



Social Representation of Problematic Students Based on the Perspective of Preschool and Primary School Teachers

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Abstract

Problematic students burden primary school teachers and school counselors with many challenges. For this reason, we believe that investigating teachers' perception of these students can create the basis for a better focus of training programs aimed at equipping teachers with the practical skills they need to support young school-age students to adapt as best as possible to specific tasks and reach their potential. This study examines the social representation that preschool and primary school teachers have of students who exhibit problematic behaviors and encounter difficulties in adapting to the school environment. The participants (n = 132; average length of service = 8.9 years) completed a standardized task based on the free association technique. The universe of associations was structured using lexical-semantic analysis, as well as prototypical analysis. In the universe of representation that the surveyed participants highlighted, two dimensions were detached: a) the vulnerabilities of the problematic students; b) the efforts that teachers must invest to respond to a wide range of difficulties these students face with. The findings are analyzed with reference to some measures that can be adopted in order to manage problematic students.

Key words: Free associations; problematic behaviors; prototypical analysis; school maladjustment; social representation; young school-age students

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1. Introduction

Problematic students (e.g., students who have difficulties in adjusting during their school career) are a part of the school population to which teachers, teachers and school counselors need to pay special attention. Dealing with the emotional problems and behavioral difficulties that such students experience is high on the agenda of all actors involved in the educational process in schools.

This article focuses on the methodological framework and the findings of a mixed (qualitative and quantitative) study through which we aimed to investigate the universe of social representation that preschool and primary school teachers have about the problematic student. The study is based on the premise that teachers are the most relevant source that can provide a realistic and practically relevant picture of what it means to be a child with adjustment problems in the school environment. The investigation capitalized on one of the best known techniques for delineating the content and structure of the representation of a “social object”, i.e., free associations (evocations). The application of the technique on a sample of preschool and primary school teachers was completed by a qualitative approach (lexical-semantic analysis of the associations that the respondents produced based on the term “problematic student”), as well as by a quantitative one, which took advantage of the technique of detecting prototypical categories (Vergès, 1992). The results are presented in summary and discussed by referring to the problems that a teacher has in terms of classroom management.

2. The challenges that problematic students bring to the school system

In a broad sense, school deviance refers to the set of behaviors that violate the norms and values of the school system (in general) or of an educational institution (in particular). In the literature, a variety of terms are used (with meanings close to the concept of school deviance), such as disruptive behavior, maladjustment, indiscipline, behavioral disorder, etc. (Neamțu, 2003). In schools, student discipline is a key factor for positive achievement and successful adaptation to specific tasks (Seifert & Vornberg, 2002). This dimension of the instructional-educational process can be defined in that students should learn how to express their feelings in accordance with the expectations that the school community has for appropriate behavior (Morrison & Skiba, 2001). In a broad sense, school misconduct refers to all behaviors that transgress the specific norms and values of a school, while indiscipline refers to the conduct of students that hinders or disrupts the work of teachers and other students (Neamțu, 2003).

Indiscipline in schools is one of the forms in which deviant behavior manifests itself and includes at least one of the following areas: a) respect for school authorities; b) compliance with rules and regulations; c) maintaining standards of behavior set by school authorities (Thornberg, 2008). To these aspects, we can add aggressiveness, restlessness, lack of attention, lack of respect for classmates and teachers, ignoring activities proposed by teachers, trivial language and insults, failure to do homework, degradation of school property, talking during class, lateness to school program, absenteeism, etc. (Silva, Negreiros, & Albano, 2017).

F. H. Veiga (2008) proposed a three-dimensional analysis of the disruptive behaviors that students exhibit in school, differentiating between distraction-transgression, aggression against classmates/other students in the school, and undermining the authority of school staff. Students with discipline problems are more likely to undermine the authority of teachers and school managers, to frequently break rules and rules of conduct and to disrupt the flow of instructional and educational activities. Boredom, the desire to have fun, the desire to be like other peers, negative attitudes from teachers, the need to stand out, etc. are some of the reasons why children and adolescents engage in acts of indiscipline (Robu, 2010).

Indiscipline has an unproductive impact on the atmosphere in a school classroom/educational institution by distracting the attention of other students, disrupting the learning process, deteriorating the quality of the overall instructional-educational process, making

the emotional and social climate vulnerable, undermining the sense of personal security, diminishing the satisfaction and attachment that students should show towards school, etc. (Boarini, 2013; Supaporn, Dodds, & Griffin, 2003).

3. The current study

3.1. Aim

The study we conducted in a sample of preschool and primary school teachers consisted in delimiting the content and structure of the social representation of the problematic student.

3.2. Participants and procedure

The universe of problematic student representation was investigated by administering a standardized protocol to 132 teachers who carried out instructional activities in the preschool and primary education system in Romania. They were recruited using convenience sampling conducted online in several preuniversity educational institutions in the counties of Bacău, Iași, Ilfov (including Bucharest), Neamț and others ($n = 45$), respectively in the population of students attending the undergraduate degree program *Pedagogy in Primary and Preschool Education* (PIPP) organized at the “Vasile Alecsandri” University of Bacău ($n = 87$). Seven of the respondents were male and the rest female, aged between 21 and 64 years ($M = 36.3$; $SD = 9.0$). About 53% of the respondents were aged ≤ 36 years.

Of the teachers who responded to the standardized protocol, 21.2% were classified as preschool teachers and 78.8% as primary school teachers. The distribution of the respondents according to the last education they had completed was as follows: teacher-training college – 9.1%, post-secondary pedagogical college – 1.5%, university college of educators-teachers – 1.5%, specialized undergraduate studies (PIPP program) – 37.9%, professional conversion undergraduate studies (PIPP program) – 28.0%, undergraduate studies in a program other than PIPP – 8.3%, master’s degree in the field of educational sciences or in another field – 13.6%. At the time of data collection, the participants in the study had a total length of service in teaching between 0.41 and 44 years ($M = 8.9$; $SD = 8.9$). Approximately 51% had at most five years of cumulative experience in their preschool/primary school teaching.

All students in the PIPP undergraduate program who verbally consented to participate in the study were recruited and responded to the pencil-and-paper protocol. Forty-five of the total protocol responses were obtained using the online version of the protocol, which was implemented using *Google Forms*. Responses were anonymized to encourage honesty. Data collection was conducted between February and May 2023.

3.3. Instrumentation

Study participants completed a standardized questionnaire that included ten items divided into two sections. In order to identify the content and structure of the representation of a “social object”, several methods can be used both at the stage of field data collection and at the stage of quantitative and qualitative processing and interpretation of the synthetic indicators. These include the method of free associations, associative map, network of associations, the method of induction through the use of ambiguous scenarios or basic cognitive schemas, etc. (Șleahțițchi, 2013; Vlăduț, 2000).

In order to collect data on the social representation that teachers working in preschool and primary education have about the problematic student and to carry out in-depth processing, the method of free associations, content analysis (lexico-semantic) and the analysis of prototypical categories (i.e., structural analysis) were used. The method of free associations makes it possible to highlight the latent dimensions that structure the content of the representation of a “social object”. The method allows researcher to obtain three indicators (Șleahțițchi, 2013): a) the frequency of occurrence of an association in the sample of subjects; b) the average rank of

importance for each association; c) the polarity/neutrality index for all the elements that make up the semantic content of the representation. The whole set of qualitative data (associations/evocations), as well as the synthetic indicators to which we have referred, form the basis of the qualitative and quantitative analyses that can be carried out in order to determine the central core and peripheral elements for the representation of the “social object” under the attention of a researcher.

The participants in the present study had to accomplish the following three tasks: a) to evoke five words/phrases that they first recalled in their mind when they heard the stimulus-expression “problematic student”; participants were instructed to ensure that none of the words/phrases they were to evoke represented a semantic or morphological form of another association (e.g., *naughty* – *fidgety* or *impertinent* – *insolent*); b) the second task asked the respondents to think again about the stimulus-expression “problematic student” and to indicate which association they considered to be the most important word/phrase for understanding what a student with behavioral problems and school maladjustment means; next to this association, the participants wrote the number 1, then they did the same to rank the other four words/phrases that they had associated with the term stimulus-expression “problematic student”; c) the third task asked participants to think again about each of the five words/phrases they had associated with the stimulus-expression “problematic student” and, for each association, to establish a connotation by noting the sign “+” if the association had a positive/desirable meaning, the sign “-” if the association had a negative meaning, and the digit “0” if the association had a neutral meaning.

3.4. Strategy for raw data analysis

The procedure of quantitative processing of the evocations that the teachers have realized through the method of free associations starting from the stimulus-expression “problematic student” followed the suggestions of P. Vergès (1992) regarding the analysis of prototypical categories, i.e., the ways in which this analysis can be applied in practice to delimit the central core of the representation of a “social object”. The analysis of prototypical categories involves, first of all, the lexical-semantic evaluation and differentiation of the associations evoked from a stimulus. In a second step, we proceed to quantify the frequency of occurrence of different terms in the universe of the representation of the “social object” under consideration, i.e., the importance that these terms have in the production of evocations. Approaching associations by simultaneously taking into account the two indicators allows for a better highlighting of the content and structure of the representation that a “social object” has in the collective mind (Șleahțișchi, 2018; Vergès, 1992).

In order to lexico-semantically homogenize and differentiate the associations that had been evoked more frequently by the study participants, a thorough content analysis of the answers they gave to the task was carried out. This yielded 75 different associations that participants made. A relative variety was found in the mental constructs around which the universe of social representations that preschool and primary school teachers have of the problematic student can crystallize. Further, only associations with a frequency of evocations $\geq 5\%$ of the total number of participants in the study (i.e., $f_a \geq 7$) were retained for in-depth processing. Also, the minimum frequency of occurrence of associations eligible to be included in the central core of the representation of the problematic student was set at 10% ($f_a \geq 13$) of the total number of respondents. In the in-depth (quantitative) analysis, the importance that respondents attributed to each of the associations they evoked was also taken into account. A value of 3 on the ranking scale (ranging from 1 to 5) was set as the cut-off point for the average rank of importance given to associations, with this value being the median. According to the frequency of occurrence in the study participants’ response protocols, as well as the average rank of importance, the associations evoked from the stimulus-expression “problematic student” were distributed in a double-entry table. In this table, the top-left compartment included the associations that were part of the central

core content. These items were assigned a $f_a \geq 13$ and an average rank of importance ≤ 3 . The other compartments gathered associations that represented intermediate elements, as follows: a) the first peripheral zone (compartment II) – $f_a \geq 13$ and average rank of importance > 3 ; b) the contrasting zone (compartment III) – $7 \leq f_a < 13$ and average rank of importance ≤ 3 ; c) the second peripheral zone (compartment IV) – $7 \leq f_a < 13$ and average rank of importance > 3 .

To assess the overall polarity of the social representation that preschool and primary school teachers have of the problematic student, the indicator proposed by A. S. de Rosa (2000) was used. It expresses in a synthetic way the attitude (which can be favorable or negative) that members of a social/professional group have towards the object of representation. The polarity indicator is useful for the qualitative analysis of the associations evoked from a given theme, as it is the result of evaluations made directly by the subjects and not the result of *post-hoc* judgments made by the researcher, which may involve subjectivity. It can take values between - 1 and + 1. A. S. de Rosa (2000) proposes the following benchmarks for interpretation: [- 1; - 0.04] – negative polarity (most associations are negatively rated); (- 0.04; + 0.04) – neutral polarity (associations are rated equally positively or negatively); [+ 0.04; + 1] – positive polarity (most associations are rated positively).

4. Results

The theoretical number of associations that respondents should have produced equals 660 (132 respondents \times 5 associations/*per* respondent). The actual number of associations that respondents evoked was equal to 581, as some provided only four or three associations. The indicators taken into account were the terms associated with the stimulus-expression “problematic student”, the frequency of their appearance in the response protocols, the average value of the importance given to each of the associations (this could range from 1 to 5, with values close to 1 signifying high importance), and the frequencies of the connotations that the respondents attributed to the associations they evoked.

The number of positive associations equaled 58 (i.e., 9.9% of the total), while 364 (i.e., 62.6% of the total) were negative associations. The value of the polarity indicator was equal to - 0.52. This predictable result reflects the tendency of the study participants to have a negative representation about the problematic student. It is noteworthy that more than 60% of the associations that the respondents evoked were negatively connoted and 27.5% had a neutral valence.

The homogenization of the associations evoked from a lexical-semantic point of view led to the identification of 75 associations (see Appendix) that the study participants generated starting from the stimulus-expression “problematic student”. Some of the associations (i.e., *aggressiveness/violence, disinterest/indolence/superficiality, children with special educational needs, sustained efforts/hard work, antisocial/inappropriate behavior/recalcitrant/conduct disorder*) were notable both for their high frequency of occurrence and their high importance. Others (i.e., *family problems* and *challenge for teachers*) were characterized by high importance, but low frequency of occurrence in the universe of evocations. The third category included six associations (i.e., *restless, hyperactive, naughty, ignorance, impertinence, lack of politeness/respect for others, undisciplined, naughty, loud, insensitive, stubborn, uncooperative, disobedient, disobeying rules*, respectively *uneducated*) characterized by high frequency of occurrence in the universe of evocations made by the study participants, but low importance. The last category included five other associations (i.e., *tiresome, stressful, frustrated, selfish, lack of empathy, lack of understanding/respect from others, irritable, nervous, temperamental*) that were both low in frequency of occurrence and low in importance.

Table 1 includes 25 different associations out of the total number of associations that the participants of the study evoked based on the stimulus-expression “problematic student”. These

exceeded the minimum threshold (equal to 5% of all teachers surveyed) for inclusion in the universe of the social representation of the problematic student.

Table 1. Associations retained for depth processing

No. crt.	Associations	f_a	Average rank of importance	Connotation		
				-	neutral	+
1.	Aggressiveness/violence	34	2.14	29	5	-
2.	Disinterest/indolence/superficiality	31	2.96	27	4	-
3.	Children with special educational needs	15	2.06	8	5	2
4.	Sustained efforts/hard work	14	2.50	6	-	8
5.	Antisocial/inappropriate behavior/recalcitrant/conduct disorder	13	2.76	11	2	-
6.	Agitated/hyperactive/restless	76	3.15	42	33	1
7.	Ignorance/impertinence/lack of politeness/respect for others	40	3.15	34	5	1
8.	Undisciplined/naughty	28	3.21	22	6	-
9.	Noisy	23	3.13	11	9	3
10.	Insensitive/stubborn/uncooperative	18	3.11	12	6	-
11.	Disobedient/they don't follow the rules	18	3.22	15	3	-
12.	Uneducated	17	3.50	14	3	-
13.	Tiring/ stressful	11	3.00	6	5	-
14.	Family problems	11	2.09	6	5	-
15.	Frustration	9	3.33	5	4	-
16.	Challenge for teachers	9	2.00	7	2	-
17.	Selfishness/lack of empathy	8	3.00	4	4	-
18.	Empathy/understanding/respect from others	8	3.12	-	4	4
19.	Irascible/nervous/temperamental	8	3.12	6	2	-
20.	Pampered/spoiled	7	2.71	3	4	-
21.	Disorganization/disorder	7	2.85	5	2	-
22.	Understanding/learning difficulties	7	2.14	4	1	2
23.	Isolated/marginalized/misunderstood	7	2.28	6	-	1
24.	Unsociable/social problems	7	3.00	4	3	-
25.	Disruptive	7	2.42	7	-	-

Note: f_a – absolute frequency of association occurrence

It can be seen that the terms frequently associated with the problematic student were: *agitated/hyperactive/restless* (57.5%), *ignorance/impertinence/lack of politeness/respect towards others* (30.3%), *aggressiveness/violence* (25.7%), *disinterest/indolence/superficiality* (23.4%), *undisciplined/naughty* (21.2%), *noisy* (17.4%), *insensitive/stubborn/uncooperative* (13.6%), *disobedient/they don't follow the rules* (13.6%), *uneducated* (12.8%), *children with special educational needs* (11.3%), *sustained efforts/hard work* (10.6%), *antisocial/inappropriate behavior/recalcitrant/conduct disorder* (9.8%).

However, when in the quantitative analysis, in addition to the criterion concerning the frequency of occurrence in the universe of evocations, the mean value of the importance that the respondents attributed to each of the associations was taken into account, the number of associations that were candidates to be part of the central core of the social representation of the problematic student was reduced to five (Table 2). They are: *aggressiveness/violence*, *disinterest/indolence/superficiality*, *children with special educational needs*, *sustained efforts/hard work*, and *antisocial/inappropriate behavior/recalcitrant/conduct disorder*.

Table 2. Content and structure of the representation of the problematic student

Frequency of occurrence	Average rank of importance attributed to associations			
	<i>high importance (medium rank ≤ 3)</i>		<i>low importance (average rank > 3)</i>	
$f_a \geq 13$	COMPARTMENT I – central core		COMPARTMENT II – first peripheral zone	
	Aggressiveness/violence	34 2.14	Agitated/hyperactive/restless	76 3.15
	Disinterest/indolence/superficiality	31 2.96	Ignorance/impertinence/lack of politeness/respect for others	40 3.15
	Children with special educational needs	15 2.06	Undisciplined/naughty	28 3.21
	Sustained efforts/hard work	14 2.50	Noisy	23 3.13
	Antisocial/inappropriate behaviour/recalcitrant/conduct disorder	13 2.76	Insensitive/stubborn/uncooperative	18 3.11
			Disobedient/they don't follow the rules	18 3.22
$7 \leq f_a < 13$	COMPARTMENT III		COMPARTMENT IV – second peripheral zone	
	Family problems	11 2.09	Tiring/stressful	11 3.00
	Challenge for teachers	9 2.00	Frustration	9 3.33
			Selfishness/lack of empathy	8 3.00
			Empathy/understanding/respect from others	8 3.12
			Irascible/nervous/temperamental	8 3.12

Note: f_a – absolute frequency of association occurrence

The associations *aggressiveness/violence* and *children with special educational needs* stood out as the most important associations that study participants attributed to them. The first of the two associations was perceived negatively by more than half of the respondents and the second by more than three quarters. The results to which we have referred indicate the tendency of participants to be aware that the problems arising in the growth and development of children with special educational needs (due to various disabilities that may be more or less pervasive in their nature) represent a negative factor that may contribute to an increased risk of maladjustment to school tasks and emotional/behavioral problems that hamper the developmental pathway in general.

Two other groups of associations (i.e., *agitated/hyperactive/restless*, respectively *ignorance/impertinence/lack of politeness/respect for others*) were characterized by a lower importance, although the frequency of occurrence in the respondents' evocations was at least equal to 30%. These refer to the psychological, social and educational problems of children who are diagnosed with ADHD or ASD with or of children who show maladaptive behaviors as a result of the action of toxic factors related to the particularities of early development (e.g., inadequate parental educational practices in relation to the real developmental needs of children).

Also, it is worth noting other associations (i.e., *challenge for teachers*, *family problems*, *comprehension/learning difficulties*, *isolated/marginalized/misunderstood*, etc.) that recorded a lower frequency of occurrence (between 5.3% and 8.3% of the total respondents), but a high importance (average rank of importance = 2.00-2.14). They suggest the importance that the family factor has in making children vulnerable in terms of their ability to adapt to school, emotional and social tasks, as well as the pressure that problematic students put on the efforts of

teachers who have the responsibility to prevent difficulties that may arise in the classrooms they manage.

The analysis of the associations that stood out more frequently in the evocations that the respondents made starting from the stimulus-expression “problematic student” suggested grouping them into the following two dimensions: a) the dimension related to the individual vulnerabilities of the students – aggressiveness/violence, disabilities caused by certain deficiencies, disinterest and lack of motivation for school activity, respectively behavioral disorders that generally affect the route positive development of a child (not only in terms of adjustment to school-specific tasks); b) the dimension regarding the interventions that preschool and primary school teachers must carry out in a sustained manner, in order to respond to the challenges that problematic students face with.

5. Practical implications

Our investigation aimed to explore the perception that teachers who support instructional and formative activities in preschool or primary education have about the problematic student. Since the early schoolchild is, in part, the product of early educational efforts (i.e., kindergarten stage), in the study we conducted, the population of primary school teachers was completed with that of preschool teachers. The results highlighted realities that we expected. Thus, from the portrait of the problematic student, the emotional, behavioral and social slippages that represent risks for the quality of schooling and the general development of a child were highlighted. We refer to the lack of motivation for the learning activity, unruly behaviors, aggressive/violent manifestations, antisociality, etc. The participants in the study also recognized that problems in terms of adapting to the school environment occur especially in the case of children with special educational needs. This result reflects a reality of the Romanian education system. Moreover, the participants in the study associated the problematic student with the need for systematic efforts that teachers must take to respond to the challenges brought by children who encounter various problems in terms of adapting to the requirements of the school environment.

Schooling is a key task for a child’s positive development (Eccles & Roeser, 1999). This stage continues and solidifies the flow of basic acquisitions obtained through participation in the activities carried out in the kindergarten and introduces a significant part of the contents that contribute to the development of intellectual processes and to the consolidation of skills (i.e., practical, emotional, social, etc.) necessary for the transition to adolescence and, furthermore, for the preparation for the assumption of the specific roles of adulthood (Woodhead & Moss, 2007). Studies show that, at an early age, successful school adaptation is a crucial factor for the development of the human individual in the following stages, i.e. puberty, adolescence and adulthood (Ladd, 1996; Mihai, 2010).

Researchers and practitioners in the field of psychological and educational assistance services emphasize the importance of knowing and correctly managing the challenges associated with the transition periods that a child is going through, especially in the first years of school. Therefore, we believe that early schooling is essential for predicting the stability and quality of the developmental trajectory that a child will go through later. One of the challenges that preschool and primary school teachers have to respond to throughout their careers in the field of early education includes emotional and behavioral problems, respectively the social difficulties that some children encounter in the process of adapting to (pre)school tasks. The causes of difficulties are complex and must be customized to the life history of each child, as well as to the specifics of the group of children that teachers manage.

Preschool and primary school teachers acquire through experience the ability to diagnose the risk factors that can intervene in the evolution of a child during early schooling. Psychosocial intuition should allow teachers to better understand the particularities of the children they manage from an educational point of view and to apply the individualized measures that are necessary to

capitalize on the potential that children have and to achieve educational goals. Therefore, teachers play a key role in organizing and shaping the instructional and formative process, in accordance with the particularities of the groups of children they manage and with the performance indicators that the education system sets. When behavioral disturbances occur in a class of students (e.g., refusal to participate in learning activities, indiscipline, violent conflicts, etc.), teachers face risk factors that they must manage “on the fly”, in order to avoid blocking the instructional process. For this reason, the knowledge of the psychobehavioral and social particularities of vulnerable students is a priority that educational agents must constantly consider, including through collaboration with the school counselors. It has the task of providing support for the improvement and/or prevention of problems that can disorganize a class of students.

We believe that investigating the perception that teachers who carry out instructional activities in the preschool and primary education system have about the difficult children/students can create the basis for a better focus of the training programs designed to equip them with the set of practical skills they need, in order to support preschoolers to integrate into school (especially in the transition period corresponding to the preparatory class), and students to adapt as best as possible to the tasks of schooling and to reach their potential.

As the current generations of students reflect a different specificity of growth and development than those of the past, it is necessary for teachers, as well as aspiring teachers to pay increased attention to training in the direction of better knowledge and management of the challenges brought by contemporary children and young people. It is also necessary to intensify the concern for the ways in which different forms of support (instrumental, psychological, social, etc.) can be offered to children and young people, in order to facilitate positive adaptation to academic tasks.

6. Conclusions

The exploratory study that we conducted and whose results were summarized and analyzed in this article aimed to highlight the way in which preschool and primary teachers represent the problematic student in the collective mind. In the universe of representation that the respondents highlighted regarding the problematic student, two dimensions that reflect the real situation in Romanian schools stood out. We refer to the vulnerabilities of students (including those with special educational needs due to disabilities or precarious family conditions), respectively to the efforts that teachers must make to respond to a wide range of difficulties. The results obtained provide a psychosocial and educational portrait of the student with behavioral disorders, as well as directions for possible measures that can be adopted in order to prevent the maladjustment of young school children to the specific educational and social tasks.

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APPENDIX

Participants' responses to the protocol aimed at examining
the social representation of the "problematic student"

No. crt.	Associations	f_a	Average rank of importance	Connotation		
				-	neutral	+
1.	Absenteeism	2	3.50	1	1	-
2.	Acceptance from others	1	2.00	-	-	1
3.	Agitated/hyperactive/restless	76	3.15	42	33	1
4.	Aggressiveness/violence	34	2.14	29	5	
5.	Pampered/spoiled	7	2.71	3	4	-
6.	Needs analysis	1	4.00	-	-	1
7.	Antisocial/inappropriate behaviour/recalcitrant, behavior disorders	13	2.76	11	2	-
8.	Unsuitable entourage	1	3.00	1	-	-
9.	Anxious	4	3.25	3	1	-
10.	Listless	2	3.50	2	-	-
11.	Arrogance, feeling of superiority	6	4.16	3	3	-
12.	Fickle	3	3.33	1	2	-
13.	Ask for unconditional attention	1	2.00	-	-	1
14.	Collaboration between teachers-children-parents	4	2.25	1	1	2
15.	Comments during classes/speaks uncontrollably	4	2.25	1	3	-
16.	Poor communication	2	3.50	2	-	-
17.	Children with special educational needs	15	2.06	8	5	2
18.	Unpleasant child	1	5.00	-	1	-
19.	Brave	1	4.00	-	-	1
20.	Curious	6	2.83	-	1	5
21.	Calm teachers	1	2.00	-	-	1
22.	Attention deficit disorder	35	3.20	30	5	-
23.	Disorganization/disorder	7	2.85	5	2	
24.	Adaptation/integration difficulties	6	3.01	3	3	-
25.	Comprehension/learning difficulties	7	2.14	4	1	2
26.	Disinterest/indolence/superficiality	31	2.96	27	4	-
27.	Discussions with difficult students	1	4.00	-	-	1
28.	Efforts aimed at adaptation and integration	2	3.00	-	1	1
29.	Sustained efforts/hard effort	10	2.50	2	-	8
30.	Selfishness/lack of empathy	8	3.00	4	4	-
31.	Emotivity	1	4.00	1	-	-
32.	Empathy/understanding/respect from others	8	3.12	-	4	4
33.	Extroversion	3	3.33	1	-	2
34.	Frustration	9	3.33	5	4	-
35.	Noisy	23	3.13	11	9	3
36.	Ignorance/impertinence/lack of politeness/respect for others	40	3.15	34	5	1
37.	Unpredictable	1	5.00	-	1	-
38.	Impulsive	3	3.00	2	1	-
39.	Uncontrollable	4	2.25	4	-	-
40.	Independent	1	3.00	-	-	1
41.	Undisciplined/naughty	28	3.21	22	6	-
42.	Inhibition	1	4.00	-	1	-

43.	Insensitive/stubborn/uncooperative	18	3.11	12	6	-
44.	Emotionally unstable	3	2.33	2	1	-
45.	Smart/clever/gifted	6	3.16	-	-	6
46.	Introversion	6	3.66	2	4	-
47.	Irritable/nervous/temperamental	8	3.12	6	2	-
48.	Irresponsible	2	5.00	2	-	-
49.	Isolated/marginalized/misunderstood	7	2.28	6	-	1
50.	Inappropriate/ vulgar language	5	3.20	5	-	-
51.	Lack of family rules	1	1.00	1	-	-
52.	Manipulator	2	4.50	2	-	-
53.	Disobedient, they don't follow the rules	18	3.22	15	3	-
54.	Uneducated	17	3.05	14	3	-
55.	Unsociable, social relationship problems	7	3.00	4	3	-
56.	Need for attention	2	2.00	1	-	1
57.	Tiring, stressful	11	3.00	6	5	-
58.	Conceited	1	2.00	1	-	-
59.	Insight, pedagogical tact	2	2.50	-	-	2
60.	Disruptive	7	2.42	7	-	-
61.	Pessimism, sadness	5	2.80	-	5	-
62.	Family problems (e.g., abandonment, emotional abuse, aggression, disorganization, etc.)	11	2.09	6	5	-
63.	Speech therapy problems	2	4.50	2	-	-
64.	Memory problems	1	5.00	1	-	-
65.	Challenge for teachers	9	2.00	7	2	-
66.	Patience	6	3.00	-	2	4
67.	Rebellious	1	4.00	1	-	-
68.	Clear rules imposed on students	2	2.50	-	1	1
69.	Poor school results	1	5.00	1	-	-
70.	Sensibility	2	3.50	1	1	-
71.	Conflict situations	3	3.33	1	2	-
72.	Low self-esteem	1	5.00	-	1	-
73.	Unpredictable situations	2	4.00	2	-	-
74.	Family support	1	4.00	-	-	1
75.	Educational/emotional/moral support	4	2.75	-	-	4

Note: f_a – absolute frequency of association occurrence