

INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS' BEHAVIOUR ON STUDENTS' ADAPTATION AFTER SCHOOL TRANSITION

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Abstract. This research aimed to reveal how students' adaptation after a school transition is related to teachers' behaviour. The gross sample of the research consisted of 1078 students (from 159 schools, representing almost all municipalities of the country) and 999 of their parents. The main research instrument was questionnaires for both children and their parents. The research revealed that the critical factor, having a positive effect on students' adaptation to a new school, is help provided by teachers to students individually. Other teachers' behaviour important for students' adaptation to a new school are friendly behaviour with students, good familiarity with their students, fair assessment and praise, clarification of the school requirements, keeping the students informed on events, care for children, experiencing difficulties in learning and children with special needs. These characteristics are alike for students of both sexes, independently from the number of school transitions they experienced, in which types of schools and educational centres they study or where they reside.

Key words: school transition, students' adaptation, teachers' behaviour

Theoretical research context

Students may decide to move from one school to another for either objective or subjective reasons. The objective reasons of school transitions are "coded" in the structure of the educational system itself, supposing that the absolute majority of students must progress from one stage of study to the next at the same time as moving to another school. Hence, many students experience several school transitions before they obtain a school-leaving certificate. The subjective reasons (for example, striving for high-quality education, specific learning needs) make a number of students transition from one school to another even more times. Therefore, **the school transition is a critical problem for educational policy, educational science and educational practice.** To solve it is in the interests of many people, such as educational politicians, school administrators, teachers, social workers (social pedagogues), psychologists, students and their parents.

Analysis of scientific publications helped to ascertain that researches on the school transition have **two** well-defined **trends**:

1. the school transition influence on students' academic and social functioning, emphasizing identification of difficulties, encountered by the students;
2. strategies, facilitating students' adaptation to a new school environment, providing a favourable school environment.

Hitherto the school transition transferring to stage 2 has been more thoroughly researched than school transition transferring to stage 3. Despite Rice's (2001) assertion that there is no substantial difference between these transferences, Barber and Olsen's (2004) research conclusion, stating that transferring to stage 3 is easier, than to stage 2, because the latter is complicated by the difficulties of adolescence, seems more persuasive. Moreover, transferring to stage 3 (i.e. transitioning from one school to another the second time) students have already had some experience. However, **groups of students' adaptation problems and certain difficulties, encountered by students,** established while researching transfers to both stage 2 and stage 3, are similar per se (Barber, Olsen, 2004; Fenzel, 2000), namely:

1. *Academic*: a larger study load, higher study standards, poorer school marks; the higher a

grade and a studying stage the weaker is rapport between students and teachers, the less encouragement and individual help received from teachers and administration;

2. *Social*: more complex relations with peers, more conflicts at school;
3. *Psychological*: more stresses, anxiety, depressions, feeling loneliness.

It means, that **the school transition and poor academic performance are directly related.**

However, more and more researches show the narrowness of such a categorical assumption. Quite a few students perform poorly and feel badly at their own “usual” school. Many children, who transitioned from one school to another, have successfully adapted themselves and show excellent academic performance. Children, who have transitioned from one school to another one to ten (!) times, may have results conforming to the level of capabilities of their peer group or even higher (Strobino, Salvaterra, 2000). Hence, to categorically state that the school transition itself negatively influence success of the academic performance is not reasonable. **It would be more correct to speak about the school transition as a risk factor, admitting at the same time existence of other factors which could help students to overcome this risk and successfully adapt themselves to a new school.** Thus, our research does not aim at identification of difficulties, encountered by children transitioned from one school to another, but rather at what and how help them to successfully adapt to a new school. However, so far we lack researches and data, allowing us to identify what conditions **a successful school transition.**

We have good reasons to state that the initial adaptation period is especially important for the entire student’s functioning at a new school in the future. We conceive **adaptation** as a process aiming at coping with inconsistency between the student and the new school environment. This process includes psychological, social and academic adaptation aspects. The adaptation process results in a qualitative interaction between the student and the school environment, harmony and a steady balance of their relationships. Seeking this harmony, both the student’s and the school’s integral efforts are critical. The student has to bear a new role, consistent with his own nature and the requirements of the new environment. These requirements, however, must be well-defined, clear and reasonably worded, protecting autonomy and dignity of the maturing personality. Teachers’ behaviour directly influences the process of students’ adaptation to a new school and its result. Success of student’s adaptation depends on the degree to which he can satisfy his needs (psychological, social and didactical) in the new environment. If these needs are satisfied, the student functions causing problems for neither himself nor those around him, he sets a positive attitude towards his new school.

Changes in school environment explain problems of students’ adaptation to a new school for the most part. If the school environment does not conform to the students’ needs, his adaptation process complicates. Researchers elucidate such significant factors for the successful students’ adaptation to a new school as students’ safety and a warm and welcoming environment, also called school microclimate or ethos. However, the students’ adaptation and success of their further functioning at a new school **mostly depend on students-teachers relationship** (Barber, Olsen, 2004; Strobino, Salvaterra, 2000). Newcomers successfully adapt to a new school and overcome negative effects of the school transition, when their **teachers’ behaviour is distinguished by such attributes** as showing interest in their students, caring for their students, appreciation of their students’ endeavour, listening to their students, their active involvement in learning (Strobino, Salvaterra, 2000), making students feel supported by their teachers and able to receive individual help (Barber, Olsen, 2004). The teachers’ behaviour indicator, especially important for students’ adaptation to a new school, is *to help students enabling them* to understand many changes in students’ learning, personal and interpersonal relationship after a school transition. Relying on students’ evaluation of help, received from their teachers, we can forecast indicators of many other variables, namely, students’ psychological condition (self-concept, depression), interpersonal relationship (interaction with teachers, peers, deviant students, children-parents conflicts). The

higher the teachers' help is evaluated at a new school, the better is students' functioning there: higher school marks, better intercourse with teachers and peers (Barber, Olsen, 2004).

The teachers' help conception, however, is not well defined. For instance, differences in needs of students, studying at stages 1, 2 and 3, for teachers' help are not clear. We can assume that some forms of such help are meaningful for all children, who have experienced a school transition. For instance, according to Rice (2001), reduction of academic requirements during the adaptation period has an overt positive effect. However, differences in needs for teachers' help may also become apparent at different stages. Thus, at educational stage 3, students are granted much freedom choosing subjects, which has a negative effect on their performance, unless teachers render children and their parents the necessary help (Rice, 2001).

The executed analysis allows *us* to conclude that success of adaptation of students, experiencing a school transition to the new school environment is conditioned by teachers' behaviour. In other words, seeking to harmonize students-teachers relationship *is* the most important role *falling* on the teachers who should act as a good relationship catalyst. However, hitherto many questions remain unanswered, for instance, what teachers' behaviour aspects are most meaningful for students at various stages and different types of schools; if a certain teachers' behaviour is equally appropriate for both girls and boys when adapting to a new school; if one and the same teachers' behaviour is evaluated alike (positively or negatively) by students and their parents, etc. Roderick (2003) ascertained that after a transfer to stage 3 boys' school marks have worsened much more considerably than girls', in spite of their similar academic performance at primary school.

Researches on adaptation to a new school usually rely on an analysis of *the* subjective experiences of students transitioned from one school to another. However, researches on their parents' opinion about teachers' behaviour with newcomers and its effect on the students' emotional state at a new school has been scanty (for instance, Kafirsten, Visscher, De Jong, 2001; Strobino, Salvaterra, 2000; Rice, 2001; Anderson, Jacobs, Schramm, & Splittgerber, 2000).

Scientific literature analysis has prompted us to conduct research choosing a relationship between students' adaptation after a school transition and teachers' behaviour as an object. We aimed to reveal how students' adaptation after a school transition is related to teachers' behaviour. We supposed that seeking this aim it was purposeful to answer such partial questions as follow:

- 1 How successful is students' adaptation to a new school within the first year after the school transition?
- 2 Does teachers' behaviour effect the success of students' adaptation after a school transition? What teachers' behaviour aspects have the most considerable effect on the success of students' adaptation? Is the effect of teachers' behaviour on the success of students' adaptation related to the students' sex, frequency of school transitions, an educational centre, a type of settlement, a type of school?
- 3 Are differences in teachers' behaviour with the students transitioned to their school related to an educational centre, a type of school, a type of settlement?

Research methods

The gross sample of the research consisted of 1078 students (from 159 schools, representing almost all municipalities of the country) and 999 *of* their parents. The respondents were sampled by a non-stochastic method. We assumed attitudes as follow: 1) to include as many schools of different types as possible (the schools were sampled by a stochastic method); 2) to provide that the schools represent a *large* majority of municipalities of the country; 3) to involve in the research only students, who transitioned from one school to another during 2003.

The main research instrument was questionnaires for both children and their parents. To assess students' adaptation we chose indicators, showing the underlying students' and their parents'

attitudes after a school transition, namely, 1) satisfaction of the students, experienced a school transition, with their new school; 2) their parents' satisfaction with the new school; 3) changes in emotional state of the students, experienced a school transition, at their new school; 4) parents' opinion on changes in emotional state of their children after the school transition; 5) students' attitude towards choice of school, if they had to change the school again; 6) parents' opinion about the new school (if it is better than the previous one). The questionnaires for students and parents included questions, conforming to these indicators, assessing them by 3-score or 5-score Likert scale.

Seeking to get the most adequate picture of the effect of teachers' behaviour on students' adaptation we conducted a pilot qualitative research with 78 respondents (students, experienced a school transition and their parents) before the main quantitative research. During a half-structured interview we asked to indicate various advantages of a new school comparing to the previous one.

Categorising all the mentioned advantages, we combined into the teachers' behaviour category such of them as:

1. Teachers know students better: *celebrate* their students' achievements and worry about their students' failures;
2. Teachers are more friendly and behave better with me (with my child);
3. Teachers more frequently praise, encourage me (my child);
4. Teachers assess me (my child) more fairly;
5. Teachers better clarify to me (my child) the school order, requirements, inform me (my child) about events;
6. Teachers are more helpful to me (my child), render me (my child) individual help, when it is needed;
7. Pedagogical help, rendered at the school to students experiencing difficulties in learning or students with special needs, is better.

These advantages became the teachers' behaviour indicators in the quantitative research. In the questionnaire, we asked the respondents to evaluate the mentioned statements, indicating in which school – the previous one or the new one – the teachers' behaviour was better.

The data collected were analyzed using SPSS for Windows program (12.0). Depending on the specific character of the data we employed different statistical methods, namely, statistical hypotheses were checked using Chi-square, Mann-Whitney, Kruskal-Wallis criteria, correlations between variables were evaluated using Spearman coefficient. We also performed factor analysis and partial correlation analysis.

Research results

First of all we were seeking to ascertain the interrelations among indicators of adaptation of students, experienced a school transition. We performed a preliminary analysis of the data to access suitability for factor analysis (Bartlett's test and KMO measure of sampling adequacy) and established the data suitability for the factor analysis and reasonability of the factor analysis (Bartlett's test $p < 0.001$; $KMO = 0.796$). Performing the factor analysis, we managed to establish only one factor explaining a dispersion of 47%.

We established that **all the indicators are closely interrelated** (Cronbach's alpha 0.758); with one exception, which is parents' opinion on advantages of their child's new school *compared* to the previous one. With this indicator discarded Cronbach's alpha slightly increases. The highest factor weights belong to two indicators, namely, "student's satisfaction with the school transition" and "parents' satisfaction with the new school". Hence, we can suppose that **satisfaction with a school transition is the critical indicator, showing success of student's adaptation to school.**

Relying on the factor analysis results we discarded the variable "parents' opinion on the new

school as a better one” and transformed all the other adaptation indicators into one new variable, measuring success of students’ adaptation to a new school. The mean of the new variable, which is 12.72 (with min=5, max=15, sd=2.36) shows **a weak tendency for successful adaptation to a new school.**

Comparing these data we established **very weak, though statistically significant, differences among the educational centres** – according to Kruskal-Wallis test the mean ranks are distributed as follows: centre 1 (1 to 4 grades) – 456, centre 2 (5 to 8 grades) – 438, centre 3 (9 to 10 grades) – 511, centre 4 (11 to 12 grades) – 452 (Spearman’s $\rho=0.048$; $p=0.014$). As we can see in educational centre 3 students demonstrated slightly better adaptation indicators, and in centre 2 – slightly worse adaptation indicators.

When analysing the data as regards students’ sex we established that **the mean rank of boys’ adaptation is slightly higher than the one of girls:** 436 and 403 respectively (the difference is statistically significant as $p=0.049$). Comparing these data for different centres, we established that in centres 1, 3 and 4 differences in boys’ and girls’ adaptation indicators were not statistically significant. However, **the differences occur in centre 2** ($p=0.013$).

We established that success of students’ adaptation has **a statistically significant relationship with the type of the settlement, where students study** (according to Kruskal-Wallis test $p=0.006$). Comparing mean ranks for different types of settlements, we established that the adaptation indicator is the best for the students, studying in cities (with population over 100 thousand people), and the worst for the students, studying in villages or small towns. Analysing these data by educational centres and respondents’ sex we established that a statistically **significant difference between students’ adaptation and a type of settlement exist only in centre 2** ($p=0.005$) **and only for girls** ($p=0.028$). However, the results only slightly differ from the general tendency of the best adaptation indicators for girls, who transitioned from one school to another in centre 2 and who studies in cities. Comparing to the others, the indicators are worse for girls, studying not in villages or small towns, but in district centres.

We established a **statistically significant relationship between success of adaptation to a new school and a type of the new school** (according to Kruskal-Wallis test $p=0.002$). A more thorough analysis helped to reveal that such differences exist in centres 1 to 3 only; we did not establish any differences in centre 4. In centre 1 successful adaptation indicators are the best for primary schools (mean rank 111), then for secondary schools (mean rank 88) and school-kindergartens (mean rank 83). Comparing to the other types of schools students adapt worse at basic schools (mean rank 77). In centre 2 students adapt best at youth schools and gymnasiums (mean ranks 194 and 191 respectively), and worst at basic schools as well (mean rank 156). In centre 3 students adapt best at youth and basic schools (mean ranks 137 and 132 respectively), and worst at secondary schools (mean rank 95).

When analysing a relationship of successful adaptation with frequency of school transitions, we failed to establish any statistically significant differences.

Fulfilling the reliability analysis of **teachers’ behaviour indicators** by students’ answers we have established that the indicators are homogenous (Cronbach’s alpha 0.845). We verified data suitability for factor analysis employing KMO and Bartlett’s tests: KMO=0.879; Bartlett’s test $p<0.001$. Thus, the data are suitable for factor analysis. The same analysis relying on parents’ answers also showed that the indicators were homogeneous (Cronbach’s alpha 0.824) and suitable for factor analysis (KMO=0.825; Bartlett’s test $p<0.001$). The highest factor weight is assigned for one teachers’ behaviour indicator, namely, “Teachers render individual help to students, when the latter need it”. It means that the critically meaningful teachers’ behaviour characteristic is providing students with individual help. This teachers’ behaviour indicator most strongly correlates with students’ satisfaction with a new school (Spearman’s $\rho=0.316$).

Analysing a relationship of students’ adaptation to a new school with teachers’ behaviour

indicators, we established a relationship of medium significance between the students' adaptation to a new school and several teachers' behaviour indicators, namely, fair assessment (Spearman's $\rho=0.331$), teachers' friendliness (Spearman's $\rho=0.350$), clarification of the school order and providing with information (Spearman's $\rho=0.316$), praising students (Spearman's $\rho=0.350$) and teacher's empathy (Spearman's $\rho=0.328$). In all cases $p<0.001$. Relationships with other teachers' behaviour indicators are also statistically significant, though weak.

Hence, we can state that **teachers' behaviour effect students' adaptation after a school transition**. The general tendency is as follows: **students' adaptation to a school and students' and their parents' satisfaction with the school directly depend on teachers' friendliness, teachers' familiarity with their students, praise and fair assessment of them, clarification to them the school order, requirements, providing them with information on events, caring for the children, experiencing difficulties in learning and having special needs**.

Seeking to establish an effect of other variables on the above-mentioned regularity, we employed partial correlative analysis. The analysis showed that the relationship between students' adaptation and teachers' behaviour at a new school remains statistically significant and the same, when it is controlled by such independent variables as students' sex, frequency of school transitions, a type of school, an educational centre, a type of settlement. It means that the established **regularity is common** and valid independently from the variables mentioned.

Employing Kruskal-Wallis test we sought to establish if teachers' behaviour differ in various types of schools, in various types of settlements. We failed to establish any statistically significant differences between teachers' behaviour and both a type of settlement or an educational centre. However, in centres 2 to 4, we noticed differences in relationship with types of schools.

Analysis of the data allow us to state that in all cases (i.e. evaluating all the indicators) the teachers' behaviour satisfies youth school students and their parents best, whereas basic school students least.

In centres 3 and 4 in all cases we established statistically significant differences among different types of schools.

The data analysis allows us to reveal a number of tendencies, namely:

- 1 The youth school students and their parents are most frequently, comparing to other types of schools, state that at their new school teachers behave better (mean ranks for all the indicators are the highest);
- 2 Secondary school and gymnasium students and their parents more rarely, comparing to other types of schools, state that at their school teachers behave better than at their previous school (mean ranks for all the indicators are the lowest, especially at gymnasiums).

Discussion

Success of students' adaptation to a new school is shown by the students' and their parents' satisfaction with a new school, students' emotional state at a new school and their attitudes towards choosing the same school (if they should transition again). The key indicator of the success of students' adaptation is children's satisfaction with their new school.

We established a general weak successful adaptation tendency among our respondents. *This* means, that a greater number of students successfully adapt themselves to their new schools and transition from one school to another with no major problems. This conclusion is consistent with thoughts of those scientists, who state that the fact of a school transition itself does not doom students' functioning at a new school to worsen (Strobino, Salvaterra, 2000). However, the research results reveal that a number of students encounter problems when adapting themselves to their new schools and these problems hinder them from successful functioning on the way to obtaining of

general education. Therefore, in general, we can agree with evaluation of the school transition as a risk factor (Barber, Olsen, 2004). Such an evaluation of the school transition proves *the* topicality and significance of this research. It encourages to research on factors, hindering from a successful adaptation, and search for successful adaptation strategies.

Hitherto more researches have focused on the school transition in educational stage 2. Our research has included all the educational stages, which allowed us to reveal statistically significant, though very weak, differences among the stages. Therefore, we can agree with Rice's (2001) assertion that the differences are not very *significant*. However, we also support Barber & Olsen (2004) concluding that students experience a school transition in educational stage 3 easier than in stage 2. Our research has also reveal slightly better adaptation indicators in educational stage 3 and slightly worse ones in stage 2. However, in this context Barber & Olsen's explanation that transferring to stage 3 is easier than to stage 2, because the latter is complicated by the difficulties of adolescence, seems controversial, as during our research we established that only concentre 3 (9-10 grades) is distinguished as regards success of adaptation and later again a fewer number of students adapt themselves successfully.

We established very weak, though statistically significant, differences between girls and boys, revealing that the latter adapt themselves slightly better. A more thorough analysis helped to reveal that in fact differences in boys' and girls' adaptation to a new school occur only in concentre 2, being not statistically significant in other concentres. It means that girls endure the adaptation slightly more difficultly than boys do, but only when transitioning from one school to another in 5 to 8 grades. Hardy, Bukowski, Sippola (2002) researching changes in relations of adolescent peers when transferring from primary schools to stage 2 schools established that at this period of time more importance is gained by social abilities helping to make new friends, but not those helping to save the old ones. Their research has revealed that adolescent girls more, than boys, tend to call strangers friends. It means that girls are, more than boys, sensitive to the influence of the school environment, which our research has proven.

We established that success of students' adaptation is related to a type of the settlement, where the school, being attended by a student, is located. However, a more thorough analysis helped to elicit importance of the type of settlement as an adaptation factor only for a certain group of students, namely, girls, transitioning from one school to another in concentre 2 (5 to 8 grades). Girls, studying in cities, slightly but more successfully adapt themselves to their new schools comparing to girls, studying in other types of towns.

The research results show that success of adaptation to a new school is also related to a type of the school, which the student starts to attend. The results for concentre 1 reveal that primary and secondary school students adapt themselves easily, whereas basic school students – comparatively more difficultly. The tendency of more difficult adaptation of basic school students remains valid in concentre 2, where adaptation is the easiest for youth school and gymnasium students. In concentre 3 the youth schools retain their leading position. However, basic schools become better for students as regards the adaptation, than secondary schools.

We failed to establish a relationship between students' adaptation to a new school and frequency of school transitions, therefore we could not confirm Barber & Olsen's (2004) assumption that students adapt themselves more easily transitioning from one school to another the second time, when they have already got a school transition experience.

While conducting the research we ascertained that parents' opinion about students' adaptation to a new school is quite adequate to the their children's real adaptation: parents quite adequately realize if the adaptation process is successful and their satisfaction with the school transition is related to the students' satisfaction (when children adapt themselves successfully their parents are satisfied, when the former fail their parents' are discontented). This conclusion substantiates Kafirsten, Visscher, De Jong's (2001) assertion that in case of a school transition

students' parents wonder how the school absorbs new students and what help it renders to them. We can assume that such parents' interest conditions their adequate reaction to their child's adaptation to a new school.

The research confirmed the concept (Barber, Olsen, 2004; Strobino, Salvaterra, 2000) that students' adaptation to a new school is related to the teachers' behaviour: better teachers' behaviour conditions successful students' adaptation. This regularity is general and does not depend on students' sex, frequency of school transitions, types of schools, educational centres or types of settlements. We revealed a notably positive effect of teachers' care for their students and appreciation of their endeavour on the students' adaptation (Strobino, Salvaterra, 2000) and exceptional importance of teachers' help to students individually (Barber, Olsen, 2004). Moreover, we also ascertained some other features of teachers' behaviour positively influencing students' adaptation. During the first year of studying at a new school, it is important for students to receive teachers' explanations on the school order, requirements, to be informed about events. Especially important factors are teachers' friendliness, fair assessment, encouragement and empathic attitude towards the students (celebrating their achievements and worrying about failures together).

We failed to establish any differences in teachers' behaviour as regards different centres and settlements. However, differences in relation to types of schools became apparent in centres 2 to 4. In all respects teachers' behaviour is better at youth schools, and worse, comparing to the other schools, at basic schools. This conclusion also complies with the students' adaptation indicators. In centre 2 the best adaptation was shown by youth school students, the worst adaptation, comparing to the others, by basic school students. In centres 3 and 4 the most favourable to students are teachers working at youth schools, less favourable, comparing to the others, are teachers of secondary schools and gymnasiums. This conclusion also complies with the students' adaptation indicators.

In our research we analysed students' adaptation relying on students' and their parents' attitudes, which are very subjective. On one hand, this subjectivity makes them valuable, as allows to know immediate experiences of the people, participating in this process. However, on the other hand, analysis of more objective data on the adaptation success (for instance, students' achievements, health indicators) would allow to form a more in-depth and objective view.

The students' adaptation problems, caused by a school transition, concern practicing pedagogues most. Hitherto they have been solving the new students' adaptation problems relying on their intuition, progressing by way of trials and errors. We would like to agree with Rice (2001) stating that researches should play a more comprehensive role creating programs to facilitate students' adaptation. Creation of such programs should become a result of collaboration of scientists, educational politicians, head teachers, practicing pedagogues, experienced in this area.

Conclusions

During the period of student's adaptation to a new school a balance between the student and the school environment is established to satisfy the student's critical psychological, social and academic needs. We established the underlying indicators of the students' adaptation to a new school, which are their satisfaction with the school transition and changes in their emotional state after the school transition. The more the students are satisfied with the school transition and the higher they evaluate their emotional state at a new school, the more successful their adaptation to the school is. Parents' satisfaction with a new school is related to their children's emotional state at the new school: the parents, believing that their children's emotional state has improved at a new school, are more satisfied with the new school. Noteworthy is the fact that students' and their parents' opinions on the new school are most frequently very similar.

We established a weak tendency of successful students' adaptation to a new school. Its

indicators are the lowest at 5 to 8 grades, slightly higher at 11 to 12 and 1 to 4 grades, the highest at 9 to 10 grades. However, the differences in students' adaptation to a new school are not very considerable among all the four centres. As regards sex, boys demonstrate better indicators of adaptation to a new school slightly more frequently.

The research revealed that the critical factor, having a positive effect on students' adaptation to a new school, is help provided by teachers to students individually. This aspect of teachers' behaviour prevails in both students and their parents' responses. Other teachers' behaviour important for students' adaptation to a new school are friendly behaviour with students, good familiarity with their students, fair assessment and praise, clarification of the school requirements, keeping the students informed on events, care for children, experiencing difficulties in learning and children with special needs. These characteristics are alike for students of both sexes, independently from the number of school transitions they experienced, in which types of schools and educational centres they study or where they reside.

We established that in different types of schools, even realizing educational programs of the same level, teachers' behaviour with new students is quite different. The most favourable for students' adaptation, in both students' and parents' opinion, is the behaviour of teachers working at youth schools. At the other end of the continuum are gymnasium students, evaluating their teachers' behaviour lowest. Noteworthy is the fact that despite high academic orientation of students, coming to gymnasiums they, however, need teachers' help and support during the period of adaptation to the new school similarly to other students at other types of schools.

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