

## EDUCATIONAL CLASSES: THEIR ROLE IN SHAPING STUDENTS' CONSCIOUSNESS AND MORAL CONDUCT

### ROLUL OREI DE DIRIGENȚIE ÎN FORMAREA CONȘTIINȚEI ȘI CONDUITEI MORALE A ELEVILOR

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**Abstract:** In this paper we analyse a few aspects concerning moral and civic education as an important aspect of education in general, on the ground of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> form students' opinion; we are also interested to see in what measure educational classes reach or not moral and civic objectives and if the topics are of particular interest to students, and if the teacher uses means and methods that are active and formative. Synthesising drawbacks during educational classes, we suggest both form masters and school managers to pay more attention to educational classes topics and issues. In order to shape beliefs and features of character, teachers should start from this in their approach of students' problems, i.e. better know each student apart and direct and satisfy his/her wishes and aspirations. Among the features required from a good form master are besides the features of a good teacher in general, the sympathy for the students, positive traits of character (sincerity, communicativeness, etc.) and especially to be a good teacher that uses proper methods and means to teach.

**Rezumat:** În lucrare analizăm câteva aspecte ale educației moral-civice, ca dimensiune importantă a educației în general, pe baza opiniilor unor elevi de clasa a IX-a și a X-a; de asemenea, urmărim în ce măsură lecțiile de dirigenție realizează sau nu obiectivele educației moral-civice și dacă temele prezintă interes deosebit pentru elevi, folosesc mijloace și metode active, formative. Sintetizând aspectele neîmplinite în activitatea desfășurată în această direcție, sugerăm necesitatea unei atenții mai mari acordată atât de profesorii diriginți, cât și de conducerea școlilor față de ceea ce înseamnă problematica dirigenției. Pentru a putea forma convingeri și trăsături de caracter, profesorii trebuie să pornească acest demers de la elevi spre ei înșiși, adică să cunoască cât mai bine pe fiecare elev în parte și să-i orienteze și satisfacă dorințele, năzuințele. Printre calitățile necesare unui bun diriginte, se regăsesc în parte calitățile necesare unui bun profesor în general: dragoste față de elevi, trăsături de caracter pozitive (sinceritate, comunicativitate etc.), și mai ales calități de bun pedagog, metode și mijloace potrivite de predare.

**Key words:** moral education, moral consciousness, and moral conduct  
**Cuvinte cheie:** educație morală, conștiință morală, conduită morală

#### INTRODUCTION

Moral education is an important part of education in general, covering both moral conscience objective and moral conduct. Though moral education has no enforcing aspects, its good efficiency needs to rely upon a series of principles concerning it. Besides classical methods of moral education, educational classes also play an important role in increasing moral education efficiency.

By synthesising some aspects concerning educational classes in schools, we would like to emphasise the need for more attention from school managers towards educational classes.

#### MATERIAL AND METHOD

The scope of the paper is to analyse a few aspects of the moral and civic education as

a component part of education in general. The objective of the research is to analyse the students' opinion on the role of educational classes in the shaping and development of moral consciousness and conduct.

The working hypotheses were as follows:

-educational classes do not fully reach objectives of civic and moral education;  
 -topics are not of special interest to students and cannot be approached with the help of attractive, active, and formative methods.

On the grounds of demographic data, the sample is as follows:

- depending on gender: 16 girls and 36 boys;  
 - depending on age there are no differences (most of the students are 16 years old, except for a school girl aged 16 and a school boy aged 18).

The research methods were the following:

a) A questionnaire with 7 open questions meant to reveal certain interests, preferences, motivations, attitudes, and opinions.

The conditions in which we applied this questionnaire were the same for all the subjects (at the same time, at the proper time, in an informal, favourable, open, and proper environment, without the presence of people directly involved in the matter (form master, students' teachers, principal, etc.).

The subjects were students in the 10<sup>th</sup> form of the Tele-Communications High-School participating freely in an extra-curricular counselling activity.

b) The study of some annual and semester projects of some form masters from different schools.

c) The direct observation of some activities aiming at monitoring civic and moral education during teaching practice.

## PROCESSING AND INTERPRETING RESULTS

1<sup>st</sup> question:

Table 1

“What important educational class topics do you enjoy?”

Topics	Options	Percentage
What we know about AIDS	10	19.23
Friendship and love	14	26.92
Moral conduct in society	10	19.23
Freedom, democracy, and responsibility	4	7.69
Role of culture in the development of a teenager's personality	6	11.53
Today's student, tomorrow's man	2	3.89
How to get ready for life	6	11.53
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100</b>

We can see a broad range of answers whose order of frequency ranks on the first places topics concerning *friendship and love* (26.92%), *AIDS* and *moral conduct in society* (19.23% each), followed by topics such as the *role of culture in the development of a teenager's personality* and *how to get ready for life* (11.53% each). Of a lesser importance are topics such as *freedom, democracy, and responsibility* (7.69%) and *today's student, tomorrow's man* (3.89%).

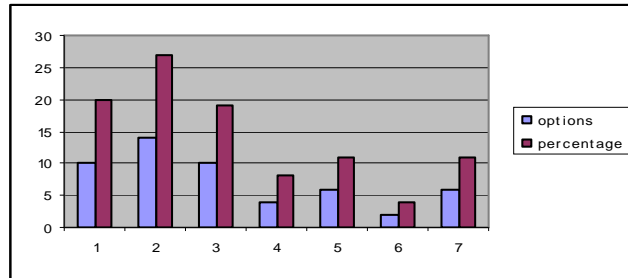


Figure 1. Educational class topics as seen by the students

2<sup>nd</sup> question:

Table 2

“Do you think that what is accomplished during educational classes meets the requirements?”

Answers	Options	Percentage
Yes	20	38.47
Partially	10	19.23
No	14	26.92
I wouldn't know	8	15.38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100</b>

As for the concordance between the goal of the topic and their real achievements, the answers can be structured as shown in Table 2, as follows: *affirmative answers* represent 38.47%, while *negative ones* represent 26.92% and 15.38% ones *do not know the answer*. Cumulated, the answers saying *partially* or *no* represent more than *affirmative ones* plus *I wouldn't know*, i.e. over 60% of the students do not have a favourable opinion on educational classes and on their content.

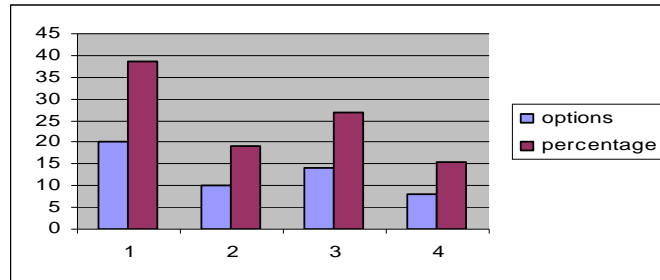


Figure 2. Correspondence between expectancies and achievements as seen by the students

3<sup>rd</sup> question:

Table 3

“Do you think that the ways of conducting educational classes are proper?”

Answers	Options	Percentage
Yes	14	26.92
Partially	20	38.46
No	6	11.55
I wouldn't now	12	23.07
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100</b>

Though 26.92% of the students think these ways and methods are proper, there were no active participative methods and procedures such as moral exercise, debate, etc. Maybe this is the reason why there is quite a high percentage of students with moderate (38.46%) or even negative (11.55%) answers concerning this aspect.

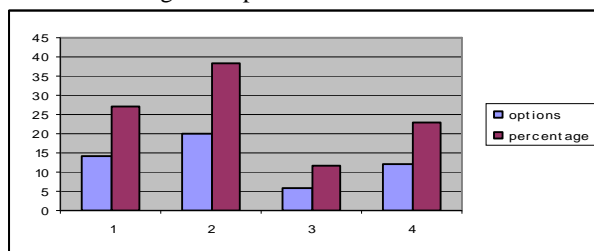


Figure 3. Propriety of the ways and methods of conducting educational classes as seen by the students  
4<sup>th</sup> question:

Table 4

“What do you think about this school year’s educational classes?”.

Answers	Options	Percentage
Very good	12	23.07
Good	10	19.25
Partially good	8	15.38
Poor	8	15.38
I cannot say	14	26.92
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100</b>

Though there were certain critical observations concerning educational classes, the opinions concerning this school year’s educational classes content are favourable: *very good* (23.07%), *good* (19.25%), i.e. 15% more than negative appreciations; 26.92% do not have any opinion, and 15.38% answer they are *partially good*.

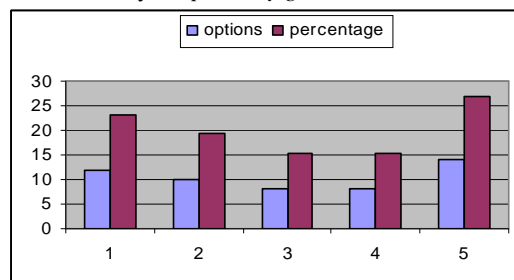


Figure 4. Educational class content as seen by the students  
5<sup>th</sup> question:

Table 5

“What do you not enjoy about educational classes?”

Answers	Options	Percentage
Commenting absences	10	38.46
Insisting on students’ behaviour	12	23.07
Discriminating students	8	15.40
Skipping educational classes	12	23.07
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100</b>

Among the aspects students do not enjoy are: *commenting absences from class* (38.46%), which denotes lack of responsibility from the students and the desire for “*broader freedom*” in behaviour, a freedom that is being misunderstood and mistaken nowadays; though there is also some criticism towards the *form master than skips the educational classes* (23.07%) and towards the *commentaries made by the form master about the students’ behaviour* (23.07%). There have also been answers concerning *student discrimination* (15.40%), but there was no clarification about the nature of the discrimination.

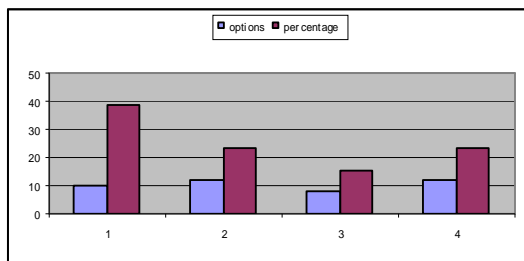


Figure 5. Negative aspects of educational classes as seen by the students

6<sup>th</sup> question:

Table 6

“What is it that you most appreciate in your form master?”

Answers	Options	Percentage
Being a good teacher	14	26.94
Being honest	20	38.46
Knowing how to make himself/herself loved	6	11.53
Knowing how to be close	12	23.07
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100</b>

A good teacher in the vision of the students should first be a *good teacher* (26.94%), be *honest* (38.46%), to *make himself/herself loved by the students* (11.53%) and to *be close to the students while being authoritarian and exigent, gaining the students’ respect* (23.07%).

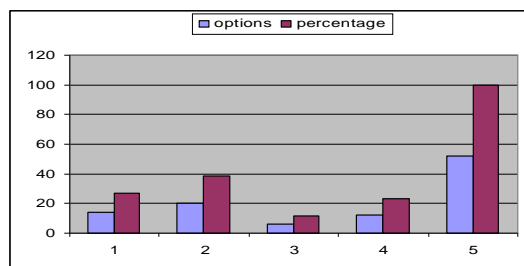


Figure 6. The form master as seen by his/her students

7<sup>th</sup> question:

Table 7

“What do you think are the causes why educational classes do not play the role they should play?”

Answers	Options	Percent age
Planning educational classes first or last in the schedule	20	38.46
Replacing educational classes by the subject taught by the form master	14	26.92
Lack of interesting, attracting topics	10	19.24
Poor educational level of the students	8	15.38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100</b>

Among the causes resulting in low efficiency of educational classes, the students have mentioned in perfect accordance with objective conditions in schools: *improper planning of educational classes* (they are either first or last in the day (38.46%), *replacing educational classes by the subject taught by the form master* (26.92%), lack of interesting, attracting topics (19.23%), and *poor educational level of the students* (15.38%).

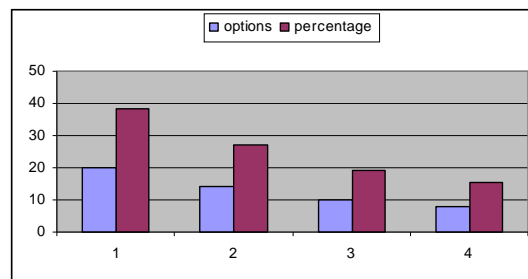


Figure 7. Causes making educational classes have a smaller role

## CONCLUSIONS

If we want to shape beliefs and features of character, i.e. to make educational classes more efficient, we need to start from the students themselves in this approach, i.e. better know each of them and their needs and desires that we should then fulfil. Among good features in a good form master are: sympathy for the students, positive traits of character (sincerity, closeness, communicativeness) and especially being a good teacher and having good teaching skills. As for the management aspect, educational classes should have a better place in the school schedule, so that they no longer are looked upon as auxiliaries of the teaching and learning process.

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