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# Time Management of Youth in the Context of Family and School Environment

# ABSTRACT

Family and school are important spaces influencing the acquisition of competences in time management by students. Each of these spaces occupies a particular position in the process of youth development. The family teaches planning and time management. Teachers' work should continue to foster skills in a secondary development context. The compatibility of these environments is a prerequisite for effective time budget planning by the young people.

Considering the role of time in the life of an individual, the aim of the research was to know what the time budget of students is and how the space of the family and school environment is conducive to its development.

In order to collect the empirical data, charts were used in which 97 tested pupils from secondary schools were asked to show the amount

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of time devoted during the day and week to various activities. Other aspects of time management by the young people as well as the participation of family and school as significant places in which young people reside were determined based on a questionnaire survey.

The obtained results lead to the conclusion that staying at school and doing homework dominates, which can be explained by the fact that education is the basic form of youth activity. However, the time devoted to it significantly limits free time, which does not always allow sufficient rest. It was noticed that the way of spending time with parents is passive, while teachers to a small extent compensate for unfavourable patterns of time management shaped in the family.

## Introduction

A person's upbringing should be considered in a specific time and place, and home and school are significant places for children. Although young people function and learn in these places, they often do not realise that their home and school determine their activities and experiences. The place where children feel natural and at ease is their family. It is "a type of micro-space which can act both as a private and public sphere. It is the closest to human, somehow closed section of space,"1 in which an individual can develop and satisfy their needs. The family provides an individual with principles, norms and habits symbolising a home. Different roles within the family determine behaviour, expectations, responsibilities and privileges of its members. To effectively play a part of a child, student, friend, an individual must meet expectations other persons have towards them. By socialising, a person learns patterns for socially accepted behaviour. In healthy family relationships, its members are aware of the needs of other family members and react to those needs respecting social norms governing mutual interactions. The extent to which family members are able to accommodate and complement one another while playing their roles and oscillating between stability and changeability of behaviours is a good indicator of the quality of family relationships.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> M. Mendel, "*Kategoria miejsca w pedagogice*," in: *Pedagogika miejsca*, ed. M. Mendel, Wrocław 2006, pp. 21–22.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> W. Świętochowski, "*Rodzina w ujęciu systemowym*," in: *Psychologia rodziny*, ed. I. Janicka, H. Liberska, Warszawa 2014, pp. 34–38.

When family members have a flexible approach to family roles, it is easier for them to understand psychological needs of a child and to steer the child towards appropriate activities. Pastoral functions require showing support, caring for others and creating a good atmosphere which provides a sense of safety in forging relationships. Parents stimulate physical, cognitive, social and emotional development, manage the family, make decisions and assume responsibility for managing their and their children's time. They develop patterns which guarantee children's proper behaviour, prevent behavioural problems and teach children responsibility and discipline.

Intergenerational transmission is an important differentiator of family life as it gives a family a timeless dimension conditioning the adaptation of all family members to the context of the surrounding reality. It ensures the continuity of behaviours transmitted by the family, but also determines the direction and scope of the changes resulting from social changes. Transmission concerns a higher-level content, specific for a social group (customs, traditions, procedures) and content regarding an individual, particularly their traits and attitudes. It can be studied by looking at transmitted content, the way of transmitting the information, the place and its effectiveness. Transmission in the family is facilitated by processes, such as copying, modelling and identification with parents as role models.<sup>3</sup>

School space is another place impacting an individual's personality. The organisation of school space plays a vital role in performing pastoral and educational functions and its scope, utility and accessibility for students can be studied. The functionality of school space can be a source of information on expectations at a given educational stage. The number of institutions which provide students with safe environment, inspire them to work and facilitate their development is constantly increasing. The right organisation of school space is vital as it reinforces the verbal and non-verbal messages sent by teachers. School facilities determine how students can function at school. The space enables its users to make decisions on how it is going to be utilised during lessons and extra-curricular activities. School space

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> M. Farnicka, H. Liberska, "Transmisja międzypokoleniowa – procesy zachodzące na styku pokoleń," in: Psychologia rodziny, ed. I. Janicka, H. Liberska, Warszawa 2014, pp. 186–187.

facilitates adaptation to a new learning environment and signals rules and principles governing the space.

School space conditions children's behaviour which also can determine teacher's actions and impact decisions on organisation of physical environment and the ways of spending time. How children are placed in school's reality should be adequate to activities and tasks they are offered. School space can encourage children to show initiative, foster resourcefulness and widely understood creativity or induce passivity and lack of participation in individual or group activities. Physical school environment reveals a lot about educational approach, teachers' attitudes towards students and desired learning objectives.<sup>4</sup> It is worth emphasising that school space should be a place where people can feel mutual trust, learn how to verbalise their thoughts and publicly present their ideas and solutions. A properly organised environment enables students to work at their own pace. Moreover, it fosters learning skills needed to achieve goals and helps to properly choose and use materials stimulating personal growth.<sup>5</sup>

It is vital that poor school environment is altered to make it more stimulating and even arousing enthusiasm for learning. Students themselves, who, in spite of the fact that their needs above all should be met in classrooms, are often left out in decision-making process, should be partners in creating the space. A friendly environment should encourage students to intensive and persistent efforts and give them a sense of satisfaction, which helps to acquire social skills and provides opportunities to use the full potential of individuals. Due to the fact that students spend relatively long time at school, all parties close to students should feel obliged to provide them with places that protect their privacy and intimacy. The school is characterised by the fact that "as a socially defined educational space, it consists of many layers."<sup>6</sup>

Teachers working at school define procedures, motivate students to learn and stimulate their personal development, as well as control and coordinate attaining learning objectives taking into account

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> G. Dryden, J. Vos, *Rewolucja w uczeniu*, trans. B. Jóźwiak, Poznań 2000.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> R. Perry, *Teoria i praktyka. Proces stawania się nauczycielem*, trans. B. Mazur, Warszawa 2000, p. 103.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> A. Nalaskowski, Przestrzenie i miejsca szkoły, Kraków 2002, p. 81.

students' needs. While performing pastoral and educational functions in school space and in time perspective teachers should establish good rapport with various students and foster interaction.<sup>7</sup> School performs its educational function not only by teaching core curricula, but also through dialogues of teachers and students in and outside the classroom based on mutual trust, modelled primarily by teachers who create situations triggering natural behaviours of students resulting from their consciousness. School identity is determined by interactions with environment supporting learning and creating school space. Skills possessed by parties engaged in education are decisive in effective cooperation and impact the quality of organisational tasks performed by teachers.<sup>8</sup>

Providing students with proper learning environment will be possible when school becomes an institution "which is constantly changing and offering services exceeding potential clients' expectations."<sup>9</sup> Such necessity is brought by the visualisation of life and reception of dynamic stimuli reaching the students in the context of constantly changing reality.

Time is a valuable element in school and family space and educators teach how to manage it. "Time is the most valuable of our assets, surprisingly, we give very little attention to how we spend it."<sup>10</sup> In educational process, time management is a decisive factor in school's effectiveness and prestige. The time students spend at school and its effective use maximises the achievements of the students. Hence, teachers face the problem of proper time management in performing specific tasks. The effectiveness of solutions proposed by teachers depends on students capabilities and abilities. When managing students' time one should prioritise time for learning and time for individual activities which can be used for personal growth. What is important here is the ability to plan and specify objectives which need to be achieved in a specified time. Detailing the activities helps students use the time effectively and gives them a sense of achievement and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> K. Barnes, *Wywieranie wpływu*, trans. Ł. Tuszyński, Gdańsk 2005, p. 26.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> M. Zielińska, Jak reagować na agresję uczniów?, Gdańsk 2012, pp. 8–9, 50–51.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Uczenie się metodą projektów, ed. B.D. Gołębniak, Warszawa 2002, p. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> P. Zimbardo, J. Boyd, *Paradoks czasu*, trans. A. Cybulko, M. Zieliński, Warszawa 2009, p. 17.

satisfaction. Unjustified prolongation of activities, on the other hand, discourages students and hinders perception of one's effectiveness.

Educators greatly impact personal perception of time utilisation, and hence it can be said that this skill can be learned. Therefore, it is important to help students develop their own perspective of time, build the awareness of passing time and the necessity of its effective use in various life situations and spaces. Experiences shape behavioural patterns which can be repeated and hence are helpful in creating schedules and predicting their effectiveness, essential for feasible planning and achieving the objectives. Feasible "perspective of time is fundamental for people's lifestyles.... Future-oriented people are generally more successful professionally and academically, they have a better diet and exercise more regularly" as they care about their health. They also help others in difficult situations.<sup>11</sup>

While studying student activities, one should take into account gender differences in social functioning. Parents are first senders of messages on gender and they very often create different environments for sons and daughters. They reinforce traditional gender roles by assigning everyday chores and differentiating their expectations towards the children depending on their gender. Family socialisation if often continued at school. Stereotypical views on gender determine boys' and girls' behaviours connected to time management.<sup>12</sup> Parents' support and good rapport with peers in educational context, where physical activity is common, fosters building adequate self-esteem, unlike stereotypical ways of spending time, such as using the Internet or reaching for pharmacological substances.<sup>13</sup>

#### Author's research

Time management is a vital skill, particularly nowadays when the pace of life is often frantic, not only for those already professionally

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Psychologia społeczna, ed. A.S.R. Manstead, M. Hewstone, S.T. Fiske, M.A. Hogg, H.T. Reis, G.R. Semin, trans. J. Gilewicz, Warszawa 1996, pp. 351–356.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> A. Pisarska, K. Ostaszewski, K. Bobrowski, "Czynniki ryzyka i czynniki chroniące związane z problemami internalizacyjnymi młodzieży w okresie późnego dorastania," Postępy Psychiatrii i Neurologii 2018, vol. 27, no. 4, pp. 261–280.

active, but also for students. Good time management plays a tremendous role in achieving a high quality of life and is a decisive factor in attaining goals and being successful. Children and youth do not possess sufficient awareness of its importance in effectiveness and getting satisfaction. A young person can distance themselves from time management models provided by their parents, teachers and peers or internalise them, and in the course of their life, develop their own, individual conduct and shape their identity.<sup>14</sup> Educators should help students acquire time management skills and emphasise their usefulness in everyday life and getting a sense of personal achievement. While looking at the role of time in the life of an individual, the research focuses on time budget of the youth and the way they manage it in the context of family and school environment. Taking into account social roles determined by gender, time management was analysed among girls and boys.

Research problems concerned using the time in everyday situations encountered by youth in their families and at school. While acknowledging the synergy of these environments, the author wanted to learn what the time budget of students was and how school and family environments influence its management. It should be emphasised that these environment are particularly meaningful for the development of individuals and their social functioning.

The empirical data were gathered on the basis of a daily and weekly graph, "the pie of life." The surveyed students were asked to indicate the amount of time spent on different activities by "cutting the pie" so that the pieces show the part of a day or week spent on a given activity. The research tool was prepared on the basis of description of exercises: "Weekly pie of life" in preventive scheme for youth "How to live with people"<sup>15</sup> and "Clocks."<sup>16</sup> Another tool used in the research was a questionnaire concerning time management aspects, as well as the role of family and school as significant places where young people spend their time.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> M. Bardziejewska, Okres dorastania. Jak rozpoznać potencjał nastolatków?, Gdańsk 2005, pp. 363–365.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Jak żyć z ludźmi. Program profilaktyczny dla młodzieży, Warszawa 1989, pp. 2–7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> M. Chomczyńska-Miliszkiewicz, D. Pankowska, *Polubić szkolę*, Warszawa 1995, p. 157.

The research was conducted among 97 students of secondary schools in Lubelskie voivodship in 2017. The research group consisted of 48 girls and 49 boys aged 15 to 16.

Time management skills enable us to adequately use the time and achieve objectives. The awareness of time budget one has allows an individual to properly plan and organise everyday activities, which increases effectiveness. Table 1 shows how much time young people devote to particular everyday activities.

Activities	Girls		Boys		
	Number of hours	%	Number of hours	%	
Sleeping	7,73	32,2	7,20	30	
Meals and hygiene	2,23	9,3	2,10	8,75	
School	7,30	30,4	6,90	29	
Homework	2,40	10	1,56	6,5	
Other responsibilities	1,76	7,3	2,58	10,75	
Leisure	2,60	10,8	3,58	15	

Table 1. Daily time budget of girls and boys

Source: conducted research.

After the analysis of the daily time budget in the perception of youth, it can be noticed that girls devote more time than boys to sleeping and spent slightly less time at school. Doing homework takes them nearly two and half hours. They spent similar amount of time for leisure and meals and hygiene. As boys need slightly less time for sleeping, stay at school shorter and spend less time doing homework, they have more time than girls for leisure activities. They reported having nearly four hours of free time.

Analysing weekly time budget showed that on the weekends the time spent on sleeping is longer, as it amounts to 7.5 hours a day for girls and 8 hours a day for boys. Moreover, boys have two more hours weekly for leisure.

In their free time, the surveyed youth prioritised using the computer and the Internet, mainly gaming. Slightly less time is spent on watching television, listening to music and meeting friends. It should be emphasised that girls more often listen to music and spent more time socialising. Doing sport as a way of spending free time was chosen by one third of boys and slightly fewer girls. Reading books was an even less popular answer, and it was more often chosen by girls than boys. Very few respondents mentioned going to the cinema or theatre in their free time. Approximately a half of the respondents said they develop their interests by taking part in organised activities. One fifth of the surveyed declared that they pursue their hobbies on their own, while the remaining respondents said they do not spent time on their hobbies.

According to M. Czerepaniak-Walczak,<sup>17</sup> "free time is an interval of subjective life, in which a person experiences an intellectual, emotional and physical well-being resulting from being able to independently and of one's own volition undertake activities which show signs of being voluntary and non-commercial and are the source of satisfaction." Multitasking is common among young people, which causes some difficulties in determining the exact amount of free time. It is also worth mentioning that free time is an individual characteristic depending on personality, the system of values and family and school experiences.

In adolescent life specifically, interests e.g. sport or music become a criterion used for choosing friends. Pursuing one's passions and maintaining or even reinforcing friendships are convergent. Relationships in a peer group are strengthened by common activities resulting from pursuing hobbies and the time devoted to it.<sup>18</sup> As family environment is considered as significant in personal development, the research also focused on parents role in organising their children's time. The respondents could indicate more than one type of parents' activities. The results are presented in table 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> M. Czerepaniak-Walczak, "Od próżniaczenia do zniewolenia – w poszukiwaniu dyskursów czasu wolnego," in: Pedagogika społeczna, ed. E. Marynowicz--Hetka, Warszawa 2007, p. 236.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> D. Boyd, H. Bee, *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka*, trans. A. Wojciechowski, Poznań 2008, p. 383.

The state of the s	Girls		Boys	
Type of activities	Ν	%	Ν	%
Family trips, walks, bike trips	14	29	11	22
Watching TV	30	62	25	51
Theatre or cinema outings	3	0.6	1	0.2
Shopping	25	52	18	37
Other	11	23	12	24

Table 2. Parents' role in managing time of boys and girls

Source: conducted research.

Family environment is a place, which ensures best conditions for development of a child and access to various sources of learning about people and the world, mainly through the media. Watching TV was the most frequent family activity for both girls and boys. More than half of the respondents said that they watch TV with their parents. Family trips and walks were the second most common activity. One may suppose that it is connected with sport and recreation. The respondents did not see parents as partners in activities such as theatre and cinema outings. This might be due to the cinema and theatre repertoire and easy access to electronic media. The respondents also mentioned talking to parents and emphasised that such conversations are often very personal. Some students indicated that they can accompany their parents in pursuing their passions e.g. "angling,""DIY" or "shopping."

Regarding the participation of parents in time management of their children, more than half of the respondents emphasised that mothers and fathers accompany them in their free time. The parents are interested in the way their children spend free time. Nearly half of the students think that their parents control them in this respect. On the other hand, when they were asked who decides about the way of spending free time, more than 80% said that they themselves choose leisure activities, very often inspired by peers. Despite this, one fifth of the respondents claimed that they are not satisfied with the way they organise their time.

The ongoing changes in all walks of life bring new, more or less valuable, ways of spending time. Traditional leisure activities coexist with virtual culture and individuals face the necessity of choosing new ways of behaving, learning, attributing value and communicating. One may expect that school education, enriching the family space, will be mostly responsible for preparing a child to participate in new reality, enhanced by modern technologies.

Town of activities	Girls		Boys	
Type of activities	Ν	%	N	%
Maths	12	25	11	22
IT	6	12	14	28
Literature/theatre	5	10	4	8
Dance	9	18	6	12
Music	10	20	5	10
Sports	18	37	23	46
Other	15	31	16	32

Table 3. Extra-curriculum activities offered by school

Source: conducted research.

Young people spend many hours at school and therefore appropriate spaces should be created and professional staff employed to help them develop their talents and interests. In the schools attended by the respondents, sport classes were the most popular type of activities as they were preferred by nearly half of the surveyed boys and slightly fewer girls. It may be due to the fact that boys are generally more physically active and need more space,<sup>19</sup> or the type of activities offered by the school appealed more to boys. Looking jointly at math and IT classes, we can see that they are chosen by half of the surveyed boys, but girls also attend them. Literature and theatre classes, attended by one tenth of the surveyed, are similarly popular among both sexes. Dance and music classes appeal more to girls. Nearly one third of the respondents, irrespectively of gender, revealed that they attend other extra-curriculum activities such as language, history, geography or photography classes. The students may perceive

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> R. Vasta, M.M. Haith, S.A. Miller, *Psychologia dziecka*, trans. M. Babiuch, Warszawa 1995, p. 575.

classes organised by the school as complementary to their education e.g. math, literature, or as developing additional competences, independently of learning objectives, which probably is behind choosing classes' such as theatre or photography. The surveyed students also take part in classes outside school, which they see as complementary to school education, but they also highly value relationships with peers in a different than school or family space.

## Conclusion

Managing time in adolescence is a very important issue. During that time, people develop habits which will continue in their adulthood. Time management skills will matter in the future as they will be useful in engaging in constructive forms of activity.

Analysing time budget of students reveals that staying at school and doing homework takes up most of their time during the day, which is not surprising since education plays a vital role in young people's lives. However, the time devoted to education significantly limits their free time, which, when used effectively, stimulates their development, teaches responsibility and independence, as well as fosters creativity. In the time budget of the students, the free time they have is not always sufficient to properly rest, regenerate and engage in leisure activities.

When looking at the time of the surveyed group in the context of their environments, one can notice that spending time with their parents has mostly passive character e.g. watching TV, as we can see that nearly by half fewer students actively spend time with their mothers and fathers. Shopping is a specific form of parents' participation in organising their children's time, and it concerns mostly daughters. Taking into account the fact that school, with its professional staff, significantly impacts time management, it should be noted that sport classes were among the most popular extracurricular activities, followed by music and dance classes. Math classes should be considered from a different angle. They were chosen but the reason for that might have been the necessity of understanding or extending the knowledge acquired during regular classes. It should be emphasised that school creates bigger space and different conditions for personal development than the family since the school's impact is connected with availability of professional educators and ability to define and achieve objectives. Moreover, the social context enables students to establish relationships with many peers, who are very often inspiring and motivational.

The students rarely participate in specialist classes at school, but they also attend extracurricular classes outside their school and emphasise the role of such classes not only in developing their passions but also in building significant social relationships.

The multimedia accompany the youth in everyday life both in family space and at school as a dominant way of recreation and they "take up their free time and very often the time of their obligatory activities."<sup>20</sup> Young people use the electronic media to maintain indirect relationships with different subjects. They enter virtual reality where they are bombarded with information which they handle alone and which makes them feel helpless. Therefore, it is important to provide them with support of the educators and both parents and teachers should be fully aware that teens strive to become independent but at the same time they want to have a sense of community with them.<sup>21</sup>

The participation of parents in their children's education and leisure activities and generally speaking in organising their time, is very important in adolescence. Getting involved enables parents to protect their children from engaging in wrongful and problematic behaviour.<sup>22</sup> The role of cooperation between parents and teachers should be emphasised as these two most important spaces in a child's development must complement each other and help students acquire time management skills. A constructive dialogue on the issue of time management is vital in this three-way relationship of students, their parents and teachers.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> J. Izdebska, "Media elektroniczne jako obszar zainteresowań współczesnej pedagogiki społecznej," in: Pedagogika społeczna, ed. E. Marynowicz-Hetka, Warszawa 2007, p. 519.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> D. Boyd, H. Bee, *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka*, op. cit., p. 379.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Ibidem, p. 282.

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