

SUCCESS WHEN LACKING EDUCATION- THE ROMANIAN SOCIETY PARADOX

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ABSTRACT:

IN A WORLD IN WHICH WHO HAS THE INFORMATION ALSO HAS POWER, EDUCATION IS THE KEY ELEMENT IN SUCCEEDING . IN A SOCIETY WHICH LACKS MANY, WITH A PRECARIOUS ECONOMY AND AN POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL UNCERTAINTY, NATIONAL AND AUTHENTIC VALUES ARE BARELY KEPT AND CHERISHED. UNFAITHFUL COMPETITION IS EVERYWHERE, WE GROW UP IN A SYSTEM LAWS ARE APPLIED TO THOSE WHO DON'T BENEFIT FROM HIGH FUNCTIONS AND A GOOD MATERIAL STATUS, A SYSTEM IN WHICH THOSE WHO HAVE THE POWER AFFRONT THE OTHERS, IN WHICH OPULENCE IS PROMOTED THROUGH ALL MEDIA CHANNELS AND A STAR IS A PERSON WHO HAS GAINED POWER THROUGH ANY MEANS. WE SEE AT TV ARRESTS MADE BECAUSE SOME PEOPLE TOOK BRIBE, INVESTED IN FUNCTIONS ON POLITICAL CRITERIONS OR "FRIENDSHIP" OR EVEN WORSE, FOR SERVICES GUARANTEED BY THE STATE. IN SUCH A SOCIETY IT IS VERY HARD TO SUCCEED DUE TO THE FACT THAT FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS ARE GUARANTEED ONLY ON PAPER...HUNDREDS OF CHILDREN FROM THE RURAL ARE WALK KILOMETERS IN ORDER TO GO TO SCHOOL, THOUSANDS FROM CITIES CANNOT AFFORD MEDITATIONS ,SCHOOL MANUALS, CERTAIN ACTIVITIES, VISITS TO MUSEUMS ,ETC. THE TEMPTATION OF HAVING SUCCESS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND VERY EASY IS VERY HIGH, BUT NO SOCIETY WILL DEVELOP WITHOUT EDUCATION! IT IS A PROBLEM OF THE SOCIETY IN WHICH WE LIVE, WE PROMOTE NON-VALUES AND LIVE IN DECEPTION. IT IS A VICIOUS CIRCLE ON WHICH WE SHOULD MEDITATE, NO MATTER WHAT POSITION OR FUNCTION YOU HAVE, BECAUSE YOU CANNOT KNOW IF YOU OR YOUR CHILDREN WILL ALWAYS BE POWERFUL OR DISADVANTAGED. EDUCATION AND SCHOOL IS THE ONLY WEAPONS WITH WHOM WE CAN RIGHTLY FIGHT IN LIFE, IT IS THE WAY TOWARDS PROGRESS.

KEY WORDS: SOCIETY, EDUCATION, SUCCESS, MODEL, INFLUENCE, MASS-MEDIA

“Nature makes us alike. Education makes us different.”
Confucius

From an etymological point of view, education comes from the Latin form *educatio* and it means growth, nourishing, nurture.

Plato defined education as being “the art of forming good habits or developing native attitudes for virtue of those who have them.” [1] Aristotle in “Politics” considered that “education must be the object of public observation, not particular.” [2]

With the passing of time, the development of the society was strongly related to the evolution of education, so that a vital interdependence was created in order to assure

the perpetuation of society. Education plays a major part in sociology, being the process through which the individual interacts and acts. Emile Durkheim defined education as being the “methodical socialization of the young generation”, whose aim is to build in every individual a social being. [3] The way in which we act is limited by the external restraints and by the needs dictated by society.[4]

Reaching professional and personal objectives with the help of scientific methods is wanted in most societies with solid principles that want to strengthen their system of values with the passing of time. Kant [5] stated in his work “About pedagogy” that “a man will become human only through education. He is nothing but what education makes of him.”[6]

For more than 20 years, in Romania there were attempts to make the educational system more efficient , to have good results on a short and long term. The experience of well developed states like The U.S.A, Germany, France or Great Britain had shown us that the social and economical development of a country is strongly related to the results from the educational system. In Europe, countries like Holland, Denmark or Finland have understood this and devoted most of their GDP to the educational system, public school being free from the pre-scholar age and up until university and it includes a classroom, buffet, books, manuals and other school materials, giving to everyone equality in chance in regard to education.

The most developed educational system in Europe is in Finland, followed by Great Britain, Holland, Ireland, Denmark and Germany. At a global level, the two “super-powers”, South Korea and Japan are followed by other three Asian educational systems- Hong Kong, Singapore and China.

This top has been made according to the results obtained by students at international tests between 2006-2010 and to certain statistics regarding the rate of graduation or the number of students. [7] The social and political transformation through which Romania has passed in the last years have the educational system unequal for children because the laws were incomplete, not properly adapted or incorrect applied on one hand and the political instability gave birth to too many changes so that a proper evaluation of these strategies could not be made properly, on the other hand.

Phenomena such as absenteeism , school drop out , school failure , segregation and discrimination in schools, are correlated with school failure, lack of quality and equality in chances. The theories regarding school failure have a significant ideological charge. The United States, Western Europe and countries from Eastern and Central Europe have met very diverse historical evolutions in the apparition of educational sociological theories, due to immigration, multiculturalism and the policy adopted.

From my point of view, In Romania, the main causes for low results and a lean education are poverty and the promotion of non-values. High lightening a success obtained without education , the avalanche of models who succeed in life without studying and without effort has become a tolerated aspect and even a marketing strategy highly promoted by media groups. Under the influence of this phenomenon, young generations are condemned to a siege , their are under continuous psychical bombardment and the aim is to destroy traditional values and the elements which define a nation from an artistic and cultural point of view.

Regarding poverty, bad results and school failure are tied to the familial environment[8], according to the Coleman report, 1966, USA. The student’s socio-economical environment is one of the factors which is at the base of school failure and

modern Romanian sociology.[9] Research on Romanian children’s participation to education have revealed multiple causes to school drop out, truancy and the total lack of interest towards school. Among the socio-economical causes, we can note: the lack of documents, insufficient material resources need to cover the hidden costs of education, discrimination (on financial, social and racial criteria) ,the lack of means for transport (especially in the rural area) and the fact that the pedagogical content is not according to the labor market which determines the lack of finality in education and a useless diploma. The lack of successful models in education at the community level and promoting quick success through different means is the source of the young’s believe that school won’t bring them success. It is important to note that familial models are very important because motivation is stronger when a child is supported and encouraged by the family. The education level of the parents influences children’s participation to school and their results , but various studies identify differently the parent’s type. [10] Hence, in the 1993 research, Zamfir accentuated the influence of the mother’s educational level, while Hatos noted a positive correlation of the father’s study level, explaining that we should take into consideration the level of the dominant parent , which in many cases, in the Romanian society, is the father. Lacking a stable educational system which could offer confidence to children and parents that school is the primary means through which they can attain success in life , the temptation of imitating people without value who have economical stability and an impressive life is very high.

“Instructing properly young people does not mean to implement in their heads a lot of words, phrases, expressions and opinions from different authors, but opening the path through which they can understand things.” John Amos Comenius.[12] The last years have shown us that schools are not preparing teenagers for the labor market’s requests, it does not offer solid qualifications or the educational program is not based (where it is the case) on developing practical activities, but more theoretical ones.

Although television was invented in order to facilitate communication and the transfer of information in an elegant manner , today we have a regrettable situation, television being stigmatized by non-value. A report made and published at the half of this year by ActiveWatch –Press Monitoring Agency and The Romanian Centre for Investigation Journalism has shown that a poor documentation of the subjects and sometimes a weak proficiency of some “experts” have lead to impairment of the journalistic acts. The accuracy of the information was often sacrificed to favors and speculation. Thus, excessive mediatization of unprofessional treated subjects or insignificant subjects has brought serious prejudice to the journalist profession and to the public. [13]A problem is that at least at the level of the young generation, the avalanche of unimportant educational information becomes the only source of getting debate subjects. The mind of the young is distracted from the study of values and it involuntarily turns towards the elements that “flood” through the main sensorial channels: seeing and hearing.

On the other hand, television is an opinion formatter , a source of entertainment and information , but this does not mean that this is the main factor in the young’s education. As I have already mentioned, I believe that school and family must play a major role in children’ s education. Ambition and the limits set by each and every one are very important. It is important what ideals you want to achieve, how high you aim, the chances you have and the possibilities of achieving that ideal, because the phrase “ chance equality” is delusive in my opinion.

Success can be seen as gradually achieving a valuable ideal or as Machiavelli [14] said :”the secret of success is the desire to win and knowing how to lose.” In Albert Einstein’s vision “ a successful man who receives much more than he gives back. Still, the value of a man is seen in what he gives, not what he is capable of receiving.”

In a normal, democratic and fair society, success must be the result of intense preparation , hard work and learning from experience.

Man is subjected to two kinds of influences in the educational process: normal society’s influences and conscious influences. The first ones are basely everywhere: family, friends, acquaintances, work, school, faculty or other types of traditional education, from different branches (sport, art, culture, mass-media, economy, medicine). All of us are subjected to this kind of influence, to “education”- most people do not leave this sphere all their life. The consequences of primitive education coming from society can be translated as long term failures :poverty (or richness, power-gained through others), various diseases, aging, unconscious death; in one word, self-destruction. There are things which always are checked. There is another kind of influence from which we receive education. These are the so called conscious influences- theoretical and practical knowledge related gaining success on long terms in certain domains, in certain teachings. Classes, conferences, seminars, books, documentaries, movies, audio-video materials, teachings from professors, trainers, mentors, masters, wise people- everything that society cannot tell you through traditional education.

Society actually means a mass of people built around some perspectives of life, people who share different believes, values, traditions, common interests and activities. Parents, friends, even teachers and professors want us to be fine- but they are limited by the knowledge they possess. They do not offer more because they are not willing, but because they do not know more. This is the part of knowledge found deep inside them and they pass it on. In order to adapt to a world and an universe in constant movement and changing , one must gain the necessary knowledge from somewhere else.

Conscious education transforms the way you live in. Taking into consideration the four major components of the human being, the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual component, conscious education focuses on the following[15].

1. mental education (intellectual) refers to the stimulation of imagination , creativity, the desire to know more and find out new and useful things, positive thinking. Our mind is the first place where we can act freely and at will. Here starts the process of conscious reprogramming .
2. emotional education- while traditional education uses the fear factor (fear of making mistakes, fear of failure) in order to motivate people in doing certain things, conscious education highlights the importance of knowing yourself and your behavior, expressing positive emotions, coping with fear and learning from mistakes and failures. Thus, you have the opportunity of correcting yourself, you become mental and emotional wiser (you develop emotional intelligence).
3. physical education- is strongly bounded to the emotional one. Conscious education encourages you to apply what you have learnt- to develop you abilities, go out into the world , act and defeat you fears. You may want to expect the fact that you will make mistakes and accept this without blaming someone else and thus, during this process, you will become more mentally, emotionally and physically powerful.
4. spitirual education is the most important component; it focuses on extracting and expressing the interior power which can send us beyond our intellectual, emotional

and physical boundaries which often define the human condition . This is the power which helps us attain real , authentic success .Also, we can develop the ability of motivating others by addressing their spirit, by inspiring them to go beyond limits. [16]

Emotional education has a great influence because most people do not have success in life due to the fact that they do not want to pass through a period of doubt and emotional frustration which seems to drove them towards failure. This happens to many of us because society (school, parents, work) teaches us, tells us that being wrong is something bad and that me must avoid mistakes. This is not something done with a bad intention and as I have already said – it is simply what they think it is the right thing to do.

Our emotional part, strengthen by the traditional educational system is blocking the access to the interior power of the soul which takes us higher. When we learn how to free this interior force we can overcome all physical, mental, emotional restrains and then we can reach the real success. We need to learn this from someone who already knows, we must associate with people who think and act in the same way in which we would like to think and act. The proverb “tell me who are your friends and I will tell you who you are” is actual. The people whom we spend out time represent our future. In order to overcome future’s challenges, people, especially children, will need a certain type of education based on: dignity, straightforwardness ,respect, conscious, honor, responsibility. Libraries and the internet offer unlimited resources of cultural development. Romanian values must be promoted as every other valuable element, cultural and artistic, in the private space of friends and family and in the public one. There still are art galleries, book presentations, popular music shows, museums.

Conclusions:

Quick obtained success , without a solid base, without work and facilitated by opportunities or different people cannot be generalized because we must be “a country of lucky people” and I do not think it can hold on forever because it is very important to fight for your ideal and how to manage certain situations. It seldom occurs that people who want to become someone through the work of others to maintain their status and work hard. Often, their attention is driven toward superficial things, things without substance , so that material values disappear faster than the spiritual ones. A solid education will help the future parent to pass one his wisdom. A nation without a powerful ,positive set of values which can give man faith, consistency in his action and attitudes ,this nation will pick bad leaders on the criterion of a populism fed with shallow words and the nation will witness his own subjugation. On a long term, these effects will be devastating. We are responsible for the legacy we leave!

As Nelson Mandela [17] said: “education is the most powerful weapon that you can use to change the world”.

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