

Place and Role of Children's Interests in Contemporary Educational Process

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to determine the place and role of children's interests in the contemporary educational process. The paper is a synthesis of theoretical knowledge and the analysis of the results that we obtained in a research study. The study was conducted on a sample of 167 students, 165 teachers and 164 parents, adding up to a total of 496 respondents. In the study we used the descriptive method, interview as a research technique and questionnaire as a research instrument. The results showed that we inadequately incorporate the development of children's interests into the teaching process and do not encourage it.

Key words: contents; learning; methods; teacher; teaching.

Introduction

Literature points out that interests are important structural elements of each personality. They form the essence of personal identity and have important functions in all phases of human life. Therefore, they have always been the subject of human reasoning. Interests, as a specific human disposition, have been explored even by the ancient philosophers such as Aristotle, Plato and Theophrastus. Later on, the phenomenon of interests was analyzed and its importance pointed out by Locke, Rousseau, Herbart and Ferrier.

There have always been different opinions among educators on the place and role of interests in the educational process. Herbart and his followers believed that developing interests is the basic task of education, while Rousseau, Mojman, Claparede, Ferrier and Dewey pointed out that the interests of children are innate, and that teaching should be organized and adjusted in accordance with those interests. The modern

understanding of the role of children's interests in the learning process is based on the fact that upon their enrolment into school children have certain interests that are not always developed and complete. The educational process should respect and further develop children's interests by means of organizing various activities, using a variety of methods and forms of work, learning materials and instructional content.

Children's Interests as a Factor in the Development of Internal Motivation

Shaping children's interests, creating conditions for their development and their incorporation into the educational process are some of the goals and essential tasks of education. This becomes even more obvious when we know that children's interests present a very strong motivational factor that encourages the development of particularly valuable intrinsic (internal) motivation for learning (Milić, 2008). Therefore, children's interests present a strong motivating factor and, in order to acquire knowledge, it is necessary that students want to learn and adopt that knowledge (Đorđević, 1975). Bearing in mind that learning is a specific activity and that for learning, as well as for any other activity, there must be an incentive, we can conclude that learning is conditioned by the motivation and interests of a student.

Students who are interested in learning achieve significantly better results than those who are less motivated or interested. "When the student is motivated, the effort involved and the degree of cognitive activity used in learning is greater, and the degree of attention is increased, which leads to better learning outcomes" (Potkonjak & Šimleša, 1989, p. 68). Lack of interest often leads to failure and even aversion towards learning. This fact suggests that the children's interests present an important prerequisite for the success of the learning/teaching process.

Interests of the child belong to the promoters or requirements for activating abilities, i.e. cognitive processes and structures for achieving the learning process. "Stronger engagement of the cognitive processes affects stronger awakening of the motivation of children" (Palekčić, 1985, p. 322). Thus, children's interests play an important part in the related process of activating students in the learning process (Milić, 2008). Students do not acquire knowledge only when they are exposed to the teacher's influence. It is essential that students are willing to adopt certain knowledge and to develop certain skills. They are active participants in the learning process only when they have interest in it. This, in our opinion, is the reason more why we need to find ways to take into account children's interests in the educational work and create opportunities for their further development. Spontaneous maturation of children's interests should not be expected. The development of children's interests is achieved through specific learning strategies that teachers use in organizing the teaching process. A modern educational process should be organized so that it creates the learning situations that will support the student's initiative and will allow the freedom of choice, both in terms of the choice of content and in terms of the selection of activities. Children's needs, interests

and desires should be integral parts of the teaching process. The reason for this is the fact that children readily actively participate in the educational process, or more specifically in the learning process, generally when activities and facilities offered to them are based on their interests. All knowledge acquired on the basis of the reported child's interests is deeper and longer lasting (Milić, 2008).

We will agree that the children's interests are diverse, numerous and rapidly changing, so it is sometimes difficult to match and incorporate them into the educational process. Nonetheless, by means of a planned design of the teaching situations we can influence the promotion and development of students' interest.

Teacher as the Initiator of the Development of Children's Interests

"If the student is in the focus of the educational work and in the centre of school life, then the teacher is the agent, the pedagogical yeast that encourages, supports, directs and cultivates the student's personality" (Gazivoda, 1999, p. 6).

Primary school offers general education and is the same for all students, regardless of their individual characteristics, needs and interests. In the teaching process "everyone is offered the same" portion "of the same food" (the same subjects, same contents) and an equal amount of material. Therefore, primary school is for some difficult, for others easy, but seemingly inadequate for most students" (Kocić, 1998, p. 69).

The school must acknowledge the fact that children are different and organize the educational process and the process of learning/teaching accordingly. The task of the school is to organize the teaching process in which every student will be able to develop their abilities in order to meet their cognitive needs and interests. The question is: how and through which educational processes can students' interests be developed and incorporated into the learning process. What is the role of the teacher in this process? The role of the teacher in the contemporary school system is complex and dynamic, because the teaching activity takes place in circumstances that are constantly changing. Structural transformation of the school also requires a radical change of the role of the teacher, since modern education analysis shows that the teacher is the key initiator of change, and that he himself is the epicentre of educational reforms. New reform solutions in the elementary education in Montenegro seek new approaches to the student as an individual, and a new attitude of teachers towards educational work. The teacher's role is very complex and dynamic. The teacher prepares and plans educational activities, the learning and development of the student as a whole. Controlling all the factors of education, he/she predicts, analyzes and directs the work of a student towards the set goal, finds ways and procedures for the most efficient learning and seeks ways that will encourage the development of children's interests, needs and desires. The teacher should be creating conditions for a variety of activities for students and their mutual cooperation through work in pairs, in small or large groups or through the individual work of students, using a variety of

methods and styles of teaching. The teaching process encourages the development of students' interests. The way of learning which engages thought processes and greater student activity influence the development of students' interest in learning. To be able to develop and encourage children's interests, the teacher must show a greater appreciation of individual differences of the students in every way.

In this respect, the teacher needs to know and appreciate the cognitive, social, motivational and emotional characteristics of children and to adjust the educational process to student diversity. This would allow each individual to express their interests and to develop himself further. In accordance with the established individual characteristics, the teacher has to make a choice on a variety of methods and styles of work, a choice on the teaching materials and processes that will stimulate and develop students' interests. The teacher should create situations in the learning process which would awaken intellectual curiosity of students by focusing on work and learning. The teacher must help children to expand their own feelings, needs, interests, and provide them with a choice of the learning content and activities (Lalović, 2004).

Curriculum has a strong motivational effect on students and their learning and work, because children learn much easier and better if they are interested in the learning content. The teacher should encourage students' interests to particular teaching contents, while respecting their needs, interests, experience, and clarify for them the value of the teaching content in everyday life. The basic motivation for learning is curiosity. A very important activity of teachers, which would motivate students and develop their intellectual curiosity, is to connect the unknown with the known material, thus connecting the material to the students' everyday experiences and referring them to find and use different sources of information. Interests are successfully applied if they result from the experienced need for continual expansion of knowledge and if students realize that the acquired knowledge is useful and necessary, and that it can be applied in everyday life. The teacher's skills to successfully connect the less interesting content with that which is well known (from the same as well as from other subjects) or interesting material, contribute to the development of students' interest in a particular teaching content.

The teaching content should represent a challenge for students. One of the tasks of teachers in the teaching process should be establishing permanent interests for learning various educational materials. Teachers should focus their skills in order to connect the required instructional content (prescribed by the curriculum) with the interests of children and create the learning/teaching activities that are close and interesting to children.

The state defines (prescribes) the required contents that the students need to acquire. But this fact should not be a barrier to teachers to, through an adequate (suitable) choice of the teaching methods, working styles and use of a variety of teaching aids and learning materials, combine the contents which result from the students' interests with the mandatory educational content imposed by the curriculum. In this way teachers can implement various activities in order to make classes even more interesting and efficient (Milić, 2008).

We have already stated that the teacher has several important roles in the educational work. One of them is the creation of the educational environment in which educational goals will be achieved. Thus, the teacher is the designer of the teaching process and, therefore, of the teaching environment. The structure of the environment in which the child resides has a great importance in the cognitive development of the child. Therefore, it is important to organize learning environments and stimulating classrooms that will most directly and most powerfully influence the overall development of a child. A stimulating classroom produces a climate that encourages communication and individual initiative as well as students' activities. It is an indicator of the teacher's style, learning strategies and instructional methods. Classroom, which provides individual initiative and student activities, is organized to provide work that stimulates and provides communication between students, students and teachers, teachers and students.

A contemporary organized classroom should be the place where students do not face each other's back, because such an organization limits communication and student self-initiative. Traditionally organized classrooms remind one of lecture halls where students should be silent, listening to the teacher and remembering his/her words. The classroom must be the place that enables live communication between the actors of the teaching/learning process. The classroom as the space in which students learn and work should provide the possibility of quick and easy implementation of different types of work, organization and implementation of research and other projects as well as various activities in order to create the necessary conditions for students to meet their needs, fulfil their interests, and achieve the educational goals set by the curriculum.

Methods

The goal of the research study we carried out was to determine whether and to what extent teachers in the teaching process in primary schools recognize, incorporate and encourage the development of children's interests. Based on the content and substance of the chosen problem, the subject, goals and objectives in this study, we used the descriptive scientific research methods. We used interview as a research technique, and as a measuring instrument we used a questionnaire to test the attitudes of students, teachers and parents.

The population (basic set) in this study consisted of primary school students in Montenegro, teachers and parents. The sample included students and teachers from 20 primary schools (urban and rural) from the northern, central and southern parts of Montenegro. The sample consisted of parents and students. The study involved 167 students, 165 teachers and 164 parents, adding up to a total of 496 respondents.

After the data collection, we started organizing qualitative and quantitative processing. When labelling the responses of our respondents, we used percentages and frequencies as indicators of the structure of a certain phenomenon. The comparison of the responses between the three sub-samples was done by means of the chi-square test.

One objective of the reform of primary education in Montenegro is to organize the educational process in a way which will allow students to satisfy their cognitive needs, desires and interests. The achievement of this goal involves the organization of the educational process that will create conditions for the development of children's interests, and will provide students with a choice, both in terms of the content and in terms of the selection of activities. That is why it is necessary to provide students with a wide range of content, methods and work forms. After seven years of the implementation of the reform solutions, we carried out this research in order to determine whether and to what extent this goal had been implemented in primary schools.

Results

After the entire corpus of questions we found out to what extent the learning process and learning in school is interesting to students and whether teachers organize and implement teaching by choosing a variety of teaching methods and styles, and selecting the teaching materials in order to acknowledge and encourage the development of their students' interests. We examined whether teachers enrich the teaching content with those facilities that are consistent with the students' interests, linking the educational content with the knowledge and experience of the students, connecting the knowledge from the subjects they teach with the contents of the other subjects, showing students the usefulness and applicability of the knowledge acquired in the process of teaching/learning in everyday life and recommending them to use different sources of information. We examined whether and to what extent students have the opportunity to be initiators of the choice of the content and activities that will be implemented in the teaching process, and if the importance and significance of giving choices to students for further development of their interest in learning is understood. We examined whether classrooms are friendly and well designed for children's stay.

After processing the data, we obtained the following results:

– Teachers (according to the students and parents) generally try to organize and implement the teaching/learning process so as to make it interesting to students and motivate them to learn and work at school.

– About the same percentage of students thought that most classes were mainly interesting (44.2%), and that most classes were both boring and interesting (49.7%). The teaching/learning process was found to be completely uninteresting by 4.3% of students (Figure 1).

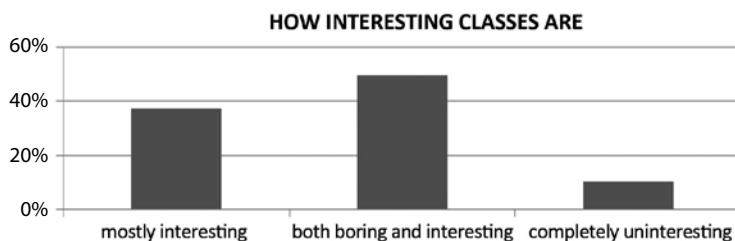


Figure 1. How interesting classes are

– The answers obtained from the students, teachers and parents on why students were bored during classes and the reasons for it, showed that both students (Table 1) and their parents believed this was due to the uninteresting and extensive curriculum content and boring teaching methods. The teachers' reasons for their students' boredom were seen in their lack of interest in learning and work. This shows that the teachers did not realize that it was up to them to create a motivating teaching/learning process (Table 2).

Table 1

Reasons for boredom in classes (students)

Reasons for boredom in classes (students)	
Uninteresting and extensive curriculum content	49.8%
Uninteresting teaching methods	35.3%
Lack of interest of students	12.6%

Table 2

Reasons for boredom in classes (teachers)

Reasons for boredom in classes (teachers)	
Lack of interest of students	43.8%
Uninteresting curriculum content	26.9%
Inappropriate choice of methods	25.9%

– If we compare the responses on the choices of activities, with those that measure reasons for boredom in classes, we can see that there is a negative impact of these variables on each other, meaning that the students' boredom in class is linked with the work that teachers usually implement in the teaching process. The results of our study show that the dominant perception among students is that teachers usually explain lessons and give lectures, while students listen to their presentations. Teachers, 78.2% of them, when answering the same question said that they usually organized educational/ learning process around their students' discussion of the subject, or by putting students in a situation where they needed to investigate a process or a phenomenon.

– There was a statistically significant difference found between the attitudes of students and teachers when it comes to the types of work used in the teaching process. Students predominantly expressed the view that the most commonly used method was frontal teaching, which inhibited interaction in the classroom, lead to the students' passivity in the learning process and made their knowledge reproductive (Table 3).

Table 3

Most common types of work in classroom

Most common types of work in classroom		Work in pairs	Work in groups	Frontal teaching
Students	F	18	26	113
	%	11.5%	16.6%	72.0%
Teachers	F	36	74	50
	%	22.4%	46.3%	31.3%
TOTAL	F	54	100	163
	%	17.0%	31.5%	51.4%

$\chi^2 = 73.344$ $df = 4$ $\rho = 0.00$

With regard to whether teachers used different teaching materials, encyclopaedias, children's magazines, picture books, CDs with movies and TV shows, internet presentations, computer models and materials for research in order to make the teaching interesting, we found considerable compliance in the attitudes of the students, teachers and parents saying that this happened sometimes. We also established that there was a difference in the attitudes of teachers who thought that this possibility was almost always present, while students and parents perceived this statement in a significantly different way (Figure 2).

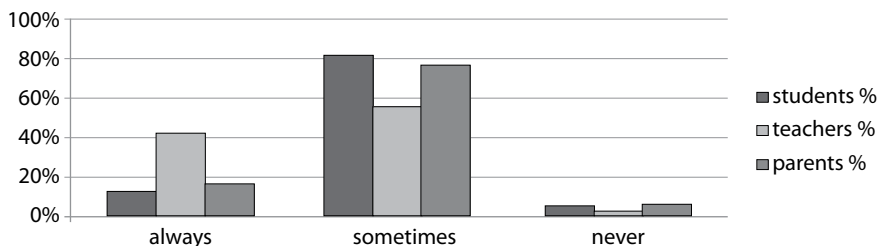


Figure 2. Use of teaching resources and learning materials

The survey results regarding the educational content as a factor of the development of students' interests, are the following:

- Students can often ask teachers only those questions that are directly related to the curriculum, and the prescribed programme (Table 4).

Table 4
Students can ask questions that interest them

		Students can ask questions that interested them		
		All questions	Only when they do not understand something	They cannot ask questions
Students	F	44	112	4
	%	27.5%	70%	2.5%
Teachers	F	98	42	23
	%	59.8%	25.6%	14.0%
Parents	F	59	83	18
	%	36.9%	51.9%	11.3%
TOTAL	F	201	237	45
	%	41.6%	49.1%	9.3%

$$\chi^2 = 64.243 \quad df = 4 \quad p = 0.00$$

Here we found a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of the respondents. The calculated value of the chi-square test is 62.243, the number of the degrees of freedom is 4, i.e. 9:49 to 13:28 of the upper limit, at a statistical significance of 0.00, which means that significantly more students and parents were of the opinion that during the teaching process students could ask only those questions which were related to the obligatory content.

- We examined whether teachers enriched the obligatory teaching content with the activities consistent with the students' interests that they acquired outside of school. We analyzed the connection between the variables and found differences in the attitudes of students, parents and teachers. The results showed that the students had the impression that in the teaching process, the teachers expanded the teaching content with those activities acquired outside of school. On the other hand, the teachers stated that they followed only the prescribed curriculum content, as a result of the need to implement the designed operational objectives of the curriculum and achieve the set standards (Figure 3).

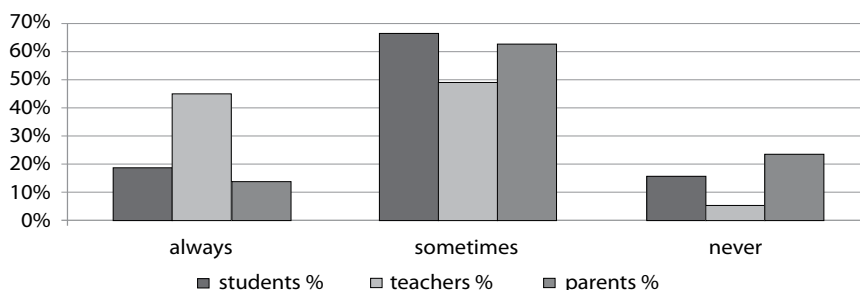


Figure 3. Teachers connect school and extracurricular knowledge of students

- When asked whether the teachers made connections between the knowledge gained from the subjects they taught and the contents of other subjects, we found diverging attitudes of the teachers, students and parents, as teachers thought that they practiced this more frequently, while the students and parents thought they did it occasionally (Table 5).

Table 5

Teachers connect their subject content with the content of other subjects

		Teachers connect their subject content with the content of other subjects		
		Always	Sometimes	Never
students	F	30	115	12
	%	19.1%	73.2%	7.6%
teachers	F	90	66	6
	%	54.5%	40.0%	3.6%
parents	F	25	111	23
	%	16.0%	71.1%	14.7%
TOTAL	F	145	292	41
	%	30.3%	61.2%	8.6%

- On the topic of whether teachers show students the usefulness and applicability of the knowledge acquired in the process of teaching/learning, we found a reciprocal relationship between the responses provided by the teachers, students and parents; it was high in relation to the assessment establishing a connection between the cognitive and the applicable (Table 6).

Table 6
Teachers point to the applicability of knowledge in everyday life

		Teachers point to the applicability of knowledge in everyday life		
		Always	Sometimes	Never
students	F	99	58	2
	%	61.9%	36.3%	1.3%
teachers	F	87	65	9
	%	53.7%	40.1%	5.6%
parents	F	93	62	4
	%	58.4%	38.0%	2.5%
TOTAL	F	279	185	15
	%	58.2%	38.6%	3.3%

$$\chi^2 = 6.101 \quad df = 4 \quad p = 0.192$$

The data collected on the possible choices of the learning content, and the possible choices of the learning activities used showed the following results:

– We first examined whether students were given a choice in terms of the content they wanted to learn, or whether they could choose study topics that were interesting to them. We found differences in the perception of this problem among students, teachers and parents. A strong discrepancy was found between the experience of the students as the participants in the teaching/learning process who were (not) given the opportunity to choose and the teachers. The teachers were more convinced that they allowed students to choose topics, and did not feel that they were not open enough, unlike the students themselves who were under the impression that they almost never had such an opportunity. Parents' attitudes were very similar to the attitudes of the students (Table 7).

Table 7
Students have the opportunity to choose the content

		Students can choose content they are interested in		
		Always	Sometimes	Never
students	F	7	64	87
	%	4.4%	40.3%	54.7%
teachers	F	16	134	14
	%	9.8%	81.7%	8.5%
parents	F	10	83	61
	%	6.5%	53.9%	39.6%
TOTAL	F	33	281	162
	%	6.9%	59.0%	34.3%

We found approximately the same percentage of answers in students and parents to the question of the opportunity given to the students to choose the learning activities in the classroom. Only 6.3% of the students stated that this possibility was always provided

and 7.9% of the parents thought that their children always had that choice. There was a greater percentage of teachers (more than one third of them, or 37.0% of respondents), who claimed that students could always choose the activities employed in the learning process. So, teachers' opinions on this issue significantly differed from the opinions of the other respondents (students and parents) because they believed they always gave their students the freedom to influence the choice of the learning activities (Table 8).

Table 8
Possibility of choosing activities

		Students have the possibility to choose activities in the classroom		
		Always	Sometimes	never
students	F	10	89	59
	%	6.3%	56.3%	37.3%
teachers	F	57	76	19
	%	37.0%	49.4%	12.3%
parents	F	12	101	38
	%	7.9%	66.9%	25.2%
TOTAL	F	79	266	116
	%	17.1%	57.7%	25.1%

When testing the statistical significance of the differences, it appears that the value of the chi-square test of 73.344 with the degree of freedom $df = 4$ is higher than the limit values at both levels of the statistical significance (9:49 to 13:28), which means that from the statistical point of view, there is a greater number of teachers than students and parents who believe that they always give their students the possibility to choose the activities employed in the classroom.

The results showed that, in terms of the learning environment, more than half of the students (62.6%) felt that the classroom was a neat and comfortable space for learning and stay, and their opinion was similar to the opinion of the teachers and parents. From these data we can conclude that teachers try to make the space in which they teach a stimulating place for the stay and work of the students.

Discussion and Conclusion

Using the previously laid out arguments, in this section we give a brief summative overview of the theoretical and research aspects of our work, and we highlight the key points of this paper.

The student's interest is the driving force that directs them towards acquiring new knowledge, which encourages and directs their activities and improves their performance. The modern educational process must rely on the events of student interest, but also at the same time must develop new needs, goals, desires and interests in students. This actually means that the student interest as a factor used for the development of the intrinsic motivation for learning and gathering knowledge can be

used in the function of the creative process and results in those segments of teaching when it encourages, enriches and leads them in the pedagogical sense.

By respecting children's interests we improve the overall functioning of the educational process. This encourages their further development and moves in a positive direction the status and position of those who are the main participants in the teaching process, i.e. the students.

The results of our study, which was focused on examining the place and role of children's interest in the contemporary teaching process in primary schools, point to the still insufficient respect and encouragement for the development of children's interests. Classroom practice and the results of this study show that in the process of teaching there is still no sufficient cooperative learning. This kind of teaching cannot develop the motivation and interest of students in learning. It is therefore very important that the teachers organize the learning process through different forms of work, especially those that support interaction in the classroom. To this end, the teacher should choose the forms of work that encourage individual work, pair work, work in small and large groups in order to develop an intensive interaction between the students and the students and teachers. The student's personality must be taken into account in the learning process, which means that the process of gaining knowledge must rely primarily on the students' cognitive activity.

The results of the study show, however, that the traditional style of teaching (lecturing) is still present in the teachers' habits and it is slowly changing towards the new, acceptable style. Only by means of the combination of different methods of work in class, technologies and learning strategies, and by the use of various teaching materials, can we awaken individual potential and interests of students. Thus, the need for a further transformation of teaching into an active, creative learning process is still needed.

The results show that teachers still insufficiently "listen" to their children's interests and their needs to acquire even that knowledge that is not required by the curriculum. It is pedagogically justified to meet the wishes and interests of the students always, when possible, and thus develop their motivation to work and study at school. It is very important to note that there is a possibility for achieving this. In fact, in our country, when searching for new solutions in the design of primary education reform, the formation of the curriculum on an entirely new basis has taken place. New educational programmes for primary schools are significantly different from the previous ones, not only regarding the content but also regarding its approach to education. The strategic document *Basis for renewal of curricula (Osnove za obnovu nastavnih planova i programa)*, discusses the partially open curriculum that defines all the programming content. This part of the curriculum, (20% – the so-called open part of the curriculum), provides teachers with a possibility to create parts of the programme in accordance with their students' interests and needs. This part of the curriculum gives students the right to vote, and at least partially decide on what they want to learn.

Providing students with choices in the learning process is very important, not only for the development of their interest in learning, but also for their overall development. Studies show that students like to be given a chance and opportunity to choose and make choices. Teachers should create learning situations which would encourage the development of their students' interest in learning, by giving them a choice. They will learn better the content that they choose to explore than the one that is imposed. By giving them a choice, providing them with a chance to choose, we prepare the students for decision-making, and thus we encourage them to take responsibility for the decisions that they have made.

The results show that students are rarely given a choice and so clearly indicate that teachers need to understand the necessity to create the learning situations which will provide their students with a choice, encourage them to take initiative, because the initiative is a strong indicator of their activities. If teachers give students the freedom of choice and expression, they help them to expand their own interests, feelings and needs. It is necessary to give students a chance to set up their own activity or to choose to learn the content that they are interested in, even if this is done only occasionally.

There are many choices that can be offered to students in the learning process which can have a positive effect on the development of their motivation. When a teacher designs a lesson, he can decide what kind of choices can be offered to students, whether it comes to the choice of the content, selection of activities, or other needs of the students. Students may be offered to choose an issue within a specific topic (an event, historical figure, text, etc.) that they want to explore to a greater extent. Students may be offered a list of topics among which they choose the ones that are interesting to them. Also, students may be offered a range of activities that they may use to learn new content or repeat the content that has previously been acquired. Therefore, they may be given the opportunity to choose how they will do or end the assigned task. Most of the tasks the students are required to carry out do not have to be done in the same way. This kind of choice appreciates different ways of thinking and promotes the sense of ability in the students.

The teacher may motivate the students to learn in a way that will allow students to choose with whom they want to work when organizing group or pair work. From all the above mentioned it is clear that low motivation to work does not have to be and should not be a persistent problem in the classroom. Pre-planned and well-designed choices that are offered to students have a strong potential to create a powerful impact on the students' attitudes toward learning.

At the end of this discussion we want to point out the necessity to analyze the overall educational work in schools. Have we managed to bring schools closer to the students and create "child friendly schools"? Have we acknowledged the individual abilities, interests and needs of the child in the process of education, or the individuality of the child and enabled the development of personality, according to their abilities and patterns of development? One gets the impression that we conceived well the reform

solutions and the objectives, activities and goals that we want to implement. On the other hand, it seems that the transformation of the work in school moves slowly in the directions that we have designed, because the school is not yet fully a motivating environment for the overall personality development of the students.

We need to think about the reasons why this happens. The incorporation and development of the children's interests in the school depends mostly on the activity of the teachers. The teachers should recognize, challenge and encourage their further development through the organization of their work in the classroom. Some activities that teachers implement in the teaching process have a stronger and some have a weaker influence on the further development of their students' interests, and some even suppress them. To be able to develop and encourage children's interests, the teacher must show greater appreciation of the individual differences of the students in every way. In this sense, the teacher needs to know and appreciate the cognitive, social, motivational, and emotional characteristics of children and adapt the educational process to the students' diversity. It is clear that a successful implementation of the reform solutions in our primary education is impossible without the well-trained and capable teachers.

In our opinion, teacher education faculties, above all, have a very important role in "shaping" such teachers. No less important task is the provision of a continuing professional development for all teachers in this regard.

From all of the above mentioned, it is clear that in terms of the direct educational work we can and should take the necessary steps in order to bring schools closer to children, and to acknowledge their abilities, needs and interests to a greater extent than it is currently the case.

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Mjesto i uloga dječjih interesa u suvremenom odgojno-obrazovnom procesu

Sažetak

Cilj ovog rada jest utvrditi mjesto i ulogu koju dječji interesi imaju u suvremenom odgojno-obrazovnom procesu. Rad predstavlja sintezu teorijskih spoznaja i analize rezultata do kojih smo došli provodeći istraživanje. Istraživanje je provedeno na uzorku od 167 učenika, 165 nastavnika i 164 roditelja, što ukupno čini 496 ispitanika. U istraživanju smo se koristili deskriptivnom metodom, anketiranjem kao istraživačkom tehnikom, odnosno anketnim upitnikom kao instrumentom istraživanja. Rezultati istraživanja su pokazali da se još uvijek u nedovoljnoj mjeri u nastavnom procesu ne inkorporira i ne potiče razvoj dječjih interesa.

Ključne riječi: metode; nastava; nastavnik; sadržaji; učenje.

Uvod

U stručnoj se literaturi naglašava da su interesi važan strukturalni element svake osobe. Čine bit osobnog identiteta i imaju važne funkcije u svim fazama čovjekova života. Zbog toga su oduvijek bili predmet čovjekova promišljanja. Interesom su se kao specifičnim ljudskim obilježjem bavili još antički mislioci Aristotel, Platon, Teofrast. Poslije su fenomen interesa analizirali i upozoravali na njegovu važnost Lok, Ruso, Herbart i Ferijer.

O mjestu i ulozi interesa u odgojno-obrazovnom procesu među pedagozima su oduvijek postojala različita mišljenja. Herbart i pristalice njegove škole smatrali su da je razvijanje interesa osnovni zadatak nastave, a Ruso, Mojman, Klapared, Ferijer i Djuj isticali su da su kod djece interesi već zadani i da nastavu organizirati u skladu s tim interesima i da im se nastava treba prilagođavati.

Suvremeno shvaćanje mjesta i uloge dječjih interesa u nastavnom procesu temelji se na činjenici da djeca dolaskom u školu donose izvjesne interese koji nisu uvijek dovoljno razvijeni i potpuni. Odgojno-obrazovni proces treba posredstvom organiziranja različitih aktivnosti, primjenom raznovrsnih metoda i oblika rada, didaktičkog materijala i nastavnog sadržaja uzimati u obzir i dalje razvijati dječje interese.

Dječji interesi kao čimbenik razvoja unutarnje motivacije

Oblikovanje dječjih interesa, stvaranje uvjeta za njihov razvoj i njihovo inkorporiranje u nastavni proces jedan je od ciljeva i bitan zadatak pedagoškog rada. Tim prije ako se zna da su dječji interesi veoma snažan motivacijski čimbenik i da potiču razvoj one, posebno vrijedne, intrinzične (unutarnje) motivacije učenika za učenje (Milić, 2008). Dječji su interesi, dakle, veoma snažan motivacijski čimbenik i za proces stjecanja znanja je neophodno da učenici to žele, da hoće naučiti i svladati i da znanje žele usvojiti (Đorđević, 1975). Ako se ima u vidu da je učenje određena aktivnost i da za učenje, kao i svaku drugu aktivnost, mora postojati poticaj, onda se može utvrditi da je učenje uvjetovano motivacijom, odnosno određenim interesom učenika.

Učenici koji su zainteresirani za učenje postižu znatno bolje rezultate od učenika koji su manje motivirani ili koji su nezainteresirani. „Kada je učenik motivisan, uloženi napor i stepen misaone aktivnosti tokom učenja je veći, koncentracija pažnje povećana, što dovodi do boljeg rezultata učenja.“ (Potkonjak i Šimleša, 1989, str. 68). Nedostatak interesa često dovodi do neuspjeha, pa čak i averzije prema učenju. Ta činjenica ukazuje na to da su dječji interesi važan preduvjet uspjeha u učenju/nastavi.

Interesi djeteta jedan su od pokretača ili jedan od uvjeta za aktiviranje sposobnosti, tj. kognitivnih procesa i struktura kojima se ostvaruje proces usvajanja znanja. „Jače angažovanje misaonih procesa,... utječe na jače buđenje unutarnje motivacije kod učenika“ (Palekčić, 1985, str. 322). Prema tome, dječji interesi su i veoma važna karika u lančanom procesu aktivacije učenika u procesu učenja. (Milić, 2008). Učenici ne usvajaju znanja samo zato što su izloženi utjecaju nastavnika. Neophodno je da učenici žele i hoće usvojiti određena znanja i razviti određene vještine. Oni su aktivni sudionici procesa stjecanja znanja samo onda kada za to imaju interes. To je, po nama, razlog više zbog kojeg moramo naći načina da u odgojno-obrazovnom radu uzmemo u obzir dječje interese i stvorimo mogućnosti za njihov daljnji razvoj. Ne treba očekivati spontano sazrijevanje dječjih interesa. Razvoj dječjih interesa ostvaruje se putem određenih strategija učenja koje nastavnici organiziraju i njima se koriste u nastavnom procesu. Suvremeni nastavni proces treba organizirati tako da se u njemu stvaraju situacije učenja koje će poticati inicijativu učenika i omogućiti im slobodu izbora, kako u pogledu izbora sadržaja, tako i u pogledu izbora aktivnosti. Dječje potrebe, interesi i želje trebaju biti sastavni dio podučavanja djece. Djeca, naime, izražavaju najveću spremnost za aktivno sudjelovanje u odgojno-obrazovnom procesu kada su aktivnosti i sadržaji koji im se nude utemeljeni na njihovim interesima. Sve spoznaje stečene na temelju iskazanog dječjeg interesa dublje su i dugotrajnije (Milić, 2008).

Složit ćemo se s tim da su dječji interesi vrlo raznorodni, mnogobrojni i da se brzo mijenjaju, tako da ih je ponekada teško uskladiti i inkorporirati u odgojno-obrazovni proces. Bez obzira na to, planskim oblikovanjem nastavnih situacija može se utjecati na poticanje i razvoj učeničkih interesa.

Nastavnik kao pokretač razvoja dječjih interesa

„Ako je u fokusu vaspitno-obrazovnog rada, u središtu života škole - učenik, onda je nastavnik onaj agens, onaj pedagoški kvasac koji potiče, podržava, usmjerava i kultiviše ličnost učenika“ (Gazivoda, 1999, str. 6).

Osnovna je škola općeobrazovna i jedinstvena za sve učenike, bez obzira na njihove individualne osobitosti, potrebe i interese. U nastavnom procesu „svima se nudi ista „porcija“ iste „hrane“ (isti predmeti, isti sadržaji) i u jednakoj količini (jednak obim gradiva). Zato je osnovna škola jednima teška, drugima laka, ali izgleda, malo kome primerena“ (Kocić, 1998, str. 69).

Škola mora uzeti u obzir činjenicu da su djeca različita i u skladu s tim organizirati odgojno-obrazovni proces, odnosno proces učenja/nastave. Zadatak je škole da organizira nastavni proces u kome će svaki učenik moći razviti svoje sposobnosti, zadovoljiti svoje spoznajne potrebe i interese. Postavlja se pitanje kako i kojim se odgojno-obrazovnim postupcima mogu razvijati i inkorporirati učenički interesi u nastavni proces. Kakvu i koju ulogu u tom procesu ima nastavnik? Uloga nastavnika u savremenoj je školi složena i dinamična, jer se nastavna djelatnost odvija u okolnostima koje se stalno mijenjaju. Strukturalni preobražaj škole zahtijeva i radikalnu promjenu uloge nastavnika, jer suvremene analize obrazovanja govore o tome da je nastavnik ključni nosilac promjena, i da je upravo on u središtu obrazovne reforme.

Nova, reformrska rješenja osnovnoškolskog odgoja i obrazovanja u Crnoj Gori traže nove pristupe učeniku, kao individui, i nov odnos nastavnika prema odgojno-obrazovnom radu. Uloga nastavnika veoma je složena i dinamična. Nastavnik priprema i planira odgojno-obrazovni rad, učenje i razvoj učenika u cjelini, kontrolira sve čimbenike nastave, predviđa, analizira i usmjerava rad učenika u pravcu postavljenog cilja, traži puteve i postupke što djelotvornijeg učenja i traži načine kojima će potaknuti razvoj dječjih interesa, njihovih potreba i želja. Nastavnik primjenom raznovrsnih metoda i oblika nastavnog rada treba stvarati preduvjete za različite aktivnosti učenika i njihovu međusobnu suradnju bilo radom u parovima, malim ili velikim grupama, bilo putem individualnog rada učenika. Kvalitetan nastavni proces potiče razvoj interesa kod učenika. Način učenja koji jače angažira misaone procese, odnosno koji angažira jaču aktivnost učenika, utječe na razvoj interesa kod učenika za učenjem. Kako bi uspio razviti i potaknuti dječje interese, nastavnik mora pokazati veće uvažavanje individualnih razlika učenika u svakom pogledu. U tom smislu nastavnik se treba upoznati i uvažiti spoznajne, socijalne, motivacijske, emocionalne karakteristike djece i prilagoditi odgojno-obrazovni proces učeničkim različitostima. Na taj bi se način svakom pojedincu omogućilo da iskaže svoje interese i da ih i dalje razvija. U skladu s utvrđenim individualnim karakteristikama nastavnik treba izvršiti izbor raznovrsnih metoda i oblika rada, odabir didaktičkog materijala i planira nastavni proces u pravcu poticanja i razvoja interesa. Nastavnik treba stvarati situacije u nastavnom procesu kojima će buditi intelektualnu radoznalost učenika usmjeravajući ga na rad i učenje. Nastavnik mora pomoći djeci da prošire vlastite osjećaje, potrebe, interese i da im da

mogućnost izbora, kako u pogledu izbora sadržaja tako i u pogledu samih aktivnosti (Lalović, 2004).

Nastavni sadržaji imaju jak motivacijski efekt na učenike i njihovo učenje, odnosno na rad, jer djeca neusporedivo lakše i kvalitetnije uče ako su zainteresirana za sadržaj koji uče. Nastavnik treba poticati zainteresiranost učenika za određene nastavne sadržaje, poštujući njihove potrebe, interese, iskustvo i ukazujući im na upotrebnost vrijednost nastavnih sadržaja u svakodnevnom životu. U osnovi motivacije za učenje je radoznalost. Veoma važna aktivnost nastavnika, kojom će uspjeti motivirati učenike i razviti njihovu intelektualnu radoznalost, jest povezivanje nepoznatog gradiva s poznatim, povezivanje gradiva sa svakodnevnim iskustvima učenika i upućivanje učenika na traženje i korištenje različitim izvorima informacija. Interesi se uspješno ostvaruju ako proizlaze iz doživljenih potreba za stalnim proširivanjem znanja i ako učenici uvide da im je stečeno znanje korisno i potrebno, da ga mogu primijeniti u svakodnevnom životu. Nastavnikova umješnost da manje zanimljiv sadržaj uspješno poveže s poznatim (iz istog, ali i drugih nastavnih predmeta) ili zanimljivim, doprinosi razvijanju interesa učenika za određene nastavne sadržaje. Nastavni sadržaji učenicima trebaju predstavljati izazov. Jedan od zadataka nastavnika u nastavnom procesu treba biti formiranje trajnih učeničkih interesa za spoznajom raznovrsnih obrazovnih sadržaja. Nastavnici svoju vještinu trebaju usmjeriti prema tome da obavezan nastavni sadržaj (propisan nastavnim programima) povežu sa zanimanjima djece, i da oblikuju aktivnosti učenja/nastave koje su djeci zanimljive i bliske.

Svakako da država definira (propisuje) obavezne nastavne sadržaje koje učenici trebaju usvojiti. Ali ta činjenica ne bi trebala biti prepreka nastavnicima da odgovarajućim (primjerenim) izborom nastavnih metoda, oblika rada i primjenom raznovrsnih nastavnih sredstava i didaktičkog materijala kombiniraju sadržaje koji su rezultat učeničkih interesa i obaveznih nastavnih sadržaja koje nameće nastavni program, i na taj način ostvare raznovrsne aktivnosti učenika, kako bi im nastavu učinili što zanimljivijom i efektivnijom (Milić, 2008).

Već smo naveli da nastavnik ima više veoma važnih uloga u odgojno-obrazovnom radu. Jedna od njih je stvaranje obrazovnog ambijenta u kojem će se odgojno-obrazovni ciljevi ostvariti. Dakle, nastavnik je projektant nastavnog procesa, a samim tim i nastavnog ambijenta. Veliku važnost u kognitivnom razvoju djeteta ima struktura sredine u kojoj dijete boravi. Zato je veoma važno organizirati sredinu za učenje, odnosno stimulativnu učionicu koja će najneposrednije i najmoćnije utjecati na sveukupan razvoj djeteta. Stimulativna učionica proizvodi klimu koja potiče komunikaciju i individualnu inicijativu i aktivnost učenika. Ona je pokazatelj stila rada nastavnika, strategija učenja i metoda poučavanja. Učionica koja osigurava individualnu inicijativu i aktivnost učenika organizirana je tako da osigurava rad koji stimulira i osigurava komunikaciju između učenika, učenika i nastavnika i nastavnika i učenika. Učionice u kojima se izvodi suvremena nastava trebaju biti prostor u kojem učenici ne sjede tako da jedni drugima gledaju u leđa, jer tako organiziran prostor

ograničava njihovu komunikaciju i samoinicijativu. Tradicionalno organizirane učionice podsjećaju na slušaonice u kojima učenici trebaju šutjeti, slušati nastavnike i pamti njihove riječi. Učionice moraju biti prostor koji omogućava živu komunikaciju između aktera nastavnog procesa/procesa učenja. Učionica kao prostor u kojem učenici uče i rade treba pružiti mogućnost brze i lake primjene različitih oblika rada, organizaciju i realizaciju istraživačkih i drugih projekata, kao i različite vrste aktivnosti, kako bi se stvorili uvjeti za zadovoljavanje učeničkih potreba i interesa, ali i za ostvarenje nastavnih ciljeva predviđenih nastavnim programima.

Metode

Cilj provedenog istraživanja bio je utvrditi da li i u kojoj mjeri nastavnici u nastavnom procesu, u osnovnoj školi, uvažavaju, inkorporiraju i potiču razvoj dječjih interesa. Polazeći od sadržaja i biti odabranog problema, predmeta, cilja i zadataka u ovom se istraživanju koristila deskriptivna znanstveno-istraživačka metoda. Primijenjena istraživačka tehnika je anketiranje, a kao mjerni instrument koristili smo se anketom za ispitivanje učeničkih i nastavničkih stavova, kao i stavova roditelja.

Populaciju su (osnovni skup) u ovom istraživanju činili učenici osnovnih škola u Crnoj Gori, nastavnici i roditelji. Uzorkom su obuhvaćeni učenici i nastavnici iz 20 osnovnih škola (gradskih i seoskih) iz sjevernog, središnjeg i južnog dijela Crne Gore. Uzorak čine i roditelji učenika. Istraživanjem je obuhvaćeno 167 učenika, 165 nastavnika i 164 roditelja, što ukupno čini 496 ispitanika.

Nakon završenog prikupljanja podataka pristupili smo njihovu sređivanju i kvalitativnoj i kvantitativnoj obradi. Tokom označavanja odgovora koristili smo se postotcima i frekvencijama kao pokazateljima strukture neke pojave. Uspoređivanje odgovora između tri poduzorka izvršili smo hi-kvadrat testom.

Jedan od ciljeva reforme osnovnog obrazovanja u Crnoj Gori jest organiziranje odgojno-obrazovnog procesa u kojem će učenici moći zadovoljiti svoje spoznajne potrebe, želje i interese. Realizacija zadanog cilja podrazumijeva organiziranje odgojno-obrazovnog procesa koji će stvarati uvjete za razvoj dječjih interesa, i koji će učenicima pružiti mogućnost izbora, kako u pogledu izbora sadržaja tako i u pogledu izbora aktivnosti. To je razlog zbog kojeg je neophodno učenicima pružiti bogatu ponudu sadržaja, metoda i oblika rada. Nakon sedam godina implementacije reformskih rješenja realizirali smo navedeno istraživanje s namjerom da, na neki način, utvrdimo ostvaruje li se, i u kojoj mjeri, taj cilj u osnovnim školama.

Rezultati

Cijelim korpusom pitanja saznali smo koliko je učenicima zanimljiv proces nastave, odnosno učenja u školi, organiziraju li i realiziraju li nastavnici način učenja izborom raznovrsnih metoda i oblika rada, kao i odabirom didaktičkog materijala u pravcu uvažavanja i poticanja razvoja učeničkih interesa. Ispitali smo obogaćuju li nastavnici nastavne sadržaje onim sadržajima koji su u skladu s učeničkim interesima,

povezuju li obrazovne sadržaje sa znanjima i iskustvom učenika, povezuju li znanja iz predmeta koji predaju sa sadržajima iz ostalih predmeta, ukazuju li učenicima na korisnost i primjenjivost znanja koja stežu u nastavnom procesu/procesu učenja u svakodnevnom životu i upućuju li učenike na korištenje različitih izvora informacija. Ispitali smo da li i u kojoj je mjeri učenicima omogućeno da budu inicijatori izbora sadržaja i aktivnosti koje će se realizirati u nastavnom procesu, shvaćajući važnost davanja mogućnosti izbora učenicima za razvoj interesa za učenje. Ispitali smo i to da li učionice u kojima se realizira nastava predstavljaju ugodan i osmišljen prostor za boravak djece.

Obradom podataka dobili smo sljedeće rezultate.

Nastavnici se, u načelu, po procjeni učenika i roditelja, trude organizirati i realizirati nastavni proces/proces učenja, koji bi učenicima bio interesantan i koji bi ih motivirao za učenje i rad u školi.

U približno istom postotku učenici procjenjuju da je većina satova uglavnom zanimljiva (44,2%), kao i da je većina satova i dosadna i zanimljiva (49,7%). Da je nastavni proces/proces učenja potpuno nezanimljiv procjenjuje 4,3% učenika (Slika 1).

Slika 1.

Rezultati ispitivanja mišljenja učenika, nastavnika i roditelja o tome zašto je učenicima u toku nastave dosadno, i koji su za to razlozi, pokazali su da učenici (Tablica 1) i roditelji kao najčešće razloge za dosadu učenika na nastavi navode nezanimljiv i obiman nastavni sadržaj i nezanimljivosti metoda rada nastavnika. Nastavnici razloge dosade učenika vide u njihovoj nezainteresiranosti za učenje i rad, ne uviđajući da su oni tvorci motivirajućeg nastavnog procesa/procesa učenja (Tablica 2).

Tablica 1. i 2.

Ako usporedimo odgovore o izboru aktivnosti s odgovorima koji mjere razloge dosađivanja na satu, možemo uočiti da postoji negativan međusobni utjecaj tih varijabli, odnosno da je to što je učenicima na satu dosadno, povezano s načinom rada koji nastavnici u nastavnom procesu najčešće primjenjuju. Naime, rezultati su našeg istraživanja pokazali da među učenicima dominira percepcija da nastavnici u toku nastavnog procesa najčešće objašnjavaju lekcije, odnosno predaju, a učenici slušaju njihovo izlaganje. Nastavnici, njih 78,2%, su na isto pitanje dali odgovor da najčešće organiziraju nastavni proces/proces učenja tako što pokreću učeničku raspravu o zadanoj temi ili tako što stavljaju učenike u situaciju da oni istražuju neki proces ili pojavu.

Rezultati istraživanja su pokazali postojanje statistički značajne razlike u stavovima učenika i nastavnika kada je u pitanju izbor oblika rada u nastavnom procesu. Učenici imaju dominantno izražen stav da se u nastavi najčešće koristi frontalni oblik rada, koji sputava interakciju u učionici, vodi pasivizaciji učenika u nastavnom procesu i učenička znanja čini reproduktivnima (Tablica 3).

Tablica 3.

U odnosu na to da li se u nastavi koriste različiti nastavni listići, enciklopedije, dječji časopisi, slikovnice, CD-i s filmovima i tv-emisijama, internetske prezentacije, računalo, makete, materijali za istraživanje, kako bi nastava bila što zanimljivija, postoji prilična usuglašenost u stavovima učenika, nastavnika i roditelja da se to ponekad zbiva, ali je utvrđeno da postoji razlika u stavu nastavnika koji značajno više doživljavaju da je ta mogućnost gotovo uvijek prisutna, u odnosu na to da učenici i roditelji takvu tvrdnju sagledavaju značajno drugačije (Slika 2).

Slika 2.

Rezultati istraživanja koji su se odnosili na nastavni sadržaj kao čimbenik razvoja učeničkih interesa jesu sljedeći: učenici najčešće nastavnicima mogu postavljati samo ona pitanja koja su u izravnoj vezi s nastavnim sadržajem, odnosno propisanim nastavnim programom (Tablica 4).

Tablica 4.

Ovdje se pokazalo postojanje statistički značajne razlike u stavovima ispitanika. Dobivena vrijednost hi-kvadrat testa iznosi 62.243, za broj stupnjeva slobode 4, tj. 9.49 – 13.28 graničnih vrijednosti, na razini 0,00 statističke značajnosti, što znači da značajno više učenika i roditelja ima stav da učenici u toku nastavnog procesa mogu postavljati samo ona pitanja koja se tiču obveznog nastavnog sadržaja.

Ispitali smo obogaćuju li nastavnici propisane nastavne sadržaje sadržajima koji su u skladu s učeničkim zanimanjima, onim što stječu izvan škole. Analizirali smo povezanost između varijabli i zapazili da postoje razlike u stavovima učenika i roditelja i nastavnika. Rezultati istraživanja su pokazali da učenici imaju dojam da u nastavnom procesu nastavnici nastavne sadržaje proširuju sadržajima koje su stekli izvan školskog učenja. Nasuprot njima, nastavnici su iznijeli stav da se mnogo više pridržavaju isključivo propisanih nastavnih sadržaja, a što je rezultat neophodnosti realizacije zadanih operativnih ciljeva nastavnih programa, odnosno ostvarenja postavljenih standarda (Grafikon 3).

Grafikon 3.

Na pitanje povezuju li nastavnici znanja koja stječu iz predmeta koje predaju sa sadržajima drugih predmeta također je utvrđena kvaliteta koja ne ukazuje na podudaranje stavova nastavnika i učenika i roditelja jer nastavnici ocjenjuju da to prakticiraju češće, a učenici i roditelji ocjenjuju da su to povremene situacije (Tablica 5).

Tablica 5.

U odnosu na to skreću li nastavnici učenicima pozornost na korisnost i primjenjivost znanja koja stječu u nastavnom procesu/procesu učenja utvrdili smo da postoji uzajamna veza između odgovora nastavnika i učenika i roditelja, odnosno da je ona visoka u odnosu na ocjenu da postoji povezivanje spoznajnog i primjenljivog (Tablica 6).

Tablica 6.

Iz prikupljenih podataka o mogućnostima izbora sadržaja za učenje, odnosno mogućnostima izbora aktivnosti učenika, dobili smo sljedeće rezultate.

Najprije smo ispitali daje li se učenicima mogućnost izbora kada su u pitanju sadržaji koje učenici žele učiti, odnosno mogu li birati teme za učenje koje su im zanimljive. Utvrdili smo da između odgovora učenika, nastavnika i roditelja ne postoji podudaranje u percepciji tog problema. Naime, poseban nesklad postoji između doživljaja učenika, kao onih kojima se (ne)daje mogućnost da biraju, s jedne i nastavnika s druge strane. Nastavnici su značajno uvjereniji u to da omogućuju učenicima izbor tema, odnosno ne percipiraju da nisu dovoljno otvoreni, za razliku od samih učenika koji imaju doživljaj da, gotovo nikad, nemaju takvu priliku. Stavovi roditelja vrlo su slični stavovima učenika (Tablica 7).

Tablica 7.

Utvrdili smo da u približno istom postotku učenici i roditelji odgovaraju o mogućnosti danoj učenicima da biraju aktivnosti na satu. Samo 6,3% učenika odgovara da im se ta mogućnost uvijek pruža, odnosno 7,9% roditelja procjenjuje da njihova djeca uvijek imaju tu mogućnost izbora. Znatno je veći postotak odgovora nastavnika (nešto više od jedne trećine ili 37,0% ispitanih), u odnosu na postotak tog odgovora od učenika i roditelja, koji tvrde da mogućnost izbora aktivnosti učenika uvijek postoji u nastavnom procesu. Dakle, značajno se razlikuje mišljenje nastavnika o tom pitanju u odnosu na ostale ispitanike (učenici i roditelji), jer oni smatraju da uvijek daju učenicima slobodu da utječu na nastavne aktivnosti (Tablica 8).

Tablica 8.

Testiranjem statističke značajnosti razlika pokazalo se kako je vrijednost hi-kvadrat testa 73.344 uz stupanj slobode $df=4$ veće od graničnih vrijednosti na obje razine statističke značajnosti (9.49-13.28), što znači da nastavnici statistički značajno više nego učenici i roditelji imaju stav da učenicima uvijek daju mogućnost izbora aktivnosti na satima.

Rezultati istraživanja pokazali su da u pogledu ambijenta za učenje više od pola ispitanih učenika (62,6%) smatra da su učionice uredan i ugodan prostor za boravak i učenje, a slično mišljenje imaju nastavnici i roditelji. Iz navedenih podataka možemo zaključiti da se nastavnici trude da prostor u kojem izvode nastavu bude stimulirajući za boravak i rad učenika.

Rasprava i zaključak

Koristeći se prethodnim razmatranjima u ovom dijelu rada dajemo sažet prikaz teorijskog i istraživačkog aspekta našeg rada.

Interes učenika je pokretačka snaga koja učenike usmjerava u pravcu stjecanja novih spoznaja. Ona potiče i usmjerava njihove aktivnosti i poboljšava njihova postignuća.

Suvremeni nastavni proces mora se oslanjati na manifestacije učeničkih interesa, ali i kod učenika istodobno razvijati nove potrebe, ciljeve, želje i interese. To zapravo znači da interes učenika, kao čimbenik razvoja unutarnje motiviranosti za učenje i spoznaju, može biti u funkciji stvaralačkih procesa i rezultata u nastavi kada ih ona stimulira, obogaćuje, usmjerava i pedagoški vodi. Uvažavanjem dječjih interesa unapređuje se ukupno funkcioniranje nastavnog procesa. Time se potiče njihov daljnji razvoj i u pozitivnom pravcu pomjera status i položaj onih koji su glavni sudionici u procesu nastave – učenici.

Rezultati našeg istraživanja, koje je bilo usmjereno na ispitivanje mjesta i uloge dječjih interesa u suvremenom nastavnom procesu, u osnovnoj školi, ukazuju na još uvijek nedovoljno uvažavanje i poticanje razvoja dječjih interesa. Školska praksa i rezultati ovog istraživanja pokazali su da u nastavi još uvijek nema u dovoljnoj mjeri kooperativnog učenja. Takva nastava ne može razvijati motivaciju i zainteresiranost učenika za učenje. Zato je veoma važno da nastavnik organizira nastavni proces/proces učenja preko oblika nastavnog rada koji podupiru interakciju u učionici. S tim ciljem nastavnik treba birati oblike rada koji potiču individualni rad, rad u paru, rad u malim i većim grupama, kako bi se razvijala intenzivna interakcija između učenika i učenika, učenika i nastavnika. Učenikova se osobnost mora uvažavati u nastavnom procesu, što znači da se proces stjecanja znanja u nastavi mora osloniti ponajprije na učenikovu misaonu aktivnost. Rezultati istraživanja ipak su pokazali da je tradicionalni stil izvođenja nastave (predavačka nastava) još uvijek prisutan u nastavničkim navikama i da se sporo mijenja novim, prihvatljivijim stilom. Samo kombinacijom raznovrsnih metoda rada na satu, tehnika i strategija učenja, uz primjenu raznovrsnog didaktičkog materijala, mogu se probuditi individualni potencijali i interesa učenika. Dakle, neophodna je daljnja transformacija nastave u aktivnu, kreativnu nastavu.

Rezultati istraživanja pokazali su i da nastavnici još uvijek nedovoljno „oslušuju“ dječje interese i njihove potrebe za stjecanjem i onog znanja koje nije propisano školskim dokumentima. Pedagoški je uvijek opravdano, kada god je to moguće, izaći u susret željama i interesima učenika i tako razvijati njihovu motivaciju za rad i učenje u školskim uvjetima. Veoma je važno napomenuti da za to postoje mogućnosti. Naime, u našoj državi prilikom traženja novih, reformskih rješenja u koncipiranju osnovnog odgoja i obrazovanja pristupilo se izradi nastavnih programa na potpuno novoj osnovi. Novi obrazovni programi za osnovnu školu znatno se razlikuju od prethodnih, i to ne samo po sadržaju već i po pristupu obrazovanju. U starteškom dokumentu Osnove za obnovu nastavnih planova i programa govori se o djelomično otvorenom nastavnom programu koji ne propisuje sve programske sadržaje. Taj dio nastavnog programa, 20% tzv. otvoreni dio kurikula, pruža nastavnicima mogućnost da kreiraju dio programa u skladu s učeničkim interesima i potrebama. Taj dio kurikula omogućuje učenicima pravo da biraju, i da bar djelomično sami odlučuju o onome što će učiti.

Davanje učenicima mogućnosti izbora u nastavnom procesu veoma je važno ne samo za razvoj interesa za učenje već i za njihov cjelokupni razvoj. Istraživanja

pokazuju da učenici vole kada im se daju šanse, prilike da biraju i izabiru. Nastavnik treba stvarati nastavne situacije kojima će potaknuti razvoj interesa učenika za učenje tako što će im dati mogućnost izbora. Oni će bolje učiti sadržaj koji su izabrali da ga istražuju, uče, nego sadržaj koji im se nameće. Dajući im mogućnost izbora, osiguravajući im šansu da biraju, osposobljavamo učenike za donošenje odluka, a time ih i ohrabrujemo da preuzmu odgovornost za odluku koju su donijeli. Rezultati istraživanja ukazuju na to da se učenicima rijetko daje mogućnost izbora i jasno ukazuju na neophodnost spoznaje nastavnika da trebaju oblikovati nastavne situacije kojima će učenicima dati mogućnost izbora, poticati ih na samoinicijativu, jer je inicijativa djece siguran pokazatelj njihove aktivnosti. Dajući učenicima mogućnost slobode izbora i izražavanja, nastavnici pomažu učenicima da prodube vlastite interese, osjećaje i potrebe. Neophodno je, makar i povremeno, pružiti učenicima šansu da sami pokrenu određenu aktivnost ili za učenje odaberu sadržaj koji ih zanima. Postoji mnogo vrsta izbora koji se mogu omogućiti učenicima u nastavnom procesu, a koji mogu imati pozitivan efekt na razvoj učeničke motivacije. Kada nastavnik sam oblikuje sat, on može odlučiti koju će vrstu izbora u toku sata omogućiti učenicima, bilo da je riječ o izboru sadržaju, izboru aktivnosti ili pak nekim drugim potrebama učenika. Učenicima se može ponuditi da u okviru određene teme izaberu neki događaj, povijesnu osobu, tekst i sl. koji žele posebno, dodatno, dublje i više učiti. Učenicima se može ponuditi popis tema između kojih će oni izabrati teme koje su im zanimljive. Također, učenicima se može ponuditi niz aktivnosti kojima oni žele učiti novi sadržaj ili obnoviti ono što su već naučili. Dakle, učenicima se može pružiti prilika da izaberu kako će završiti, odnosno obaviti postavljeni zadatak. Većina zadataka koji se traže od učenika ne moraju se izvršiti na isti način. Takvi izbori uzimaju u obzir različite načine mišljenja i kod učenika promoviraju osjećaj sposobnosti. Nastavnik može učenike motivirati za učenje i tako što će prilikom organiziranja grupnog rada ili rada u paru omogućiti učenicima da biraju s kim žele raditi. Iz svega se navedenog jasno zaključuje da niska motivacija za rad u učionici ne mora i ne treba biti stalan problem. Unaprijed planirani i dobro osmišljeni izbori koji se nude učenicima imaju jak potencijal u stvaranju snažnog utjecaja na odnos učenika prema učenju.

Na kraju ovih razmatranja želimo ukazati na neophodnost analize sveukupnog odgojno-obrazovnog rada u školama. Jesmo li uspjeli u tome da školu približimo učenicima i napravimo „školu po mjeri djeteta“? Jesmo li u odgojno-obrazovnom procesu uzeli u obzir individualne sposobnosti, interese i potrebe djeteta, odnosno uvažili individualnost djeteta i omogućili mu razvoj osobnosti u skladu s njegovim sposobnostima i zakonitostima razvoja? Steže se dojam da smo dobro koncipirali reformska rješenja, definirali ciljeve, aktivnosti kojima te ciljeve želimo ostvariti. Čini se, međutim, da se transformacija rada u školi odvija sporo u smjerovima koje smo projektirali, jer škola još uvijek nije u potpunosti motivirajući ambijent za cjelokupan razvoj osobe. Trebamo razmisliti i o razlozima zbog kojih je tome tako. Inkorporiranje i razvoj dječjih interesa u školskim uvjetima, u velikoj mjeri, ovisi o

aktivnosti nastavnika. Nastavnici organizacijom rada trebaju uvažiti, izazvati i poticati njihov razvoj. Neke aktivnosti koje nastavnici ostvare u nastavnom procesu jače utječu na daljnji razvoj interesa kod učenika, neke slabije, a neke ih čak i guše. Kako bi uspio razviti i potaknuti dječje interese, nastavnik mora pokazati veće uvažavanje individualnih razlika učenika u svakom pogledu. U tom smislu nastavnik se treba upoznati i uvažiti spoznajne, socijalne, motivacijske i emocionalne osobine djece i odgojno-obrazovni proces prilagoditi učeničkim različitostima. Jasno je da je uspješna realizacija reformskih rješenja našeg osnovnoškolskog odgoja i obrazovanja bez dobro obrazovanog i osposobljenog nastavnika nemoguća. Po našem mišljenju nastavnički fakulteti, prije svih, imaju veoma važnu ulogu u „stvaranju“ takvog nastavnika. Ne manje važan zadatak je i osiguranje kontinuiranog profesionalnog razvoja svih nastavnika u tom pravcu.

Iz svega je rečenog jasno da se u pogledu organizacije neposrednog odgojno-obrazovnog rada mogu i trebaju poduzeti neophodni koraci kako bi škola još više postala bliža djetetu, kako bi u većoj mjeri nego što je to sada slučaj uvažila njegove sposobnosti, potrebe i interese.