THE VALUE OF FORMAL EDUCATION IN THE PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS

Anca Manuela EGERĂU, P.h.D.,
Associate professor PhD, University of Aurel Vlaicu from Arad
anca_petroi@yahoo.com
Editha Margareta COȘARBĂ, P.h.D.,
University Assistant PhD student, University of Aurel Vlaicu from Arad
ecosarba@yahoo.com
Henrietta TORKOS, P.h.D.,
University Assitant PhD, University of Aurel Vlaicu from Arad
torkos_henriette@yahoo.com

Abstract: *Education has a decisive role on the personal development of the individual. It is especially important that from an early age the individual should have an effective education that will reflect on his entire life. Along with education, the internal and external factors that condition the development of the individual also play an important role. Internal factors are heredity and psychosocial and biological influences and the main external factor is the environment. A relationship of interdependence and mutual and continuous correlation is established between the internal and external factors of development. Each factor helps and determines the formation and development of the other in order to achieve the goals of education. The school offers the student the framework for development, training, socialization starting from the knowledge of the individual and age peculiarities specific to each stage of development, by designing a strategy and by carrying out a rigorous didactic approach, based on a program, planning, educational resources, methods. and didactic strategies aimed at achieving the objectives and the proposed goal. The present article shows the results of a brief research on the personal development of pupils and some elements of personality through instructive-educational activities within the frame of the formal education. The main instrument used was the questionnaire, applied to a number 73 4th grade pupils from a class from Arad County. The questions*

relate to the experiences of pupils in formal education and especially to the way in which they perceive the changes, events, learning and socialization that take place in these years and the way all these connect to the development of their personality through education.

Introduction

School, as a specific formal institution, designed to train young generations, justifies its existence and role, through the processes it leads and whose result - the man trained as a personality - becomes the primary factor of social progress. The education achieved through the school transforms the student from the object into its subject. With the formation of self-awareness, systematic feedback determines the student's cooperative attitude with his educator.

Teachers should know how to capitalize on the various learning experiences of students from non-formal or informal education and find ways, ways to capitalize on their own learning experiences outside of formal learning, to energize and streamline teaching processes which they build. Because students feel valued, they gain confidence, they learn to communicate with others, they have the chance to learn authentically and deeply, from several perspectives on a topic, to internalize various learning experiences and to clarify their own values and attitudes towards knowledge, internalize a continuum between what they learn at school and what they learn in other contexts, non-formal or informal. Teachers should share their own learning experiences, resulting in a certain attitude towards knowledge and an intellectual work style, to create a stimulating climate for students, the satisfaction of using their full cognitive and metacognitive potential in the teaching process.

Formal education is especially important because it shows the irrevocable effects of education on the formation and development of an entire society. An uneducated child is just like a whiteboard. It has no essence, no values and, obviously, it will be a maladaptation of society. For, in addition to the own needs that education nourishes, education also "feeds" the needs of the society of which the child belongs. Every modern, evolved and democratic

society wants its people to be educated, which is why formal education is free up to a certain point.

Theoretical foundation

Education is a holistic process that cannot be limited only to schools. It is a lifelong process. Ordinary events in our daily lives educate us in one way or another. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the existence of human beings is fruitless without education.

An educated person has the ability to change the world, as he is full of life, confidence and is assured of making the right decisions at the right time. Personality development does not mean enriching a person's prospects by getting good grades, but a suite of many other things. Personality development is self-awareness. It includes all the traits it possesses, its strengths and weaknesses. (Cristea, 2000)

Education is the most vital institution in the social world that has as components economic, political, religious and other institutions. As an essential component of society's education, it is then linked to other institutions, including political ones. The object of education is to awaken and develop in the child those physical, intellectual and moral states which are required of him by his society as a whole and by the environment in which he is specially destined. Education helps to develop the qualities of an individual, such as his physical, mental and emotional make-up, as well as his temperament and character, which is called personality. (Cucoș, 1995)

Education is a conscious and deliberate effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop the potential for it to have the spiritual power of religion, self-control, personality, intelligence, nobility and the skills necessary for it. society itself. (Piaget, 1980)

Concepts that education cannot contribute to human change have emerged since the slavery period, when the interests of the ruling classes were thus defended. At the same time as theories proclaiming heredity as a decisive factor in the formation of man, doctrines and doctrines have appeared in the literature claiming that the environment determines everything and nothing can be achieved through education. Therefore, the environment would fatally determine human becoming. These pessimistic theories, which deny the power of education, have also led to the denial of education itself. Thus, in the late 1800s, instead of pedagogy, pedology appeared, not as a science of education,

but as a pseudo-science based on the theory that the cause of school failure is heredity and the environment. (Siebert, 2001)

Today, few psychologists would be willing to state unequivocally that development is due solely to one or another of the factors listed above - it is clear that both heredity and the environment and education contribute to human development. Heredity and the environment, in a perfect interaction and unity, constantly promote human development, but not spontaneously, but in a structure with a new, conscious function, a new factor in human formation - education. From this perspective we can say that education controls and organizes the influences of the environment on the individual, adapting them to his age and individual characteristics. That being said, education makes the connection and mediates between the potential for development, proposed by heredity, and the offer of possibilities of the environment. Education harmonizes the heredity-environment interaction and creates a favorable climate for updating genetic potential, which is why we can say that education is a human activity specialized in development. (Mândâcanu, 2010)

Formal education is usually divided into stages such as: preschool or kindergarten, primary school, secondary school and then college, university or apprenticeship. The right to education has been recognized by governments and policies in all countries of the world. In most regions, education is compulsory until a certain age. There is a movement for education reform and, in particular, for evidence-based education, with global initiatives aimed at achieving the goal of sustainable development, which promotes quality education for all.

Historical view and modern perspectives on the formal education

Education began in prehistory, as adults trained young people in the knowledge and skills considered necessary in their society. In pre-literacy societies, this was done orally and by imitation. The story passed on knowledge, values and skills from one generation to the next. As cultures began to expand their knowledge beyond skills that could be easily learned through imitation, formal education developed. Schools existed in Egypt during the Middle Kingdom. Plato founded the Academy in Athens, the first higher education institution in Europe. The city of Alexandria in Egypt, founded in 330 BC, became the successor of Athens as the intellectual cradle of ancient Greece. There, the Great Library of Alexandria was built in the 3rd century BC. European civilizations suffered a collapse of literacy and organization after the fall of Rome in the EC 476. In China, Confucius of Lu State was the country's most influential ancient philosopher, whose

educational outlook continues to influence Chinese and neighboring societies. Korea, Japan and Vietnam. Confucius gathered disciples and searched in vain for a leader who would adopt his ideals of good governance, but his Analects were written by his followers and continued to influence East Asian education in modern times. (Miroiu, 1998)

After the fall of Rome, the Catholic Church became the sole custodian of literacy scholarships in Western Europe. The church established cathedral schools in the early Middle Ages as centers of advanced education. Some of these units eventually evolved into medieval universities and the forerunners of many modern universities in Europe. During the Middle Ages, Chartres Cathedral was home to the famous and influential Chartres Cathedral School. Medieval universities in Western Christendom have been well integrated throughout Western Europe, encouraging freedom of inquiry, and producing a wide variety of natural scientists and philosophers, including Thomas Aquinas of the University of Naples, Robert Grosseteste of Oxford University. , an early exponent of a systematic method of scientific experimentation, and Saint Albert the Great, a pioneer of biological research in the field. Founded in 1088, the University of Bologna is considered the first and oldest continuously operating university.

Throughout life, people are subject to choices. The choices we make can have a huge impact on our future. A special role in our choices is played by the reason we make that choice. Personality, interests also determine the direction of the election. The environment also plays an important role because we are often limited in space and therefore we have to make choices based on the social and cultural conditions specific to our situation.

Personal development and the role of education on the personality traits

Personality is defined as the characteristic sets of behaviors, cognitions, and emotional patterns that evolve from biological and environmental factors. Although there is no agreed upon general definition of personality, most theories focus on motivation and psychological interactions with the environment. Trait-based personality theories define personality as the traits that predict a person's behavior. On the other hand, more behavioral approaches define personality through learning and habits. However, most theories consider personality to be relatively stable.

Personality refers to individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling, and behavior. The study of personality focuses on two broad areas: One is the understanding of individual differences in certain personality

traits, such as sociability or irritability. The other is to understand how the different parts of a person come together as a whole. (Schwartz, et all, 2008)

The term personality has been defined in many ways, but as a psychological concept, two main meanings have evolved. The first refers to the consistent differences that exist between people: in this sense, the study of personality focuses on the classification and explanation of relatively stable human psychological characteristics. The second meaning emphasizes those qualities which make all men the same and which distinguish the psychological man from other species; he urges the personality theorist to look for those regularities among all the people that define human nature, as well as the factors that influence the course of life. This duality can help explain the two directions that personality studies have taken: on the one hand, the study of increasingly specific qualities in humans and, on the other hand, the search for the organized totality of psychological functions that emphasize the interaction between organics. And psychological events inside people and those social and biological events that surround them. The dual definition of personality is intertwined in most of the topics discussed below. It should be noted, however, that no definition of personality has found universal acceptance in the field. (Roman & Dughi, 2007)

Behavioral theories suggest that personality is the result of the interaction between the individual and the environment. Behavioral theorists study observable and measurable behaviors, often ignoring the role of inner thoughts and feelings. Behavioral theorists include B.F. Skinner and John B. Watson. Humanistic theories emphasize the importance of free will and individual experience in developing a personality. Humanist theorists include Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow.

The idea that people fall into certain categories of personality types in relation to bodily characteristics has intrigued many modern psychologists, as well as their counterparts among the ancients. However, the idea that people need to fall into one or another rigid personality class has largely been rejected. Here are considered two general sets of theories, humoral and morphological. (John et all, 2008)

Development is a complex process that involves irreversible transformations in nature and society that lead to qualitative and quantitative upward change even if there are still phases of regression along this continuum. In humans, development is a process by which new functional structures are created that differentiate behavior leading to better adaptation to

the environment. Human development is a permanent, lifelong process, which is why J. P. Tanner calls it secular development. By development, in general, is meant a complex process of transition from lower to upper, from simple to complex, from old to new, through a succession of stages, stages, each stage representing a functional unit more or less cohesive, with its own qualitative specificity.

The transition from one stage to another involves both quantitative accumulations and qualitative leaps, these being in a mutual conditioning. Personality development is manifested by the incorporation and establishment of new behaviors and attitudes that allow active adaptation to the requirements of the natural and socio-cultural environment. Development allows and facilitates the establishment of increasingly differentiated and subtle relationships of the human being with the environment in which it lives and is formed. (Dafinoiu, 2001)

Education controls and organizes the influences of the environment on the individual, adapting them to his age and individual characteristics, both in regular classes, as in special educational situations. (Roman, 2018) That being said, education makes the connection and mediates between the potential for development, proposed by heredity, and the offer of possibilities of the environment. Education harmonizes the heredity-environment interaction and creates a favorable climate for updating genetic potential, which is why we can say that education is a human activity specialized in development. (Balaș, 2019) Without denying the importance of hereditary and environmental factors, however, we are entitled to say that education, which includes a complex system of actions and influences of a formative and informative nature, has a major role in mental development and in the formation of human personality.

The source of development is, as is well known, the internal contradictions that arise as a result of external demands. Creating the means to overcome and resolve these contradictions is primarily a matter of education. On the one hand, education provides the contents to be assimilated, on the other hand it is concerned with how to assimilate them, the formation of human capacities to not be confused by obstacles or unfavorable influences and to be receptive. to the positive influences of the environment. (Enăchescu, 2008)

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Research methodology

This research is a benchmark for teachers who want to learn about the role of education in the development of students' personality: from definitions of concept, structure, functions, theories, particularities and classifications, to its importance in the life of young students. By conducting this research, we aimed to analyze the current situation of the Romanian school, at primary school level, in terms of organizing instructive educational activities, and how they may or may not develop students' personality significantly.

The objectives formulated for the proposed research are:

1. Bibliographic documentation in order to obtain the information necessary to carry out the research.

2. Definition and description of education.

3. Defining and describing personality.

4. The analysis of the existing relations between the development of the personality of the small schoolchildren and the instructive-educational activities used in formal educational systems from the educational institutions from Arad.

5. Design / design and application of questionnaires, which collect and capture both qualitative and quantitative data, in order to measure the degree to which the formal education offered in the application school, in the chosen class, can develop some component parts of the students' personality.

6. Analysis of the results obtained in order to improve the instructive educational programs offered at the application class

Research hypothesis

Participation in instructive educational activities within formal educational institutions, contributes significantly to the development of the personality of students in primary education.

Variables

The variables represented by the subjects can be delimited in two categories:

• variables that describe the participants: group, gender, age, class.

• variables that describe the presence, absence or level of development of their personality.

Independent variable

The independent variable consists in the diversification of the opportunities for the formation of the personality of the students from the primary school, by participating in instructive educational activities within the formal education.

Dependent variable

The dependent variables show changes in the development of the students' personality, or of some elements within it, by participating in instructive educational activities offered within the formal educational systems.

Subject sample

The sample of subjects we worked with was established based on criteria and taking into account the chronological age of the subjects (schoolchildren aged 10 to 11 years). We worked with a number of 73 subjects. The subjects were selected from a primary school in Arad County, from 4th grade classes.

The sample of subjects, subject to research, consists of 73 students, aged between 9 and 10 years. In general, the pupils of the 4 classes come from families with a good financial situation. Most students attend school regularly, so there is a good informal relationship in the classroom. They have a well-developed material base; with a well-organized classroom and the teaching materials they need for each learning activity.

Both traditional and interactive teaching-learning methods, typical of formal education systems in Romania, were used in this research. Considering that the research was carried out in two 4th grade classes within a school in Arad County, the learning consisted of using the contents given by the school curricula for this age level.

Methods and instruments of research

The research tool that was used in this research was the questionnaire. Through this, we proposed to investigate how fourth graders who participated in the research relate to the primary school cycle and especially how they

perceive the changes, events, learning and socialization that take place in these years.

To this end, we have designed and applied a questionnaire for fourth graders, which included 18 mixed questions, with open and closed items, through which we wanted to find out how pupils who completed the questionnaire, developed as a representation the school in general, and especially the way in which the educational activities within the educational institution they attended and still attend, positively or negatively influenced the formation of their personality, the development and their becoming. In this tool, we collected more qualitative data, in which students were allowed to freely and anonymously answer questions about their training so far.

The created questionnaire followed the actual structure with two parts: the introductory part and the actual questions. In the first part, we motivated the participating students, the need to prepare and apply it, we have specified the title of the research in which we have used the answers received by them, making clarifications and comments on how students should answer the questions in the questionnaire, emphasizing the sincerity of their answers.

In the second part of the questionnaire, we asked 18 questions clearly and concisely, using language accessible to students, even using images in which students had to find a suitable title. A total of 73 pupils completed the questionnaire, freely choosing to do so, and were not pressured in any way to complete this task. They answered all the questions in the questionnaire, these being short and accessible questions, thus providing sincere and short answers, as they liked.

Findings and results

During the research, 73 answers were recorded in the questionnaire, in the first stage, out of a number of 73 students participating in the research. Of the 73 participants, 52.2% were female and 47.8% were male.
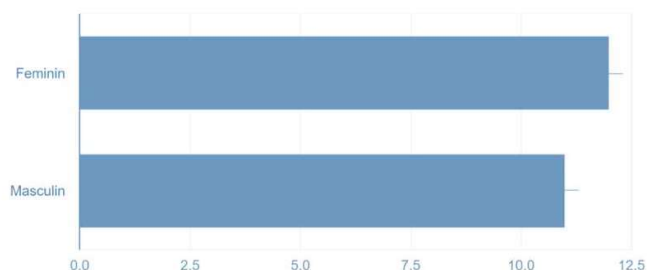
Chart no. 1. Gender of participant pupils

Regarding the most interesting questions and answers of the research, we are going to present some. One question of interest was: *What was the happiest time spent in the 5 years of school?* The students' answers are presented as follows:

First day of school
I liked it the most when we celebrated 500 days of school
The happiest moment of these 5 years was March 8 this year.
When I went on a trip
The most beautiful moment was when I went to class two years ago on a trip, I felt fine with my colleagues and the teacher
My birthday is the happiest moment
When my colleagues applauded at the puppet show
When I came to school
When I was applauded
The happiest moment spent in the 5 years of school was when we went to see the fire station in a different town
When I first took A+
The celebration of 300 days of school
The happiest moment was when I started school
When I met new colleagues
The happiest moment was the Christmas celebration with the class
I had a happy time in all the classes
The happiest moment of the 5 years of school was when we turned 500 days of school. It was a very beautiful moment.
Going to school physically, socializing and learning new things
Doing extracurricular activities

The best moment was when I first arrived at school

Table nb. 1. Participants answers regarding the happiest times in school

From the answers given by the students, it can be seen that the main moments that developed their personality were: socializing, physically participating in classes at the expense of classes in the online version, the big moments of celebration in school, extra-curricular activities. made with the class and the moments when they were motivated and praised after achieving good and very good grades and the first day of school.

The next question in the questionnaire related to the topic of interest was: *What is your favorite school subject?* An open question was used. Of those who answered this question, most argue that Romanian language and sports are their favorite subjects. (21% and 8.7% respectively).

Another question in the questionnaire of particular importance for the topic was: *What did you learn from your favorite school subject?*

Respondents filled in with free phrases or expressions. Most of the answers were related to the content criterion of learning, respectively the part of development at the cognitive level. Another type of response from the 73 participants was health and social development. Unfortunately, as it was shown in other studies, transversal competencies were not mentioned in response to this question. (Torkos & Pasinszky, 2021) Some of the answers are shown in the table below:

I learned to calculate
New ways of calculating
Gather, subtract, multiply and divide, etc.
I learned about maintaining health
That we need to keep our bodies healthy
Many multiplications
We learned from sports that we need to keep our bodies healthy
I learned the multiplication table, division, problem solving, and more.
Many stories
I developed my curiosity
My favorite subject was learning parts of speech and parts of sentences
How to add, multiply, subtract, divide
I broadened my artistic horizon
Many calculations
Spelling and punctuation
To think logically

Reverse methods
I learned about the counties of Romania
I learned to draw
About our ancestors and their deeds

Table nb. 2. Students' answers regarding the knowledge, skills and attitudes learned through their favorite subjects

Using the following question from the questionnaire: *Tell me what you think is more important — to have a healthy body, a good mind, a good heart, or respectful behavior? Or all of them? Why?* we wanted to know the opinion of fourth graders about their values in life. Most of them considered all the elements to be important. The arguments for choosing this answer refer mainly to those around them and then to themselves. This shows that pupils are at an age when socializing, relationships, the image and opinion of others is very important to them. Some answers also made it clear that they are able to differentiate between good and improper behaviors, and are trying to harmonize their own values with those developed through education.

We also wanted to find out in this questionnaire the significance of homework for each of the students, because this aspect is present in formal education, in the daily activity of pupils, giving them the opportunity to develop and educate through their realization. Also, a second question on this topic was whether students believe that adults have homework. We considered this question important because it refers to lifelong learning and the willingness of students to do so. From their answers, it can be seen that pupils link lifelong learning to certain professional categories.

We have formulated a question about the recommendations that pupils would make to adults, teachers, parents, the immediate social environment. We gave the answer to this question the free answer, and the analysis of all the answers provided is in the chart below:
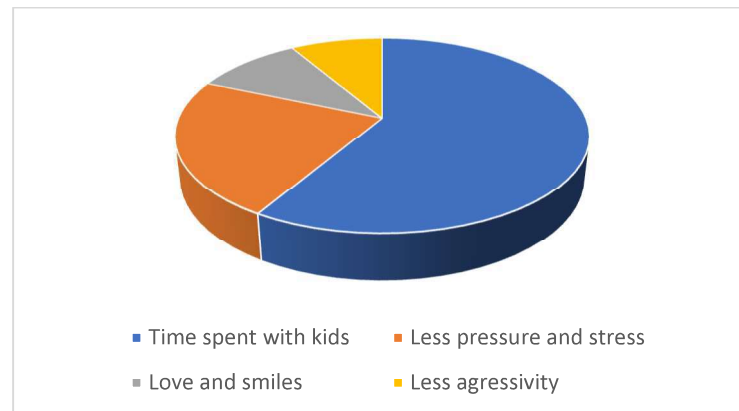
Chart no. 2. Pupil's recommendations for adults

The highest percentage in was the time spent more with children, in second place is less work and implicitly less stress, hence the fact that the choice of job from the perspective of respondents is directly related to the level of stress. Approximately a similar percentage of responses chose more attention, smiles and love, and less verbal and physical aggression.

A reference question for the chosen topic referred to the professional perspectives of pupils. This question is of particular relevance in the present research, because the development of personality through education also means a good choice for the future career, based on the skills that were developed during schooling. All the answers are listed in the following chart:
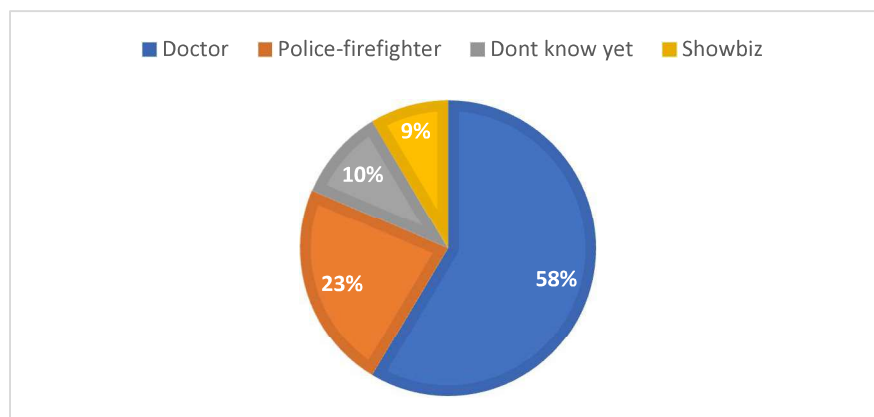

Chart no. 3. Future perspectives at the end of 4th grade

The next question in the questionnaire was: *What do you think the activities (both at school and during extracurricular activities) that you have participated in so far have helped you?*

Among the answers provided were listed the following:
• Creativity
• Learning
• Development
• Socialization
• Key competencies
• Transversal skills
• Life skills.

To the question: If you were to give three pieces of advice about a friend's behavior in society, what would they be? The answers were presented as follows:
• Politeness
• Sincerity
• Altruism
• Respect
• Honestly
• Kindness
• Learning.

Pupils' answers can be interpreted as showing values of individuals who, through education, can develop good traits that prepare them for life.

80% of the students participating in the questionnaire say that they enjoy going to school. These answers are gratifying, because at the end of the study cycle, there is the habit and lack of enthusiasm of the students. Two students claim that they do not like going to school at all, and they do this out of obligation, and only one student scored 2 on this question. Three students chose a score of 4, which means that even if not completely, but they gladly go to school.

The question: *How important do you consider school subjects to be for your education?* Makes the connection between the emotional side of the questionnaire and its cognitive side. 80%, chose to give a score of 5 points, thereby motivating the fact that the subjects they study are very important for their development. A percentage of 13.3% gave a score of 4, which means that the subjects studied in the formal education system are considered to be important. Only one student chose to score 1 and score 3.

How motivated do you feel to learn new things? was the next question, through which we wanted to test not only the students' motivation, but also the degree of curiosity they have at the end of the fundamental acquisition cycle, regarding the contents of the school curricula. Curiosity is that interactive feature of a being through which it spontaneously explores its ambience and

seeks changes in its structure or dynamics. Pupils, have raised *curiosity* to the rank of fundamental quality and puts it at the base of all his own connections and implications.

Do you like to express your opinion usually in front of your colleagues? was the question that tests the courage to initiate opinions and communication situations at the class level. The competency behind this is critical thinking. The expression of personal opinion is one of the fundamental freedoms of man. It is the defining quality of any person; the idea of life, of the actions of those around you, but also of the problems of society. The school should teach us about the power of this right and how we should use it. For example, we should learn how to structure a discourse on a particular topic, how to express our opinions in public, but also how to listen and discuss the opinions of others. Even if there are certain discussion groups in some schools, they are still not enough because participation is reserved for a relatively small number of students, the selection often being made on the basis of skills already formed in this regard. This competence shows a personality element of the students that can be developed if the communication within the group or the class is encouraged. A large majority of those who participated say that they have the courage to express their own opinions and opinions towards their colleagues. This shows that formal education develops certain elements within the personality of students.

What would you like the school to be like in the 5th grade? is the last question pupils answered as it follows:
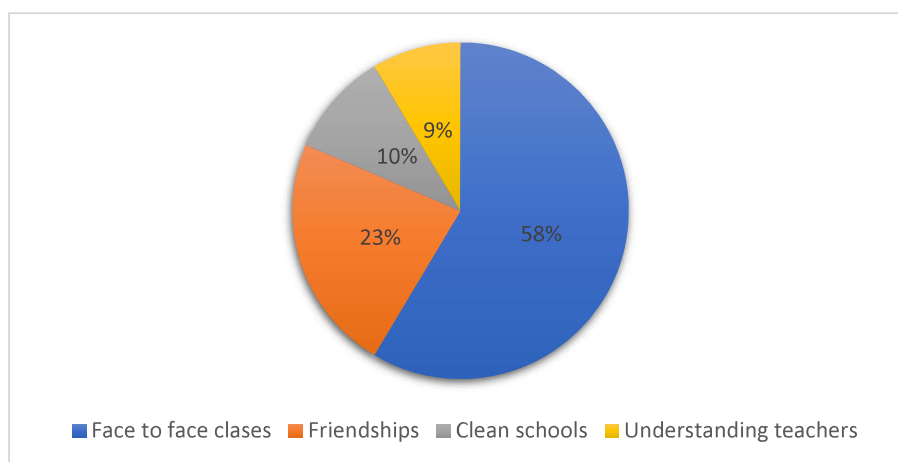

Chart no. 4. Future perspectives at the end of 4th grade

Most respondents, 58%, would choose a school where the courses take place face to face, meanwhile 23% want to make more friends. An almost equal percentage of respondents believe that in the next cycle of studies, teachers should be more understanding and the school cleaner.

Conclusions

After observing the students throughout the study and analyzing the ways in which universities prepare and this way contribute to the development of future teachers, we found the following:

• formal education has a large number of pluses. It tends to increase the qualification and can be used to accumulate an impressive resume. In addition, the person who hires a formally qualified person knows for sure that the person knows the subject well and can be hired. He / she has the necessary expertise to do a certain task, and this gives the individual an excellent job, financial security and, in turn, a bright future.

• more than knowledge, it instills self-confidence (among other things), which is essential for a successful future.

• develops intelligence, curiosity, passion, character, motivation, intuition, writing skills and the ability to make intelligent value judgments.

Formal education is an important part of children's daily lives and - together with the family - is the most important source of children's educational progress in most countries. Therefore, parents' attitudes towards school and involvement in school activities have long been studied as an important factor in children's educational progress. Parents' involvement in the formal education of their children is positively related to the achievement of their children: parents of high-performing children tend to have more positive attitudes towards school, participate in school functions, volunteer at their children's schools and get to know better teachers than the parents of underperforming children. (Roman, 2019)

Some theorists have pointed out that families with higher socio-economic status are more comfortable with the cultural environment of schools and thus find it easier to address teachers and school administrators than families with lower socio-economic status. These barriers to parental involvement are even greater when parents are a disadvantaged minority group and have had previous contacts with school officials who have been negative. (Albulescu, 2009)

Formal education is essential for the development of a nation. Only by implementing a formal learning system can any country hope to develop a well-informed society and progress towards achieving societal goals. This belief prevailed in Europe, Britain and the United States in the 19th century, and during this period the basic principles of a formal learning system were established and developed. Social problems threatened to destroy the very fabric of society, and education was seen as a powerful solution. (Stanculescu, 2019)

Personal development can also be seen as a cycle or a spiral. The similarity with education is striking. Both are introduced through a process of internal analysis, reflection and questioning. In the same way that the student uses this step to take responsibility for any change in the knowledge base, in personal development the individual gives authority to the changes that will take place in performance and attitude. Personal development can be encouraged and assisted, but because it has the potential to change one's perception and self-perspective, those who would facilitate the process in others must do so ethically. (Dughi & Roman, 2008; Roman & Coşarbă, 2020)

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