concluded that there was no significant difference in anger, repressed and unrepressed anger and anger management scores according to the mother's education level factor.

**Table 5. One-Way Variance Analysis Results Regarding Whether the Scores Adolescents Received from Trait Anger and Anger Expression Styles Sub-Scales Differed According to Father's Education Level Factor**

	<b>Source</b>	<b>KT</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>KO</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>
Trait Anger Total Score	Inter-groups	35.299	3	11.766	.360	.782
	Intra-group	17627.268	539	32.704		
	Total	17662.568	542			
Repressed Anger Total Score	Inter-groups	124.954	3	41.651	2.268	.080
	Intra-group	9896.920	539	18.362		
	Total	10021.874	542			
Unrepressed Anger Total Score	Inter-groups	62.387	3	20.796	.893	.445
	Intra-group	12556.391	539	23.296		
	Total	12618.778	542			
Anger Management Total Score	Inter-groups	177.411	3	59.137	2.188	.089
	Intra-group	14570.729	539	27.033		
	Total	14748.141	542			

According to the results of one-way analysis of variance regarding whether the scores obtained by adolescents from trait anger and anger expression sub-scales differed according to father's education level factor, it was concluded

**Table 6. Correlation Results for Submissive Behaviors, Trait Anger and Anger Expression Styles Sub-Scales**

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>1. Submissive Behaviors</b>	-				
<b>2. Trait Anger Total Score</b>	.019	-			
<b>3. Repressed Anger Total Score</b>	.389**	.358**	-		
<b>4. Unrepressed Anger Total Score</b>	-.049	.722**	.318**	-	
<b>5. Anger Management Total Score</b>	.045	-	-.077	-	-
		.575**		.548**	

\*\* p <.01

that there was no significant difference in anger, repressed and unrepressed anger and anger management scores according to father's education level factor.

As a result of the correlation analysis conducted in the study, a positive and moderately significant relationship was found between the scores that adolescents received from the submissive behaviors scale and the scores they received from trait anger and anger expression sub-scales and repressed anger

sub-dimension. No significant relation was found between scores obtained from submissive behaviors scale and trait anger, unrepressed anger and anger management scores.

**Table 7. Regression Analysis Results Related to Repressed Anger in Adolescents**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b><i>t</i></b>	<b><i>p</i></b>
<b>Submissive Behaviors Scale</b>	.203	.021	.389	9.847	.000***
*** <i>p</i> <.001		<i>R</i> =.389	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> =.151	<i>p</i> <.001	F(1, 545)=96.968

As a result of the regression analysis conducted in the study, submissive behaviors of adolescents significantly predict their repressed anger. It was concluded that 15.1% of the total variance related to the adolescents’ repressed anger can be explained by submissive behavior.

## **Discussion**

As one of the findings of this study, a significant relationship was found between gender and trait anger, unrepressed anger and anger management levels. When the literature is analyzed, it is seen that there are no consistent results in this regard. There are studies claiming that there is not a significant relationship between gender and trait anger and anger expression styles (Keskin, 2019; Buntaine and Costenbader, 1997; Erdoğan, 2015). At the same time, in the study conducted by Dündar (2016), it was found that the controlled anger scores of men

were higher than women. In the study conducted by Özmen, Özmen, Çetinkaya, Taşkın, and Dündar (2009) with adolescents, it was concluded that the anger management scores of men were higher than women, and the mean of trait anger, repressed anger and unrepressed anger scores were higher in women than men. In the study conducted by Evren, Bozkurt, Çiftçi, Demirci, Evren, Can, and Umut (2015), it was concluded that women have more problems such as anger, depression and anxiety, which may also be associated with suicidal ideation, when compared to men.

When the findings of the research are evaluated within the framework of the related literature, Averil (1983) stated that men are likely to encounter more devastating results than women at the end of the process of expressing anger. He stated that men tend to express their anger more physically, while women tend to express their anger more emotionally, such as crying. When evaluating the forensic and physical negative results that may occur at the end of the process of men's expressing anger feelings, it can be interpreted that men may prefer controlling their anger by repressing anger, and as a result, the level of women's unrepressed anger is higher than that of men, and their level of anger management is low. The fact that the level of trait anger of women is higher than that of men can be interpreted as that women express their anger less destructively than men, are freer than men to control their anger, and as a result, their trait anger level is high. In addition, it can be interpreted that discipline policies applied in schools put more pressure on male students to control their anger than women.

In another finding of the study, the fact that trait anger, unrepressed anger, and anger management scores in adolescents do not differ statistically according to the grade variable can be considered as an expected result, since the group of students who participated in the study was in the same developmental period. The fact that repressed anger is higher in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade students than the 9<sup>th</sup> grade

students can be explained by the tendency of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade students, who are nearing the end of the adolescence, to tend to hold their anger with the increase in self-esteem. When the literature is examined, in a study conducted by Önder and Bölükbaşı (2019), a positive correlation was found between self-esteem and repressed anger. Sarıkaya (2015) stated that as age increases, the level of self-esteem also increases. In the study conducted by Burney (2006), it was concluded that 9<sup>th</sup> grade students tend to more display unrepressed anger compared to 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students tend to control their anger more than lower grade students. These studies support the findings of the research.

According to the findings of the research, it was concluded that the trait anger and anger expression style did not differ according to the mother's education level factor. When the literature is analyzed, it is seen that there are various studies examining the relationship between the level of mother's education, trait anger and anger expression styles. The findings of this study support the studies in which there is no significant relationship between mother's education level and sub-scales of trait anger and anger expression styles (Demirci Danışık, 2005; Gülveren, 2008; Zengin, 2010). In addition, these research findings can be interpreted as: The information and experiences that mothers conveyed to adolescents about trait anger and anger expression styles may be based on informal education rather than formal education.

According to the findings of the research, it was concluded that the trait anger and anger expression styles did not differ according to the father's education level factor as well as the mother's education level factor. When the literature is analyzed, it is seen that there are various studies examining the relationship between father's education level and trait anger and anger expression styles. In the studies conducted by Kuruoğlu, (2009) and Zengin, (2010), there

was no significant difference between father's education level and trait anger and anger expression styles. In addition, the findings of this research can be interpreted as: The information and experiences that fathers convey to adolescents about trait anger and anger expression styles may be based on informal education rather than formal education. The fact that both mother's and father's education level did not significantly influence adolescents' trait anger and anger expression styles can be interpreted as a collaboration between parents in raising adolescents.

Generally, the way anger is evaluated and handled has many positive and negative effects on other behaviors. The person needs to get to know her/his own anger and develop appropriate approaches (Soykan, 2003). When the literature is examined, it is seen that there are studies investigating the relationship between concepts such as violence, aggression and hostility, which may be associated with anger and anger expression styles (Kaya, Güneş, Kaya and Pehlivan, 2004; Yavuz and Özdemir, 2019). There is no study investigating the relationship between trait anger and anger expression styles and submissive behaviors. With this study, it was aimed to find the relationship between repressed anger and submissive behaviors and the importance of expressing anger in appropriate ways. In addition, the study is intended to contribute to the relevant literature.

According to the findings of the research, it was concluded that submissive behaviors are a significant predictor of adolescents' repressed anger. An individual who exhibits submissive behaviors can be evaluated in a way that s/he is afraid of expressing her/his feelings and thoughts, and as a result, s/he is expected to have repressed anger instead of unrepressed anger. Gilbert and Allan (1994) state that individuals with submissive behaviors can sometimes afford to lose the respect of others' in their environment for the sake of a profit. This can be interpreted as that submissive behaviors are not the only variables in

explaining repressed anger, but different reasons can be effective in explaining repressed anger. Kaygısız and Tıraş (2019) stated that the existence of a situation that can be evaluated as negative and risky can be effective in the emergence of submissive behaviors. Gansle (2005) states that anger is generally considered to be a negative experience for both people who display it and those to whom the anger is directed. This negative experience has also been linked to many negative situations for children, adolescents and adults. Although not limited to these behaviors, they stated that physical harm to others, themselves and their environment is related to anger behavior.

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

In this study, it was concluded that submissive behaviors are a significant predictor of adolescent's repressed anger. Studies on variables such as stress, self-perception, and self-efficacy that will be able to predict the anger of adolescents' repressed anger can be conducted, and results can be compared.

In the research, repressed anger levels of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade students were found to be significantly higher than the 9<sup>th</sup> grade students. The “The student uses constructive ways to deal with anger” achievement in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level classroom guidance program can also be added to the 10<sup>th</sup> grade level classroom guidance program.

Group counseling activities can be carried out for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students by school psychological counselors.

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**Note:** The present study was derived from Yusuf ATIŞ's master's thesis titled "*Investigation of the relationship between trait anger and anger expression and submissive behavior in adolescents*" which was carried out under supervision of Prof. Dr. Zeliha TRAŞ.

## **CONVICTIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF PERSONALITY VALUES FORMATION IN ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

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### ***Abstract***

This article touches upon a theoretical and experimental study of the relationship between convictions and values at adolescence and youth ages. The theoretical study covers various scientific papers concerning conviction, value and value orientation with reference to definitions, main characteristics of structural components of value orientation, comparison and correlation with different elements in the frame of a personality system. The analysis of the scientific approaches highlights some unclear positions and data about convictions and values and their interrelationship at adolescence and youth life periods. The experimental study reflects the current data regarding manifestation specifics of convictions, values during adolescence and youth ages, represents the dynamic specifics of the relationship between convictions and values during the investigated age periods.

**Keywords:** conviction, belief, value, value orientation, adolescence, youth, relationship.

## **Introduction**

The concept of conviction is becoming more and more up-to-date from the perspective of the scientific approach in defining the terminology, comparing it with related notions, evaluating and determining the degree of relationship with other components of personality, etc.

According to their outcomes, values include internalized cognitive structures that guide choices by evoking a sense of the basic principles of right and wrong, to put sense into contents of a subject or an object, a sense of priorities and desires and to see stereotypes.

L.Stolyarenko (2003) considers that the system of value orientations determines the consistent part of the personality direction and forms the basis of its relations with: the surrounding world, other people, the self, the basis of the concept of the world and the core of the motivation for active life, the basis of concept of life and “philosophy of life”.

The values reflect the essence of personality; their content and functionality are hidden from any external view; they are the monitoring centre of the entire personality. Values are manifested through the process of diversified externalizations of the subject: ideas, concepts, thoughts, convictions, attitudes, emotions, behaviours, actions. Convictions are placed close to values, thus becoming an administrative point of positioning, decisional guidance of the subject, having various ways of ideational and strategic coordination in their toolkit.

In the opinion of the authors V. Pavelcu (1982), P. Popescu-Neveanu (1978), value is considered an attribute, a criterion, a representation, a product; it is essentially an objectification of the human essence.

The identification and understanding of convictions in the context of values is a real challenge, but at the same time, it is important to know their contents, correlations with other system components, the specifics of their functioning, because they are the essence of growing into a personality, which develops multidimensionally, at a variable speed at different age phases.

*The challenge of this research* is generated by the multitude of contradictory definitions on the concept of conviction, value and value orientation, lack of thorough studies and up-to-date data that could answer the multiple emerging questions about the specifics of convictions and values in contemporary adolescents and young people, the dynamic relationship between convictions and values in adolescents and young people.

Addressing the concept of conviction is part of a complex study undertaken to validate the mechanism of formation and functioning of value orientation. In this sense, we undertake to determine the importance of convictions through relationships, actions, positioning with other components of the value orientations of the personality.

This study reviews the concept of conviction through values from theoretic and experimental perspectives: defining the concept in context of values, assessing convictions and values in adolescents and young people, determining the relationship between convictions and values.

## **2. Theoretical approaches regarding convictions**

The existence of various scientific positions allows us to examine the convictions in their positioning as related to the multiple elements within

personality and to determine their location within the system of value orientations of a personality.

The process of conviction formation according to the Praxiological Dictionary of Pedagogy (2016) is explained as an aspect of the instructive-educational process while the personality subject to such education is endowed with ideas, beliefs, certainties and axiological landmarks, “which he/she firmly believes to be true, considering them in accordance with the objective reality and expressing superior human values (...) insofar as the arguments presented in different circumstances are supported by reality, by own experience, they serve to form convictions and vice versa. Only he who has convictions can form convictions. The intellectual, affective or volitional component of convictions plays a different role depending on age, circumstances, the nature of beliefs, level of education, etc.”

L. Skitka (2010) examines moral convictions in terms of attitudes. This point of view is also of interest for our more extensive research regarding value orientations. L. Skitka (2010) notes the establishment of moral convictions in evaluations based on moral and immoral perceptions, on right and wrong, while attitudes are positive and negative evaluations of the object of attitudes. The analysis of theory and research focused on moral development has highlighted the distinctions between people’s attitudes that reflect subjective preferences, normative conventions and moral imperatives. In Nucci’s and Turiel’s view, (Nucci, 2001; Turiel, 2002, as cited in L. Skitka, 2010) personal preferences are subject to individual discretion and are not socially regulated; they cannot be interpreted as right or wrong. Instead, conventions are socially or culturally shared notions of how things normally occur in a group. Authorities, rules and laws often formally agree on penalties. However, the aspects of the moral

imperative are generalized and applied regardless of the boundaries of the group: the right is right and the wrong is wrong.

E. Cocoradă (2012, p.219) focuses on the fact that values and attitudes respond to the needs of formation of the affective-attitudinal, social dimension of the personality and believes them as implicit for didactic activity. The author mentions that they correspond to the hidden curriculum, which is taught indirectly, through the teacher's conduct, the activity or the general atmosphere in the school and the classroom, the quality of textbook or additional materials. The general and specific competencies pursued in the study of Psychology promote positive relationships with other people, self-confidence and confidence in others, personal balance, optimal and creative capitalization of personal potential.

The French philosopher Maurice Blondel (as cited in Patapievici, 2006) was concerned with the study of the relationship between autonomous philosophical reasoning and Christian conviction. Therefore, the scientist concluded that “the notion of conviction seems to indicate the intellectual aspect of a strong faith, that is, the bright part of a firm adherence, the justification of which is not entirely rational” (Patapievici, 2006). Conviction would be a stubbornness of feeling that manages to maintain the strength of faith only on account of a deficit of intelligence (or knowledge). The notion of “conviction” originates from a Latin verb (*convinco, ere*) which means: 1) to prove someone guilty; 2) to show clearly, to prove something as wrong or true.

R.Dilts et.al. (1990, p.3-4) uses the term of belief with the meaning of conviction and explains the belief systems as a large framework around any change that has been made. R. Dilts is the author of many works that offer various ways to change convictions. In the opinion of the scientist in the process of work with any limiting conviction, the objective is the transition from the current state

to the desirable one. The first and most important step is to identify the desirable condition. This requires a clear representation of the result. For example, if working with a smoker, it is important to determine the position: who will the person be and what he/she will do in his/her relationships, work life, recreation, etc., when he/she stops smoking. It is necessary to establish the result that initiates the process of change, because the brain is a cybernetic mechanism. This means that once the subject realizes his/her goal, the brain will organize the unconscious behaviour to achieve it. The person will automatically start getting self-correcting feedback to keep him/her on track for the set goal.

Thus, upon identification of the desired thing, information about the current situation and condition can be collected. By contrasting and comparing the current state with the desired one, the skills and resources needed to achieve the desired state can be determined.

R. Dilts et.al. (1990, p.7-8) reveals four additional elements that influence change and are part of the desire to change, to know how to change and to give oneself the chance to change. These elements are: (1) physiology, (2) strategies, (3) congruence, and (4) beliefs systems. Any change that one makes will be influenced in some way by each of them.

In the opinion of R. Dilts (1990) beliefs are one of the broadest frameworks of behaviour. When one truly believes something, the respective subject will behave congruently with such belief. There are several types of beliefs that need to be in place in order to achieve the desired goal.

A certain type of belief is called an *outcome expectancy*. This means that the subject thinks that his/her goal is achievable. When it comes to health, it means that one may think that it is possible for people to recover from something like cancer. When people do not think such a goal achievable (such as overcoming an illness, for example), they feel hopeless (Dilts, 1990, p.35-40).

Another type of belief is called *self-efficacy expectancy*. This means that the person believes that the outcome is possible and that he/she has all that is needed to achieve the respective goal. When it comes to health, it means that a person thinks that he/she has the resources to heal (while thinking that there is a need to reorganize such resources).

Another belief is called response expectancy by R. Dilts. The hope of response is what one expects to happen positively or negatively, as a result of the actions taken in a given situation. The Placebo effect is an example of response expectancy (ibidem).

L. Skitka (2010) has studied the relationship between attitudes and moral beliefs. As a result of the research, the author found that attitudes held with a strong moral conviction (called “moral mandates”) are something psychologically different from other constructs (e.g., the force of attitude, religiosity) and that variation in moral conviction has important social and political consequences, such as increased attitudinal intolerance to dissimilarity in others, difficulties in resolving conflicts, enhanced political participation, willingness to accept violent means to achieve preferred aims, strong links with positive and negative emotions and inoculation against common pressure to submit to authorities.

L. Skitka (2010) researched moral convictions from a psychological perspective and concluded that moral convictions are also likely to be perceived as true, universal goals, and to have particularly strong links to emotion. L. Skitka believes that attitudes that are rooted in moral convictions (or “moral mandates”) are a unique class of strong attitudes. Strong attitudes are more extreme, more important, central, safe, and / or accessible, and are also more stable, lasting, and predictive of behaviour than weaker attitudes.

For our research, it is also interesting to address the convictions from the neuro-linguistic perspective proposed by the psychologist L.M. Cojocaru (2019): “The belief forming process encompasses the following steps: we live an experience and we have a thought (interpretation) related to it. The focus on this interpretation during other experiences makes us observe the aspects that “prove us right”, thus enabling us to speak of confirmed experience. Several “confirmed” experiences lead to the conviction that yes, we are right, the reality is of type X (the way we chose to interpret it). This conclusion leads to the formation of a belief, which will be the “map” through which we filter reality. Again, the attention to this interpretation makes us observe the aspects that “prove us right”, thus reaching the confirmation of the conviction. Our convictions create the habit of interpreting things predominantly in a certain way and, through repetition, build an unconscious way of interpretation. The author concludes that as a result, we live and feel exactly what we think (believe)”.

In the process of scientific papers study regarding the issue of conceptualization of convictions we have encountered multiple positions related to the synonymy of the concepts “*convictions*” and “*beliefs*”. Some scholars (R. Dilts, J.L.Eisen, K.A.Phillips, D.Beer, K.D.Atala S.A.Rasmussen, etc.) use only the notion *beliefs* meaning, in fact, convictions, while others (Vaske, Donnelly, Fulton, Manfredo, Lipscomb, Nobe.) use the two terms alternatively. Still others (Windy Dryden, Raymond DiGiuseppe, L. Skitka) use only the term conviction. Another group of scientists (J. Jastrow, L. Cojocaru, etc.) make a difference in the use of the concepts “belief” and “conviction”.

Jastrow J. (1918) has dealt with the study of convictions, attitudes, beliefs from a psychological perspective. The scientist thinks that we are guided by our emotions, hopes and desires, while our interests are of a more practical importance, and our varied relationships with the content of our thinking are of

permanent significance. In addition, mental processes generate and drive convictions.

Convictions are formed and sustained that are emotionally acceptable and traditionally accepted by a sizable group of tribes, people, neighbours, fellow citizens; they are institutionally reinstated by the sanction of tradition and authority.

FJ.Jastrow (1918, p.523-524) emphasizes that the original source of conviction is emotion. In order to reach convictions, an impulse towards thinking is involved; it implies use of elementary data of experience and the standard social environment in which beliefs operate and determine conduct.

A. Ellis (1918, p.15) highlights that emotions, cognition and behaviour are not disparate human functions, but they are integrated in an intrinsic and holistic way. This idea has served as a hypothesis for rational-emotional and behavioural therapy (REBT), which is always integrative in trying to help people turn their irrational convictions into rational convictions and thus improve their emotional and behavioural functions.

A. Ellis' theoretical position is that people have both rational (RC) and irrational (IC) convictions, and when they have frequent and intense irrational convictions (IC) they tend to be more troubled than when they have fewer and weaker irrational convictions (IC), was supported by the proofs provided by Clark (1997), Glass & Arnkoff (1997), Schwartz (1997). According to these studies, people's recognized ICs and their degree of emotional disorder are strongly correlated (Ellis, 2018, p.17).

Additionally, A. Ellis' second position regarding people who change their irrational convictions into more rational convictions, either through therapy or through individual self-help procedures, thus becoming much less disturbed was later confirmed by an enormous amount of evidence (Ellis, 2018, p.17).

Based on A. Ellis' theory, we conclude that the behavioural, emotional, attitudinal manifestations of the personality are guided by convictions. Accordingly, the changes that take place within convictions are directly reflected by the externalizations of the human being; affective, cognitive and conative processes are closely related.

Thus, convictions represent a lifestyle of the personality, which determines the actions for situations roughly experienced in the past and outlined by the results obtained in line with the projected expectations and with the experienced emotional background. The development and completion of convictions depends on the intensity of the subject's life and are specific to the experienced situational context.

Personality's convictions have emotional and motivational support developed through the process of knowledge and experimentation, which protects to a certain extent the subject from possible failures.

Convictions represent a cognitive position supported by emotion, volitional, attitudinal personality, which allows the person to determine what is right or wrong in relation to the social and cultural environment of which he/she is part and to act and fight in accordance with the developed fundamental positions.

### **3. Convictions in the context of values and value orientations in adolescents and young people**

Rokeach (Rokeach, 1973, p. 3 as cited in Nobe, 2014) emphasizes five defining characteristics that separate values from other human cognitions (i.e. value orientations, attitudes, norms, and behaviour intentions). First, the total number of values that a person possesses is relatively small. Second, all people

everywhere possess the same values to different degrees. Third, values are organized into value systems. Fourth, the antecedents of human values can be traced to culture, society and its institutions, and personality. And fifth, the consequences of human values will be manifested in virtually all phenomena that social scientists might consider worth investigating and understanding.

Nobe (2014) analysing Vaske & Donnelly' (1999) points of view establishes that value orientations are groupings of basic beliefs; they differ from values in that value orientations are specific to a general context (i.e., the environment) and do not transcend situation. The authors accepts starting of value orientation's construction with identifying individuals' basic beliefs in a broad context such as the environment. All individual beliefs are then grouped and placed on a continuum direction. The scientists give the following example: to assess environmental value orientations, individuals' basic beliefs about the environment firstly necessary to be identified. Vaske et al. (2001, as cited in Nobe, 2014) highlights that these beliefs might be that nature has as much right as humans to exist or that the primary function of forests is to provide resources for human use. Finally they state that as more basic beliefs are determined and grouped, they reveal an individual's value orientation which can be represented by the position of basic values groupings on a continuum (as cited in Nobe, 2014).

Nobe (2014) emphasizes that beliefs grouping can be kept in environment context and offers next example: one environmental value orientation that has been identified in the literature is a biocentric - anthropocentric value orientation. Value orientation extreme is explained that the environment has intrinsic value separate from the benefits that it can provide to person; the other position represents environment as a valuable because of the resources and services it provides for human use. As example to explain environmental attitudes from the perspective of value orientation can be "protection - use" and "materialist - post-

materialist". Nobe (2014) observes that understanding of human behaviour (which refers to attitudes and norms in frame of specific context) is possible by value orientation.

Based on the definitions offered by Nobe (2014), values and value orientations are foundation for environmental behaviour understanding since all behaviour is rooted in individuals' values and beliefs. Nobe denotes, that studied positions do not provide a completed understanding of human environmental behaviour because they are separated from behaviours by attitudes, norms, and behaviour intentions.

#### **4. Conviction and value research at adolescence and youth ages**

##### **a. Research purpose**

There are two directions for our interest in researching convictions and values in adolescents and young people. First, to determine the specifics of convictions and values manifestation in contemporary adolescents and young people who represent a generation formed during the period of multiple change and rapid technological and informational progress. Second, the age of adolescence and youth are the period of value formation and needs in-depth study.

##### **b. Research methodology**

A number of 383 subjects have participated in the research. Most of the experimental lot were 286 adolescents aged 14 to 19 from general schools (54 subjects were aged 14 to 15; 74 children were 16; 42 subjects were 17; 76 adolescents were 18; 40 subjects were 19) and 97 young people aged from 20 to 35 from universities, of them 30 subjects were 20; 19 young people were 21; 13 subjects were 22; 7 subjects were 23; 10 young people were 24; and 18 subjects were 25 to 35.

In the research we aimed to determine the specifics of convictions and values manifestations in adolescents and young people in school and university education. Towards this end, in order to evaluate convictions of subjects, the Attitudes and Belief Scale 2 (ABS-2) by R. DiGiuseppe, R. Leaf, T. Exner, & M. W. Robin validated in 1988 was used. We undertook our research of values using the following technique of identifying the value orientations (Ghid de orientare profesională a tinerilor și planificare a carierei, 2008).

The research was undertaken in the spring 2019, and it took place simultaneously for both age groups of subjects involved in the research. The tools were applied in the paper version. The selection was random based on the availability of the subjects. For the initiation of the experimental research, the agreement was obtained from the administration and the experimental subjects in order to apply the psychological tools and the training was carried out according to the requirements. The confidentiality policies regarding the research process and the experimental results obtained were specified.

### **c. Research results**

To investigate convictions in adolescents and young people, as already mentioned, we applied the ABS Scale II after R. DiGiuseppe et.al. Experimental subjects responded to the proposed statements without a time limit. The subjects were instructed to respond as honestly as possible to the statements presented, specifying that there were no right or wrong answers.

Table 1 presents the results obtained upon assessment of adolescents' convictions.

**Table 1. Average indices of convictions in adolescents after ABS-II (points)**

<i>Conviction processes</i>		<b>14-15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>Average</b>
<i>Convictions</i>	IR	86.0 7	79.8 3	75.3 8	80.8 6	80,1 0	80.45
	R	57.3 2	55.2 4	61.0 2	57.8 1	60,5 2	58.38
<i>DEM</i>	IR	19.8 3	19.0 4	17.6 9	18.5 1	17,9 8	18.61
	R	14.9 6	13.5 6	15.4 9	14.7 7	14,7 0	14.70
<i>SD/GE</i>	IR	21.3 9	18.4 3	20.3 9	20.8 8	20,9 3	20.41
	R	12.9 9	11.5 2	13.1 3	12.9 3	12,9 8	12.71
<i>LFT</i>	IR	21.0 7	20.3 9	18.6 6	19.9 2	19,3 5	19.88
	R	14.0 8	14.0 2	15.1 1	14.2 5	14,6 7	14.43
<i>AWF</i>	IR	22.7 6	21.0 2	18.3 6	21.0 0	20,0 2	20.63
	R	13.8 7	14.7 6	15.3 9	14.2 7	14,9 5	14.65
<i>Comfort</i>	IR	27.2 8	25.7 8	24.9 7	26.7 4	25,7 2	26.10
	R	17.7 5	17.3 7	20.1 6	19.1 4	18,6 3	18.61
<i>Acceptance</i>	IR	28.1 1	25.4 8	23.9 3	25.6 7	25,8 8	25.82
	R	20.2 0	18.0 2	19.7 7	19.2 8	20,3 5	19.52
<i>Achievement</i>	IR	30.8 4	28.3 9	26.3 8	28.4 7	27,0 9	28.23
	R	19.6 3	19.7 6	21.0 3	19.3 8	20,4 4	20.05

\*IR- irrational; R - rational; DEM – demandiness; SD/GE - self-downing and/or global evaluation; LFT - low frustration tolerance; AWF – awfulizing.

The analysis of the data obtained upon evaluation of convictions allows us to find the dominance of irrational convictions throughout adolescence, the average being 80.45p. According to scientific papers, irrational conviction is considered to be wrong, illogical, incongruent with objective reality and to hamper achievement of the subject's goals, while rational convictions are fundamental, based on empirical reality, focus on logic, promote goal achievement. Irrational convictions about negative activation events give rise to dysfunctional and maladaptive cognitive, affective, behavioural, and physiological responses. The indicative level for the total score (138.83p.), built on the data obtained from the sample, shows a highly irrational response specific for adolescence.

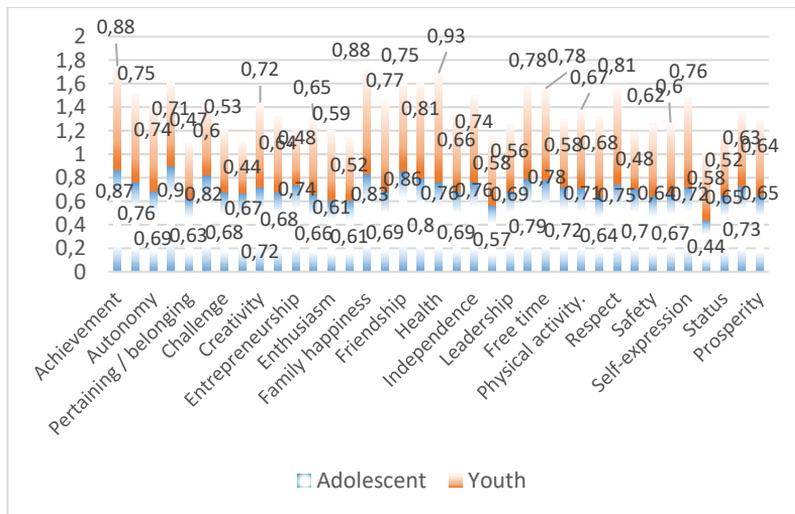
**Table 2. Average indices of convictions in young people after ABS-II**

<i>Conviction processes</i>		<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25-35</b>	<b>Average</b>
<i>Convictions</i>	IR	72.90	65.00	67.77	72.6	66.8	64.93	68.33
	R	47.66	45.31	43.23	40	47.7	33.80	42.95
<i>DEM</i>	IR	17.28	16.19	17.85	18	16.5	17.87	17.28
	R	11.24	11.69	10.62	8.6	10.9	8.53	10.26
<i>SD/GE</i>	IR	15.83	13.69	11.15	9.2	12.8	11.00	12.28
	R	10.10	8.31	7.38	7.2	10.3	5.80	8.18
<i>LFT</i>	IR	19.93	17.06	19.08	23.6	17.7	18.33	19.28
	R	12.66	12.38	13.23	12.4	14.3	10.07	12.50
<i>AWF</i>	IR	18.69	17.00	18.46	19.2	19.1	16.47	18.15
	R	12.76	11.94	11.00	11.4	10.9	8.93	11.15
<i>Comfort</i>	IR	24.59	22.31	24.46	25	24	22.60	23.83
	R	15.79	14.69	15.15	11.6	15.3	11.07	13.93
<i>Acceptance</i>	IR	22.55	17.44	17.46	17	17	15.27	17.79
	R	15.90	14.13	12.31	14.6	16	10.00	13.82
<i>Achievement</i>	IR	25.41	24.75	25.46	29	26.1	26.27	26.17
	R	16.59	16.31	15.23	13.2	16.4	12.53	15.04

\*IR- irrational; R - rational; DEM – demandiness; SD/GE - self-downing and/or global evaluation; LFT - low frustration tolerance; AWF – awfulizing.

The review of data in Table 2 shows a decrease in irrational convictions in young people as compared to adolescents. Additionally, we find the presence of absolutist evaluations in young people, who tend to favour the emergence of irrational convictions. It is worthwhile to appreciate the prevailing approval variable, acceptance of failure situations with no self-depreciation, projecting oneself for possible chances to achieve the proposed and expected positive results. This position can lead to a change in low tolerance for frustration, i.e. the subject will have the cognitive strength to believe that s/he can be happy even if something occurs which t should never occur.

One of the tools applied was the technique of identifying the value orientations. From the 37 values offered, the subjects determined the significant hierarchical order of their values and contents existing in reality in the frame of their personality. The results are shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Average indices of value orientations of adolescents and young people by Value Orientation Identification**

The data review carried out in the study of value guidelines in adolescents and young people allows us to perform a comparative analysis of the results and to highlight the values that are in relative stability throughout the entire period of studied ages. Highlighted values include: achievement (0.87p. and 0.88p.), harmony (0.8p. and 0.81p.), free time (0.78p.), learning (0.78p. and 0.79p.), creativity (0.72p.), advancement (0.76p. and 0.75p.), prosperity (0.65p. and 0.64p.).

In addition, we also notice positive changes with a trend towards increase in some values towards the age of youth such as the significance of health (from 0.76p. to 0.93p.), family happiness (from 0.83p. to 0.88p.), respect (from 0.75p. to 0.81p.), autonomy (from 0.69p. to 0.74p.).

Table 3 presents only some significant correlation coefficients established by applying the Pearson test using the SPSS program.

**Table 3. Correlation coefficients between the convictions and values in adolescents and young people**

Values	Convictions	Experiment subjects		
		Adolescents	Youths	Entire sample
Achievement	Total	0.149*, p=0.013	-	0.202**, p=0.000
	IR	0.120*, p=0.044	-	0.188**, p=0.000
	R	-	-	0.103*, p=0.049
	DEM_IR	0.136*, p=0.022	-	0.163**, p=0.002
	SD_GE_IR	0.135*, p=0.024	-	0.180**, p=0.001
	SD_GE_R	-	-	0.111*, p=0.033
	AWF_IR	-	0.244*, p=0.022	0.144**, p=0.006

	Comfort_IR	0.120*, p=0.044	-	0.157**, p=0.002
	Acceptance_IR	0.148*, p=0.013	-	0.217**, p=0.000
	Acceptance_R	-	-	0.106*, p=0.042
Advancing	Total	0.120*, p=0.044	-	0.147**, p=0.005
	IR	-	-	0.115*, p=0.027
	SD_GE_IR	0.186** 0.002	-	0.196**, p=0.000
	SD_GE_R	-	-	0.132*, p=0.011
	Comfort_R	-	-	0.102*, p=0.05
	Acceptance_IR	-	-	0.130*, p=0.012
Autonomy	Total	-	0.235*, p=0.027	0.151**, p=0.004
	R	-	0.225*, p=0.035	0.138**, p=0.008
	DEM_R	-	0.233*, p=0.029	0.131*, p=0.012
	SD_GE_IR	-	0.262*, p=0.014	0.148**, p=0.005
	SD_GE_R	-	-	0.113*, p=0.03
	AWF_R	-	-	0.143**, p=0.006
	Comfort_R	-	-	0.112*, p=0.032
	Acceptance_IR	-	-	0.110*, p=0.034
	Achievement_R	-	-	0.134*, p=0.01
Balance	Total	-	0.253*, p=0.018	0.155**, p=0.003
	IR	0.129*, p=0.031	0.266*, p=0.012	0.205**, p=0.000
	DEM_IR		0.218*, p=0.041	0.146**, p=0.005

	SD_GE_IR	-	0.266*, p=0.012	0.186**, p=0.000
	LFT_IR			0.129*, p=0.013
	LFT_R	- 0.137*, p=0.021	-	-
	AWF_IR	0.136*, p=0.023	-	0.177**, p=0.001
	Comfort_IR	-	-	0.117**, p=0.025
	Acceptance_IR	-	-	0.191**, p=0.000
	Achievement_IR	0.151*, p=0.011	-	0.184**, p=0.000
	Achievement_R	- 0.154*, p=0.01	-	-
Harmony	Total	0.152*, p=0.011	-0.213*, p=0.046	-
	R	0.152*, p=0.011		-
	IR	-	-0.249*, p=0.019	-
	LFT_IR	-	-0.359**, p=0.001	-0.107*, p=0.041
	AWF_R	0.181**, p=0.002		
	Acceptance_R	0.129*, p=0.003		
	Achievement_R	0.121*, p=0.043	-0.256*, p=0.016	
Health	IR	-	-	-0.159**, p=0.002
	R	0.127*, p=0.034	-	-
	DEM_IR	-0.128*, p=0.033	-	-0.120*, p=0.021
	LFT_IR	-	-	-0.133*, p=0.011

	LFT_R	0.150*, p=0.012	-	-
	AWF_IR	-0.123*, p=0.004	-	-0.155**, p=0.003
	Acceptance _IR	-	-	-0.153**, p=0.003
	Acceptance _R	0.117*, p=0.049	-	-
	Achievemen t_IR	-0.121*, p=0.043	-	-0.141**, p=0.007

The analysis of the correlation coefficients presented in Table 3 allows us to find that there is a significant relationship of medium and strong intensity of different valence between the convictions and values of adolescents and young people both at each age and throughout the entire sample. We notice that for adolescence the relationship between most irrationally formulated convictions and *achievement* value is specific. At the age of youth, only one correlation coefficient was established between *achievement* and *irrational catastrophic convictions*, which means that subjects evaluate negatively what should not be, but it has happened and in the future prevents them from achieving the planned goals. The analysis of the results of the relationship between the variables studied on the whole sample indicates the presence of the relationship between most irrational convictions and the values of experimental subjects.

The analysis of the relationship between autonomy and convictions allows us to highlight the presence of significant positive relationship with rational convictions during youth, which indicates that the irrational absolutist cognitions that dominated during adolescence change into rational ones (DEM-R) in youth and lead to personal autonomy and independence. Although, we establish that autonomy correlates significantly with depreciation and irrational global

assessment (SD-GE-IR), i.e. we can say that the global labeling of oneself and others, of life as “bad” persists, if things do not go as must and do not meet expectations of a person.

The continuous analysis of the data makes it possible to find the significant positive relationship between health and most irrational convictions during adolescence, which already changes to the negative with irrational convictions during youth, which means that health itself is reevaluated with age as valuable and thinking become positive, which is observed by the correlation coefficients on the whole sample.

Thus, the study of the correlational data between convictions and values gives us a possibility to confirm the fact that a significant relationship of different valence, which depends on the dominated convictions, is present between the convictions and values of the personality. Likewise, with age, the developing and changing of convictions leads to the awareness of important things, the finalization and definitization of life values for one’s own personality and their hierarchy in the system of values.

## **5. Conclusions about the relevance and prospects of the research**

The analysis of scientific literature and the results obtained from the experimental study shows the need for continuous research of convictions in subjects of adolescence and youth, such subjects being in a period of finalizing their volitional. Attitudinal, cognitive dimensions decisive in the formation of personality values. The results received are important for the development of strategies for training and development of desired values in adolescents and young people to achieve personal performance, successful educational process, socialization and relationships with members of the social environment,

development of emotional intelligence by facilitating search for means of expression and adequate identification of emotions. Thus, the implemented theoretical-experimental research allows us to conclude the following:

- the process of value formation is a consecutive one focused on interaction with the basic components of the value orientations and it takes place throughout the adolescence; it continues and it is successfully outlined during youth;
- the mechanism of forming value orientations presents a consecutive process of forming beliefs and values throughout adolescence and youth, consisting of a set of behaviours, emotions, cognitions, attitudes, convictions and values;
- adolescence and youth phases are characterized by: achievement, balance, creation, entrepreneurship, family happiness, friendship, teamwork, learning, advancement, balance, harmony, respect, health, financial security;
- upon analysis of statistical data obtained to determine the dynamics of the relationship between convictions and values in adolescents and young people we find the existence of a significant ratio of varying valence (+/-) of medium and high intensity in most variables included in research (achievement and acceptance, rational and irrational etc. advancement and beliefs in their entirety; autonomy, balance and beliefs in totality, between the imperative “must” and achievement, fame, status).

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## **CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL TRAINING - PRIORITY OF TEACHING STAFF**

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### **Abstract**

The article covers the issue of continuous professional training of teachers, which is a complex, coherent process, aimed at ensuring the permanent adaptation of teachers to the dynamics of education processes and systems, promoting a proactive attitude, specific to a lifelong learning horizon.

The research paper specifies the defining characteristics of the continuous professional training process, describes the principles and objectives of continuous teacher training, determines the content, methodology, forms of continuous teacher training, and elucidates the trends in continuous professional training of teachers.

**Keywords:** continuous professional training, characteristics, principles, objectives, contents, forms, contexts, trends

## 1. Introduction

Continuous training, the driving force behind social dynamics, is currently of increasing importance in the educational field due to the impact of technological progress, the evolution of contemporary society, the growing demand for quality education, the need to successfully overcome crisis situations, etc.

S. Cristea (2000, p. 155) highlights the fact that the concept of *training* defines a vital, essential social action, which integrates, among others, education, instruction and training without being reduced to them. Its evolution registers three significant moments from the perspective of the theory and management of education:

- *training* understood in the sense of Aristotelian philosophy, which highlights the role of the external impulse form of activity;
- *training* understood in the sense of classical pedagogy, which highlights the importance of initial professional training, extended to the level of adult education;
- *training* understood in the sense of modern and postmodern pedagogy, which highlights the importance of integrating complex, initial and continuous socio-professional training, at the level of strategic models specific to *lifelong learning*.

T. Callo (2003, p. 35) argues that “education has its place throughout life (continuous education, lifelong learning), it is more necessary in certain *critical moments* that occur in the activity of teachers. In order for these moments to acquire *significance*, so that they are not *moments of regression*, but *factors of progress* on the path leading to a better knowledge, it is necessary to make a special development effort every time, as if be a new formation. Professional development is the conscious, voluntary, competent part of continuous training and takes place according to the psychology, philosophy, discipline of each

individual; involving choices, waivers, decisions, which require knowledge, information, elements that depend on a broad and in-depth conception of the given field”.

Teaching staff must always keep up to date, to be the first bearer of the new. According to researcher I. Jinga (2005, p. 62), this requirement is determined by a number of factors, including:

- the economic and social development of the country, as a whole and in territorial profile, according to which the school prepares the new contingents of qualified staff, specialists, human resources in general;
- the changes that take place in the world of work and in the world of professions, with significant implications in the content of school curricula and therefore in the teacher training;
  - new acquisitions in the field of science, human knowledge;
  - the advances registered in the sciences of education, in the learning theories;
  - increasing the duration of compulsory education;
  - heterogeneity of student groups and diminishing the share of family education;
  - increasing society's demands on school.

The issue of continuous professional training is a theme studied by various researchers in national and international contexts. In the Republic of Moldova, aspects of in-service teacher training have been covered in the studies of various researchers, specified by T. Nagnibeda-Tverdohleb (2018, p. 37): VI. Guțu - the training of teachers' competencies, the contexts that ensure the functionality and efficiency of the initial and continuous professional training of teachers; VI. Pâslaru - reconceptualising the training of general education staff; T. Callo - professional development of teachers in terms of conditions, accountability, conceptualization of attitudes; V. Andrițchi - human resources management in

education; N. Bucun - the issue of continuous training from the perspective of personality development; S. Baciuc - continuous teacher training in the context of adult education, ensuring quality management in the school; D. Patraşcu - the management of the training of the teachers' professional competencies; A. Cara - training / professional development of teachers in the context of quality, standardization; L. Cuzneţov - teacher training from an axiological perspective; Paniş A. - professionalization of teachers; V.Gh. Cojocaru - ensuring the management and quality of continuous training of teachers; O. Dandara, I. Gîncu - value orientations in professional training; M. Cojocaru-Boroşan - the formation of the emotional culture of the teachers, etc.

I. Jînga (2005, p. 67) notices the recorded trends in the field of continuous professional training of teachers:

- integrating of training and improvement in a unitary system, finding factors to stimulate the interests of teachers towards their own improvement;
- transforming lifelong learning from desideratum into reality;
- involving teachers to a greater extent in the decision-making process regarding training programs and courses;
- moving the centre of gravity on the training actions carried out at school level;
- identifying innovative methods for teacher training;
- increasing the duration of improvement and especially of that intended for the practical application of theoretical knowledge.

## **2. Continuous professional training: terminological benchmarks**

By contrast with the initial professional training, which aims at introducing the future teaching staff, through specific theoretical and practical activities, in the professional universe for which it is formed, continuous training

/ preparation refers to updates, achievements and specializations of theoretical, methodical and practical order, through a series of training activities during the professional exercise (C. Cucos, 2014, p. 495).

*The concept of continuous training* refers to a set of theoretical and practical activities, institutionalized at system level, which involves the participation of educators in order to amplify their psycho-pedagogical, methodical and specialized knowledge necessary for developing optimal socio-professional skills and attitudes in relation to the requirements of a quality education.

The activity of continuous training of teaching staff employs two corresponding actions: an action of renewal and improvement of professional practices by updating the knowledge acquired during the initial training and an action aimed at professional reorientation through new skills validated including through obtaining diplomas. Their interflow anticipates the permanent evolution of educators in the context of a complex activity of advanced training, which responds to both personal and organizational needs, thus favouring the development of educator autonomy (S. Cristea, 2000, p. 155).

Going beyond the traditional meaning of “remedy for the shortcomings of insufficient initial training for the entire professional (didactic) career”, continuous education, in its (post)modern sense, begins to be conceived as a process of long duration and lifelong learning, being defined as a set of activities and practices that require the involvement of educators to amplify their own knowledge, improve skills, analysis and development of professional attitudes.

The continuous training of teachers represents an activity with pedagogical and social content designed, realized and developed within the education system, with a managerial function of continuous regulation / self-

regulation of the educational process, at all its reference levels: functional, structural, operational.

At the functional level, the continuous training of the teaching staff aims at stimulating the pedagogical and social capacities of practical conversion of the system finalities (ideally, educational aims) into objectives engaged in the educational process, in the school and extracurricular environment.

At the structural level, the continuous training of the teaching staff aims at stimulating the pedagogical and social capacities of full capitalization of all the pedagogical resources (informational, human, didactic-material, financial) existing at system and process level.

At the operational level, the continuous training of the teaching staff aims at stimulating the pedagogical and social capacities of design, realization, development and completion of the specific activities of the educational process (lessons, courses, seminars, practical works, conducting classes; extracurricular activities performed with: students, teachers, parents, other representatives of the educational community, activities: managerial, methodical, psycho-pedagogical and social assistance, school and professional guidance, counselling, etc.), in optimal conditions, corresponding to the existing internal and external context, in the short, medium and long term (A. Panait, 2014, p. 3).

Continuous education can be complementary or an extension of the initial one. In connection with this problem, the following misunderstanding arises: it reinforces the idea that continuous education should focus on the academic area that the graduate followed in the initial training stage, and not on the profession acquired or chosen by him at some point. There is not always a complete overlap between the intentionality of initial training and the actual configuration of a profession. The correspondence *between the initial training and the continuous training* is not absolute, and the last one, i.e. the improvement aims at the current

professional state, and not an imponderable state, still undetermined, one that could have been, but was not (C. Cucoş, 2014 , p. 496).

### **3. Continuous professional training: defining notes**

Analyzing the system of continuous professional training in different European countries, the researchers L. Pogolşa, A. Afanas, N. Vicol, V. Andriţchi et al (2016, pp. 12-13) identified the following defining characteristics:

- Continuous professional training is declared a priority area in the educational policy of the countries, but the mechanisms for implementing these policies differ from one country to another.

- Continuous professional training is compulsory or optional, but is done on flexible content and based on decentralized designs.

- Continuous professional training is carried out both by higher education institutions and by specialized institutions, scientific societies or professional associations of teachers; the adopted forms, the duration of the traineeships and the periodicity differ from one country to another.

- In most European countries there are trends of re-conceptualization of the professional training system with emphasis on: establishing factors to stimulate the interest of learners in their own training; involvement of teaching staff to a greater extent in the decision-making process regarding training programs and courses; transfer of training actions in school units; elaboration / setting up of innovative methodologies for continuous professional training; increasing the duration of training activities, especially for practical applications.

According to European policies in the field of continuing professional training, it is appropriate that the relevant legislative and normative regulations of each member country aim at:

- guaranteeing and facilitating continuous access to lifelong learning for skills training and improvement;
- valuing non-formal and informal learning and recognizing the competencies formed in these contexts;
- encouraging innovation in teaching and learning;
- rethinking guidance and counselling, with a focus on access to quality information and counselling on lifelong learning opportunities;
- more flexible ways of providing and personalizing training offers;
- bringing home learning closer, providing lifelong learning opportunities as close as possible to the beneficiaries, in their own communities and supported by IT equipment;
- quality assurance in training.

In order to streamline the process of continuous training of teachers, in response to their professional and personal needs and interests, but also to the specific requirements of the labor market, it is necessary to respect certain principles referred to by Ş. Iosifescu (2001):

*Principles of educational policy:*

1. *The principle of decentralization and flexibility* - translates into the indicative nature of the course and the curricular approach, so that the training offered to meet the specific needs identified at the level of each regional / county centre, both in terms of themes and management of organizational forms and related durations.

2. *The principle of efficiency* - involves a more profitable use of human resources (national, regional and local certified trainers) and support materials through structural and procedural ways to ensure both quality training and co-training and development of trainers.

3. *The principle of compatibility* - the Romanian continuous training system with the European standards (training with the help of educational tutorials).

*Curricular principles:*

1. *The principle of cultural selection and ranking* - refers to the areas of the continuous training curriculum in relation to the fields of human knowledge and the teachers' interests and needs. The curricular offer for continuing education must be sufficiently broad and diverse and integrate multiple cultural approaches.

2. *The principle of functionality* - the connection of the proposed themes to the age of the participants, to the point in their career evolution, to the psychological particularities specific to the different generations of trainees.

3. *The principle of coherence* - the integration of the training themes offered on different components and training channels, the articulation of the learning experiences vertically and horizontally so as to favour the complete learning, the acquisition of functional and operational skills and knowledge.

4. *The principle of equal opportunities through education and of ensuring the individualized path* - the training theme to favour both the improvement on the own field of knowledge, and on the secondary fields, required on the labour market.

5. *The principle of connection to the social* - response to needs / creation of needs - the theme and learning experiences to support the great diversity and rapid dynamics of social life, to be focused on solving situations.

VI. Pâslaru (2003, p. 11) draws attention to the need of reconceptualising the training of the staff involved in pre-university education and argues that *the principles of staff training* envisage change as an immanent state of education / training; positive change of the human being through education / training; strengthening the identity of the human being, including as a national being, the freedom and the democratic character of education / training; permanence and

ubiquity of education / training; the axiological universality of the training of educational staff; employment in culture; scientific character, scientific plurality and interculturality; social connection; focusing on novelty, innovation and creation, on the continuous capitalization of tradition; continuous updating of staff training; systemicity and coherence, efficiency, continuous decentralization and flexibility of training of education staff: correlation of institutional and private approaches, individualization of training; integrating the processes of monitoring, evaluation and certification of the training of the educational staff.

S. Cristea (2000, p. 155) highlights the objectives of continuous training, structured around three poles:

a) personal and professional development of educators by: updating basic skills (psycho-pedagogical and specialized) and acquiring new skills (especially in the field of methodology / specialized teaching);

b) improving the quality of the educational process by: stimulating interdisciplinarity and pedagogical innovation and hiring management at the school and student level and in terms of psychosocial behaviors;

c) knowing the social and environmental environment by: fostering relations with the local educational community (family, economic agents, etc.), bringing the school closer to the social environment (economic, political, cultural), adapting to social change (cultural, political, economic).

I. Jinga (2005) specifies the *objectives of continuous teacher training*:

- improving teacher training, as a premise for optimizing the training quality;
- fostering the competent participation of teachers in the development, modernization and improvement of education;
- developing the capacity of teachers to adapt quickly and easily to the new demands of society.

The basic coordinates of the continuous teacher training according to the researcher I. Jinga (2005, p. 70):

- Continuous education or teacher training must meet the real requirements of education and teachers and be based not on administrative obligation, but on motivational factors.

- Reconsideration of the rigid system, based on a rigid planning and an inadequate evaluation, of school type, which appeals to a small extent to thinking.

- Diversification of training forms and programs, in order to be able to respond to a greater extent to the requirements and possibilities of different categories of teachers.

- Radical improvement of the content of the continuous training activity at all levels, simultaneously with the increase of its attractiveness.

- Giving priorities to those who participate in training activities and obtain very good results, by reducing the internship between grades, promoting in various positions, sending internships abroad, etc.

- The system must ensure the continuous teacher training, designed as complex, creative and responsible personalities, in accordance with the new acquisitions in the field of specialty and education sciences, with the requirements of a democratic society, based on pluralism, on personal initiative.

- The continuous training of teaching staff is a complex process, susceptible to improvements, in relation to the evolution of the objectives and the didactic optimal.

T. Callo (2003, p. 35) is of the opinion that in the process of continuous professional training it is necessary to pursue the following *tasks*:

- Elaboration of programs that would establish the connection between the requirements and the content of the profession, between the general training and the various situations *for which* and *through which* the teacher is fulfilled.

- Increasing the quality of learning by relating the specialized needs of each one and highlighting the professional potential.
- Identifying and applying the advantages of best teaching practices, offering opportunities for professional advancement.
- Transforming professional development into a right and an obligation of all teaching staff.
- Introducing professionalization days in school. Apply a course syllabus to the workplace to ensure vertical transfer.
- Professional development in the classroom context.
- Dynamization of mutual training, summarized in the following components: presentation of the theory; modelling or demonstration; structured or free, unconditional reverse connection; application training.
- The use of a considerable volume of practice in simulated conditions to ensure a dynamic control over the formation of new skills.

The essential difficulty of professional development consists in the relationship that the teacher establishes with his/her own activity, in terms of duration. The transition from one educational field to another does not occur without crises. Professional development must be made omnipotent: the person can be trained and accustomed to submit to the pace of his/her individual development. A first gain is *not to give negative valences to change*, but to consider it a positive factor. On this solid basis the person can explore new areas and acquire the benefits.

VI. Pâslaru (2003, p. 11) states that the *objectives of training teaching staff* involve the epistemological-conceptual and praxiological-methodological fields.

The objectives of epistemological and conceptual training provide:

- promoting identity awareness and property awareness;

- proper understanding of the currently promoted educational concept and of the educational reform, of the conception and strategy of staff training;
- awareness of continuous professional training as a manifestation of the professional personality of the human being;
- discrimination of specific periodic training (active life) from permanent training (whole life);
- the formation of a modern axiological vision, centered on the fundamental values of the contemporary human being (freedom and democracy), on the values of the local, national and universal community;
- encouraging pedagogical creativity and research in the school professional environment;
- the ability (the will) to assume responsibilities and educational initiatives, to think professionally, managerially, economically;
- openness to scientific, professional, cultural pluralism.

The objectives of methodological training establish:

- rigorous conceptualization of all technological training actions;
- integration of technologies with teleology and the contents of teaching staff training;
- universalization and operationalization of training of teaching staff in all its aspects;
- focusing on modular continuing education, on general and specific issues of education;
- selection / combination of traditional and modern methodologies in accordance with the technological vision of the educational actions to be carried out;
- focusing training activities on professional and cultural communication, on creative dialogue and personal insertion of the teacher / school manager in their

own training;

- integration of the values of sciences and technologies, literature and arts with the educational experiences of the teachers, with their own experiences of continuous professional training;

- monitoring the impact at the level of formative innovation;
- promoting the pluralistic model of training sciences;
- continuous adaptation of the technological repertoire to the objectives and the training program.

In the context of continuous professional training it is necessary to focus on the following issues:

- ensuring continuity so as to avoid the loss of accumulated knowledge;
- adapting programs and methods to original objectives, specific to each company;

- training the person for a reality in which evaluations, changes and transformations could occur;

- mobilization and massive use of all means for training and information;
- establishing a close link between the various forms of action and the objectives of education.

On these bases, several models and formulas can be designed, presenting various aspects that would meet the same imperative: transforming professional development into a tool to prepare the person for the tasks and responsibilities imposed by the profession, which also involves a re-evaluation of the educational system according to certain coordinates of thought and action, the emphasis shifting from the forced presentation of novelties in the field to the systematic implementation of effective ideas (T. Callo, 2003, p. 36).

*The content of the continuous training activity* reflects the objectives evoked by the offers designed longitudinally and transversally in different

institutionalized variants (improvement, professional promotion exams, intensive and extensive research, implementation of didactic innovations, school management courses, experience exchanges, scholarships / documentaries etc.) that respects the particularities of each education system. These offers cover, in principle, the following areas of activity:

- a) the curricular design of the subject of the specialized discipline / disciplines;
- b) the managerial organization of the school and the class;
- c) (re)orientation of the psycho-pedagogical training in order to individualize the training, to optimize *the functional-structural correlation* between teacher and student;
- d) the deepening of the essential sociological aspects that aim especially at the relations between school-society, school-local community, school-family (S. Cristea, 2000, p. 156).

As for the structure of curricula in the process of continuous training (i.e. further training), C. Cucuș (2014, p. 504) considers that it should be decentralized and organized modularly, offering the possibility for the teacher to choose the modular segments that actually are useful for them in his/her professional situation: “It is not right for all teachers to be aligned with the same curricular training coordinates, to be put in a particular “form”, knowing that they themselves have different competencies and that they manage different teaching situations, with concrete problems to be solved”.

*The methodology of the continuous training activities* for teaching staff capitalizes on the pedagogical strategies affirmed at the level of permanent education, in general, and in the field of adult didactics, in particular.

S. Cristea (2000, p. 156) is of the opinion that the continuous teacher training is achieved through: methodical and psycho-pedagogical improvement activities carried out at the level of departments or specialized teams in

educational units; conferences, seminars, debates or other special forms of training, organized at interschool, territorial and national level; training courses for specialized, methodical and psycho-pedagogical training, etc.

The main *forms of teacher training* aim at: methodological-scientific and psycho-pedagogical activities carried out at school and after school; methodological-scientific communication sessions, symposia and exchanges of experience; periodic internships for specialized scientific information and in the field of education sciences; distance learning; non-attendance courses; professional training courses organized at different levels, etc. (S. Cristea, 2000, p. 157).

I. Jinga (2005) specifies the value of the following *forms of organizing the continuous teacher training*: individual study (led by a mentor); current scientific information (performed territorially); inter-assistance and exchanges of experience on given topics; pedagogical circles and seminars; summer courses; scientific research; specialized training courses; obtaining teaching degrees; courses organized on TV; internships abroad; master's and doctoral studies, etc.

VI. Pâslaru (2003, pp. 13-14) specifies the following types and forms of training of teaching staff:

a) by duration: long-term training; medium-term training; short-term training;

b) by type of activity: trainings; workshops; practical and laboratory work; assistance with experimental activities in pilot schools; lectures; thesis development; counselling in all types and forms of professional training; internships offered by various specialized training institutions (on thematic modules, on common interests, based on individual need, visits to other schools, teacher exchange between schools, in personalized training workshops); training within the school unit (on-the-job training through the alternation of theoretical

study and practical activity, through counselling, monitoring, assisted design, professional partnership, action learning, tutoring); conferences and debates; self-training (observing another teacher in the class, working in a working group, carrying out research projects); distance learning; permanent and special thematic seminars; methodological meetings; assistance to the educational activities within the school, the department; professional partnership, including expertise of works; monitoring various types and forms of training activities, etc.

In accordance with the principles and laws of the modern labor market, it is necessary to achieve a permanent marketing of the teacher training, which involves:

- investigating the training needs and motivations in relation to various training offers, stimulated by the competition emergence of several educational factors that provide training activities, innovations in the field, various training qualities, and aimed at establishing gaps in professional performance of education staff;
- reporting the real level to the estimated performance level;
- elaboration of training programs focused on the real needs of the beneficiary;
- adequate choice of advertising channels, which is based on the analysis of the quality-price ratio (VI. Pâslaru, 2003, p. 14).

T. Nagnibeda-Tverdohleb (2018, p. 27) states that the variety of types of proposed trainings demonstrates the complementarity and complexity of the launched process. In the face of the offer of continuous training, teachers can find an answer to their needs. They must also apply for participation, obtain approval, be accepted and be able to bear the consequences of the commitment (school absence, replacement, travel, material and family problems), as well as the question of whether the actual contents and methods of continuous education meet expectations.

Researchers L. Pogolşa, A. Afanas, N. Vicol, V. Andriţchi et al (2016, p. 12) argue that continuous professional training of teachers is a significant area in the implementation of changes in education and therefore concerns many factors interested in this system of adult education. Streamlining the process of continuous professional training is possible with qualified trainers, innovative learning methods, high quality infrastructure and facilities, high relevance to the labour market and motivating directions to further education and training. At the same time, the system of continuous professional training must be accessible to teachers, be career-oriented, and facilitate all over the life both the skills development and career changes of those employed in education.

In order to correctly orient the activity of continuous training of teachers in general education, it is necessary to highlight their motivation, this being an energetic-directional component of their learning potential. It is also necessary to specify the role of each teacher in their own continuous training, in order to modernize this process (T. Nagnibeda-Tverdohleb, 2018, pp. 125-126).

E. Muraru & O. Dandara's research (2003, p. 42) is about ensuring the continuity of the educational process, establishing the connection between general culture training in pre-university education, initial vocational training in university education and continuous professional training as an integral part of professional activity. Trying to correlate the three stages of human formation / realization as a personality, through the prism of the three levels, the authors conclude that in the context of general education the theoretical aspect of training prevails which will diminish in favour of practicality while passing through initial and continuous professional training. At the same time, the authors claim that the basic element of the (initial and continuous) professional training standard is competence. In the same train of ideas, among the multitude of competencies that

must be held by teachers, *the continuous training competence* is highlighted, which aims at:

- identifying professional training needs;
- knowing and using continuous training methods;
- determining priorities in continuous professional training;
- manifesting an openness to changes in the field of activity.

C. Cucuș (2014, p. 509) highlights the need for the teacher to have the *self-reflexive competence*, critical in relation to their own educational activity. The authentic teacher must supervise his/her educational activity; to develop metacognitive resources in the perspective of improving his/her own didactic approach. At the same time, he/she becomes responsible for his/her own professional evolution which must be part of the logic of a permanent development or reevaluation.

E. Păun (2017, p. 185) mentions the value of *career management competence*, in the context of which the teacher is a critical, reflective practitioner who constantly evaluates his/her activity and its pedagogical effects and actively seeks opportunities for professional development and improvement. Among the defining aspects of that type of competence are:

- manifestation of a self-evaluative, self-reflective and self-critical behaviour towards one's own activity;
- openness to innovative trends in the field of his/her professional activity;
- ability to use different sources for his/her professional progress;
- consulting and cooperating with colleagues and school management to improve the activity;
- participation in various forms of improvement and implementation of the assimilated ones;
- the ability to get involved and to carry out research activities.

The characteristics of an efficient continuous professional training system (L. Pogołsa, A. Afanas, N. Vicol, V. Andrițchi et al, 2016, p.13) are the following:

- teachers who demonstrate skills necessary for personal, social and professional growth and development throughout life;
- the relevant continuous training curriculum, connected to the professional needs of the teachers, the school, the community;
- training process focused on the professional needs of teachers and the educational needs of learners;
- fair evaluation system, focused on measuring the skills relevant for the life of the individual and for the labour market;
- teachers able to design learning activities focused on the individual educational needs of the beneficiaries;
- infrastructure and a learning environment friendly to the learner
- a modern, flexible and functional institutional framework that contributes to ensuring the quality of education;
- sustainable academic and social partnerships, focused on common long-term benefits.

#### **4. Conclusions**

1. So as any teacher to respond to the constant demands of the educational environment and the ever-changing society, to become a promoter of change himself, it is necessary to create easy contexts for quality professional training (designed in relation to the requirements of continuous labour market development, but also in accordance with the interest and needs of the pedagogue), whose improvement lasts throughout the entire professional process.

2. The continuous training of teachers is a complex, coherent process, aimed at ensuring the permanent adaptation of teachers to the dynamics of education processes and systems, facilitating the coherence of the professional development of teachers at the same time promoting a proactive attitude, specific to a lifelong learning.
3. In ensuring the professional progress of pedagogues, it is necessary to respect the principles, to achieve the objectives, to capitalize the contents and technologies relevant to the process of continuous professional training of teaching staff.
4. The teacher's self-reflexive competence, critical in relation to their own activity, of continuous training competence, of career management competence enhances their own process of continuous professional development.

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## **CURRICULAR PERSPECTIVES AND STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING COGNITIVE SKILLS IN EARLY EDUCATION**

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### **Abstract**

Starting from the assumption that in early education the curricular strategies are selected and developed according to the curricular context and the specificity of general and particular cognitive development, we decided to engage in an experimental research focused on identifying, validating and developing some curricular strategies that are as relevant in the development of cognitive skills, as well as of other areas of development and experience. Our research fulfils several functions: 1) The systematization of the conceptual analyses regarding the problem of the cognitive skills and of the curricular strategies of their development, accompanied by personal appreciations and interpretations; 2) Of retesting and developing a previous micro-research; 3) Of methodological research, based on the development and validation of relevant investigation tools;

4) The development of a methodological framework and operational landmarks for the development of cognitive skills in early education.

The article is conceived in the spirit of scientific consistency and comprehensive analysis of conceptual models, strategies and methodological models that outline the terminological code of the problem, but which also constitute premises for theoretical development and design of some experimental approaches.

The article is structured on two dimensions: a) theoretical foundation regarding the conceptual analysis of cognitive competence in early education, from the perspective of the skills-centred educational approach, of the curriculum for early education, with implications for lifelong learning; b) addressing curricular strategies, which facilitate the process of developing cognitive skills in preschoolers, with an emphasis on child-centred training.

**Keywords:** early education, lifelong education, cognitive skills, curricular strategies, child-centred training

## **1. The theoretical foundation of cognitive development in early education**

One of the fundamental objectives of the curricular reform aims to develop the cognitive skills necessary for the adequate management, creative processing and comprehensive approach of the cognitive scientific and didactically processed system, in order to develop the autonomous learning skills and to crystallize the cognitive and metacognitive skills. In this sense, in recent years, in the Romanian education there is a special interest for the elaboration and implementation of curricular and educational programs with impact on the cognitive and affective-motivational development.

In the context of the curriculum focused on the development of the child, since the preschool period, the paradigms of cognitivism and constructivism have been capitalized, which offers the conceptual framework and methodological landmarks for developing and implementing curricular projects and strategies with an impact on the development of cognitive skills. In the last decades, all over the world, there is a special interest for the formation and development of the child in the first years of life, becoming a strategic formative intervention in education for all (EFA) and lifelong learning (LL).

Early education, comprising the years of ante-preschool and preschool, aims at the multidimensional and multifactorial action of child modelling and represents an important interval of learning with essential effects for the whole subsequent life of the person; it is the most complex and rich stage of child development, with an impressive number of cognitive, affective and social acquisitions. At the basis of the development of the concept of early education and of the programs of early education from all over the world are the theories of development and the important studies of many specialists, such as M. Montessori, J. Piaget, J. Dewey, L.S. Vygotsky, focusing, as a priority, on the cognitive aspects of the child's development, on their thinking, understanding and learning skills.

Early childhood education and care are considered as the basis of education and training systems, which translates into ensuring optimal conditions for the development of key skills.

Early education, in Romania, is characterized by an impressive evolution due to the educational policies existing at international level, these imposing periodic changes and reforms according to the educational ideal, the results of research and experiments in the field, the continuous evolution of the society. "Educational reforms cover different stages, with peak moments or radical

changes, with intermediate periods, less visible, and with periods of consolidation of the acquisitions acquired in the previous stages. “ (Potolea, D, Toma, S., Borza, A. coord., 2012, p.12) Thus, the changes in the system have led to the elaboration of a dynamic-evolutionary curriculum, by taking over, adding and adapting to the new contexts.

The Curriculum for Early Education, approved in August 2019, is a comprehensive, integrated and diversified curriculum, focusing on addressing the holistic development of children, achieving an appropriate balance between learning and harmonious development of personality and on transferable transversal collaborative learning, skills, attitudes and values useful for personal and social development.

Studies and research show that school success depends to a large extent on the education and fundamental learning that takes place before school starts, which means: acquiring precursory math and language skills – raising children able to communicate and share their thoughts with others (to gladly discuss their experiences, plans and discoveries), which will make it easier for them to learn to read and write; developing curiosity – curious children who investigated and compared quantities, shapes and materials when they were still very young learn more easily arithmetic and physics.

The basics of lifelong learning are formed in the early years of childhood. Learning is a gradual process and building strong premises in early childhood is a prerequisite for developing skills and educational success from higher levels, being equally essential for the health and well-being of children. The school curricula for early education capitalizes the curricular paradigm centred on skills and bases the educational steps on the child and on his learning activity as a process, respectively on the acquisition of behaviours that ensure the premises of the development of the key skills later.

In the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2008 on establishing the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (Official Journal C 111 of 06.05.2008) skill is described from the perspective of responsibility and autonomy, as proven ability to use personal, social and/or methodological knowledge, skills and abilities in work or study situations and for professional and personal development. (Curriculum for Early Education, 2019, p. 4)

Early education is at the base of developing these skills, starting from the model of structuring the development levels of the eight key competences areas, in relation to the pre-university education levels. This represents the pre-elementary level, the prerequisites of the skills, the level of behavioural stimulation where the teacher will design appropriate learning activities to achieve the selected behaviours. The educational approach centred on skills will highlight the dynamic aspect of the accumulation of knowledge, through the need to articulate them in action sets useful in solving certain categories of problems.

The skill involves “integrating and adapting, mobilizing and transferring knowledge to various situations, regulating the thinking resources and strategies and action, acquiring more and more finesse in relation to the plurality of the experiences accumulated” (Perrenoud, 1998, apud. Manolescu, 2010, p. 102). The skill integrates abilities, aptitudes, and capacities, but there are two main elements: the application of what the child knows or can do within a given task and the capacity to transfer this ability between other different situations. Referring to the cognitive skill, this can be described as an intellectual capacity that has a variety of transfer possibilities to a given situation, a capacity that will also associate affective and attitudinal components, of motivating the action. Using information, as more effectively, it demonstrates a proper development of cognitive skill in older preschoolers, because through a set of skills, habits,

cognitive abilities they can easily sort information, finding meanings and significations that they can convert into practical behaviours.

The child must make a constant effort to integrate the new information into the existing system, to make deductions beyond the given information and to think strategically about his/her own learning activity. Preschoolers should be accustomed to seeking, learning and using information and ideas, going through processes of analysis, selection and critical reflection. Although they are in an early stage of systemic learning, preschoolers may be able to practice the identification and flexible use of some acquisitions from their own knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to meet certain educational and extracurricular challenges. For a good cognitive development, preschoolers go through a continuous process of interaction with the environment, which leads to the extension of the field of knowledge of the intellect and to the increase of the number of mental abilities.

The older preschool can use successfully within the integrated activities different cognitive processes such as: discovering, interpreting, sorting, and classifying information, but also processing, organizing and using them in an efficient way according to the context. At the same time, children can carry out evaluations of some statements, they can be involved in problem solving, easily understanding rules or concepts, planning, and anticipating alternatives and consequences of their own behaviours.

The preschool period represents the richest and most intense stage of cognitive development, due to the impressive number of cognitive acquisitions the child acquires, initially based on sensory processes, focusing on perception and representation. Although in the beginning the preschooler's thinking is irreversible, focused on perception, preoperative, the transition is made easily, based on the activities centred on the preschooler's experience of the surrounding

reality, towards a logical thinking, thus becoming operational. Thus, cognitive competence, in early education, is reflected in the abilities of logical thinking and problem solving, knowledge and basic mathematical skills of the child (numbers, numerical representations, operations, geometric shapes, measurement), as well as those related to the world and the environment the (living world, the Earth, the space, the scientific methods).

In this context, the curricular program will include training strategies that will create learning situations centred on the preschooler's direct action on the reality he/she must understand.

## **2. Curriculum strategies that facilitate the process of developing cognitive skills in preschoolers**

Within the process of teaching knowledge and skills in an educational institution, any teacher carries out a whole series of activities and behaviours oriented towards obtaining a maximum quality of educational results. All of these are initiated by analysing the resources, conditions, educational factors building authentic educational strategies. The notion of strategy represents a component of the training program, it constitutes “the dynamic, active aspect, through which the teacher directs the learning” (Manolescu, 2008, pp.193) or “the set of coordinated and harmoniously integrated actions meant to direct the learning in the vision of achieving the pre-formulated objectives”. (Vlasceanu, 1993, pp. 97)

The strategies are the “defining instruments” of the didactic activity, which aims at the whole process of teaching-learning-assessment. Thus, I. Cerghit defines the training strategies as “a set of deliberately structured or programmed teaching-learning actions and operations, oriented towards the achievement, under conditions of maximum effectiveness of the predetermined objectives”. (Cerghit, 2002, pp. 276). There are numerous variants of defining the educational

strategy that covers a wide area, from mentioning it as an element of the learning process (classical didactics) to its limitation to methods, processes and ways of solving a work task, respectively catching in its sphere of the entire actual accomplishment of one or more objectives, as a basic element of the design and realization of the activity.

In the context of education reform, for the formation of skills, attitudes and values towards school, life, work, and according to the Curriculum for Early Education, which is based on the experiential paradigm, to be effective, the training strategy used must be child-centred, to create a bridge between teachers and children for their active and creative training in the assimilation and use of information. Referring to the development of cognitive skills in early education, through the strategies used, the teacher involves the child in specific situations of learning, rationalizes and adapts the content of the training to the particularities of the children's personality (motivation, preparation mode, knowledge/learning styles). Thus, strategies can be defined as the set of methods, means, learning experiences through which the teacher can design, realize and evaluate the educational process in order to develop cognitive skills, based on the specific behaviours of the development areas.

Early education capitalizes the constructivist paradigm so that training strategies, with an emphasis on developing the cognitive skills of preschoolers, can be diversified only by transforming the child into a central point of training, as a direct explorer of the environment, building on their own learning. An open, diverse and resource-rich learning environment leads to active learning through reflective observation and exploratory behaviour.

Child-centred training implies its autonomy in the process of acquiring new knowledge, acquiring cognitive schemes and operational procedures for solving problems. The formative effects of child-centred training and the affective

resonance of the results obtained through their own efforts are included in the spectrum of curricular reform objectives: divergent, flexible, creative, critical thinking; transfer, application, generalization skills; strategies, styles, cognitive schemes that will be the basis of learning in the process of continuous (self)training, as a future student and adult. (Bunăiașu, 2011, pp. 158-159).

The specialized literature presents a variety of training strategies, the most relevant categories being punctuated by I. Cerghit and R. Iucu (Cerghit, 2002, pp.279 -283, Iucu, 2001, pp. 100-101). Selecting those with applicability in early education, we obtained the following taxonomic system (op. cit):

- a) according to the field of predominant instructional activities:
  - cognitive strategies – aim to train the cognitive processes in achieving the objectives;
  - psychomotor strategies – specific to achieving the psychomotor objectives;
  - affective-motivational strategies – training situations that favour intellectual experiences and stimulation of motivation.
- b) following the logic of thought:
  - inductive strategies: the learning process follows the path from intuitive perception to explanation, from the concrete example to the idea;
  - deductive strategies – the educational route is from principle to example, from hypothesis to observation and experiment;
  - transductive strategies, through the use of transitive, essays, etc.
  - analogue strategies – learning by using models (knowledge, action models, models representing complex processes);
  - mixed strategies: the educational approach is a compilation, interactive and dynamic one;

- c) according to the degree of leadership or flexibility and creativity in the learning process:
- algorithmic strategies: impose a strict learning direction, by designing a didactic behaviour specific to each objective;
  - semi-algorithmic strategies: the guidance is no longer strict for the learning process, and the didactic behaviours are no longer so rigorously outlined, being open to the teacher's situational decisions;
  - heuristic or creative strategies – focused on fostering learning through discovery, on learning through solving problematic situations, encouraging search behaviours and guiding the child in the decision-making process.

These strategies that capitalize on children's learning experiences by providing an interactive, participative and effective educational environment automatically lead to the development of intellectual capacities and the construction of new cognitive experiences, thus facilitating the development of cognitive skills. However, the highlighting of their efficiency results only in the results obtained after using the assessment strategies, combined and applied according to the particularities of the age of the children and the built situations.

Educational assessment in early education is part of the paradigm of curriculum reform and the assessment system and aims to shift the focus from assessment focused on product measurement to development-focused assessment (of children's competences, of the educational process), organically integrated into the training process. The centring of the competency assessment represents a paradigmatic change of great relevance in postmodern pedagogy, which requires new methodological options, compared to traditional evaluation criteria and tools. In this context, the standards represented by the performance descriptors tend to be replaced by standards of a qualitative nature, to which the

appraisals of internal processes and mechanisms relate. The competences are not the object of the quantitative assessment; they are qualitatively assessed by reference to the performances, which express the level of development of the skills. (Bunăiașu, 2015, pp. 89-91)

The assessment represents “the process by which useful information is delimited, obtained and provided, allowing subsequent decisions taking, assuming three relatively distinct moments: measurement, assessment of school results and adoption of improvement measures” (Cucoș, 2002, p. 367); is “the activity by which value judgments about the process and product of school learning are issued based on pre-determined qualitative criteria, in order to make decisions according to the significance given to the assessment approach: regulation/improvement, selection, certification, etc.” (Manolescu, 2010, p. 21)

The strategy in the educational assessment is the responsible deliberative conduct of the assessor in all aspects and throughout the scope of the evaluative approach, as well as the option for the most appropriate and adequate type/method of pedagogical assessment, in the given instructional-educational situation. The classifications of the assessment strategies are quite different, depending on the criteria used, but these classifications only present a temporary situation. A brief classification of the evaluation strategies was made by Marin Manolescu, grouping them around two analysis perspectives, from which we have selected several representative variants for the assessment of cognitive abilities in early education (Manolescu 2010, pp. 53 - 66):

1. Critical perspective – the assessment strategies are designed according to criteria such as:

a) Assessment actors:

- assessment centred on the teacher, on his correctness;
- assessment focused on the child, on his personality.

- b) Assessment tools:
  - objective strategies – standardized tests or other tools that faithfully measure preschoolers’ performances;
  - qualitative strategies – focused on the qualitative aspect of the results.
- c) The objective of the assessment:
  - summative assessment, focused on the final products of the learning process;
  - formative assessment, of appreciation of the way of development of the learning process and of the training program.
- d) Extension of the assessment act:
  - frontal assessment;
  - group assessment;
  - individual assessment.
- e) After the moment of the assessment in the curricular process:
  - initial or predictive assessment;
  - continuous or formative assessment;
  - summative or final assessment.

## 2. Polar axes perspective

- a) The normative assessment axis versus the critical assessment. The normative assessment is based on the analysis of the results of the preschoolers in comparison with the results of other colleagues having the effect of ranking them; The criterion assessment is focused on the report of the children’s performances to the educational objectives, to the curricular standards of performance defined in the curricular programs.
- b) Axis of product assessment versus process assessment.

- c) Axis of proactive assessment versus retroactive assessment. Proactive assessment activities are planned, while retrospective evaluation activities develop during the training program.
- d) The axis of global, holistic assessment versus analytical assessment. The global evaluation refers to all the components or features of the object of the assessment, and the analytical assessment focuses on certain variables.
- e) The internal assessment axis (carried out for regulatory, didactic purposes, by the teacher or authority within the school institution) versus the external assessment (carried out during school examinations and competitions, by external assessors, with certified expertise).

The construction of these strategies, either for training or assessment represents an analytical-synthetic approach and is based on the education policy, the needs of the children's training and professional development of the teacher, and their application has a specific context: the school culture and access to modern means of communication and information. The process of constructing these strategies involves the following essential stages: strategic analysis, strategic choice and strategic implementation.

### **3. Conclusions**

The comprehensive conceptual approaches of the concept of cognitive skill, the presentation of the modalities of didactic transposition of the theoretical references and of selecting/adapting the taxonomies of the training strategies, systematized in the article, constitute prerequisites in designing the investigative approach assumed by us. The theoretical-methodological references analysed have the terminological code value of the research carried out in several stages.

In the next stage of the investigative approach, of retest and development of a micro-research, we will have as a starting point the following presupposition, developed on the basis of the crystallized conceptual system:

*The use, alternatively and complementarily, and the appropriate adequacy/ contextualization of the curricular strategies presented will generate didactic approaches favourable to the development of the cognitive skills of the preschoolers.* In this respect, curricular strategies, selected and developed on relevant theoretical bases, integrated in flexible, child-centred training situations, can constitute effective methodological-procedural resources for increasing the educational act in early education.

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