

# Psychological and Pedagogical Aspects of Eliminating Student Failure

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## Abstract

The problem of school failure is one of the central issues in pedagogy and pedagogical psychology. It was revealed that school failure can be a consequence of factors of both a socio-pedagogical nature – family conditions, pedagogical neglect, level of education of parents –, and psychological – deficiencies in the cognitive, need-motivational spheres, individually psychological characteristics of students, lack of analysis and synthesis. In the study of psychological and pedagogical literature, we have identified a contradiction between a large number of psychological and pedagogical literature on the problem of student failure, on the one hand, and a small number of methodological developments to address these causes.

As a result of student assessment, the problem of academic failure or failure in the studies of individual students arises. Underperformance refers to a situation in which the behavior and learning outcomes do not meet the educational and didactic requirements of the school. Underachievement is expressed in the fact that the student has poor reading, counting skills, weak knowledge of the intellectual skills of analysis, generalization, etc. Systematic underachievement leads to pedagogical neglect, which is understood as a set of negative personality traits that contradict the requirements of the school and society. This phenomenon is extremely undesirable and dangerous from a moral, social, economic point of view. Pedagogically neglected children often drop out of school, fill up at-risk groups.

**Keywords** academic failure, pedagogical support, pedagogical prevention, pedagogical diagnostics, pedagogical consultation, pedagogical therapy

Teachers of the mass school are well aware that

## INTRODUCTION

First of all, poor self-organization in the learning process is characteristic of all unsuccessful schoolchildren: the lack of well-formed methods and techniques of educational work, the presence of a persistent incorrect approach to learning.

Unsuccessful students do not know how to learn. They do not want or cannot carry out logical processing of the acquired subject. These students do not work systematically in the lessons and at home, and if they are faced with the need to prepare a lesson, they either do it hastily without analyzing the teaching material, or resort to reading it repeatedly to memorize it, without delving into the essence of the memorized. These students do not work on the systematization of acquired knowledge, do not establish links between new material and old. As a result of this, the knowledge of the underachieving has a haphazard, fragmented character (Bardin, 1980).

This approach to learning leads to a systematic intellectual underload, which in turn leads to a significant decrease in the rate of mental development of these students and further enhances their lag behind classmates.

The low self-organization of underachieving schoolchildren is also manifested in the low level of mastery of such mental functions as memory, perception, imagination, as well as the inability to organize their attention, as a rule, underachieving schoolchildren are inattentive in class. Perceiving the educational material, they do not seek to recreate it in the form of images, paintings.

children who do not steadily learn the school curriculum have negative character traits and behavioral disorders. A comprehensive study of the characteristics of the mental development of under-performing schoolchildren – a diagnostic psychological experiment, a detailed biographical study, observation of behavior in the classroom and after-school activities, conversations with parents and teachers – made it possible to identify a number of conditions that contribute to the formation of distortions in the development of children's personality (Wenger, 2004).

The first and most important factor in the formation of negative character traits is the unwillingness to learn, the aversion of an underperforming child to all kinds of educational work. Persistent difficulties in mastering the material, a constant feeling of failure naturally lead to the fact that such children avoid the process of preparing lessons, tear notebooks, hide textbooks, cry in response to school requirements. They begin to skip classes, to lie at home, to deceive, to say that “nothing has been set”, and at school that they “forgot books at home”, etc. In these actions, emotional distortion begins to appear, the rudiments of negative character traits already in the first six months, during the first year of training. Such behavioral patterns form very quickly and by the second half of the year such children are very noticeable in the mass school (Babansky, 2012).

By this time (that is, to the second class), the following factor joins - conflicting relations with teachers. At first glance, it seems that these relations

are negative in nature, even an opinion is formed about the biased attitude of teachers towards unsuccessful children. Teachers are rude to them, shouting at them, making abusive remarks, complaining to their parents, discussing each other in an open form, with other schoolchildren. At the same time, conversations and careful observation make it possible to understand that such behavior of teachers is caused by helplessness, inability to work with such children, special attention to them, and minimal academic success. All available means are used here. In an increased tone, notations and moralizing, teachers are trying to attract the attention of poorly performing students, to include them in academic work, to get them to do it.

A persistent conflict situation leads to the fact that unsuccessful children after a short time begin to dare in response, to be rude to the teacher, defiantly leave the classroom, disrupt the learning process. Unsuccessful schoolchildren have various negative traits of character - conflict, spite, affective excitability.

Similar problems arise in persistently under-performing children in relation to parents. Parent behavior is even more complex and controversial. Most often, parents of unsuccessful students have complaints about school, blame teachers ("they do not teach well"), the curriculum, but when observing in an informal setting it is clearly seen that these same parents constantly blame children for learning problems. Tired children are planted immediately after school to learn homework, sit with them, hire tutors, often use physical punishment, scream, etc. Thus, parents finally lose the confidence of their children, constant conflicts aggravate the home environment and their unsuccessful children begin to leave on the "street".

Leaving home, returning home late at night become permanent, children in every possible way lie, trying to get out of the situation. This happens by the end of the third grade.

The basis of the typology of underachieving schoolchildren, many authors put the causes of failure studied by them. This is done, in particular, by L. S. Slavina: the types of the non-singing are distinguished by her for the dominant reason. One group of students who do not succeed is those students who do not have effective motives for learning, the other - children with poor learning abilities, the third - with incorrectly formed academic skills and who cannot work (Slavina, 1986).

Thus, the psychological characteristics of under-performing students consist in poor self-organization in the learning process: the lack of well-formed methods and techniques of educational work, the presence of a persistent incorrect approach to learning.

## Literature review

An analysis of the scientific literature on this problem showed that the problems of unsuccessful schoolchildren were addressed by Russian researchers: F. F. Korolev (1962), M. A. Danilov, V. S. Tsetlin, A. A. Budarny, etc.

In the Republic of Kazakhstan, K. Zh. Kozhakhmetova, K. B. Seitaliev, A. K. Duisenbayev and others were directly involved in the problems of under-performing schoolchildren.

Underachievement - lag in learning, in which the student does not master at a satisfactory level in the allotted time the knowledge provided by the program. The main reasons are: various kinds of shortcomings

in the development of the cognitive sphere of the child; learning deficiencies; set of reasons (Tsetlin, 1989).

Lag is a mismatch between the level of achievement of a person or group of people – especially in the educational context – with the expectations or potential that they possess (Mardakhaev, 2012).

Underperformance and lag are interconnected. Backlog is a failure to fulfill the requirements (or one of them) that occurs at one of the intermediate stages within the segment of the educational process that serves as a time frame for determining academic performance. The word “lag” also means the process of accumulation of non-fulfillment of requirements, and each individual case of such non-fulfillment, that is, one of the moments of this process.

The contradictory nature of this understanding and terminology lies in the very essence of the phenomenon under study: the process of lag consists of acts of lag. Separate lags are synthesized in poor progress; it is the result of the lag process. Multiple lags, if they are not overcome, grow, intertwine with each other, and ultimately form poor performance.

## Materials and Methods

Problems of learning difficulties in primary school are some of the most difficult. The fact is that learning difficulties depend on various reasons. The teacher connects almost all the difficulties that arise in children mainly with academic performance. In this case, the child’s assessment fits, as a rule, in a typical scheme: an excellent student means a good student, gets a deuce, means bad. The measures taken are also consistent with this scheme. In the best case

scenario, parents are called to school, and the teacher claims that they are poorly caring for their child, poorly raising him. In the worst, completely unacceptable case, the teacher in front of the whole class, without thinking about the consequences, insults and humiliates the child in raised tones.

Most even the most experienced teachers associate student failure with his laziness, carelessness, and bad manners. 80 % of teachers believe that academic performance is determined by hard work and attitude to the task. Much less often, the teacher thinks about the true causes of failures and, of course, the need to take appropriate measures to eliminate them. In the end, I decided to consider this issue in more detail, namely to dwell on the reasons for the failure of primary school students.

So far, one of the most problematic issues in all schools is poor student performance. The reason lies not only in imperfect methods of school work, but also in the peculiarities of age, in the psychological readiness of the child for school. An analysis of literary sources shows that many authors study the problem of school failure. Failure to execute is the result of our inattention and indifference. Experience shows that timely and correctly experienced difficulties not only allow the child to study normally, but also maintain his physical and mental health. Poor student performance can also be associated with low motivation for learning. According to E. V. Panasyuk, the teacher should set himself the task of forming a motive for achievement in children, creating a situation of success that is associated with the motivational sphere and is determined by the psychological aspects of the child’s personality (Panasyuk, 2015).

Yu. K. Babansky believes that academic failure in most cases is not associated with impaired cognitive

activity, but primarily with insufficient preparation of children at school, which, with a low level of organization of the educational process, can lead to pedagogical neglect. Often the cause of failure is unfavorable living conditions in the family, lack of control and educational assistance in adults, family conflicts, lack of regime (Babansky, 2008).

American psychologist Barbara Hoover-Schultz writes in his book "Gifted underachievement: oxymoron or educational enigma" that that processes of determining failure in primary school children, as well as the identification of failing children, involves appropriate interventions, which still remain controversial issues. The author notes that her work is primarily aimed at finding out how unsuccessful children of primary school age can learn and what can be done to reduce school failure in school institutions. According to Barbara Hoover-Schultz, the cause of school failure can be a combination of both family and domestic factors (Hoover-Schultz Barbara, 2005).

Currently, scientific thought is characterized by the theory of two factors, that is, the adoption of both biological and social theories. Experts note that the problem of failure is both pedagogical, medical, psychological and social. That is why in the last decade, calls are increasingly being made to unite the efforts of specialists in various fields to increase the performance of students. It is believed that a comprehensive examination is needed to identify the causes of failure. To the psychological examination, it is necessary to add anthropometric (type of physique) and psychophysiological (properties of the nervous system) examination.

To solve the indicated problems and verify the initial assumptions, this study apply a set of methods, including theoretical analysis (generalization, system

analysis, modeling); study and generalization of advanced pedagogical experience; diagnostics (testing, questioning, interviewing, conversation, etc.); pedagogical experiment.

## Results

The most important task of didactics is to uncover the essence of underperformance for given goals and the content of education, to identify the structure of underperformance, the signs by which its components can be identified, to develop scientifically based methods for detecting these signs. Without this, it is impossible to scientifically study the factors of failure and to develop measures to combat it, if this is not done, there is no guarantee that the essential aspects of failure are identified and that measures to overcome it are aimed at the main thing in this phenomenon. It is didactics that is called upon to define underachievement, and this problem cannot be solved by other sciences, since the concept of underachievement is primarily a didactic concept related to the main categories of didactics - the content and the learning process.

Studies have identified three groups of causes of school failure:

- Socio-economic - material poverty of the family, general dysfunctional situation in the family, alcoholism, pedagogical illiteracy of parents. The general state of society also affects children, but the main thing is the shortcomings of family life.
- Reasons of a biopsychic nature are hereditary features, abilities, and character traits. It should be remembered that makings are inherited from parents, and abilities, hobbies, character develop during life on the basis of makings. Science has proved that all born healthy babies have approximately the same development opportunities, which depends on the social, family environment and upbringing,

- Pedagogical reasons. Pedagogical neglect is most often the result of errors, the low level of school work. Education, teacher work is a decisive factor in the development of the student. The gross errors of the teacher lead to psychogeny, didactogeny - mental trauma received in the learning process and sometimes requiring special psychotherapeutic intervention. Didactogeny is a rude relationship in the work of a teacher.

Studies show more specific causes of academic failure:

- a rigid, unified system of education, the content of education, the same for all, not satisfying the needs of children;
- uniformity, stereotypicality in teaching methods and forms, verbalism, intellectualism, underestimation of emotions in learning;
- inability to set learning goals and lack of effective monitoring of results;
- neglect of student development, practicality, coaching, orientation on cramming.

The most important condition for overcoming academic failure is to increase teacher skill and the ability to pursue an individual and differentiated approach to the poorly performing. An individual approach is understood as the implementation of the pedagogical process taking into account the individual characteristics of children (temperament, character, abilities and inclinations, motives and interests.) Currently, education is being considered by teachers as a universal value. This is confirmed by the constitutionally enshrined human right to education in most countries. Its implementation is ensured by the education systems existing in a particular state.

The implementation of certain values leads to the functioning of various types of education. The first type is characterized by the presence of an adaptive practical orientation, that is, the desire to limit the

content of general education to a minimum of information related to the provision of human life. The second is based on a broad cultural and historical orientation. With this type of education, it is envisaged to obtain information that would certainly not be needed in direct practical activity. Both types of axiological orientations inadequately correlate the real possibilities and abilities of a person. To overcome these shortcomings, educational projects began to be created that solve the problems of preparing a competent person.

Modern pedagogical science focuses not on passive adaptation to the existing level of development of students, but on the formation of mental functions, the creation of conditions for their development in the learning process. Therefore, great importance, according to L. S. Vygotsky, is given by modern educators to building a training that takes into account the "zone of the nearest development" of the individual, that is, focuses not on the current level of development, but on tomorrow, which the student can achieve under the guidance and with the help of a teacher (Vygotsky, 2016).

For mental development, as established by the research of N. A. Menchinskaya, even a complex and mobile system of knowledge is not enough. Students must master the mental operations by which knowledge is acquired and manipulated.

Researcher N. A. Menchinskaya pays great attention to the development of learning, which is characterized by the generalization of mental activity, profitability, independence and flexibility of thinking, semantic memory, the connection of visual - figurative and verbal - logical components of thinking. She believes that the development of learning is a reliable way to increase the efficiency of the process

of assimilation of knowledge and training in general (Menchinskaya, 1971).

Thus, the relevance of the search for an effective training system has not decreased at the present time, since its further development serves as the basis for improving the learning process.

The next important prerequisite for the implementation of an individual approach to the student is the orientation of training towards the formation of the student's personality, which requires effective attention to each student, his creative personality in each lesson. First of all, it is necessary to educate children in interest in classes, educational work and a responsible attitude to learning. Interest, as P. P. Blonsky writes, is characterized by three obligatory moments: positive emotion in relation to activity; the presence of the cognitive side of this emotion, i.e. what we call the joy of knowing and knowing; the presence of a direct motive coming from the activity itself, i.e. activity in itself attracts and encourages the student to engage in independent of other motives (Blonsky, 2011).

The experience of teachers suggests that only against the background of a comprehensive improvement in the quality of training for all students, including the most capable and the most trained, are favorable opportunities created to increase the effectiveness of teaching poorly performing students.

At any lesson, one of the main reasons for the student's passive work, his mistakes is distracted, unstable attention, inability to concentrate on the work being done. Clarity of work, business attitude, constant monitoring of the results of each student in the lesson, periodic summing up of work contribute to maintaining attention. Not a single error goes unnoticed and uncorrected.

Many teachers, working with poorly performing schoolchildren, try to include them in the collective life of the class, and help them form social motives for learning.

To eliminate the didactic causes of failure there are such tools.

Pedagogical prevention - the search for optimal pedagogical systems, including the use of active teaching methods and forms, new pedagogical technologies, problematic and programmed instruction, and computerization. For this, Yu. K. Babansky proposed a concept for optimizing the educational process.

Pedagogical diagnostics - systematic monitoring and evaluation of learning outcomes, timely identification of gaps. For this, there are conversations of the teacher with students, parents, observation of a difficult student with fixing data in the teacher's diary, conducting tests, analyzing the results, summarizing them in the form of tables for the types of errors made.

The pedagogical consultation is a council of teachers on the analysis and solution of the didactic problems of lagging students.

Pedagogical therapy - measures to eliminate learning gaps. In a domestic school, these are additional classes. In the West, alignment groups. The advantages of the latter are that classes in them are conducted according to the results of a serious diagnosis, with the selection of group and individual training aids. They are led by special teachers, attendance is mandatory.

Educational impact. Since failure to study is most often associated with poor upbringing, individual planned educational work should be carried out with unsuccessful students, which includes work with the

schoolchild's family.

The very concept of a sign of failure in theoretical and practical work is not identical. In theoretical work, the signs of failure are elements that together form its composition, because it is a scientific definition of the concept. In practical work, the sign of failure should be understood not as the element of failure, but its external manifestation.

The study of the composition of failure and the justification of the means to prevent it require the use of two terms: "failure" and "lag."

Underachievement - lag in learning, in which the student does not master at a satisfactory level in the allotted time the knowledge provided by the program. The main reasons are: various kinds of shortcomings in the development of the cognitive sphere of the child; learning deficiencies; set of reasons (Luskonova, 1993).

Lagging is a mismatch between the level of achievement of a person or group of people, especially in the educational context, expectations or the potential that they have.

Learning lag - a child with some developmental delay, whose ability to learn is slightly below the average level, requiring special educational techniques in the learning process.

Student lag - insufficient mastering by individual students of the current educational material.

Thus, academic failure is a complex problem that has didactic, methodological, psychological, social and pedagogical aspects. Integrated should be its solution.

## Discussion

The variety of reasons for poor performance makes it difficult for the teacher to identify them, and in most cases the teacher chooses the traditional way of working with poorly performing students - additional classes with them, consisting mainly of repeating the training material. Moreover, most often, such additional classes are held immediately with several lagging students. However, this work, which requires a lot of time and effort, is useless and does not produce the desired result. In order for work with poorly performing children to become effective, it is necessary, first of all, to identify specific psychological causes that impede the full assimilation of knowledge by each student.

In order for work with poorly performing children to become effective, it is necessary to identify specific psychological causes that impede the complete assimilation of knowledge by each student. The problem of school indifference has always been paid attention by both psychologists and teachers (M. N. Danilov, T. A. Vlasova, M. S. Pevzner, A. N. Leontyev, A. R. Luria, A. A. Smirnov, L. S. Slavina, Yu. K. Babansky). The reasons for school failure were noted: unpreparedness for schooling, in its extreme form acting as a social and pedagogical neglect; somatic weakening of the child as a result of prolonged illnesses in the preschool period; speech defects uncorrected in preschool age, visual and hearing impairments; mental retardation; negative relationships with classmates and teachers.

Currently, the theory of two factors is characteristic of scientific thought, i.e., the adoption of both biological and social theories. Experts note that the problem of academic failure is a pedagogical, medical, psychological, and social one. That's why the last for a decade, more and more calls have been made to unite the efforts of specialists of various profiles in

improving student performance. There is an opinion that a comprehensive examination is necessary to identify the causes of failure. To the psychological examination, it is necessary to add anthropometric (type of physique) and psychophysiological (properties of the nervous system) examination. Despite the close attention of teachers and psychologists, scientists and practitioners to the problem of school performance, the number of students experiencing learning difficulties is constantly growing.

The causes of failure are neutralized (elimination of negative circumstances and strengthening of positive aspects).

When developing ways to improve the educational process, it is usually meant to create particularly favorable conditions for under-performing students. Separate measures are also being developed that apply to all students; they serve to improve the general conditions of instruction and education of students at school. This includes suggestions for improving accounting and control, recommendations for enhancing the cognitive activity of students and their independence, strengthening creative elements in it, and stimulating the development of interests.

Much attention should be paid to the differentiated work of the teacher in classes with temporary groups of students. It is proposed to distinguish three groups: weak, medium and strong. The teacher primarily helps weak students. At the last stage, students report on their independent work. This principle of building a lesson is used in the practice of many schools. It is important to note that the groups are temporary, the transition from one to another is allowed by students at their request and is carried out by the teacher, taking into account the success of each student.

Students' homework should also be differentiated.

This question has not been worked out much, but there are interesting tricks that I would like to note: the usefulness of programmable manuals for homework of lagging ones, the effectiveness of creating a problem situation and the individualization of homework.

It is very important to timely identify the causes of failure and eliminate them. If a student does not develop skills and a desire to study in elementary grades, then with each year difficulties in learning will grow. Then the parents pay attention to the condition of the student and begin to urgently take tutors. But, as a rule, it is already too late. The student has already formed a negative attitude towards the educational process, and he does not understand most of the disciplines. Endless "studies" by parents sometimes worsen the already bad microclimate in the family.

The teacher's efforts to prevent underperformance require that prompt action be taken to resolve problems when problems are found. According to S. K. Militsyna: "school failure occurs when the results of educational activities are lower than the requirements of the educational process and when educational success does not meet the requirements of the school curriculum" (Militsyna, 2017).

The choice of measures is usually associated only with the causes of failure, which, of course, are not enough. Such a coincidence in theory and practice is due to the fact that the concept of "flaw" does not highlight its elements, does not reveal signs of lag. However, this is necessary for the right choice of measures to overcome academic failure and lag in understanding the causes of these phenomena.

The teacher mentally addresses the circumstances that

immediately preceded the student's unsatisfactory grades and could affect his academic performance. First of all, circumstances such as missed lessons, failure to complete homework or inattention of the student in the lesson are usually striking. A thoughtful teacher does not stop at this analysis, but tries to find out what personality traits of the student and what circumstances of his life could cause his actions. The reasons for this can be very different: the student's illness, his lack of discipline, weak character, poor living conditions, conflicts with teachers and friends. From such a wide variety of reasons, the teacher chooses those that could play a role in the life of this student. But these reasons are also the result of other, more general and deeper ones, and they can also be revealed by the teacher. Based on the results of their analysis, the teacher can decide what educational influences are needed.

Thus, knowing the specific causes of schoolchildren's difficulties in learning to solve problems, various methods of overcoming poor progress and increasing the level of assimilation of knowledge can be used, these include: supporting cognitive activity of students, developing the motivational sphere, pedagogical prevention, pedagogical therapy and pedagogical diagnostics. To prevent failure, it is necessary to consider absolutely all aspects of education and upbringing. "Thus, the social education of the person is carried out in educational institutions, which are composed of primary groups, that is, from the peer group as micro-factors socialization" (Duisenbayev et al., 2016).

## Conclusion

It is very important to have close relations between the teacher, psychologist and parent, as well as

constantly monitor the quality of knowledge both from the school and from the parents. It is important to include subjects of socialization of education for the diverse development of the individual and create a situation of success in various educational fields.

Elementary school chose the motto: "If you want to be the best at something, try yourself in everything!" Thanks to this motto, we allow children to discover undisclosed talents in themselves, try to transform themselves, and also create a system of prevention of failure within the elementary school. Assisting an underperforming student in a lesson is as follows:

- Creating an atmosphere of special goodwill during the survey.
- Slowing the pace of the survey.
- Offer students a rough response plan.
- Permission to use visual aids to help explain the essence of the phenomenon when presenting new material.
- Applying measures to maintain interest in learning a topic.
- A more frequent appeal to poorly performing students with questions that clarify their degree of understanding of educational material.
- Involving them as assistants in the preparation of instruments, experiments, etc.

Involvement in making suggestions in case of problem training, in conclusions and generalizations or explaining the essence of the problem expressed by a strong student.

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