

Summary

The Teacher (Not) Supporting the Pupil - the Importance of Teachers' Social Competences

The monograph focuses on the role of form teachers in supporting their pupils and helping them cope with stressful, difficult situations, and also decision-making processes. These actions require mindfulness, identifying the pupil's needs and knowing his/her educational and life situation, motivating them to take action, and also application of various assistance strategies, primarily based on effective communication with children and young people. All these actions require extensive social competences that the form teacher can utilise in the processes of supporting students.

The monograph provides a theoretical overview of the processes of support, assistance and counselling in the educational system, with particular emphasis placed on the role of the form teacher, who should play a significant role in these activities due to their frequent and less formalised contact with pupils. The assumptions concerning the role of the form teacher in supporting pupils are presented, and the real state of affairs in this respect is referred to. Both the expectations and reality are illustrated using fragments of narratives from various individuals in the educational context – pupils, students who referred to their form teachers from secondary school, and teachers themselves. The primary aim of these reflections was to indicate the processes of help and support created by the form teacher and addressed to students within the school environment.

The monograph also presents the findings of studies from many research perspectives (carried out in various research paradigms, over several years). This includes the results of surveys (with the use of questionnaires) in which adolescents respond to selected aspects of the role of form teachers, and point out their evaluation and emotions connected with their form tutor and his or hers behaviour in view of the particular individual and class problems faced by pupils.

The level of form teachers' competence and selected aspects of how they function socially was also diagnosed using a psychometric tool – the Social Competence Profile (Matczak, Martowska, 2013). In order to broaden the research context and obtain a comparison group, it was also decided to use the aforementioned questionnaire to diagnose social competences in a group of teaching specialisation students.

The research results presented here illustrate the (non)supportive role of form teachers, taking into account their social competences as diagnosed from the pupils' and teachers' perspective.

The unsatisfactory assessments that pupils gave to their form teachers and the indifference they frequently declare to their teachers, as well as the rather low level of teachers' social competences that was diagnosed all served as starting points for reflecting on the possibility of developing these competences in the context of building a culture of trust in schools and improving the communication processes within them.

The publication is addressed to theoreticians dealing with education, including such sub-disciplines of pedagogy as counselling, school pedagogy, and pedeutology, as well as to practitioners and decision-makers influencing the shape of the school, and, above all, to teachers and students preparing to take up professional roles in education.

Translated by Rob Pagett