

THE KINDERGARTEN-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP VERSUS THE SOCIALIZATION OF PRESCHOOLERS IN AN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT*

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Abstract

The involvement of parents in the educational activities of the kindergarden is ideal for a good development in the entire educational process and what better way to get involved than through a kindergarden-family educational partnership project, where the triad of teacher-parents-preschoolers work together for a preschool growth process. The physical presence of the parents in the activities of the preschooler in the group, their active involvement with the aim of developing the socialization of the modern preschooler, the awareness of the importance of the development of socialization from the preschool age are paramount among parents. The educator –parents relationship, through educational partnership is strengthened and the results are not long in coming.

Key words: *Preschool education; Kindergarden; Family; Partnership; Socialization.*

1. Introduction

Preschool is the period of the initial formation of the child's personality, the period of the appearance of the first relationships and attitudes that constitute a higher level of organization of the child's mental life. In preschool we will encounter a greater organization and stabilization of behaviors, a fact possible due to the essential changes that occur in the structure of mental activity.

The family occupies a central place in the multitude of determining factors of the individual's evolution. The child is particularly receptive to positive or negative

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influences exerted on him. The child must be socialized and shaped, and the foundation of his personality is achieved, to a large extent, within his family, which concentrates his first affective and social universe.

Kindergarten is the child's first life experience in society. This institution places it in a new framework through its dimensions and content. Here the child learns about activities and objects that stimulate his taste for investigation and action, challenges him to express himself and proposes, initially, engagement in group social relations. Adapting its methods to the particular forms of the child's mental life, the kindergarten tries to respond to the specific activity of each age and to identify the means and activities necessary for a complex development of the child's forces in order to mature them. Kindergarten-family partnership ensures the coherence of educational influences and all the factors that act on children is a major wish and must be realized.

2. Theoretical approaches regarding educational partnership and socialization of preschoolers

According to specialized literature, partnership is a form of association (interhuman, intergroup, interinstitutional) based on a system of relationships between people, groups of people, institutional structures, institutions or organizations characterized by: mutual trust; involvement, motivation and mutual support; collaboration and mutual support; assumption of mutual responsibilities with the aim of achieving certain common objectives in common actions (Bocoş *et al.*, 2011).

If we are to ask ourselves how a partnership is built, we can claim that the construction of a partnership is procedural; presupposes convergent knowledge, strategies, competences, skills; it implies a management that is based on availability to change, acceptance of differences, communication, collaboration, complementarity of contributions.

Analyzing the scientific positions (*idem*, 2011) regarding the classification of partnerships, we highlighted:

1) Inter-institutional partnership - where there is an association between partner institutions from an educational, social, artistic, political, economic point of view.

2) Educational/school partnership – where there is a mutual commitment, written or verbal, between educational/educational units or between educational/educational units and other persons or institutions.

Based on the subject of the proposed study, the approach of the researcher Bocoş, Todea, Marin and Pinteă (*ibidem*, 2011) regarding the classification of the educational partnership is of interest to us: Next, we will refer to the educational partnership, which can be of several types:

- ✓ Educational/school partnership where there is an association between several educational institutions or between educational/educational institutions or between educational institutions and other types of institutions, which can be local, county, inter-county, national or international.

- ✓ An interschool partnership - where there is an association between several school institutions. Interschool partnerships can be local, county, inter-county, national or international.
- ✓ Kindergarten/school partnership - community where the association is between school institutions and community institutions: churches, local authorities, economic agents, media institutions, cultural institutions, non-governmental organizations, etc.
- ✓ Kindergarten/school-family partnership where the association is between the school representatives and the members of the families of the preschoolers/students.
- ✓ Kindergarten/school partnership - family-community - where the association is between school institutions, family members of preschoolers/students and institutions and community members.

In accordance with the National Education Law no. 1/2011, updated in 2022, consolidated with subsequent amendments and additions, we can state that: in art. 79, paragraph (1), (2) and (3) the primary beneficiaries, secondary beneficiaries and tertiary beneficiaries of pre-university education are specified, namely: " (1) The primary beneficiaries of pre-university education are preschoolers, preschoolers and students; (2) The secondary beneficiaries of pre-university education are the families of preschoolers, preschoolers and students; (3) The local community and society in general are tertiary beneficiaries of pre-university education". Also, in art. 80 describes the fact that major decisions are taken by consulting the representatives of the primary, secondary, tertiary beneficiaries: "pre-university education is centered on the beneficiaries. All major decisions are taken by consulting the representatives of the primary beneficiaries, respectively the National Council of Students or other representative student associations, and through the mandatory consultation of the representatives of the secondary and tertiary beneficiaries, respectively the associative structures representative of the parents, the representatives of the business environment, local public administration authorities and civil society". Thus a partnership for skills, training and development is formed.

More specifically, where else is the kindergarten/school-family educational partnership provided for in the legislation? We can find the legal provisions of the *kindergarten/school-family educational partnership* in the National Education Law no. 1/2021, with subsequent amendments and additions, in the framework Regulation for the organization and operation of pre-university education units, with subsequent amendments and additions, Annex to Order of the Ministry of National Education, OMEN no. 5.447/31.08.2020 but also in the Student Statute, with subsequent amendments and additions, approved by Order of the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research OMENCS no. 4742/10.08.2016, where the principles governing education are provided pre-university and higher, as well as lifelong learning in Romania: "Art. 3, point q) of the National Education Law "principle of parents' participation and responsibility"; Art. 3, letter t) "principle of basing decisions on dialogue and consultation".

At art. 108 (1) information is found regarding the fact that parents are the main educational partners of the educational units: "The parents, guardians or legal supporters of the pre-schooler/preschooler/pupil are the main educational partners of the educational units".

With reference to the planning and carrying out of extracurricular activities, in the address of the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport, MECTS 46267/ 28.08.2010, in chapter II it is specified that monthly, extracurricular activities will be planned and carried out with the children, with the *participation of parents* and partners educational institutions from the community (local authorities, church, police, economic agents), chap. III weekly, in order to ensure a constant, prompt and effective communication with the parents, the educator will plan and carry out a counseling/consultation activity with the parents of the children in the group, in a time interval established by her and communicated to the parents. This also includes the semester/occasional meetings with parents.

All these activities are recorded in the record book of the educator's activity and presence in the group, which is a legal document and tool that supports the didactic staff, and provides them with the correct general orientation regarding the planning of the didactic activity, as well as numerous other spaces for the recording of data about the children in the group, about their evolution during the school year and about the way the educator connects with the community, with a view to a successful school and *social integration of preschoolers* (cf. Note no. 28.259/09.03.2000).

Thus, the entire educational process, especially at the level of preschool education, is indicated to be carried out through the involvement of *parents*. The preschool period can be considered a period of discovery. According to Glava and Glava, for the first time the child goes beyond the narrow familiar space of the house, notices that there is a world beyond it, notices that he can get involved in its knowledge and transformation, he can discover himself, and the fact that he has the ability to make to make certain things happen, develops autonomy and initiative in knowledge (2002, p. 9).

As Vernon (2002) states, for preschool children, the world is a fascinating place. Children are curious, full of energy, and with the help of imagination everything is possible. Most of the time it is difficult for them to distinguish between real and imaginary. The child is born without the ability to immediately understand reality according to *the interactionist-symbolic theory of socialization*, therefore, the gradual development and training of these abilities is important for socialization during childhood, states Albuлесcu (2007, p. 67).

Thus, according to Furtună (2007) "*socialization* is a long process through which the individual learns and internalizes the different elements of his living environment and adapts to it. Socialization is achieved through learning: learning through consolidation, through conditioning, through observation, through interaction with others".

According to Turcu (2000), *socialization* is a complex process of formation and development of man as a social being, of adaptation and integration of the individual in society through the assimilation of social and moral values.

Schaub and Zenke (2001) approaches the concept of "*socialization*" – (lat. sociare, Engl. socialization) as a lasting process, through which the individual reaches, as a result of a specific-cultural regulation, the satisfaction of daily needs, to balanced relationships with family members or with other people and to the most appropriate behavior, acquiring essential means of understanding, an attitudinal repertoire and behavioral models.

Socialization is the fundamental process of transmitting culture and social organization to the next generations, thus ensuring the continuity, stability and perpetuation of society, according to Schifirneț (2004, p. 67).

Socialization is carried out, in an environment of belonging, assuming in certain situations and environments of reference. The socialization environment is the one to which the integrating agent is a part: European, Asian, African culture, the family from the village or the city, the type of religion, the particularities of the organizations or institutions in the situation of agents of socialization. Reference environments are those through which agents of socialization borrow models and values: a rural family can borrow values from the field of religion, one from the city from that of technology, an institution can borrow values from the political sphere, according to Achim (2008, p. 203).

3. Research methodology

For the study of the socialization process of preschoolers, 124 children aged 4-5 years from the National Pedagogical College „Regele Ferdinand” and Gymnasium School no. 5, Sighetu Marmației, Maramureș (with prior parental consent) during 2020-2021.

In order to evaluate the involvement of parents in the educational activity in order to socialize preschoolers, we applied the Identification Questionnaire for parents, to determine the degree of involvement of parents in the activities of the preschool education institution and the Screening of social skills to diagnose the social skills of preschoolers, form for parents and educators, according to Miclea (2010).

4. Research results

Based on the purpose of the research, we applied the Questionnaire for parents to determine the degree of involvement of parents in the activities of the preschool educational institution and the Screening of the social skills of preschoolers aged 4-5, the form for parents and educators and the results obtained, will be found in what follows. Next, we will proceed to the presentation of the results obtained following the application of the Identification Questionnaire for parents:

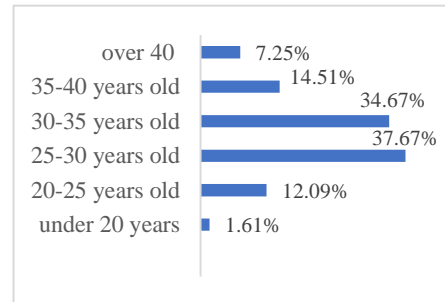
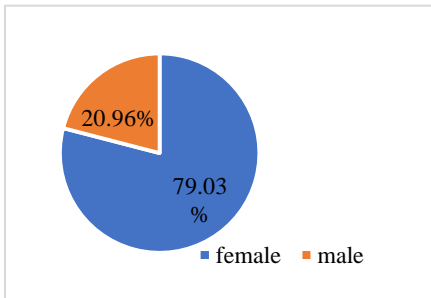


Figure 1. Group of parents, by gender **Figure 2. Group of parents, by age**

Figure no. 1 and Figure no. 2 show the particularities of the sample of parents, therefore, in total, 79.03% mothers and 20.96% fathers answered the questionnaire, of which there are 2 parents under the age of 20, only 1,61%, 15 parents aged between 20-25 years which represents 12,09%, 37 parents aged between 25-30 years, that is 29,83%; 43 parents aged between 30-35, that is 34,67%; 18 parents are between 35-40 years old, that is 14,51% and only 9 parents are over 40 years old, that is 7, 25%.

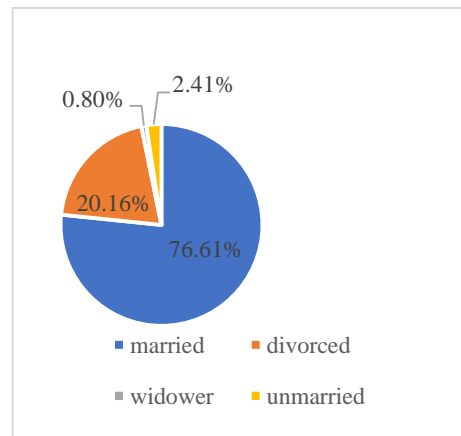
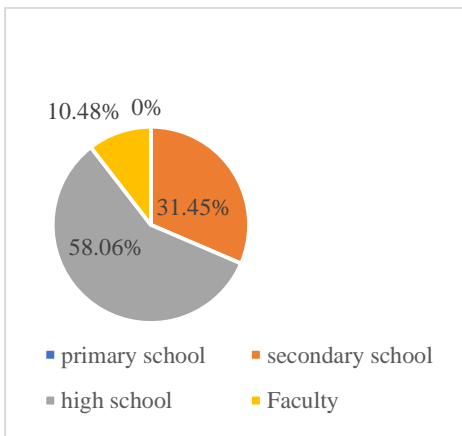


Figure 3. The studies of the parents involved in the experiment **Figure 4. The marital status of the parents involved in the experiment**

Regarding parents' education, in figure no. 3. it can be seen that: 39 parents have high school education, that is 31,45%; 72 parents have high school education, 58,06% and 13 parents have higher education, 10,48%.

In figure no. 4 it can be seen that most of the parents are married, 25 divorced and 3 single, 1 parent is a widower.

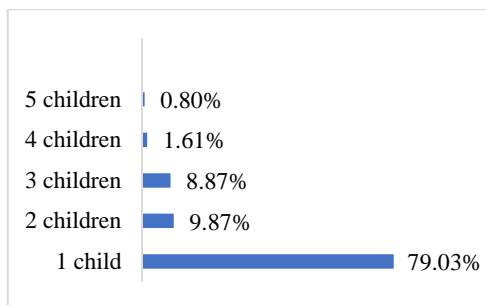


Figure 5. The group of participants according to the number of children in the family

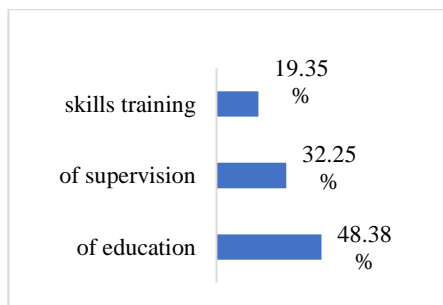


Figure 6. What is the role of kindergarten for your child from your point of view?

In figure no. 5. it can be seen that the parents involved in the experiment mostly have only one child, 98 parents, this means 79,03% of the parents, 12 parents have 2 children, 9,67%, 11 parents have 3 children, 8,87%, 2 parents have 4 children, 1,61% and 1 parent has 4 children 0,80%.

The results obtained for the question "What is the role of kindergarten for your child from your point of view?" which can be found in figure 6 allow us to find that most of the parents, 60 parents believe that the kindergarten has a role to educate children, only 24 parents believe that the role of the kindergarten is to form competence. And 40 parents believe that the role of the kindergarten is to supervise the children.

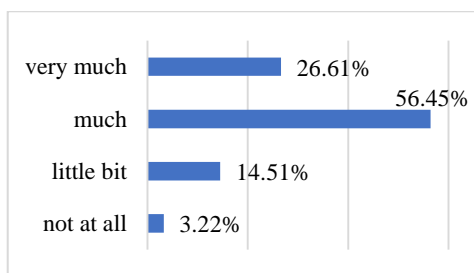


Figure 7. Do you think that the family should participate in the activities of the kindergarten?

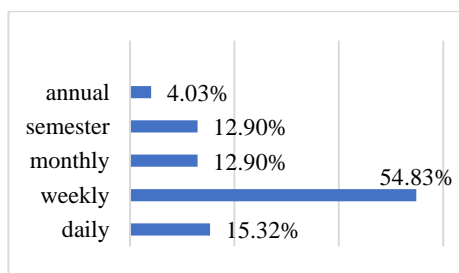


Figure 8. How often do you think it is necessary to get in touch with your child's teacher?

To the question "Do you think that the family should participate in the activities of the kindergarten?" the results show that only 4 parents believe that it is not necessary to get involved in the activities of the kindergarten, this means that the involvement of these parents in an educational partnership with the kindergarten can be more difficult, 18 parents believe that they should get involved a little in the activity of at the kindergarten, 70 parents believe that they must get involved a lot and 33 parents believe that they must get involved a lot in the activities at the kindergarten, thus, a

participation of these parents in the kindergarten activities considerably increases their involvement in a kindergarten-family educational partnership.

In figure 8, the results for the question "How often do you consider it necessary to get in touch with the teacher who takes care of your child?" shows that 19 parents consider that it is necessary to contact the teaching staff on a daily basis, which indicates that their involvement in an educational partnership with the kindergarten would be indicated, 68 parents consider that it is necessary to contact the teaching staff on a weekly basis, 16 parents consider that it is necessary to contact the teaching staff monthly, 16 parents consider that it is necessary to contact the teaching staff every six months and only 5 parents consider that it is necessary to contact the teaching staff annually.

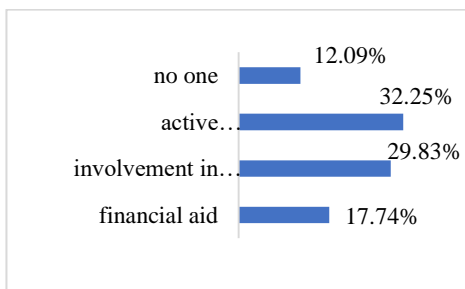


Figure 9. What do you think is your most important contribution as a parent in the smooth running of the act. from kindergarten?

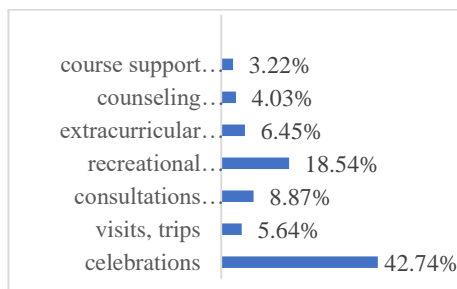


Figure 10. What kind of activities would you like to participate in as the child's parent?

The results show that to the question "What do you think is your most important contribution as a parent in the smooth running of the activity in the kindergarten?" 32 parents believe that financial aid is the most important contribution for the smooth running of the activity in the kindergarten, 37 parents believe that involvement in extracurricular activities is the most important contribution, 40 believe that active involvement in any ongoing project is the most important contribution, a fact that denotes that their involvement in an educational partnership with parents would be fruitful, and 15 parents believe that no input is important as a parent in the smooth running of the activity in the kindergarten.

"What kind of activities would you like to participate in as the child's parent?" the results show that most parents, i.e. 53 parents, would like to participate in celebrations, only 7 parents state that they would like to participate in visits or excursions, 13 parents believe that they would like to participate in practical activities, 11 parents would participate in consultations with parents, 23 parents would participate in recreational activities, 8 parents would participate in extracurricular activities, 5 parents would participate in counseling activities and only 4 parents would participate in support activities for course assistance.

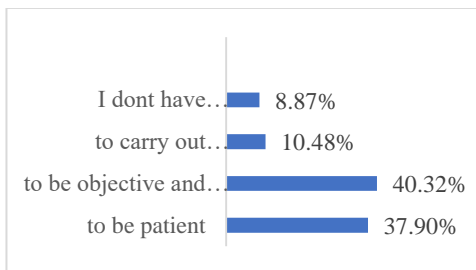


Figure 11. What suggestions, recommendations, proposals do you have for the educator who will take care of your child?

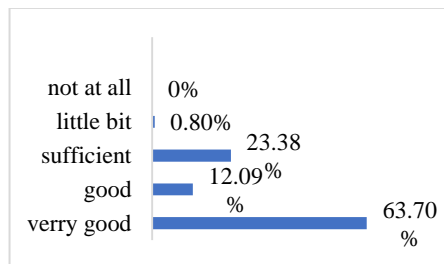


Figure 12. How well do you think you know your child?

To the question "What suggestions, recommendations, proposals do you have for the educator who will take care of your child?" the results demonstrate that 47 parents suggest the educator to be patient, 50 parents suggest the educator to be objective and impartial, 13 parents suggest the educator to carry out outdoor activities and 11 parents have no suggestions or recommendations for the educator.

The results show that to the question "How well do you think you know your child?" most of the parents, 79 parents consider that they know their child very well, 15 parents consider that they know their child well, 29 parents consider that they know their child sufficiently and only 1 parent considers that they know their child a little.

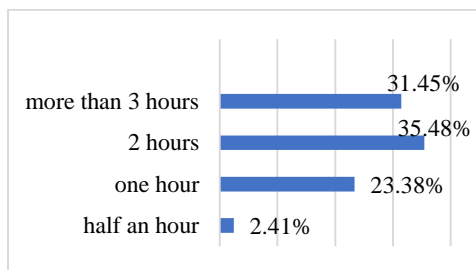


Figure 13. How much time do you spend with the child?

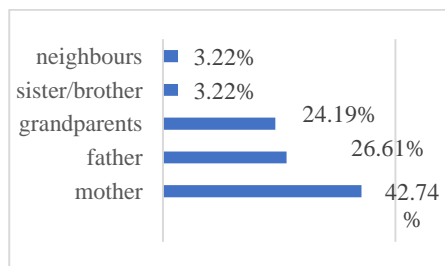


Figure 14. Who spends the most time with your child?

In figure 13 we can see the results for the question "How much time do you spend with your child?" which demonstrates that 3 parents spend half an hour with their own child, 29 parents spend an hour a day with their own child, 44 parents spend 2 hours with their own child and 39 parents spend more than 3 hours a day with their own child .

To the question "Who spends the most time with your child?" the obtained data show that most mothers spend time with their own child: 53 mothers, 33 fathers spend

time with their own child, 30 children spend time with their grandparents, only 4 children spend time with their sister or brother and 4 children spend time with their neighbors.

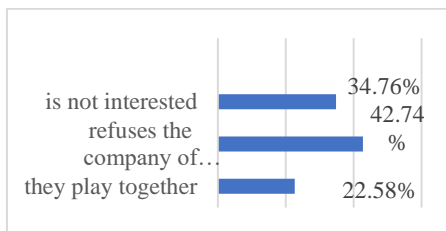


Figure 15. How it manifests your child compared to other children?

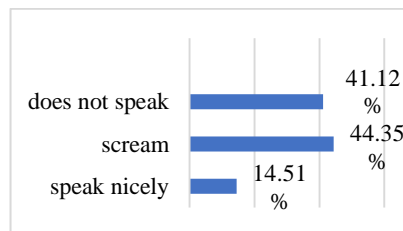


Figure 16. How do they communicate with others?

The results for the question "How does your child behave compared to other children?" demonstrates that parents find that 53 children prefer to play alone, 43 children are not interested in playing with other children and only 28 children play together, this means that a socialization development program for children is necessary. To the question "How do you communicate with others?" the data obtained show that 18 preschoolers speak beautifully, 55 preschoolers shout or scream when communicating with others, 51 do not speak with others, this means that in most children, social competence are insufficiently developed and a program based on their social development would be beneficial. Next, we present the results obtained at the Social Competence Screening of 4-5-year-old preschoolers, *the form for parents*, respectively the form for educators.

The results obtained in *the dimension of compliance with the rules* of the subjects of the experimental and control groups at the ascertainment stage demonstrate the frequency with which the children respect the rules of the game according to item 1 is almost never, over 60% of the children. Almost never follow the rules more than 50% of these children means that these children need support to follow the rules at home. No child always or very often respects the rules at home, according to the answers given by the parents, both in the control group and in the experimental group. At the same time, it allows us to note that in the other items as well: 2. it responds adequately to your requests, 3. it easily accepts the change of the rules of the game; 4. interrupts an activity that he is carrying out, when he is told to do so; 5. collects the toys at the end of the game, if told; the frequency of the developed behaviors is very low, the frequency of the developed behavior almost never and very rarely prevails.

The results regarding *the dimension of the social relationship* of the subjects of the experimental and control groups at the ascertainment stage demonstrate that the children, both those in the control group and the children in the experimental group according to the answers given by the parents, show behaviors that require support to be developed, therefore in item 6, they very rarely cooperate with the other children over 60%, in item 7 almost 50% of the children very rarely tell about their classmates at home,

in item 8, sometimes they invite other children to play together over 50%. In the very rare item 9, over 50% are friendly with children they do not know.

The results of *the dimension of the prosocial behavior* of the subjects of the experimental and control groups at the ascertainment stage demonstrate that both in the control group and in the experimental group at item 10, almost never more than 50% of the children do not offer help to others if asked; in item 11, over 60% of children very rarely share their toys with other children, without being told; and in item 12, the very rare frequency of the behavior also prevails, therefore, very rarely more than 50% of the children, they help with different tasks if they are told (they give you the object that you ask them to give you). At the same time, the results allowed us to find that no child has a frequency of social behaviors almost always or very often on the three dimensions: the dimension of compliance with rules, social relations and prosocial behavior.

According to the data in table no. 1., the results demonstrate that 114 children have serious problems in the development of social competence, 7 children have insufficiently developed social competence and only 3 children have well-developed and consolidated social competence.

Table 1. Final results in the ascertainment stage of the Screening of social competence - form for parents, the control group and the experimental group

Group	Children from the risk group who have problems serious in the development of social competence	That those assessed social competence are insufficiently consolidated	That those assessed social competence are good developed and consolidated
The control	57 children 91.93%	4 children 6.45%	1 child 1.61%
The experimental	57 children 91.93%	3 children 4.83%	2 children 3.22%
Total	114 children 91.93%	7 children 5.66%	3 children 2.41%

We continue with the presentation of the results obtained at the Screening of social competence-*form for educators* in the ascertainment stage. The results regarding *the dimension of compliance with the rules* of the subjects of the experimental and control groups at the ascertainment stage, demonstrate that in both the control group and the experimental group the frequency of social behaviors prevails almost never and very rarely. Therefore, in item 1, more than 50% almost never and more than 30% very rarely in group tasks follow the teacher's instructions, without being told; in item 2, over 60% of children from the experimental group and over 40% from the control group very rarely keep quiet when asked; it happens that

sometimes they respond adequately to the teacher's requests and almost always more than 4% of the children; and in item 4, over 40% both in the control group and in the experimental group very rarely collect the toys at the end of the game, without being told. In item 5, over 45% very rarely easily accept changing the rules of the game.

The results regarding *the dimension of the social relationship* of the subjects of the experimental and control groups at the ascertainment stage, show that both in the control group and in the experimental group the behavior of playing in large groups with more than 3 children very rarely prevails, according to the answers given to item 6, also over 60% very rarely cooperate with others when playing, according to the answers to item 7; also very rarely in the game they imagine that they are someone else (play a role) according to item 8 and almost 20% almost never imitate the educator's actions through the game according to the answers to item 9.

The results obtained in *the dimension of prosocial behavior* of the subjects of the experimental and control groups at the ascertainment stage, demonstrate that both in the control group and in the experimental group the frequency of social behaviors prevails almost never and very rarely. At the same time, the collected data show us that in item 10 over 40% almost never invite other children to play together; in item 11, the behavior of greeting and responding to the greeting, if they are told, prevails very rarely over 35%; in item 12, over 48% in the experimental group and over 32% in the control group almost never take care of other people's toys; in item 13, only over 37% of children offer help to a colleague if told; in item 14, very rarely more than 60% of the children in the experimental group help the teacher with various tasks (e.g. distributing supplies, distributing snacks), if they are told; and only over 1% in item 15 almost always share their toys with other children, if they are told.

According to the data in table no. 2, it can be seen that at the Social Competence Screening form for educators, 107 children have serious problems in the development of social competence, 13 children have insufficiently consolidated assessed social competence and only 4 children have well developed and consolidated competence.

Table 2. Final results in the ascertainment stage of the Screening of social competence - form for educators, the control group and the experimental group

Group	Children from the risk group who have problems serious in the development of social competence	That those assessed social competence are insufficiently consolidated	That those assessed social competence are well developed and consolidated
The control	54 children 87.09%	6 children 9.67%	2 children 3.22%
The experimental	53 children 85.48%	7 children 11.29%	2 children 3.22%
Total	107 children 86.29%	13 children 10.48%	4 children 3.22%

The results obtained through the application of the Questionnaire for parents and the Screening of social competence for children aged 4-5, the form for parents and the form for educators, in the ascertainment stage, allowed us to ascertain the level of socialization of preschoolers aged 4- 5 years as well as determining the degree of involvement of parents in the activities of the preschool education institution.

5. Conclusions

The kindergarten must find a bridge to connect with the family, presenting parents with new paths to education for the benefit of the children.

Educators, who take care of the children, are often bombarded with questions and requests from the family who express the desire to continue to be in control of the situation, being protective, caring, sometimes marked by the impulse to check all the factors that act on their children: from the material conditions, to the way the staff relate to the little ones. Any changes in children's behavior, except for absolutely positive ones, become for some parents reasons for concern, suspicion and raise questions about the influences in the kindergarten. On the other hand, teaching staff need, anyway, the support of the children's families, both to take over and develop the formative-educational directions of action that they train institutionally, and to find concrete solutions to the needs of various categories: financial, practical-applicative, organizational or logistic (Andrasiuc, 2019, pp.143-150).

All these motivations lead to the need for a real, active partnership, with sustained family involvement, and for the educational program to be known and understood by parents and carried out through a close collaboration between the family institution and the preschool. In conclusion, we can say that family involvement is very important in the development process of socialization of preschoolers. The family exerts a decisive influence in the constitution of the child's personality, the permanent contact with the parents as reference adults contributing to harmonious development, building social courage and optimism.

The family can contribute to the social development of the preschooler, together with the educator from the group, working together in a partnership. Kindergarten and family are two primary factors in children's education. In kindergarten, the foundations of a personality are laid that will later be an integral part of a society whose demands are constantly diversifying.

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