RATIONAL LEARNING IN THE CONTEXT OF SCHOOL (NON) SUCCESS

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ABSTRACT

Success and failure in school are two sides of a single educational process. Depending on the criteria by which to assess the quantity and quality of educational results, we can speak about school success, but also about school non-success (failure). In this paper, the authors present the interdependence between how students and teachers evaluate the level of representation and use of techniques and methods of effective learning in relation to the correlates of school (non)success. The authors associated the views on the techniques of effective learning with the intensity of motives that lead to school non-success. The intention is that the interdependence between the valuation techniques of rational learning and school failure is examined by calculating correlations and differences among the variables that represent these two. Data obtained in this study are consistent with theoretical facts, but also with the assumption that there is a statistically significant correlation between current practices of teachers which influence the stimulation towards efficient learning (visualization, correlation and design, perceiving ideas, openness of the senses, etc.) and the efficiency of their implementation with regards to the students' failure at school. Factorization of measuring variables indicates that the awareness of teachers concerning teaching techniques in the rational learning process should be reinforced, which is a good referral for a new research. Obtained results have helped us in solving general problems in school (non)success among adolescents and we believe that it will contribute to overcoming the current situation and to the improvements in our education system.

Key Words: School (non)success, efficient learning, cognitive deficit, self-confidence, investigative identity.

INTRODUCTION

Living in the modern age, where every individual has a variety of different information to choose from, somewhat weakens the educational function of the school and reduces the interest of students to learn, because they are overloaded with irrelevant information. "When faced with an abundance of content, students who are ignorant of effective learning begin to study focusing on memorising facts, that is, they immediately begin to memorise everything. That is almost a sure path that leads to hating studying because of the hassle and boredom of the struggle with the bulk of unnecessary information.

Instead of this approach, it is possible to study by differentiating important from unimportant, and only to remember key information or the structure of the material, and not merely the entire content. This means that children should study by using books and other sources, but they should at the same time work on the practical

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examples." (Suzić, 2005: 498). School failure is a complex and multifaceted concept, as it relates to the educational performance within individual subjects, but at the same time it relates to the students' behaviour, attitude, beliefs and value system formed. Success and failure in school are two sides of a single educational process. Depending on the criteria by which to assess the quantity and quality of educational results, one can speak about school success, but at the same time we can talk about school failure as well. "The success in teaching is considered to be the level where the following is achieved: the realization of material, formal and educational tasks set by teaching, specified in the curriculum, i.e. the degree to which students permanently adopt curriculum-prescribed knowledge, skills and habits, develop their mental and physical abilities and form moral understanding, aspirations and actions." (Markovac, 1973:.9). It can be derived from this definition that success in teaching should be seen as the degree of development of the aforementioned characteristics of students. Teaching should meet the above mentioned criteria from the point of view of society, schools and individuals. Soviet pedagogy treats the school success in a similar manner. Success in school depends on the curriculum characteristics, scope, depth, consciousness, knowledge sustainability, and habits created. Success is expressed with grades. With this definition of school success, its content is narrowed, because it does not recognize other aspects of students' personality. School as an institution of social standards in the field of education offers and allows the students to master specific skills, to develop their intellectual abilities, critical spirit, as well as positive socially acceptable properties; all the students are offered this on equal terms. "It is often emphasized that the society provides and allows for formal education to take place under equal conditions for all, but that does not necessarily mean that it is always the case, because if it was, we would not even need to speak about the category of "unsuccessful student" (Malinić, 2010: 181). Failure is often treated as an individual problem of a student. However, it must be borne in mind that failure is not an issue related only to students, but it also depends on the characteristics of all those with whom the student interacts, where he is only one of the participants. School failure not only can, but must be seen as a result of the attitude between the school system and the students, between the teachers and students, and among students themselves. This means that it is not only the students who are responsible for their own failure. Students do not educate themselves, which means that education, interaction and responsibility must be shared. The work of school pedagogues on improving student achievements is closely linked with the organization of school work practice. "For a systematic work on this extremely delicate problem, it is also important if and how the professional development department in the school is developed and organized; within it, the status, role and function of school pedagogues should be defined. The genesis of pedagogical departments is indicative of the development of the approach of school pedagogues towards the problem of student achievement in schools" (Zloković, 1998: 19).

The key change that needs to happen in the educational process therefore consists of re-directing the activities of teachers from preparing the content which they would present during the lessons, to creating teaching situations that will make students *active constructors of their own knowledge*. Specifically, teachers' task is not to teach the student and feed them the contents of the curriculum. Their main task is *to transform the curriculum into creative and productive activities for students in the classroom*, and instead of merely teaching, they need to design learning situations, to create the opportunities for learning and to lead the students through the learning activity in school. Learning is a process of mutual activities, some kind of cooperation between the students and teachers on the content being taught. From the aspect of students, this process involves learning, while from the aspect of teachers, it involves education, which in this case is seen as *organising and guiding students learning activities*, i.e. presenting learning and studying to students, and motivating students to study (Suzić, 2005).

European framework of key competences says that one of the key ones is "Learning to learn". This competence involves "the disposition and ability to organize and regulate the learning process, both individual and in groups. It includes the ability to manage one's time, to solve problems, to acquire, process, evaluate and assimilate new knowledge and to apply newly acquired knowledge and skills in different situations – at home, at work, while studying and advancing. All in all, "learning to learn" significantly contributes to an individual's career management (Baranović et al., 2006).

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Researches which cover the topic of learning process have attracted the attention of foreign researchers for decades now. These researchers seek in them the principles and rules for the effective application of learning methods in practice. Mirkov and Opacic present the results of previous research carried out by Entwistle and Wilson (Entwistle&Wilson, 1977 according to: Mirkov, Opačić, 1997). in the UK, USA, Australia and New Zealand. Their research was primarily focused on predicting school success. The variables that proved to be a prerequisite for success in learning are school success, teacher assessment, age and gender differences, academic motivation, learning methods, the intellectual climate in the environment, etc. According to the obtained empirical data, there was a weak positive correlation with the success in academic ability, intrinsic motivation, organized methods of learning and academic values.

The authors have emphasised that there is always the possibility of retroaction, which complicates interpretation of the correlations obtained, i.e. the methods of learning, intrinsic motivation and other anticipated variables can be determined by the success in school, and not vice versa, which was the subject of their research.

Ames and Archer (Ames & Archer, 1988) in their study came to a conclusion that students' perception of success and presentation of learning objectives show different relationships with learning strategies, for example by choosing a challenging task, as well as by the beliefs about the causes of success and failure.

Although one might expect that the perception of your own abilities is at the basis of motivation to use learning strategies, actually, the results of this study showed that even highlighting the target can overcome the contribution of perceived abilities aimed towards achieving the ability to study in the manner expected. Thus, emphasizing the learning objectives which the students set for themselves has a significant impact on their motivation to use learning strategies in mastering learning material. Due to the failure, the student loses confidence and the motivation to continue the education process.

In this study it was found that it is not only one factor that can cause failure. Emotional disorder as a cause of school failure grows and is manifested as depression, anxiety and fear of exams. Depression is hardly noticed by the school staff and it is therefore necessary to involve health workers to assist students who do not achieve success in school.

As stated by the authors of this study, all schools should follow the new system of "independent schools" that provide support to children in need, and parents should be more encouraged to be more involved in the school life of their children. This study will, according to the authors, help policy makers to be turned more towards the prevention of failure, and not towards making a distinction between "good" and "bad" students. All this can facilitate the identification of risk factors and causes of school failure among children. When studying the problem of school failure, we should mention the studies that have dealt with the causal relationships and mechanisms between behavioural problems and failures in childhood and adolescence (Hainshaw, 1992). These studies state that the links between school failure and difficulties in adapting one's behaviour were noticed a long time ago. Firstly, in terms of prevalence, personal and social suffering and resistance to most intervention strategies, behaviour problems and school failure constitute the majority of problems in childhood. Secondly, each domain predicts later failure to adapt, thus externalizing problem so that it often leads to antisocial behaviour and the use of opiates, while a major failure in reading not only remains, but creates a very bad condition for other fields of progress. Thirdly, the explanation of the basic mechanisms can lead the theorists to make a connection between behaviour and cognition, with regards to normal and atypical development, which is an important principle in the field of developmental psychopathology. Fourthly, the association has a direct impact on politics, as evidenced by the recent attempts to modify US law with an aim to put attention deficit disorders into a special category that deserves special education services.

How do the students relate to the content they are learning and to the context in which they learn? "Winne and Marks determined through their research that students generally arbitrarily focus their efforts on the curriculum, but they rarely have the opportunity to decide for themselves how they will be involved in classroom activities. This would mean that students receive little or no instruction on how to study, but the

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teacher points out what to study and what will be evaluated as a desirable outcome from the content studied "(Winne and Marx, 1982 according to: Suzić, 2005: 499).

Research practice has shown that children do not have formed learning styles, but they do develop their own strategic orientations that adapt and change depending on the situations in which they learn. This means that schools should work on developing strategies and learning styles, and that students should be introduced with the methods of learning, and learning mnemonics.

One of the main tasks of modern teaching is to strengthen students' intrinsic motivation, which will encourage students to study continuously, even when there is no external motivation and reward. This means that external incentives should be directed towards improving students' potential, i.e. to developing intrinsic motivation to learn, progress and to act creatively (Lungulov, 2010).

In modern education there has been significant progress in terms of expanding targets, so that they go beyond simply learning. In recent years, it has often been pointed out that in the overall learning process learn how to learn is of particular importance (Mirkov, Opacic, 1997). Everyone motivated enough can be prepared to succeed in learning; it is only necessary to develop and appreciate the proper habits that will help you achieve that goal. By developing and using good habits in studying, the results can be observed after a few days. It should be noted that, as with the development of other habits, there will be futile, stagnating and declining periods. The intentions of modern society are reflected in the fact that students are trained to learn continuously, and in order to do so, it is necessary to enable each individual to apply self-study or active learning. Scientific facts are accumulating rapidly in the field of science and certain individuals will acquire them if they are enabled to learn and study easily, fast, efficiently and continuously. One of the prerequisites for this qualification is to emphasise the activities that are the part of the process of teaching the students, to strengthen students' competencies for active learning and self-study, that is, for continuous education (Omerovic, Džaferagić-Franca, 2012).

In order to save time and energy and use them for deeper consideration of new ideas with which the student is faced in learning, it is necessary that the strategies and learning rules are well trained, so that they become automated and well-organized, which also includes training to use them properly in a given situation.

In the active approach, the teacher's role is to apply new methods, active methods, to diagnose, build new interpersonal relationships, build emotional climate in the classroom, encourage goal-driven learning and other tasks, such as student self-evaluation, individualization, etc. Methods used in interactive teaching are different and, in fact, they complement classical teaching methods, such as algorithmic methods and cooperative learning methods. Algorithmic models include methods that are based on algorithms: analytical and synthetic method, a generic method, analogy methods, models method and problem of black box method.

Cooperative learning methods include student team learning methods, mosaic-learning method and its modifications, group project method, cooperative networks and other peer interactive methods (Omerovic, Džaferagić-Franca, 2012).

How can the learning material be memorised most easily? Mnemonics are mental processes which aim to improve memory. Thought processes make the content being studied more meaningful and better linked, and during the learning process signs that allow better memory are provided. The basic principles which underlie the mnemonics are association (connection), imagination (imagining) and location (place).

The use of mnemonics and their creation bring to the classroom an element of game which is one of the basic human needs that the education system largely neglects (Arar, Milotić, 2001).

Contemporary theory and practice are looking for a set of mnemonics methods that have one or more characteristics. *Mental images* are actually thoughts or ideas that a person creates on the basis of external sensory excitation. Thus conceived images or ideas will come to the central memory more easily if the mind-set

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is succinct, and if the images are strong and clear. But the process of building strong mental pictures is not so simple. This focusing skill should be practised.

Projection is a technique that creates mental structures or diagrams between the concepts or ideas to remember. The logic of this kind of memory is that all objects contain a lot of ideas so this type of memory has wide application possibilities. The teacher should allow students to use their imagination to create their own projections and to use them to enhance memory. This technique combines the student's previous experience with new knowledge, specifies the abstract perception and directs students to isolate the most important elements of the learning material that will be projected to a specific object.

Associative technique is in many ways opposite to symbolization and simplification, as in the creation of associations it is desirable to invent as many unusual and absurd relationships between things and ideas. Unlike random associations that our minds constantly create, this is a deliberate creation of connections that should be used for efficient memory or for remembering certain facts or ideas.

However, this absurdity cannot be devoid of any logic; in fact, it is desirable that absurdity has its own logic.

In order to be involved in combating school failure, one must be well-acquainted with the ways of identifying students who fail, but also, it should be borne in mind that there are different types of unsuccessful students.

Malinić distinguishes four types of unsuccessful students:
1. The first type are unsuccessful rebels - students who know that parents place great importance to the school and education, but they also know that their parents cannot force them to study.
2. The second type are the students who are characterized by a lack of confidence in their own abilities to be able to reach high standards. These students are afraid of success, because they believe that if you are successful once, you must always be successful. For them this is frustrating experience and they see this success as a result of fortunate circumstances, and not of their own commitment and effort.
3. The third type are unsuccessful students whose skills do not fit into the framework of the conventional teaching process. In most schools, teachers' approach is such that they act the same towards most students. Classes are prepared based on the construct "average student" and the preferred learning styles are not taken into account.
4. The fourth type includes the students who are looking for security and trust, but they are afraid of intimacy and therefore avoid any interaction. Those may be students who were successful at high school, but in a transitional period, for example, when switching to another schooling level they may feel uncertainty, express fear of independence that is reflected in their future success in school (Malinić, 2007: 86-98).

School failure can be manifested in different ways. It is important to be familiar with each of them, in order to take preventative measures or measures to combat failure in time. It is never possible to identify all the causes that have led to failure, but those that are identified can be the basis to identify other causes that cause students to be unsuccessful. Experiencing success or failure not only contains a subjective reaction to academic achievement, but also the feedback on how others (society, family, school, peers) evaluate student's achievement. Personal traits of students also play an important role in their success. When we talk about personal traits of students which are essential for success in school, we are primarily referring to the intellectual qualities, affective personality traits and self-concept, as well as the control locus. Perceptions of success or failure in school directly affect the changes of structural components of self-awareness: self-assessment of school-related skills, self-assessment of personality values, and self-assessment of the responsibility for success or failure in school.

The way students respond to feedback on their success or failure, directly affects the development and changes of self-assessment skills with regards to school. In addition, the student's perception of reactions of parents and teachers influence the self-assessment of students' personality. Experiencing school failure causes in students loss of confidence in their own abilities, loss of self-esteem, reduction in motivation for learning and

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participation in educational activities. Burden of failure causes general uncertainty and fear. It should be kept in mind that failure in school, as mentioned, does not only affect an individual objectively; there is also a subjective side to it, since it is always accompanied by emotional experience. Repeated failure may discourage, reduce the initiative and thus hinder the advancement of the individual. Students with low self-esteem have lower school achievement, and lower school achievement leads to a decrease in self-esteem. One of the possible solutions to this correlation is that school achievement and self-esteem can be treated as a result of intelligence. More intelligent students may have rich school achievements due to the fact they are intelligent, and can have high self-esteem because they are smart, while the low achievement and low self-esteem can be a consequence of low intelligence.

So, the lack of confidence in your own abilities is only one of the predictors of school failure. Unsuccessful students are less persistent in meeting the goals and finding adequate strategies. In this case, the teacher is important because it is proven that the teacher has an important role in building students' confidence that they can succeed in school.

When the teacher shows the student that he/she believes in him and that good results are expected, the students themselves start to believe in themselves. The process of communication between the teacher and the student is much easier in an atmosphere of mutual understanding, respect, trust and positive emotions. (Jevtic, 2012).

Students see their success or failure depending on the control locus. Successful students have a tendency to attribute their success to hard work, while occasional failure is seen as a lack of effort. On the other hand, unsuccessful students describe their failure as a result of circumstances beyond their control.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is exploratory, and our intention was to check the impact of rational learning through mutual interaction and connection of school (un)success among students and teachers.

Research objectives
Cognitive: The study wanted to determine the attitudes of teachers and students on encouraging the efficient-rational learning.

Pragmatic: Searching for the structure of preferences, we wanted to diagnose the current state of the variables that determine the actual practices of teachers that influence the encouragement of effective learning, as well as the relation between these procedures and (un)achievement of students.

General hypothesis
The assumption is that there is a statistically significant correlation between the actual actions taken by teachers which encourage the efficient learning (visualization, connection and projection, perception of ideas, etc.) and the efficiency of their use in school (un)success of students.

Sample
The sample includes 105 high school teachers and 195 high school students in Rasina area. The sample is not balanced by gender, nor does it represent the entire population of teachers and students, but it is significant for its size, so that certain generalization is possible but it will be within the examinees that make up the sample.

Methods used during the research
The nature of the research affected the definition of variables, both dependent and independent. In accordance with the studied problem and used research methods, appropriate statistical procedures were applied. These will enable the display of the obtained data and their analysis. The methods of data processing and analysis which were used are: descriptive statistics, factor analysis as a form of multivariate data

processing method-categorical principal component analysis, comparative analysis of mean values (ANOVA), Instruments reliability (Cronbach Alpha).

METHODS

Three methods were used during this research:
1. Evaluation scale PEUTM-N – encouraging effective learning with the use of techniques and methods (for teachers); Adequacy of the data was checked using the Kaiser-Meyer Olzon (KMO) test and the value obtained of 0.75 indicates that the data are adequate for the use of this technique.

2. Evaluation scale PEUTM-U - encouraging effective learning with the use of techniques and methods (for students); Adequacy of the data was checked using the Kaiser-Meyer Olzon (KMO) test and the value obtained of 0.77 indicates that the data are adequate for the use of this technique.

3. The questionnaire designed for the research purposes: SUA - School (Un)Achievement.

THE FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

School non-achievement of students is certainly conditioned, and as such determined by a number of correlates. In addition to establishing this relationship, we have also tried to establish a relationship between the techniques and methods of effective learning, and other factors that may have an impact on the school (un)success of students. Based on the obtained data, the low degree of correlation confirms the use of inadequate, mainly traditional techniques and methods that are aimed primarily at developing and then encouraging school (un)success, not recognizing the need to work on encouraging self-esteem, cognitive ability of students; there is also the inertness towards new knowledge and professional development. The fact that in some cases the obtained correlations were of a negative direction supports this hypothesis. Those methods used by teachers which should develop students' school success in most cases do not provide the expected result, and in a lesser degree, those methods are counterproductive. These data reveals the schedule of the obtained factors that apply to the students: lack of self-confidence, cognitive deficits, antisocial behaviour, anxiety, personal traits.

It turned out that among the factors obtained by factor analysis, the best distributed factor is named as "a lack of confidence" (SD = 7.024), which is composed of those items that describe situations which require the seriousness and urgency of response towards persons who are in need of efficient learning, and the need for immediate application of knowledge acquired in school. Antisocial behaviour (SD = 3.61) and anxiety (SD = 3.64) were factors distributed in almost the same degree, and these point to the professional incompetence of teachers.

We can conclude from the results that the school (un)success is not only a consequence of (not) working and activities in school, but it also depends on other agents of socialization. The examined aspects of school (un)achievement, which are confidence, cognition, social relationships, anxiety, research identity, personal traits are the aspects of school (un)successfulness whose formation is affected by family, peer groups, close personal and wider social environment. Skilfulness of teachers can be a good predictor of positive school achievement and adaptation in the group.

The obtained results of our study confirm that teachers should encourage the techniques and methods of effective learning, but one must not disregard the fact that the obtained correlations are not so dominant. This speaks in favour of the lack of work and commitment to rational learning by teachers in the field of academic achievement and multifactorial causality of school (un)achievement. Studying school (un)successfulness within which techniques of effective learning and similar terms that contribute to the overall achievement of the study were included, actually indicate that competence can be seen as a form of social behaviour in the process of socialization, as an attribute of personality and as a part of human nature. Numerous factors have a say in the process of socialization, so it is not exclusively the agents of socialization such as schools and teachers that

should be considered. If we analyse the results we obtained in our study within which there were various forms of effective learning and the opportunities for school (un)success, we can conclude that the data are consistent with the two domains that will be mentioned below:

The first domain that shows the characteristics of behaviour pattern called internalized behaviour manifested by reclusion, depression, anxiety – externalized problems are more stable than internalized, and (except in the case of severe inhibition or depression) they can predict more serious problems as well as resistance to most interventions which is also in line with the results of our study, because predominantly, there is no connection between the measured subscale of school (un)achievement among students with the subscales that determine teachers' efforts to use the techniques and methods of effective learning.

For this reason, the percentage of the obtained correlations in our study is so small, which speaks of the necessity of professional training for teachers in order to develop and encourage specific techniques of effective learning. Teachers partially implement adequate procedures for the development and promotion of school success (perception of ideas, visualization, correlation and projection). This supports the fact that high schools are still not enough oriented towards education, and even less to the educational dimension, and that, despite the increasing intensity of disruptive behaviour patterns and the increasing use of traditional techniques of learning in high schools, the solution to change work methods that will allow for different approach is still not being searched for. This different approach could be based on the involvement of teachers to provide help and support to their students in building social skills, in learning communication skills and assertive response, in strengthening confidence, in reduction of cognitive deficits, in developing research identity and strengthening personal traits and all this in order to create a highly educated, socially, emotionally, cognitively competent individual who will know how to respond to the demands of the present.

Comparing the results of correlations among individual schools with the correlation results obtained in the total sample, we can conclude that there is no general correlation between the teachers' tendency to encourage school success in students, and the reported techniques and methods of rational learning of students themselves. This proves that there are some individuals among teachers who try and some distinctive methods to encourage school success among the students themselves in the sense that teachers do not apply similar criteria, but these criteria vary from one teacher to another.

We expected to obtain the correlations which would be statistically significant, assuming that the professional competence of teachers when working with students in the field of encouraging school success is similarly designed using didactic and methodological methods such as group work, cooperative learning, learning based on the model, verbal prescription, providing positive examples for pro-social activities, etc., but it actually turned out that this trend has no basis in practice, but it rather comes down to the individual efforts of teachers to develop academic achievement in their students.

It was established that in some schools there is no correlation on any aspect of teacher-student relation which tells us that not only are the attempts and efforts individualized, but actually some teachers do not even try to implement these methods.

Teachers can use their skills, behaviour and methods to greatly contribute to establishing a favourable social climate in the classroom, and to the school achievement of their students. In order to obtain such results, it is necessary for teachers to be aware of the importance to achieve positive interaction in the classroom, and of the existence of good interpersonal relationships, as well as of their own role in creating encouraging atmosphere for their students learning and studying to improve. In order to contribute to the achievement of students, it is essential that teachers show interest in students and their needs, to show interest for the implementation of effective techniques and methods of learning, but they should also encourage students to be personally responsible for this to happen.

We can use different scales to determine the forms of school (un)achievement and degree of its presence in students.

The information we have received can be compared with methods, procedures, educational styles and all other activities which teachers use to try to encourage school (un)success in order to realize how big the impact teachers have on school (un)achievement. The investigation of this problem in some next research will allow the field of rational learning in the context of the school (un)achievement to receive a greater significance.

CONCLUSION

The problem of children who fail in school is not only confined to school. Lack of confidence, linguistic problems and difficulties in interpersonal relationships are a frequent occurrence. Some components within a domain can be affected by other domains. For example, repeating the course and low grades may be closely related to behaviour as well as to the failure itself. Our research focuses primarily on the assessment of teachers and whether they encourage school (un)success. The fundamental debate focuses on whether the inattention and inefficient learning, which we can see as the types of externalised problems, are actually a cognitive deficit. Due to the above mentioned, the problems of assessment play a key role in explaining the overlap between rational learning and school (un)successfulness. Researchers must use developmentally sensitive measures in order to make conclusions concerning causal advantages, including the assessment of the previous variables. Therefore, that is why the factors that are related to methodology are highlighted here.

School (un)success is a complex and multifaceted concept, as it relates both to the educational performance within individual subjects (courses), and the students' behaviour, attitudes, beliefs and value system formed. Failure in school has often been explored from the perspective of teachers and parents, and little attention has been given to the students themselves and their views on the causes of failure. Many teachers blame the students themselves and often their parents for failure; on the other hand, parents blame the teachers and the school system; yet, (un)successful students remain on the margin and have no right to say their opinion. Students find it important to be accepted by their peers, to seek help from each other when they are not as good enough at something as the others, and most of them tend to have similar or the same grades as their peers, which encourages them to be more successful. Students lose interest to study because teachers always teach in the same way. Students think that teachers do not motivate them enough to be better. Personal characteristics that adolescents possess, they do not see as a definite cause of their failure at school. Namely, they claim that the cause for bad academic success is that the school makes them study content they are not interested in, and they consider they would be more successful if they studied using different techniques, methods, and using them in a more efficient and effective manner. On the other hand, adolescents lose their motivation to study when they experience multiple failures in a row and begin to doubt their abilities when they get a bad grade.

School learning is intentional learning through well-organized and rationally presented lessons. It is a planned educational activity managed by qualified people according to established curricula and using the latest teaching strategies. It is carried out on two levels: teaching and learning, which together form a unique process. The aim is to master cognitive content (knowledge, skills, habits, abilities) and content related to learning attitudes, social reaction and balanced emotional reactions. With regards to the requirements that students are faced with in traditional lessons present in most schools, it is necessary to examine to what extent the students know about and apply the techniques of rational learning.

The study was carried out in order to determine whether there is a need for efficient and effective training of students for learning, which involves mastering the rules of rational learning, learning to learn, and memory enhancement techniques. We would also like to emphasise the importance of teachers giving instructions, which will facilitate students learning and allow them to be better acquainted with all the learning techniques.

The results of this study point to the need to undertake certain measures in order to raise the awareness of students and prepare them to use rational and applicable learning skills that are useful, and advise them not to purely memorise curricula content.

Since our survey has shown that students have very poor knowledge of the ways of applying techniques of effective learning, teachers knowledge of the same techniques should also be inspected, as well as their encouragement of students to apply these techniques with an aim to advance in school.

The results obtained have helped us to better understand general problems related to school (un)achievement among adolescents, and we believe that these results will contribute to overcoming the existing situation and to the improvement of our education system.

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