The Impact Of Emotionality On The Attitude Towards The Learning Process At Romanian Preadolescents

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Abstract

The emotionality is an intense subject of today’s researches in the field of psychology. The paper tried to reveal the influence that the emotionality profile has upon attitude towards the learning process at Romanian preadolescents. The research' outcomes allowed us to see some features of emotionality at Romanian preadolescents and how these features influence the pupil' attitudes towards learning process.

Keywords: emotionality, attitudes towards learning process, sociability, preadolescents, classroom management

1. Theoretical backgrounds

Over the years, the psychologists have tried to reveal the dynamic of human psychic. Lately, the affectivity has become an area in which researches have been increased.

The affectivity has a crucial role in how interpersonal relationships are structured. It also has a crucial role in the process of social communication where emotional evaluations and responses is related to affective experiences.

The affectivity is closely connected with the dynamics of its manifestations in a complex construct generically called emotionality. Emotionality arises from dynamic interactions of structural cognitions with the emotional ideas that are developed in the field experience of (experienced by each person sau in the field of experience of each person) each person. These interactions are reflected over the Ego and offer him new dimensions of movement and evolution.(apud. Golu, 2007, p.644)
In other words, emotionality is a circular process which is realized through social interactions. Those social interactions are perceived and affective integrated.

Emotionality is deeply involved in the structure of interpersonal relations: sympathy– antipathy, aggressiveness-tolerance, friendship- hate, in determining the psychosocial climate in groups, classrooms and communities - trust-mistrust, cohesion-tension, harmony-conflict.

The classroom dynamic is also shaped by the pupils’ emotionality and it favours the appearance of different attitudes towards the learning process.

Around 1974, Thomas Killman developed a theory in the human resources field, stipulating that in each activity a person will develop 5 types of behaviours/attitudes: competition, collaboration, compromise, avoidance and accommodation. Based on this theory and taking into consideration that learning is one of the four types of human activity, starting with 2006, in Romania researches have been performed focusing on those types of attitudes throughout the labour process (see Urea, 2008), through training process with different types of pupils (Urea, 2012).

2. The structure of research

The experts in the education field have revealed the importance of the emotionality in the process of social interaction in establishing personal relationships that would allow to each person different levels of groups’ integration. In classroom management during the teaching act, the pupils’ emotionality is in a continuous dynamic and will produce specific behavioural responses. So, this situation raised the following question: how does the pupils’ emotionality, as an engine that guides the way personal relationships are established, will influence their attitudes towards the learning process?

To answer this question we developed an investigative research that had the aim to investigate the influences of pupils’ emotionality upon their attitudes towards the learning process; the wider goal was to thus design special strategies that would determine pupils’ better emotional control and would reduce the school failure.

Our research focused on two major objectives: a) investigation of the pupil’s emotionality; b) investigation of the preadolescents’ attitudes towards the learning process. We started from the following hypothesis: taking into consideration the preadolescent’ personality features, we will find specific influences of emotionality upon the attitudes towards the learning process.

3. The target group. Characteristics of the investigated population

Our research had an initial testing procedure on 30 preadolescents and the Cronbach Alpha index (α= .652) obtained allowed us to proceed to an extended psychological research. In our psychological extended investigation there were two stages: 1) investigation of the preadolescent’ emotionality features; 2) investigation of the dynamic of the attitudes manifested in the learning process.

We performed our research on 198 preadolescents aged 11-14 years (with mean of 13.15 years and median =13.02 years), 88 boys (44%) and 110 girls (56%) from three schools in Bucharest. The pupils’ participation to this investigation was volunteer and with their parents’ agreements. Distribution is uniform, skewness index values of 1.050, and with a standard error of skewness of .325, and kurtosis index values of .478, and with a standard error of kurtosis of .581.

The schools were selected according to the following criteria: a) each provides educational services to 2500 families; b) each school enrolled over 100 students in gymnasium and has a staff of at least 50 teachers.

4. Methods of research

In our research we used the following psychological instruments: a) The Romanian Questionnaire of Emotionality (fidelity index= .687, test-retest index=. 751); b) The Thomas- Kilmann Questionnaire adapted in 2009 by R. Urea for Romanian preadolescents (fidelity index=.675, test-retest index=.725); c) systematic observation method and statistical processing methods.
5. Research’s findings

5.1. Investigation the students’/pupils’ emotionality features

We used The Romanian Questionnaire of Emotionality that was built on two major directions: the first direction designates the orientation of the response to the social environment through the report extroversion-introversion evaluated; the second direction designates the stability and consistency of the response to the social environment. Each direction was investigated through a set of variables. By combining those two directions four structures will result: stable- extrovert, stable- introvert, instable- extrovert, instable- introvert.

The first aspect that we will analyse will be the dynamic of the emotionality features. The data collected are presented in table no.1

Table no1. The emotionality components at investigated Romanian preadolescents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of subjects</th>
<th>Sensuality</th>
<th>Sentimentalism</th>
<th>Fidelity</th>
<th>Passion</th>
<th>Independence</th>
<th>Sociability</th>
<th>Ambition</th>
<th>Combativeveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>198</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the beginning, we notice, that at our investigated subjects, the dominant component in emotionality profile is “sociability”. This situation is not surprising if we take into consideration that our subjects are eager to enlarge and diversify their interpersonal relationships and increase their social experiences, to test their criteria for Alter social perception.

For a proper understanding of the phenomena mentioned above, we should analyse in the emotionality profile, the presence of the components situated on second and third position. We notice that the independence is present on the second position. This situation suggests, that they are able to develop proper behaviours designed to ensure, on medium and long term, affirmation of their internal capacities, in different contexts. On the third position “the combativeveness” is present and it reflects the generation gap and an intense spirit of challenging all the rules that adults impose; that will also determine an intense development of social and emotional assessment criteria for personal relationships developed in the intimate space.

Beside the analyses of the details of emotionality profile, we are able to determine the adaptative emotionality profile at our investigated subjects. Data are presented in table no.2

Table no.2. Emotionality profile types at investigated Romanian preadolescents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of subjects</th>
<th>Stable- extrovert</th>
<th>Stable- introvert</th>
<th>Instable- extrovert</th>
<th>Instable- introvert</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>198</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can see that we find all the four emotionality profile types at our investigated subjects, with a dominant of stable- extrovert profile type. This typology is not surprising and it is a dynamic one. It reflects not only specific interpersonal behavioural patterns that are structures in preadolescence, but it also explains the mosaic behaviours that these subjects produce in emotional context situations, in particular the alternation of between the of internal withdrawal with those of intense socialization.

We can say that the emotional profile type that the preadolescents develop is a constant expression of knowing Alter process and it is the fundament of future, intimate social relationships.
5.2. Investigation of students’ pupil’s attitude toward the learning process

The next step of our research was to investigate the pupils’ attitude toward the learning process. We used Thomas Killman’s Questionnaire for investigating the attitude towards the learning process among Romanian preadolescents. This instrument focuses on revealing the following types of attitudes: competition, collaboration, compromise, avoidance and accommodation. The data collected are presented in Table no.3

Table no.3. The types of attitudes towards the learning process at investigated Romanian preadolescents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subjects</th>
<th>Dominant types of attitudes towards the learning process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>198</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the data collected in Table 3, we notice that most of our investigated preadolescents developed the collaboration attitude in a dominant manner in their learning process. This situation reveals that, throughout the learning process, good partnership exists between preadolescents in classroom management. In fact, this partnership points that between them, depending on current learning tasks, the preadolescents constantly evaluate and self-evaluated school performance on grounds of merit and quality; the preadolescent also start to develop particular interests and learning strategies toward future professional area and intended career.

The statistical analyses revealed significant direct correlation between the emotional profile type and the attitude that the preadolescent developed in the learning process: a) between stable- extrovert emotional type and the collaboration attitude developed (r = .781, p = .05); b) between instable- extrovert emotional type and the competition attitude developed (r = .764, p = .05); c) between stable- introvert emotional type and the accommodation attitude developed (r = .794, p = .01); d) between instable- introvert emotional type and the compromise attitude developed (r = .656, p = .05).

The statistical analyses also allowed us to compute the kurtosis index (.894) which revealed that the features we found are relevant for our investigated subjects as a group.

We can say that the attitudes the preadolescents developed in the learning process are an expression of their emotional profile type developed in the learning environment

6. Conclusions

From the beginning of our research we wanted to reveal at Romanian preadolescents the role that the emotionality profile has on their attitudes towards the learning process.

Based on the statistical analyses, we found that the Cronbach Alpha index has the value .831. This value is a sign of the high reliability of the psychological instruments that were used in our research.

The data collected by us allow us to establish the following typology regarding the investigated phenomena: a) Type A is represented by those who have stable- extrovert emotional profile type, the dominant component of emotional profile type is sociability and develop during the learning process collaboration attitude; b) Type B is represented by those who have stable- introvert emotional profile type, the dominant component of emotional profile type is independence and develop during the learning process accommodation attitude; c) Type C is represented by those who have instable- extrovert emotional profile type, the dominant component of emotional profile type is combativeness and develop during the learning process accommodation attitude; d) Type D is represented by those who have instable- introvert emotional profile type, the dominant component of emotional profile type is fidelity and develop during the learning process compromise attitude.

Such typology and the findings of the research suggest:

1. At Romanian preadolescents, there is a direct influence of their emotionality profile type upon their attitude towards learning process.
2. The teachers should pay more attention to the emotional aspect of classroom management when they assess the pupils and in particular when they social valorise the pupils’ personality potential
3. We can develop special programs for increasing the internal consistent of school group by developing learning strategies that will allow these pupils to get social and personal satisfaction regarding their school performance.
Based on such a typology revealed by our investigated subjects, it is necessary that the future researches in this area should be focused on revealing differential influences of preadolescents emotional profile types upon their efficiency of social and professional adaptation, upon their process of making social decision.

References


