

Summary

Pedagogical foundation of the curriculum of social competencies in the school

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This paper analyses the results of a study carried out within the project *Curriculum of social competencies and relationships in the school* run by the Department of Pedagogy at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Zagreb in 2011. The study was conducted on a sample of 2,661 pupils attending 7th and 8th grade in the 4 macro-regions of Croatia. The aim of the research was to analyse the role and quality of social competencies and relationships in school as an integral part of the school curriculum. A factor analysis has established 12 significant factors, with internal consistency reliability varying from $\alpha=0,88$ to a satisfying $\alpha= 0,62$. The dimensions of social competencies and pupil relationships were examined through an independent sample t-test in relation to age, gender, academic achievement and pedagogical measures. The test has shown considerably higher results for younger pupils, who are significantly more likely to cooperate and help others ($p < .01$), have a greater sense of creative learning and satisfaction in schoolwork ($p < .001$), have a more positive attitude towards the teachers' professional role and their relationship to pupils ($p < .001$), as well as a significantly more positive view of the school-parent cooperation ($p < .001$), of the school's role in meeting the individual needs of pupils with special needs ($p < .001$) and in developing cooperation and friendship among pupils ($p < .001$), and show more responsibility and an inclination to non-violent conflict resolution ($p < .001$). Gender analyses show male pupils as significantly more violent in conflict resolution ($p < .001$), while girls are considerably more likely to help and cooperate with others ($p < .001$), are more creative and satisfied with the learning process ($p < .001$) and have significantly more positive attitudes towards the teachers' professional role and their relationship to pupils ($p < .001$). Tests on academic achievement show that less successful pupils are significantly more critical towards the school and the teachers ($p < .001$), show most difficulty to adapt to their peers ($p < .001$) and display least care and understanding for others ($p < .001$). They do, however, show the highest tendency to be physically aggressive in conflicts ($p < .001$), but are least likely to be verbally or relationally aggressive, which is most present within the group of the highest-achieving pupils ($p < .01$). Tests on pedagogical measures show relatively dichotomous results – on the one side, the pupils given a school admonition or a warning show the lowest levels of pro-social behaviour in school ($p < .001$), while on the other the pupils with commendations and honours display pro-social behaviour most evidently ($p < .001$). A correlation analysis of the factor analysis components shows significant positive correlations between multiple social competence factors. Finally, it is important to note the existence of a negative correlation between the *verbal and relational aggression* and *violent conflict resolution* and all other examined factors, alongside their mutually significant positive correlation ($r=,64^{***}$).

Keywords: social competencies, curriculum, education, cooperation and relationships in the school.