BEHAVIOURAL-EMOTIONAL DIFFICULTIES OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS OCCURRING DUE TO UNFAVOURABLE ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME THEM: THE EXPERIENCE OF PEDAGOGUES

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Abstract

Unfavourable environmental factors are environmental conditions or circumstances that inhibit the child's development or even lead to a risky behaviour. Children growing in an unfavourable environment have less knowledge, experience, are less dutiful and responsible, less mature in respect of their age, have psychosocial problems and adaptation difficulties more often. It is particularly important to identify the behavioural-emotional difficulties, which arise from unfavourable environmental factors, in primary school, because in the absence of timely assistance to the child his psychosocial development may be impeded.

The objective of the study is to reveal behavioural-emotional difficulties of primary school pupils occurring due to unfavourable environmental factors and the strategies to overcome them on the basis of the experience of pedagogues. Problematic study question: What behavioural-emotional difficulties of pupils, which are resulted in by unfavourable environmental factors, do primary school teachers encounter and how do they overcome them? Qualitative research type was chosen for the study. In the study, the method of a semi-structured interview was used. The study data were processed by using the method of content analysis. 12 pedagogues participated in the study.

The study findings revealed that primary school teachers encounter the following behavioural-emotional difficulties: children's hostility, impulsiveness, involvement in fighting and/or bullying, taking of others' belongings without a permission, shrinking into themselves, anxiety, sadness, absent mindedness, irritability, failure to control his emotions.

In order to overcome behavioural-emotional difficulties of pupils, teachers observe the behaviour of a pupil and record arising difficulties, work individually with a child and a form (consult a pupil, create a positive interaction with the child, adapt the learning environment to the child, develop communication skills and encourage positive relationships in the classroom, develop   self-control and self-confidence skills, employ different strategies to change misbehaviour), work with a family (provide factual information to parents on behavioural-emotional difficulties and conditions of the child, assist parents in recognising parenting mistakes and learning to change incorrect reactions to the a child's misbehaviour, organise collegial consulting of parents), as well as cooperate with teachers and educational assistance specialists (inform teachers, who work with the form, about a worrying behaviour of a pupil, consult with the specialists of educational assistance, while cooperating prepare and realise the plan of individual assistance to the child).

Keywords: Primary school, children, behavioural-emotional difficulties, unfavourable, environmental factors, teachers

1 INTRODUCTION

There has been much debate in scientific literature concerning what personal behavioural-emotional difficulties are contingent upon: whether these are biological features or the ones acquired in the process of socialisation. A large number of educologists and psychologists raise the social origin of behavioural-emotional difficulties. The most important role, while difficulties behavioural-emotional difficulties emerge, is played by a social environment, an individual's personal characteristics and his behaviour in the socium. In this context, the attention has been drawn to the socialisation process of a personality, which is perceived as the process of the formation and development of social essence of a person. During the socialisation process, an individual engages in society, its sub-structures (social groups and communities, entities, organisations), adopts the experience gained by them, social values and norms, develops socially significant personal characteristics (Juodaitytė, 2003). A fully-fledged social environment is one of the most important factors of an individual's development and his functioning in society. According to the representatives of the theory of social ecology J. D. van der Ploeg and E. M. Scholte (1990), social environment forces, which limit the possibilities of an individual, negatively affect the expansion of personal social knowledge and, at the same time, of social powers. Then some personal dimensions and powers remain only potential and they are not sufficiently effective when organising behaviour.

Young people's behaviour difficulties impact at many levels – society, local communities, schools, families and also on the lives of the young people themselves (Bennett, 2006, p. 188). According Weare (2000), there is a need to acknowledge the complex relationship between the societal, family and school environments and the part that each of these contexts plays in creating and ameliorating children's social, emotional and behavioural problems (Evans,Harden, Thomas, 2004).

An important role in forming a personality is played by the family. Unfavourable conditions for a personality's development in his family may affect the formation of behavioural-emotional difficulties. Unfavourable conditions in the family, which are distinguished most often, are the following: poor parenting skills, alcohol and narcotics consumption in the family, parental conflicts, child neglect, poor parental and children interrelationships, violence in the family, parental criminality, parenting mistakes. The robust characteristics of a negative family is a real obstacle to a person's socialisation, especially if such parenting shortcomings in the family are not compensated by other social institutions.

An appropriate environment at school creates preconditions for successful social development of a child. The entire school life has an effect on it: educational content, school's microclimate, inter-relationships betweeen community members, the organisation of school life, the involvement of pupils in school life. Scientific literature most often highlights the following negative factors in school environment which may impact children's desocialisation, his hostility towards school and behavioural-emotional difficulties: his rejection, failure to involve him in school life, negative inter-relationships between pupils and teachers and between pupils themselves (Taylor, Robert, 2007; Howell, 2009).

Peers also exert significant influence on the social development of a child's personality. The acceptance of a child in his group, his feeling of being a group member/belonging to a group are important factors in forming the child's self-confidence and self-esteem. Children, who have close friends, are more open, inclined to communicate than those, who have no close friends. In addition, positive relationships with peers not only expand the social experience of a child, but are also serve as prevention of behavioural-emotional difficulties.

It is particularly important to identify the behavioural-emotional difficulties, which arise from unfavourable environmental factors, in primary school, because in the absence of timely assistance to the child his psychosocial development may be impeded.

The research (Ališauskas et al., 2010, Ališauskas, Šimkienė, 2013) demonstrates that hindrances to inclusive education of children with behavioural-emotional difficulties are most often related not to a child, but to his environment: emotional insecurity and bullying, the lack of the possibilities of self-expression, poor funding, which results in a shortage of material and human resources necessary to ensure assistance, negative attitudes of school communities towards pupils with behavioural-emotional difficulties, the anxiety and fears of pedagogues, and the lack of competences. The educational success of children with behavioural-emotional difficulties is determined by the preparedness of the entire educational system to ensure inclusive and quality education while responding to individual needs of a learner, rendering coordinated assistance to children and their families and the professionalism and a positive attitude of pedagogues and educational assistance specialists. The education of these pupils would be more effective, if parents, teachers and other specialists cooperated more actively, these pupils received sincere

communication, emotional connection was developed, teachers lacked no information how to educate these pupils.

It is noteworthy that, in Lithuania, emotional and behavioural problems in children are analysed by the scientists of various areas, however, they pay the greatest amount of attention on the consequences of the behaviour of pupils, which were resulted in by emotional and behavioural problems: avoidance of school in pupils or school absenteeism, the manifestations of delinquent behaviour at school (Rimkevičienė, 2000, Educational Assistance to Pupils of General Education School, 2005; Civinskas, Levickaitė, Tamutienė, 2006). Geležinienė, Ruškus, Balčiūnas (2008) emphasise the variety of subjective approaches and certain confrontation between the participants of educational process (pupils with behavioural-emotional difficulties, their parents, peers, teachers, specialists, administration) when identifying and defining emotional and behavioural problems, foreseeing the objectives of an activity, searching for the means of impact and applyping them in practice, assessing and reflecting on results. The rendering of timely assistance to a pupil with behavioural-emotional difficulties at primary school is especially important, because it may be difficult to overcome them at a later stage at school. Therefore, it is important to identify behavioural-emotional difficulties in pupils and strategies to overcome the within the shortest possible time. It is noteworthy that there is the lack of scientific research analysing this problem.

The objective of the study is to reveal behavioural-emotional difficulties of primary school pupils occurring due to unfavourable environmental factors and the strategies to overcome them on the basis of the experience of pedagogues. Problematic study question: What behavioural-emotional difficulties of pupils, which are resulted in by unfavourable environmental factors, do primary school teachers encounter and how do they overcome them?

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Methods

Qualitative research type was chosen for the study. In the study, the method of a semi-structured interview was used. This article overviews problematic question of the study: What academic difficulties of pupils, which are resulted in by unfavourable enviromental factors, do primary school teachers encounter and how do they overcome them? The obtained data were analyzed by using the content analysis method. The qualitative content analysis was performed in the following sequence (Creswell, 2009): the repeated reading of the content of transcribed interview texts, the distinction of meaning elements in the text analysed, the grouping of the distinguished meaning elements into categories and sub-categories, integration of the categories/sub-categories into the context of the phenomenon analysed and the description of their analysis.

2.2 The sample of the Research

A criteria-based sample was used in the study. The informants were chosen according to the following criteria: 1) primary school teachers working with 3rd-4th form pupils, 2) teachers with at least 5 years of work experience.

The study was conducted in the September – October of 2018 in the primary schools. 12 pedagogues (all women) participated in the study.

2.3 Ethics of the Research

Personal permission of the informants to take part in the research was sought. The researchers obliged themselves to the research participants not to divulge the information related to the organisation and the informant. The principles of anonymity, volunteerism and benevolence were followed. The teachers of primary schools were acquainted with the goal of the research, the interview questions, and the importance of a reasoned reflection on their experience.

3 ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH RESULTS

3.1 Behavioural and Emotional Difficulties Determined by Unfavourable Environmental Factors

Recently, there has been an emphasis on systemic approaches that acknowledge the role of the wider environment in creating and ameliorating children's social, emotional and behavioural problems (Evans, Harden and Thomas, 2004, p. 4) . When analysing the study data the following emotional and behavioural difficulties in primary school pupils arising due to unfavourable environmental factor were distinguished:

children's hostility, impulsiveness, involvement in fighting and/or bullying, taking of others' belongings without a permission, shrinking into themselves, anxiety, sadness, absent mindedness, irritability, failure to control his emotions (Fig. 1).

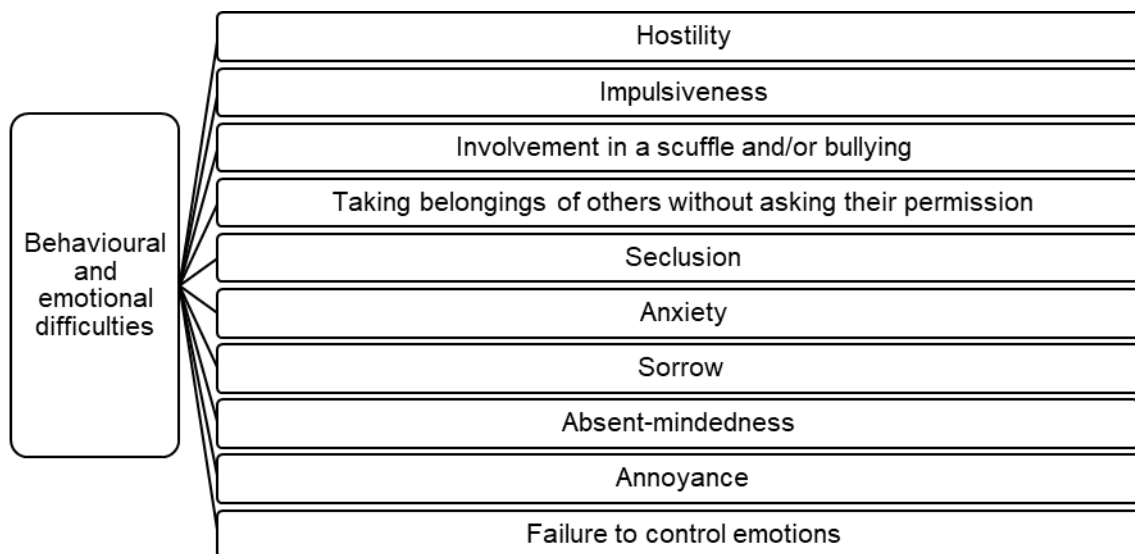| Hostility |
| --- |
| Impulsiveness |
| Involvement in a scuffle and/or bullying |
| Taking belongings of others without asking their permission |
| Seclusion |
| Anxiety |
| Sorrow |
| Absent-mindedness |
| Annoyance |
| Failure to control emotions |

Behavioural and emotional difficulties

Figure 1 Behavioural and emotional difficulties Behavioural and emotional difficulties determined by unfavourable environmental factors

The study revealed that failure to satisfy the child's emotional needs, inappropriate mutual relationships and unfavourable psychosocial environment both in the family and at school affect the expression of the child's emotions and behaviour. According to the informants, children, who have emotional and behavioural difficulties, are characterised by hostility: "there are children, who tend to contradict only in order to receive attention" (E), "when they are accustomed to get what they want in the family, then they demand in the same manner in the classroom as well" (J). They behave on impulse, tend to get involved in fighting and/or bullying: "they talk without waiting for their turn", "they do not know how to resolve conflicts, therefore, they resolve them by fighting or bullying others" (A). The informants pointed out that these children may be characterised by shrinking into themselves ("it is difficult to work with children who become withdrawn, hide their emotions and thoughts" (B), "when you do not see the child's emotions and he does not tell anything the teacher has difficulty understanding whether a task is clear to the child…" (H)) or increased anxiety ("there are children, who are anxious about everything, they have difficulty concentrating" (D), "the child is not able to realise himself due to increased anxiety" (F)).

The study has established that children's sadness, absent-mindedness, irritability and failure to control emotions are on no account a lesser reasons for learning difficulties. The informants underlined that when: "children come emotionally loaded from home: sad, irritated, restless, so it is very difficult to start a lesson, to get them involved in the activity" (C), "there are children, who come without getting enough sleep, unfed or the like and they are unable to concentrate during their lessons", children lack empathy, they do not recognise their own emotions or those of others, therefore, behave on impulse" (B).

The child, who has not had close relationships with parents, is characterised by people avoidance, distrust in people around him, aggression, failure to control himself, the lack of social skills. On the other hand, the child, who feels safely next to his parents, tends to trust other people, possesses well-developed social skills.

3.2. The strategies to Overcome Behavioural-Emotional Difficulties of Primary School Pupils Used by Teachers

During the study, an interest was taken to elucidate how primary school teachers overcome behavioural-emotional difficulties encountered by their pupils. The research demonstrated that primary school teachers firstly endeavour to reconise behavioural-emotional difficulties. Having recognised behavioural-emotional difficulties, which arise to a child, a teacher works individually with the child and his family, teachers also work with the whole form and cooperate with teachers and educational assistance specialists (Table 1).

Table 1 The strategies to overcome behavioural-emotional difficulties of primary school pupils used by teachers

Category	Subcategory	Proving Statements
Recognition of behavioural-emotional difficulties	Observation of a pupil's behaviour, his emotional condition	"I observe children's behaviour in various environments" (J), "I observe children not only during lessons, but also during breaks or excursions, how they behave, how they react to arising difficulties and how they feel in various situations" (D)
	Recording of arising difficulties	"I draw attention to children, who have arising difficulties when communicating with peers, who disagree while working in small groups" (A), "I keep records, in which I note behavioural-emotional difficulties arising to a child" (G)
Individual work with a child and a form	Consulting a pupil	"I talk with a child about arising behavioural-emotional difficulties and how it would be possible to overcome them and what can help" (B), "We talk why behavioural-emotional difficulties arise to a child, we discuss how it would be possible to behave in another way" (I)
	Establishment of positive interaction with a child	"It is very important to have positive disposition and to establish a positive relationship with a child" (E), "When I start feeling that when communicating with a child I get tense, when the desire "to judge" a child and not to help him arises, I make a pause and "reprogram myself" into the role of an assisting one, and not of a judging one" (D).
	Adaptation of a learning environment of a child	"I arrange the class in such a way that the environment would distract the attention of a child as little as possible" (H), "If a child behaves inappropriately towards other children, I make a child sit in such a place in the classroom where there is less contact with other children, through which fewer pupils walk" (C),
	Development of communication skills	"I constantly pay attention how children interact with each other while experiencing communication difficulties, I help establish a positive contact with a friend, I create conditions for mutual cooperation of children" (A), "I encourage children not to compete, to ask for help, because the majority of them are not inclined to ask for it" (L)
	Encouragement of positive relationships in the classroom	"I pay a lot of time to establish good relationship in the classroom" (K), "I create and maintain good psychological climate in the classroom community" (F)
	Development of self-control and self-confidence skills	„I teach children self-control and self-confidence skills" (H), „We, together with children, create the rules of conduct in the classroom and apply them" (F), „In order to maintain consistency and avoid spontaneous reactions, we foresee beforehand the ways and tools of classroom conduct management , incentives for appropriate behaviour and penalties for inappropriate behaviour" (J), „I encourage and praise children for appropriate behaviour, I develop the feeling of self-confidence" (B), „I teach children to speak positively about themselves" (L)
	Development of appropriate behaviour	„I endeavour to always notice appropriate behaviour of a child and praise it immediately" (G), „When a child breaks rules, I remain calm, I don't discuss, I point out inappropriate behaviour without arguing" (I), „I choose and apply a penalty for inappropriate behaviour – neither too strict nor too lenient" (E)
Work with the pupil's family	Assistance to parents through informing	"I inform parents constructively and respectfully about behavioural-emotional difficulties of their child and the conditions in which behavioural-emotional difficulties manifest" (K), "I advise parents where they can apply for assitance both to them and the child" (C)
	The teaching of parents of alternative reactions towards inappropriate behaviour of their	„I talk with parents while trying to learn their parenting style they use rearing their child and the cause of behavioural-emotional difficulties" (F), „I assist parents in recognising parenting mistakes and we discuss how to change incorrect reactions to the inappropriate behaviour of the child" (B), "Together with parents, we discuss strategies how to change inappropriate behaviour, expected

	child	results, we make commitments and constantly discuss achievement and still arising difficulties" (G), "I especially emphasise that parents would try to change the negative behaviour of their child through their own positive behaviour and that parents would not create conditions for their child that he would achieve, what he wants, by acting aggressively or in another inappropriate manner" (L), "We talk with parents about the importance of positive relationships in the family and the impact of inappropriate relationships in the family on behavioural-emotional difficulties" (H)
	Organisation of collegial consulting of parents	"If there are behavioural-emotional difficulties, mutual conversations of parents, which I organise during parents' meetings, help understand the essence of problems and the ways to resolve inappropriate behaviour" (A), "Parents, while sharing their experiences, tell a lot of options how to resolve problems and who and how rendered assistance to them" (E)
Cooperation with teachers and educational assistance specialists	The informing of teachers working with the form about a worrying behaviour of a pupil	„In order to minimise the amount of problems, which my colleagues would encounter with the pupils of my form and that timely assistance would be provided to a child, I inform them about behavioural-emotional difficulties of the child" (I), "I share experience with my colleagues, what behaviour change strategy works best for a specific child" (B)
	Consulting with educational assistance specialists	"When it comes to children with behavioural-emotional difficulties, I consult with a psychologist, social pedagogue" (F), "At school, a whole team of specialists works to help children with behavioural-emotional difficulties" (K)
	Cooperative preparation and realisation of the plan of an individual assistance to a child	„It is important that all the participants of the provision of assistance to a child would foresee together the process of the assistance and would share responsibilities" (L), „When resolving behavioural-emotional difficulties of a child, the most important thing is a focused teamwork and uniform and clear requirements for the child" (A)

The study revealed that primary school teachers, having noticed behavioural-emotional difficulties in their pupils, observe the pupil's behaviour, his emotional condition in different environments and situations closely: "I observe children not only during lessons, but also during their breaks or excursions, how they behave, how they react towards arising difficulties and how they feel in various situations" (D). Pedagogues, while observing behavioural-emotional difficulties in children, record arising difficulties by taking notes. Thus they are able to notice both the conditions and the dynamics of the manifestations of the child's inappropriate behaviour. These records contribute to planning individual assistance to a child, a plan to his family and the cooperation both with other teachers, who work with the form, and educational assistance specialists.

Primary school teachers, while providing assistance to children with behavioural-emotional difficulties, work individually with a child and the whole form. While consulting a pupil individually teachers talk with the child about arising behavioural-emotional difficulties, discuss strategies how to overcome them and advise what can help them. The informants underlined that is especially important to create positive interaction with a child: "it is very important to have a positive disposition and establish a positive relationship with a child" (E). It is noteworthy that a positive attitude towards a child with difficulties assists in overcoming behavioural-emotional difficulties when his strengths are noticed: "when I praise a child for his appropriate behaviour and his efforts he tries to behave appropriately" (C). It should be noted that when a teacher thinks positively a desire arises to help a child to overcome behavioural-emotional difficulties, the teacher's self-confidence, that he is able to help a child, emerges. According to Darvinyte-Bongarzoni (2008), a teaching method is a very important factor, whereas a good contact between him and a pupil – communication, the maintenance of relationships, mutual understanding – is essential.

The study showed that it is very important that teachers would be examples of self-control, self-regulation and appropriate behaviour to children. The informants pointed out that, if they start feeling even the slightest tension when communicating with an inappropriately behaving child, they make a pause, apply „silence" method to overcome irritation and assume the role an assistant and not that of a judge. The participants of the study stated that it is easy to disturb children with behavioural-emotional difficulties: „stress, pressure and

fatigue can easily encourage inappropriate behaviourof a child" (I).

In order to help a child with behavioural-emotional difficulties, the adaptation of learning environment both at school and at home is very important. The teachers, while adapting environment to a child, try to make that the environment would distract the child's attention as little as possible. The informants pointed out that the blending of active work with passive work may assist agile, exhibiting problematic behaviour children in diverting undesirable activeness, conduct into a constructive activity. Excessively agile and inattentive children work willingly and well during a lesson when a teacher combines a movement and thinking. However, it is equally important to develop communication skills of children with behavioural-emotional difficulties. Teachers encourage children to communicate and to cooperate, to feel free to ask for assistance when it is needed. In other words, teachers encourage positive relationships in the classroom, endeavour to ensure a good psychological climate in a classroom community. The activy of a teacher, when building positive interaction and appropriate behaviour, encourages and increases positive behaviour in children, initiates positive changes in a classroom and minimises behavioural problems (Scheuermann, Hall, 2008).

Primary school teachers develop the skills of self-control and self-confidence in children. The informants pointed out that, in order to ensure appropriate behaviour in a classroom, it is very important „to create, to discuss, to apply the rules of behaviour in a classroom, behaviour management techniques and tools, incentives for appropriate behaviour and penalties for inappropriate behaviour together with children". The study revealed that, when developing self-confidence in children, it is important to notice and to praise a child for appropriate behaviour, to encourage him to talk positively about himself. The informants also stated that the adopted rules should be discussed with parents and other teachers, who work with the form, and all would adhere to them.

Teachers, when applying strategies to develop appropriate behaviour, endeavour to notice appropriate behaviour in a child and immediately praises him. When a child breaches the rules of behaviour, it is important that a teacher would remain calm, would not get involved in discussions or arguments. A clear indication of inappropriate behaviour and penalties, which are adequate to inappropriate behaviour, empower a child to behave properly. The primary school teachers pointed out that all too often remarks directed at a child are expressed negatively. Therefore, it is advisable to minimise the use of the word „No".

The study revealed that the pedagogues emphasised the importance of the cooperation between school and parents when resolving behavioural-emotional difficulties arising to a child. The teachers firstly constructively and respectfully inform parents about behavioural-emotional difficulties of their child and situatitions, in which behavioural-emotional difficulties occur. The teachers also advice parents where they are able to request the assistance. The informants pointed out that is very important to teach parents alternative reactions at inappropriate behaviour of their child, to assist them in recognising parenting mistakes and to discuss together how to change incorrect reactions towards the appropriate behaviour of their child. The informants distinguish inadequate emotional reactions of parents towards arising problems, behavior management and control through the use of authoritorian methods, or the withdrawal of parents. Agreements regarding expected results, the asumption of responsibilities, the continuous discussing of achieved results and arising difficulties are equally important. The participants of the study underlined that parents would not create conditions for their child to achieve what they want aggressively or in another inappropriate manner. The pedagogues devote great attention to conversations with parents about the importance of positive relationships in the family and the influence of inappropriate relationships in the family on behavioural-emotional difficulties of a child. Parents are the example of appropriate behaviour to their children, therefore, parents must observe and control their behaviour. B. K. Scheuermann, J. A. Hall (2008) present promotion activities for parents to involve them in the educational process: the deployment of parental education and family assistance programmes, involvement in school activity and the formation of positive social networks.

The informants stated that one of the most effective methods to overcome behavioural-emotional difficulties in children is collegial consulting of parents. According to the informants, "parents, while sharing their experiences, tell a lot of possible options to resolve problems and who and how rendered assistance to them" (E).

On the other hand, the informants stated that „it is impossible to bring about changes, to establish cooperative relationships with parents without solving the existing problems in the family: parental addictions, the lack of parental skills and the like." (A). According to the teachers, when resolving the aforementioned problems, it is important that other institutions, which assist in resolving family functioning problems, would also get involved. A risk factor is any impact or influence, which increases the likelihood of the start or occurrence of a problem, the increase or continuance of an existing problem (Christens, Peterson, 2012).

It is noteworthy that the informants accorded great importance to the establishment of positive relationships between teachers and parents. According to the informants, parents should participate in the educational process of their child at school benevolently, „to start feeling their responsibility as an educator of their child not only in their family, but also at school, and not to withdraw from school by putting all responsibility on the shoulders of a teacher" (E).

The informants stated that it is important cooperate and share responsibilities, while resolving behavioural-emotional difficulties of primary school pupils, not only together with the family, but also with other teachers, who work with the form, and educational assistance specialists. The primary school teachers pointed out that teachers and educational assistance specialist, having noticed behavioural-emotional difficulties in a child, should cooperate with a form's teacher and parents. Teamwork is a very important condition of the provision of successful assistance to a child. It is noteworthy that behavioural-emotional difficulties in pupils are complex, therefore, the provided assistance must encompass various kinds of assistance, the services and possibilities of different areas. Assistance to a child must firstly be provided there, where he is, every specialist working with a pupil must try to assist a pupil within his respective competence. Consequently, shared responsibilities and teamwork empower to provide a child with timely, appropriate and quality assistance while helping him cope with arising behavioural-emotional difficulties. Consequently, the focus, cooperation and personal development of all the persons, who are in the educational environment of a child with behavioural-emotional difficulties (a pupil, his parents, classmates, teachers, specialists et al.) when changing the behaviour of the child create prerequisites to overcome behavioural-emotional difficulties. According P. L. Bennett (2006) helpful strategies for behavioural-emotional difficulties pupils include whole-school commitment to behaviour policies, reward systems, consistency between staff, individual help and working in small groups, having time to work with children as well as positive relationships between staff and pupils. Consequently, the focus, cooperation and personal development of all the persons, who are in the educational environment of a child with behavioural-emotional difficulties (a pupil, his parents, classmates, teachers, specialists et al.) when changing the behaviour of the child create prerequisites to overcome behavioural-emotional difficulties.

CONCLUSIONS

Unfavourable environmental factors are environmental conditions or circumstances that inhibit the child's development or even lead to a behavioural-emotional difficulties. The study findings revealed that primary school teachers encounter the following behavioural-emotional difficulties: children's hostility, impulsiveness, involvement in fighting and/or bullying, taking of others' belongings without a permission, shrinking into themselves, anxiety, sadness, absent mindedness, irritability, failure to control his emotions.

In order to overcome behavioural-emotional difficulties of pupils, primary school teachers work with a child and his family individually, with the whole form, cooperate with teachers and educational assistance specialists. The study revealed that primary school teachers firstly endeavour to recognise behavioural-emotional difficulties in children. To this end, teachers observe a pupil's behaviour, his emotional condition in various situations and different environments and record arising difficulties. Having recognised behavioural-emotional difficulties in pupils, primary school teachers work with the children individually by consulting them, creating positive interaction with the children, adapting the learning environment to the child, developing the skills of appropriate communication and behaviour and self-control and self-confidence. The teachers do not resort only to individual work with a child. In order to help a child with behavioural-emotional difficulties, they work with the whole form: they develop communication and cooperation skills in children and encourage positive relationships in the classroom.

An important role when overcoming behavioural-emotional difficulties of a child is played by a teacher's cooperation with a pupil's family. Teachers, having noticed behavioural-emotional difficulties arising to a child, inform parents correctly and constructively, discuss the possibilities of alternative reactions towards inappropriate behaviour of the child with parents, assist them in recognising parenting mistakes, understanding, acknowledging and changing incorrect reactions towards appropriate behaviour of their child. When providing assistance to a child, the agreements regarding expected results between pedagogues and parents, the assuming of responsibilities and appropriate behaviour in the family are very important. The teachers also organise collegial consulting of parents.

While rendering assistance to a child, if behavioural-emotional difficulties are present, primary school teachers communicate with other teachers, who work with the form and involve educational assitance specialists. The cooperation of teachers, parents and educational assitance specialists, focused teamwork, a shared responsibility are able to assist in resolving behavioural-emotional difficulties in primary school pupils.

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