

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION AND THE FAMILY OF A CHILD WITH DISABILITIES

*PhD Stanisława Katarzyna Nazaruk, PhD Joanna Waszczuk,
PhD Barbara Sokółowska*

John Paul II University in Biala Podlaska, Poland

Jūratė Danielienė

Klaipėdos Valstybinė Kolegija / higher education institution

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52320/svv.vliVIII.289>

Abstract

Taking care of the well-being of pupils with disabilities, schools and teachers look for new forms of collaboration in order to meet the expectations of parents and their children who, for various reasons, require additional care. This was the reason for starting the research on the cooperation between teachers and parents. The research aim was to recognise the needs of parents and teachers with regard to their collaboration and to determine the actual forms of this cooperation present in the surveyed entities.

The above-mentioned issues were taken into account when conducting a diagnostic survey on the process of cooperation between teachers and parents in selected primary schools educating children and young disabled people. The research covered primary schools attended by pupils with disabilities coming from the city of Biała Podlaska in the province of Lublin.

Research has shown that there are some factors that inhibit the collaboration of the school with parents bringing up children with disabilities. However, some factors that positively influence the process of cooperation have also been observed. The factors were indicated by both parents and teachers.

Keywords: pupil with disabilities, cooperation, parents, teacher, educational institution.

Introduction

Relevance of the topic. The current reality oscillates between, on the one hand, rapid changes and, on the other hand, the growing needs of the child, including the child with disabilities, which prompts scientific reflection and research on the diagnosis and monitoring of the processes of school-family cooperation, which is important for several reasons: firstly, it determines the proper bio-psycho-social development of the child, secondly, it contributes to the proper functioning of the school and thirdly, it enables the building of the local community. Cooperation between teachers and parents of children with disabilities influences not only the development of children's learning potentials, but also their well-being, which for various reasons requires extra care.

Research problem. This article analyses the features of cooperation between teachers and parents of children with disabilities. The main features characterising cooperation, its forms, factors hindering it by both teachers and parents were evaluated.

Subject matter of the research. The subject of this research is the cooperation of teachers and parents with children with disabilities and the factors that determine it. Among these are forms of cooperation, parents' attitudes towards the school, parents' evaluations and hindering factors.

Research aim. This article aims to identify the features of cooperation between teachers and parents with children with disabilities who attend special primary schools and require special care and attention because of their disability.

Research objectives:

1. To identify the focus of parent-teacher cooperation.
2. To find out the parents' evaluation of cooperation with the school.
3. To identify the most common forms of cooperation between teachers and parents.

Research methods. Due to the problematic nature of the research, a diagnostic survey method and a questionnaire technique were chosen. The lack of a standardised survey instrument prompted the authors to develop their own research tools, one addressed to parents and the other to teachers. Before the aforementioned tools were applied, a pilot study was carried out in order to clarify the content of the questions and to calculate the Cronbach's α reliability coefficient of the individual questions and of the entire tool (separately for parents and teachers), the result of which, at 0.72, allowed the interpretation

of a survey questionnaire with correct internal consistency. The aforementioned value is accepted in the social sciences as being adequate to guarantee the reliability of the tool.

1. Parent-school collaboration in the literature

When analysing the literature on the relationship between teachers and parents, we come across terms such as partnership, cooperation or collaboration. The educator Lulek writes that in educational reality teachers and parents often use these terms interchangeably, narrow their meaning, or apply a certain valuing on the basis of their compatibility or divergence (Lulek, 2008). According to Okoń, cooperation "refers to the interaction of individuals or groups of people performing specific, partial tasks to achieve a common goal. Cooperation is based on mutual trust, loyalty and subordination to a goal realized by all individuals or groups" (Okoń, 1996,p.318). In the teaching and upbringing process, the cooperation of teachers and parents is a joint action aimed at the welfare of individual pupils, classes and the whole school community. A constitutive feature of this process is the undertaking of various tasks in the name of jointly agreed goals (Łobocki, 1985, p.16). Educational partnership, which refers to the child/pupil - family - school - local environment relationship, is centred on the cooperation that makes it happen. Mutual trust and a sense of shared ownership of a certain good should develop in the partners, as well as collegiality. In the simplest terms, it is a kind of equal relationship, a mutual influence that the different environments of a child's education have on each other (Mendel, 2002). Stanislaw Kawula identifies the links between: participation-sharing-cooperation-inspiration; adaptation-accommodation; inertia-passivity-indifference; opposition-rejection-contradiction-of-interest-conflict (Kawula et al., 1998, p. 209). The aforementioned pedagogue points out that we are not always dealing with relationships that reach the level of cooperation and collaboration, and therefore proposes the introduction of the term "pedagogical family-school relationship" (Kawula et al., 1998, p. 202).

The intersection of family, school and community influences becomes the ground for a partnership from which benefits arise, not only serving the child but also all parties involved in the collaboration (Mendel, 2002).

In order to better understand the phenomenon of co-operation and to predict its effects, it is necessary to define the norms on which it is based, namely that co-operation occurs when the individual clearly benefits from the co-operation and it is profitable for him or her. The decision to co-operate is influenced by the individual's perception of the number of people for whom it is beneficial, the more people, the more likely it is that co-operation will be initiated. The individual's way of resolving the conflict between "I" and "we" and ability to communicate is also important. The relationship is significantly influenced by people's attitudes towards each other, as we are more likely to cooperate with people who are liked. In addition, previous positive experiences of working together with a person encourage us to work together with that person in the future. The basis of joint action is the knowledge of how partners, whose attitudes we perceive as predictable and who act according to commonly accepted rules, will behave (Kaminska, 2019).

The realisation of the objectives outlined above requires the observance of certain principles facilitating contact between teachers and parents and the exchange of experiences, among which Łobocki includes: positive motivation, partnership, multilateral flow of information, unity of action (Łobocki, 1985, p.35).

The effectiveness of the activities between the school and parents depends on the defined and adopted objectives. According to Łobocki, the most important aims are to improve work with pupils, to make teachers and parents better acquainted with their pupils, to make parents aware that the multifaceted development of the child depends on activities carried out jointly by school and home, to strengthen emotional bonds, to enable two-way communication between the parties on a democratic and partnership basis, to exchange opinions and observations, and to suggest specific forms of educational interventions to parents (Łobocki, 1985,p.17-20).

In such cooperation, attention should be paid to the role of the family in the functioning of the child. The family is the natural environment for care and education, and forms a community in which participation is permanent and covers a longer or shorter period of life. The functioning of the family is based on natural factors, i.e. birth, residence, meeting the needs of the child. In the Apostolic Exhortation

Familiaris Consortio, John Paul II wrote that since parents gave life to children, they have the primary responsibility for the upbringing of their offspring and must be recognised as their first and principal educators (Apostolic Exhortation Familiaris Consortio, 2000, p. 12). It is also part of the family's task to familiarise them with socially accepted rules of behaviour, to form ethical concepts, caring attitudes, to teach tolerance, to understand the behaviour of others, their individuality and otherness, and to evaluate and interpret this behaviour in accordance with accepted rules of social coexistence. The second important task is to ensure the full intellectual development of the child, by creating the right conditions for the development of interests and aspirations and the motivation for lifelong learning. The tasks of the family also include introducing the child to the world of culture, art, traditions, developing the right attitude to work, parental and marital tasks, developing the need for interpersonal contacts and, finally, preparing for independent life (Badora, 2001). The family is a very important determinant of a child's educational opportunities, often even a decisive factor. The primary task of the modern family and school is to prepare and introduce the child to life in a constantly changing world and to implement the child to understand the surrounding reality, the multiplicity of ideals, values, beliefs present in it, and for the child to learn about itself (Jeziorański et al., 2012).

Family upbringing is irreplaceable and forms the basis of the educational influence of many institutions, kindergartens and schools. Thus, alongside the family, the school is also an important environment for child development. According to the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 14 February 2017 on the curriculum for pre-school education and core curriculum for general education, the task of the school is to gently introduce the child to the world of knowledge, prepare him or her to perform the duties of a pupil and implement self-development. The school should provide safe conditions and a friendly atmosphere for learning, taking into account the individual capabilities and educational needs of the pupil (Journal of Laws 2017, item 356).

1.1. Forms of interaction between the school and the family

The process of school-family integration has been the subject of many studies. Łobocki (1985, 1992), Kawula (1993), Babiuch (2002), Warzecha (2001), Smykowska (2008) and others have written about it. According to Dorota Ruszkiewicz, integration is a complex, difficult and long-term process, which, however, sets the right direction in the process of shaping social inclusion. It is fostered by the search for new and attractive forms of mutual contacts and the improvement of those already implemented (Ruszkiewicz, 2011). One of these is individual contact between teachers and parents, which contributes to increased interest in the child's problems. They may concern the assessment of the current situation, future plans, the indication of the strengths or weaknesses of the pupil. If individual contacts are taken seriously, they become an expression of the subjective approach of each party. They have the advantage of being discreet, as they take place without witnesses, which promotes a genuine dialogue.

School meetings are a popular form of interaction between teachers and parents. They serve to provide information and regulate matters concerning children and parents, e.g. the educational situation in the classroom, the work of the school, plans for the semester, the school year, the organisation of class trips and outings. These meetings are an opportunity for parents, usually focused on their child, to see how the child functions in the group, to notice problems of other pupils in the class.

School celebrations are also an opportunity to strengthen cooperation, which build close relationships and enable people to spend time together in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. They provide an incentive to present joint achievements. School festivals undoubtedly make cooperation between school and family more lively and attractive.

Lectures are another form of collaboration in which parents can be involved. Teachers, or others, benefit from the experience and knowledge of parents who represent different professions and specialities.

An important role in the school's cooperation with the family is played by the parents' council, which, together with the teaching staff, is responsible for implementing the school's work plan.

Parents' corner, school magazine, exhibitions of children's work. These are also forms in which parents can find various interesting facts, important information, view works, document joint ventures or information about the development and education of their children.

Exhibitions of children's work are a way of giving parents an insight into the content of their children's experiences, and of teaching them how to look at children's creations and appreciate their efforts.

Other forms of co-operation between parents and schools can also be mentioned, e.g. telephone calls, pedagogical consultations, individual contacts.

The current social reality makes it necessary to improve the existing forms of cooperation and to look for new ones in order to meet the expectations of parents and the needs of children. This is particularly important in relation to children who, for various reasons, require special care. And agreeing on joint steps in dealing with the child is an essential condition for effective education and teaching. Well-organised cooperation between school and family, in a variety of forms, is a facilitating factor in achieving this particular objective (Paprotna, 2000).

2. Organisation and methods of research

The research was conducted in two primary schools located in the city of Biała Podlaska in the Lubelskie Voivodeship. One of the schools is part of the Complex of Special Schools in Biała Podlaska, the other is run by the Centre for Assistance to People with Autism in Biała Podlaska run by the Association of Youth Aid "Wspólny Świat". It is worth pointing out that in the city of Biała Podlaska only two of the above-mentioned establishments provide education at the primary school level, addressed to children and young people with disabilities. Teachers and parents of children with disabilities declared their willingness to participate in the study. The research was carried out in late 2022 and early 2023. The survey took place with the help of teachers who were involved in distributing the survey questionnaires to parents. The questionnaires received were checked for correct completion, sorted and subjected to further statistical analysis. The figures collected from the parent questionnaires were collated in one group and the data collected from the teachers in the other group. Next, the numerical data were converted into percentages and presented in graphs and descriptions.

Taking into consideration the number of completed research questionnaires by a group of parents (N=50) and teachers (N=50), it was assumed that the results of the research would not be generalised, but referred to the group of people taking part in this study. Therefore, it was considered that the research carried out will be the first stage of the study, which will be deepened in the second stage planned for implementation in the school year 2022/2023, while the conclusions and recommendations developed on its basis will be made available to the school establishments that declared participation in the study.

Primary school teachers (50 people) participated in the research conducted. Among the respondents, 98% were women, which is in line with the general trend towards a trend towards a predominance of women working in the teaching profession. All teachers-100%, had a experience of service of more than 5 years. In terms of the age of the people surveyed, the majority 73% were between 30-50 years old. According to data from the Central Statistical Office (CSO), at the end of September 2022, there were 909 primary schools in Lubelskie voivodeship, of which 43 were special schools, accounting for (4.73%) of the total number of schools in the voivodeship.

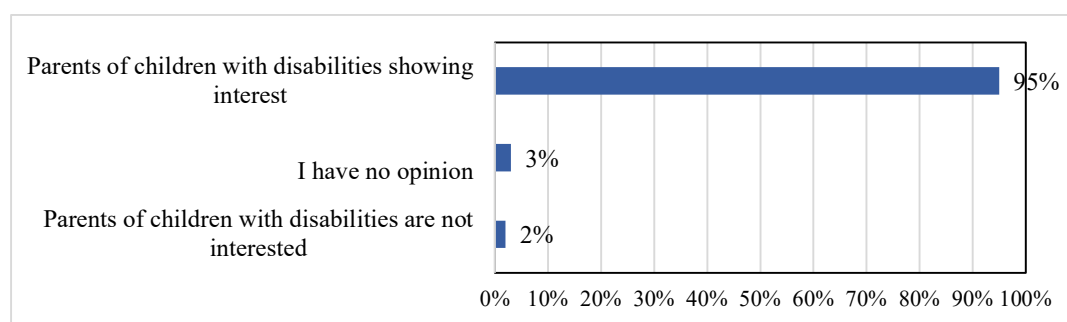
According to CSO data, in the surveyed school year 2022/2023, 28,600 teachers were employed (in terms of full-time equivalents), of whom 1,009 teachers were employed in lower-secondary vocational schools, including special preparatory schools and basic vocational schools. Most teachers were employed in primary schools (51.9%) and pre-school education establishments (19.9%). The majority of employed teachers (79.2%) had a professional promotion degree, with the highest number of qualified teachers (59.9%) and appointed teachers (19.3%). In the surveyed school year 2022/2023, primary schools were attended by 156,500 pupils, including 2,263 pupils attending special schools. In the city of Biała Podlaska, which is part of the Lubelskie Voivodeship, in the school year 2022/2023 there were 9 public primary schools, of which one offered special education, i.e. the Primary Special School. There were also two non-public special schools operating in the city, and a survey was conducted in these two special education institutions (CSO, 2023).

Considering the group of respondents, which consisted of parents (50 people) of school-going children, there was also a predominance of women 82% with secondary education 65%, unemployed 73%. More than 69% of the parents surveyed were in the 31-49 age range. More than half of the respondents 64% had older children attending school.

3. Results of the study

The analysis of the data from the collected survey questionnaires showed that the majority of the surveyed group of teachers were satisfied with the cooperation with parents (79%). Some respondents indicated a lack of cooperation (21%). Satisfaction with the cooperation guarantees mutual trust, provides support and predicts further long-term correct relations.

From the point of view of the child's developmental course, it is very important that parents show an interest in the child's education and school life. Thus, the child's success in school depends to a large extent on the parents. The answers to the question: What is the parents' interest in their child's school situation is illustrated in Picture 1.

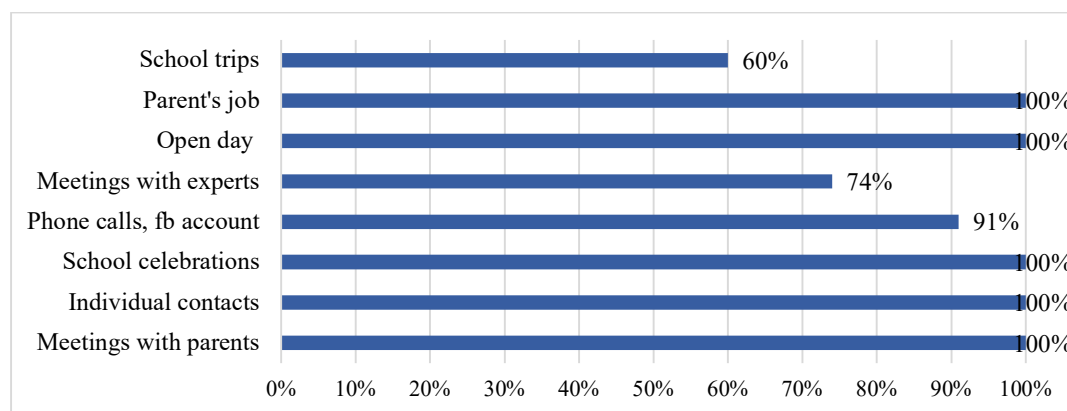


Picture 1. Parents' interest in their child's school situation.

Source: authors research

The analysis of the data collected shows that parents are interested in what is happening at school (95%), while 3% find it difficult to say and 2% show no interest in their child's school situation.

Depending on the needs and problems of the child, the school's cooperation with parents takes place in various forms. It is therefore important to determine which forms of cooperation with parents are most often implemented by teachers? The data collected are shown in Picture 2.



Picture 2. Forms of cooperation between teachers and parents

Source: authors research

Among the leading forms of cooperation, teachers indicated the organisation of group meetings and individual meetings (100%). Teachers realise school celebrations, e.g. on the occasion of the beginning and end of the school year, Independence Day, Teacher's Day, etc. The cooperation also includes meetings with invited parents who talk about their profession. Teachers prepare an event called

School Open Day. A form of cooperation between the school and parents is group events, e.g. a carnival party, school discos. Teachers, together with parents, prepare excursions for pupils, trips to the swimming pool, cinema or theatre (60%). Preparing pupils to participate in competitions was chosen by 81% of the surveyed teachers. Among the forms of cooperation, teachers indicated telephone contacts with parents, as well as the creation of groups on social networking sites, e.g. Facebook (91%).

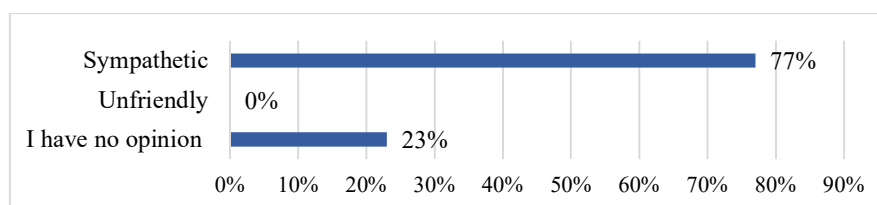
Cooperation between teachers and parents is easier when two parties are involved in helping. Teachers unanimously stated (100%) that parents offer help in school activities. The organisation of trips, celebrations and school events were given as examples. By getting involved in the events described, parents show that they are not indifferent to the issues of their child, the school and that they care about a good relationship with the teachers. Thus parents can influence the functioning of the school.

The school, as part of its cooperation with parents, organises additional meetings with specialists supporting the child's development and functioning, both socially and individually. Their main aim is to support parents in raising their child. Schools offer consultations with a speech and language therapist, special educator and or other therapists. A very important form of support for the child is the psychological-educational support offered by the schools. The surveyed teachers unanimously indicated (100%) that the school organises and provides psychological and pedagogical support for each child. The indicated support is provided during specialist classes with the child, ongoing cooperation with the child, integrated activities of teachers, specialists and parents. Schools participating in the study mentioned the organisation of workshops and training as a form of support addressed to parents raising children with disabilities.

An element of cooperation and evaluation of the school's work is obtaining parents' opinions on the implementation of the school's activities. As many as 96% of the surveyed teachers obtain the information during discussions at general meetings and 4% during individual meetings with parents. Such evaluations are used to make changes to the way the teacher works. By means of evaluation, the teacher receives feedback on his/her activity, makes modifications, improvements to certain procedures depending on the needs and situation. According to the research, the most common form of collecting information is anonymous questionnaires addressed to parents.

A correct relationship between parent and teacher is a prerequisite for participation in the education, upbringing and care of the child. Parents have a responsibility to help in their child's planning and education, implemented in the form of cooperation with the school. The research asked whether parents get involved in the activities of the school? Respondents said yes, they participate in the life of the school (100% of responses).

It can therefore be concluded that the parent's attitude towards the school will be correct. The data in this respect are shown in Picture 3.

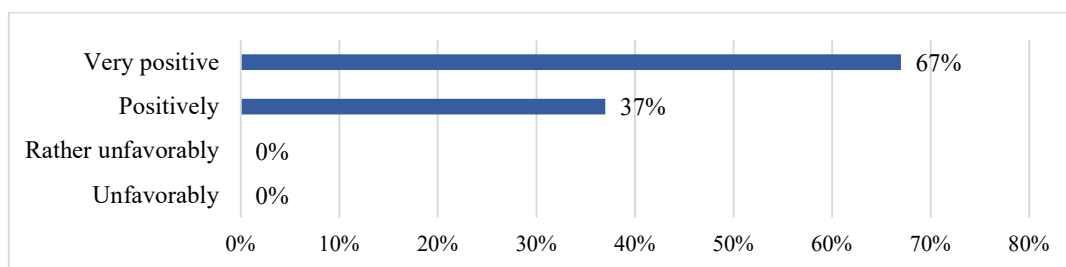


Picture 3. Parent's attitude towards the school

Source: authors research

According to the parents surveyed (77% of the responses), the school is a parent-friendly institution. Some respondents declared that they had no opinion on this issue (23%). Some parents did not give an answer at all. The lack of opinion may signal hidden problems or accusations made about the activities carried out by the school, or it may also represent a dislike of the school, or be related to parents' lack of time to act. The results collected showed that the school is perceived as a parent-friendly institution.

How do parents rate the interaction with teachers? – it is another question, the answers to which are shown in Picture 4.



Picture 4. Evaluation of cooperation with school

Source: authors research

The vast majority of parents rated their cooperation with the school as very good (63%), with no objections or requests for change in this area. This leads to the conclusion that parents believe that cooperation has a positive impact on their child's development.

It was mentioned earlier that parents participate in the meetings organised by the school. The question was then asked: do they get involved in the meetings? The participants in the survey stated that they have the opportunity to speak about issues concerning the children during the assemblies. They have the opportunity to have a say in matters of importance to the class. Parents have knowledge of where they can get information about events currently happening at the school. They have no doubts about where to go or who to talk to in order to gain knowledge about an issue that is important to them. Thus, parents' access to current information demonstrates the absence of barriers or other constraints in this respect.

All parents (100%) responded that teachers take their ideas into account when planning and implementing various activities. Parents therefore realise that teachers trust them, consider their opinions and provide opportunities for them to actively participate in their child's school life.

However, divided opinions were noted regarding the evaluation of the organisation of school meetings. No answer was indicated that significantly exceeded the other results. In the multiple-choice question, 56% of the respondents indicated that the tutor teacher clearly defines the purpose of the meeting, 100% of the parents state that the meetings are held in a friendly atmosphere and that the teachers provide a lot of relevant information. In opposition to the previously described statements, 6% of parents indicated that the meetings are a waste of time.

Meetings with parents are a form of contact offered by the school. Do parents take the initiative to interact? The results showed that parents take the initiative to contact the teacher when they want to discuss issues of concern to them (71%). A smaller proportion of respondents said that they communicate with the teacher when necessary (19%), or regardless of obligation several times a year (10%).

Parental activities on school premises often take on a formal character. Examples include the activities of the Parents' Council or other forms of parent community. Participants in the parent survey know that there is a Parents' Council at the school and are familiar with how it functions (100% of the responses). The Parents' Council is the body represented by parents at the school. Therefore, it is important to be able to participate and to have the decision-making power that comes with being a member.

Finally, the factors that hinder parent-school cooperation are discussed. Of great importance in the process of school-family cooperation is the personality of the individuals entering into the relationship. The individual characteristics of both the teacher and the parent determine the integration or disintegration of upbringing or educational interactions. According to the teachers, cooperation is hindered by an inappropriate attitude of the parent (as many as 92% of answers), too infrequent contacts with the school (73% of answers), low reliability on the information provided about the child (61%), lack of objectivity about their own child (49%), lack of readiness of parents to make use of the teacher's comments (45%), exaltation of the parent, especially in terms of material possessions or position held (29%), excessive egoism and ambition accompanying the parents' behaviour (14%) and insufficiency of pedagogical knowledge (5%).

However, despite the diagnosed difficulties, teachers do not stop at the results of a difficult situation. They encourage the uncooperative parent through conversations (85%), assigning a small

amount of responsibility (22%). Teachers also suggest grouping parents together for a specific task (7%). The actions taken allow communication to take place, building interpersonal relationships, achieving a sense of success, acquiring a willingness to continue working together and taking further initiatives. They are an excellent example of inclusion in community building, in which parents and teachers are partners. Among the reasons for a lack of involvement on the part of parents, the teachers interviewed cited an overabundance of responsibilities, a lack of time, a lack of confidence in their own abilities, and laziness.

Parents were also given the opportunity to comment on factors that hinder cooperation with teachers. Respondents pointed to inappropriate attitudes of teachers, especially a lack of kindness and forbearance (47%). According to parents, teachers create an unfavourable or unfavourable climate for joint activities (25%). They point out the divergence of views on the child's goals and methods of upbringing (19%), teachers' unwillingness to have direct contacts (5%), excessive criticism of parents' upbringing activities (4%).

The collected survey results show that the majority of the surveyed group of teachers and parents are satisfied with the interaction. According to the teachers, parents are involved in the life of the school, parents feel that their activity is very high. As parents feel encouraged to cooperate and feel good about their relationship with teachers, they offer their help. The teachers interviewed were unanimous in stating that 100% of parents offer help with school activities.

4. Discussion

As shown in a study conducted by Krystyne Żuchelkowska (2013), parents, through various forms of cooperation with the educational institution, are involved in school life, help the teacher to eliminate difficulties in children related to the specifics of their health, cognitive-perceptual functioning and environmental constraints. The need for cooperation and trust between teachers and parents is illustrated by research carried out in 79 schools in Israel (Schwabsky et al., 2020). A team of researchers from Utrecht in the Netherlands conducted a review of empirical studies on teacher-parent collaboration relating to child rearing. They found both positive and negative factors regarding teachers' professional practices. Positive factors included: initiating dialogue, building warm, trusting relationships, adopting alternative approaches to broaden either understanding of teacher-parent collaboration and building alternative parenting practices and beliefs. The following factors were found to complicate teachers' educational cooperation with parents: the tendency of teachers and parents to remain silent on educational issues, teachers' difficulty in cooperating with parents when there are different value positions, teachers' narrow views of "good" parenting (Stroetinga et al., 2018). In the context of the given negative examples of teacher-parent cooperation, it is important to note that the results of the research carried out showed that there are also factors hindering cooperation between parents and teachers.

The proposal of research results presented in this article is only an outline of the concept of exploring cooperation in the school-parent-teacher area. In order to verify or confirm the conclusions of the research, in particular the identification of weaknesses in parent-teacher cooperation, it seems reasonable to carry out further research on the same group after a certain period of time.

Conclusions

1. The results of the study showed that the cooperation of the vast majority of the surveyed parents with the teachers concerns the child's school situation. According to the surveyed group of teachers, on the other hand, the cooperation concerns support for parents in their child's upbringing and development. In order to help parents, schools offer consultations with specialists: speech and language therapists, special educators and therapists. The surveyed group of teachers unanimously indicated that the school organises and provides psychological and pedagogical support for each child. A permanent element of the cooperation between teachers and parents is obtaining parents' opinions on the implementation of the school's activities. Parents are encouraged to cooperate, feel comfortable in their relationship with teachers and offer their help.

2. Finding out parents' evaluation of their cooperation with the school. The vast majority of parents evaluated their cooperation with the school as very good or good, which indicates a lack of reservations or even a need for change in this area. In contrast, a small percentage of parents expressed a different opinion, which could be a signal for an evaluation of the current cooperation. Parents believe that teachers take their ideas and suggestions into account when planning and implementing various school activities, which may indicate the trust they feel is necessary to build dialogue.

3. Among the most common forms of cooperation between teachers and parents are class meetings organised by teachers, during which parents meet teachers and have the opportunity to express themselves, and can co-determine issues concerning the education and upbringing of their children. The results of the research showed that teachers take parents' ideas into account in the implementation of projects such as children's trips to the swimming pool, cinema, theatre or performances.

Other forms of cooperation include: individual meetings between parents and teachers, participation in school celebrations, meetings with invited parents who talk about their profession, joint preparation of school trips, telephone contacts between teachers and parents and the creation of groups on social networks.

4. In the context of the given examples of cooperation between teachers and parents, it should be noted that the results of the surveys also showed factors hindering cooperation. The following were diagnosed: inappropriate attitudes of parents towards teachers and towards the implementation of certain tasks of the school, too infrequent contacts with the school, exalting of the parent. Parents, on the other hand, indicated a lack of kindness on the part of some teachers, excessive criticism of their actions, a divergence of views regarding their child. In the context of the factors diagnosed, there is a need to improve the communication skills of both teachers and parents.

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COOPERATION BETWEEN THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION AND THE FAMILY OF A CHILD WITH DISABILITIES

PhD Stanisława Katarzyna Nazaruk, PhD Joanna Waszczuk PhD Barbara Sokółowska, Jūratė Daniėlienė

Today's reality is characterised by rapid changes, new trends and the growing needs of children, including those with disabilities, which makes it necessary to undertake a diagnosis and to monitor the processes of cooperation between the educational institution and the family. Taking care of the well-being of pupils with disabilities, schools and teachers look for new forms of collaboration in order to meet the expectations of parents and their children who, for various reasons, require additional care. This was the reason for starting the research on the cooperation between teachers and parents.

The research aim was to recognise the needs of parents and teachers with regard to their collaboration and to determine the actual forms of this cooperation present in the surveyed entities. The researched was also designed to identify the level of cooperation between the two parties.

The above-mentioned issues were taken into account when conducting a diagnostic survey on the process of cooperation between teachers and parents in selected primary schools educating children and young people with disabilities. The lack of a standardised research tool made the authors develop their own research tools, one of them was addressed to parents and the other one was addressed to teachers. The research covered primary schools attended by pupils with disabilities coming from the city of Biała Podlaska in the province of Lublin.

Research has shown that there are some factors that inhibit the collaboration of the school with parents bringing up children with disabilities. However, some factors that positively influence the process of cooperation have also been observed. The factors were indicated by both parents and teachers.

The cooperation between teachers and parents is aimed at the effectiveness of school work for the benefit of pupils and is based on mutual respect and trust. However, in the context of the diagnosed factors hampering school-parent collaboration, there is a need to improve communication skills on the part of both teachers and parents.

Keywords: pupil with disabilities, cooperation, parents, teacher, educational institution.