SCHOOL ABANDONMENT IN THE UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT: CAUSES AND ECONOMIC-SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

ROXANA PLEŞA [*]

ABSTRACT: *Obtaining a university degree is a decisive asset in finding a job. Although a job is not an absolute guarantee for a decent living, the risk of poverty and social exclusion greatly affects people without education. Labor market forecasts in Europe show that high-skilled jobs will be required in the future. This is why equal and direct access to quality training is needed to facilitate the acquisition of skills required for future employment. Poor skill increases the risk of precarious employment, low wages, few hours of work and poor security.*

KEY WORDS: *university abandonment, personal development, professional qualification, labor market.*

JEL CLASSIFICATION: *I2.*

1. CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

1.1. School abandonment in the pre-university environment

School abandonment is the ultimate evasion, which consists in ending school attendance, leaving the education system regardless of the level attained, prior to obtaining a full professional qualification or training or before the beginning of the study.

True, real education is grounded in the family and then it continues in kindergarten and school through teachers. First, it is done through the power of the example. A good intervention by the teacher through the educational process he / she carries out with children may be a means of preventing school abandonment, which has become more and more frequent.

---
[*] *Lecture, Ph.D., University of Petrosani, Romania, rpmita@yahoo.com*

Pupils who drop out of school are those who have become remarked for absenteeism and other behavioral difficulties for which they have been repeatedly punished in school. This abandonment is all the more serious as it takes place at the level of the educational forms, because until that time the society has spent a lot of resources with the person. Even the one in question had to make some efforts.

In order to reduce the number of school abandonment, it would be good trying to identify and study some causes:

- schools in disadvantaged areas are characterized by isolation, poverty and lack of socio-professional success opportunities for graduates. Lack of motivation, many of the gymnasium students dropped out of their early years of study, remaining a handful of help in their own households, or even working daydreaming at the wealthiest people in those villages. The poverty of communities in disadvantaged areas limits the possibilities of parents to provide children with the necessary resources for education. This condition often causes child labor through work by parents. Lack of interest for school is explained by economic pressures, personal disappointments of parents, and the lack of community culture that may be susceptible to formal institutions. These causes could be eliminated by targeting the funds available to schools in such areas by establishing links with existing training centers by providing an infrastructure to ensure the transport of pupils and also providing food for pupils living at school distances. It also mentions the appreciation (without any support) that rural abandonment increases in the winter, "in a state of subsistence" and because of "lack of food or clothing". It's a simple opinion without the general knowledge of reality. On the other hand, the warming up of the weather, the creation of natural conditions for practicing some jobs make the children to follow their parents to work, abandoning the school;

- culture of origin of pupils - research in the field of education has revealed that the socio-cultural background of pupils is one of the most important variables in the student's success or failure. The attitude of the family towards the school is very important. There are also cases where parents encourage to violate the norms of school values through their attitude towards school. As the main forms of school deviation, we can recall as socially and behaviorally more serious: school run, absenteeism, school abandonment, vandalism, violent behavior, drug abuse, copying and suicide. Knowing these attitudes and identifying the sources of possible tensions or bottlenecks in relation to the school career of young people is an important factor in preventing abandonment. Students were also encouraged by the attitude of parents for whom the book is no longer a priority, or the guarantee of a job. Moreover, labor migration emphatically affects students who either follow their parents or are left to the care of relatives or close acquaintances who deal superficially with the school situation of children;

- the family climate has a decisive role in the causes of school abandonment. Thus, the disorganization of family life, the consequence of divorce, the conflict and immoral familial climate, the excessively permissive, the divergence of educational methods and the lack of authority of the parents, the cold, indifferent or, on the contrary, tyrannical attitude are other aspects leading to abandonment school;

- social and economic factors such as political, economic, social and moral crises, the collapse of the social protection system, confusion or the absence of norms or values are other causes that lead to disorientation of pupils, their removal from the educational environment and, in final, school abandonment;
- educational factors: insubordination to school rules and rules, tuition, absenteeism, repetition, motivations and weak interests in relation to school, teachers' mistakes (attitudes and relationships, professional competence, moral authority) also have an important role in the phenomenon of school abandonment;
- the poor quality enthusiasm disorients the students with a lazy psychic due to childhood deficiencies; the desire to escape from educational or family tutelage, the desire to capture objects, clothes or food through deviant, unclean pathways are causes for which the student abandons the school. Enthusiasm is a negative factor in the pupil's life; he can cause the student to smoke, drink alcohol, consume drugs, steal or even chew at school.

The main objectives of a school abandonment prevention program:

- identifying the risk of school abandonment in order to maintain it in the day-to-day education system;
- involving the family system in the school and social rehabilitation of the pupil;
- increasing the involvement of the local community in solving situations of school dropout or situations at risk of abandonment of school.

In pre-school education, the educator also has a decisive role in shaping the concept of school preschool children - future schoolchildren. Its role is not only to inform them about school but also to make them aware of the importance of school in the life of an individual.

Another element in combating school abandonment is the participation of all children in the educational program, each with its strength and possibilities. Children are different, their capacities are different, their level of adaptation and perception is different, but in the kindergarten group everyone can have a place, a status, a role and a value, which leads them to love the school environment. The assessment the educator can make is about the educational skills and capabilities of each child. It must be assumed that every child has value and is unique and that every child can learn, regardless of his / her social needs. In order to better prevent school abandonment, the skills and needs of each child integrated in the education system, whether religion or ethnicity different from the rest of the children, must be known.

Education for all is a need of our age. It depends on each teacher, the responsibility and the involvement of everyone in it to become a reality from which everyone learns and develops, and not forget that education is very dependent on family. In Romania, school abandonment is a cause for concern, and for this, the school must have a very close relationship with family members.

1.2. School abandonment in the academic environment

Although we have the impression that only those who do not want, do not attend the courses of a Romanian faculty, the statistics show that we do not excel in this chapter as well. According to data collected by the European Institute for Gender

Equality (EIGE), Romania ranks 3rd in the European Union in terms of university abandonment.

EIGE defines this concept by taking into account all young people between the ages of 18 and 24 who do not attend a faculty, vocational or post-secondary schools.

More than a quarter of students admitted to undergraduate and master study programs do not complete their studies, according to the latest analysis by the National Alliance of Student Organizations in Romania (NASOR).

For the four-year license studies, the abandonment average was 38.81% in 2015, a percentage point below the national average in the previous survey for 2013.

The average calculated by NASOR for study programs lasting 3 or 4 years (majority programs in the higher system), based on the answers provided by 28 universities, shows that 35.68% of students drop out of college.

4-year bachelor study programs exist in 23 of the 28 universities that responded to the NASOR form.

None of the 23 universities had abandonment below 10%, and in 10 of these institutions almost one in two students dropped out of their studies.

Also, 3 universities have abandonment over 50% - Technical University of Civil Engineering in Bucharest (UTCB - 60.71%), University of Craiova (63.4%) and Eftimie Murgu University in Resita (73.57%).

The lowest abandonment rate was recorded for 5-year license programs:
- 3 universities with rates between 1.83% and 9.70%
- 2 with rates between 11.25% and 12.38%

Fewer dropouts are also recorded in six-year study programs, these being typically faculties where competition from admission is higher. Even here, however, the abandonment average in some cases (such as the faculties of medicine and architecture) one in four students drops out.

In the case of one-year master study programs, 1 of the 6 responding universities declare a risk of school abandonment below 10%. The highest share is registered by WUT (West University of Timisoara), with 41.17%.

The situation for masters is distributed over extremes: at the 1-year master the average abandonment is 17.95%; 2-year master programs register very high rates of abandonment, with 3 universities more than 50%, according to the study conducted by NASOR.

2. METHODOLOGY AND SUBJECTS OF RESEARCH

The study was conducted between January and May 2018, with 100 former students of the three faculties at the University of Petrosani, who for various reasons, abandoned their academic studies. The subjects interviewed were predominantly male for the Faculty of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering and the Faculty of Mine, respectively female for the Faculty of Sciences. Regarding the respondents' age, the majority (three quarters) of those enrolled in the Faculty of Sciences are up to 25 years old, and the majority share of those who were students of the two faculties exceeds 30 years. The vast majority (over 90%) come from urban areas.

The method of research used was that of the direct telephone inquiry.

Also, the results obtained from the data processing are the premises of the next step, namely the empowerment of the main factors belonging to the three social, economic and academic backgrounds, which could diminish the magnitude of this phenomenon of university abandonment.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS

University abandonment continues to ravage among students. More than a quarter of young people admitted to undergraduate and master programs do not complete their studies. While sources quoted in the mass-media find the main cause of this phenomenon, the wrong choice of the field, the subjects of our research attribute as the main cause of school abandonment in general the precarious financial and financial situation. The percentage of those who have found the determining factors, the inadequate school orientation / the wrong choice of the profile, but also the lack of interest on the part of the family, manifested by inadequate material and moral support, should not be neglected.
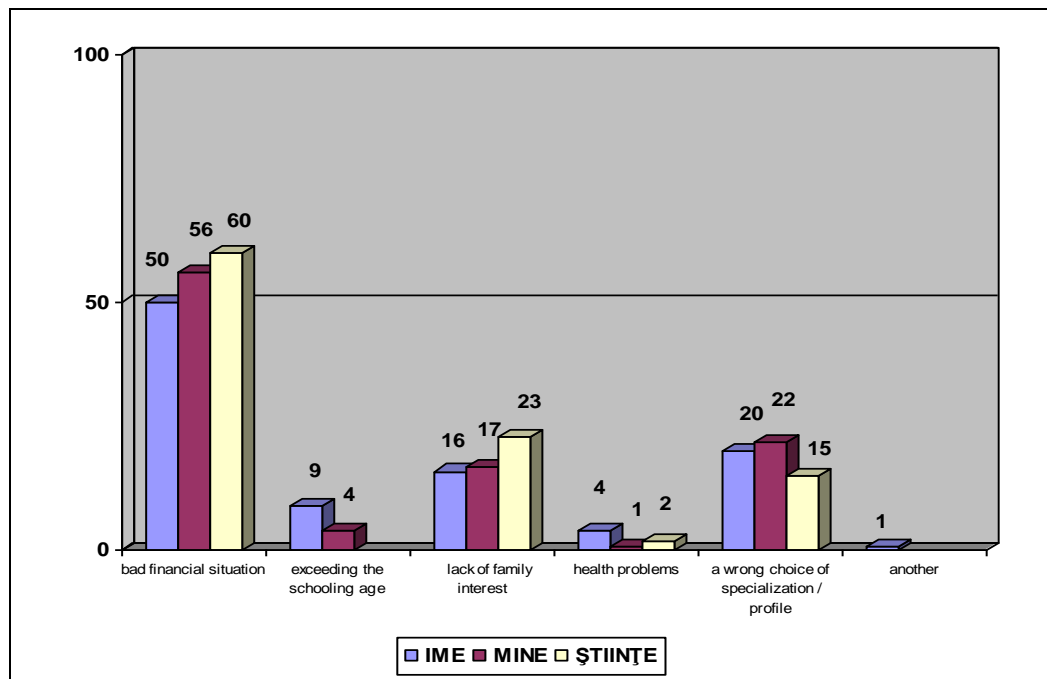

Figure 1. The main reason for school abandonment (%)

One of the main reasons for dropping out of college is in the previous cycle at high school, where adolescents do not have access to specialist counseling to find out what they are good at, what they would like to make alive, or what career they do not -l fit.

Assisting when the young high school graduates come to the University, before submitting the contest file, their first question is: "Where are there still free places?" By the time they discover that they do not like it and give up or torture for three years' days after graduation to work in a totally different field than they have been prepared for.

For many of these, counseling centers at universities would be useful, but they would be inadequately staffed - they could show young people career alternatives at the end of their faculty, they could turn them into specializations that would fit them or are looking for them.

The field of labor market, especially from the perspective of identifying and accessing the available jobs, is a subject of interest for extended categories of the population, from young people, pupils and students, graduates, people employed, unemployed etc. The field is especially interesting for families concerned by the socio-professional development of its members, or by career development.

Certainly, accessing a graduate job is the most important moment after graduating from university. (Bogathy, 2002; Tabachiu, 1997).

In many European countries, but not only, the classification of universities takes into account some extremely important criteria. Occupation of a graduate job in the specialty, as well as the size of the salary, are essential criteria for placing a university at the top of the university rankings. (Iosif, 2001).

Preparing future graduates to get a job to achieve the expected success in career management, starting with the pre-employment stages and supporting the employment interview, is made on the basis of several interconnected elements. First of all, developing the set of competences in education and completing them with other types of skills can be, and most often constitute, an important advantage in the employment competition. Secondly, the way of approaching the job interview and the employer, i.e. the manifestation of a professional, irreproachable, optimistic conduct regarding the success of the action, also counts very much (Ghivirigă, 2006; Szilagyi, 2008).

Vocational training is a process of learning / training through which people acquire new theoretical and practical knowledge, as well as skills and techniques that make their work more efficient. (Mathis & Jackson, 1994).

Vocational training is a process of learning and training through which people acquire theoretical knowledge, as well as skills, new practical skills. Vocational training involves three stages: professional training, training and professional development. (Mathis, et all, 1997).

In our respondents' view, vocational training is highly needed to facilitate access to the labor market.
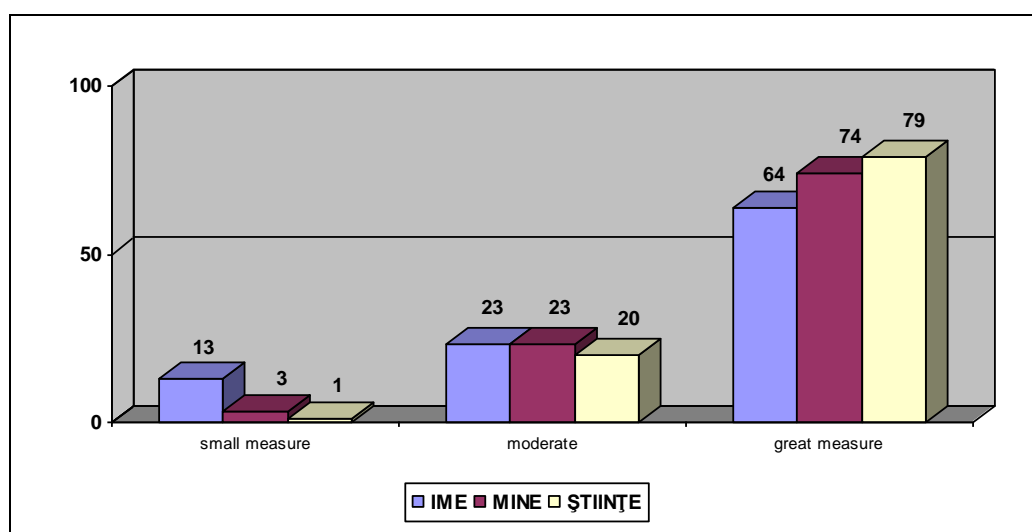
Figure 2. The necessity of the existence of practical /training activities (%)

Young people represent a distinct age category with specific needs and aspirations, being the object of concern of many researchers in various fields, such as sociology, psychology or pedagogy. Any sociological approach appreciates that youth is, in essence, a problem and a resource, equally, in any of the contemporary societies. One problem - because, as an age category in the process of training and socio-professional integration, young people need more counseling and assistance from different social segments (family, school, governmental and non-governmental structures). But young people are also a significant resource, as the younger generation is the future of any society, a truth that no longer involves other arguments, but which often becomes a political cliché or a noble idea that is not reflected in coherent and systematic strategies.

The importance given to the professional training and implicitly to the experience in the field of activity, as essential elements for getting a job, is also highlighted by the significant percentage of those who place them in the first two places in the hierarchy of the issues that decisively influence the access to the labor market.

Professional training is part of other activities in an ample and lasting process, namely lifelong learning.

Lifelong learning takes place throughout the active life and brings together all forms of training for the purpose of properly pursuing a professional activity. It has as objectives: optimizing the conditions for people's participation in scientific and technical progress; diminishing inequalities in training; prolonging the active age; increasing the possibilities for adapting to the new conditions of the professional activity; creating the conditions for increasing the labor efficiency; individual development of personality through efficient work; increasing the quality of life and professional satisfaction.
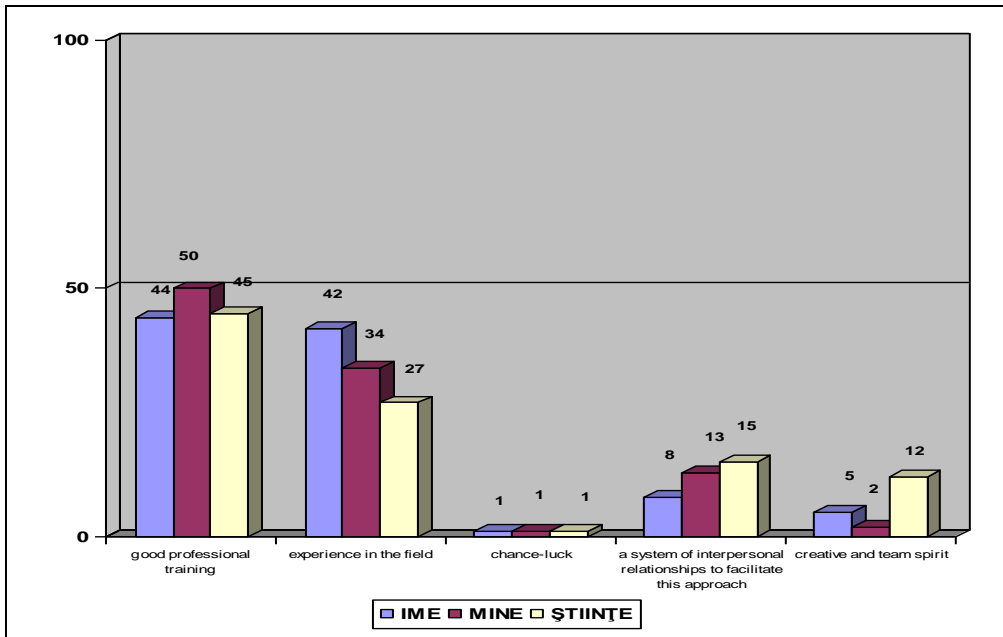
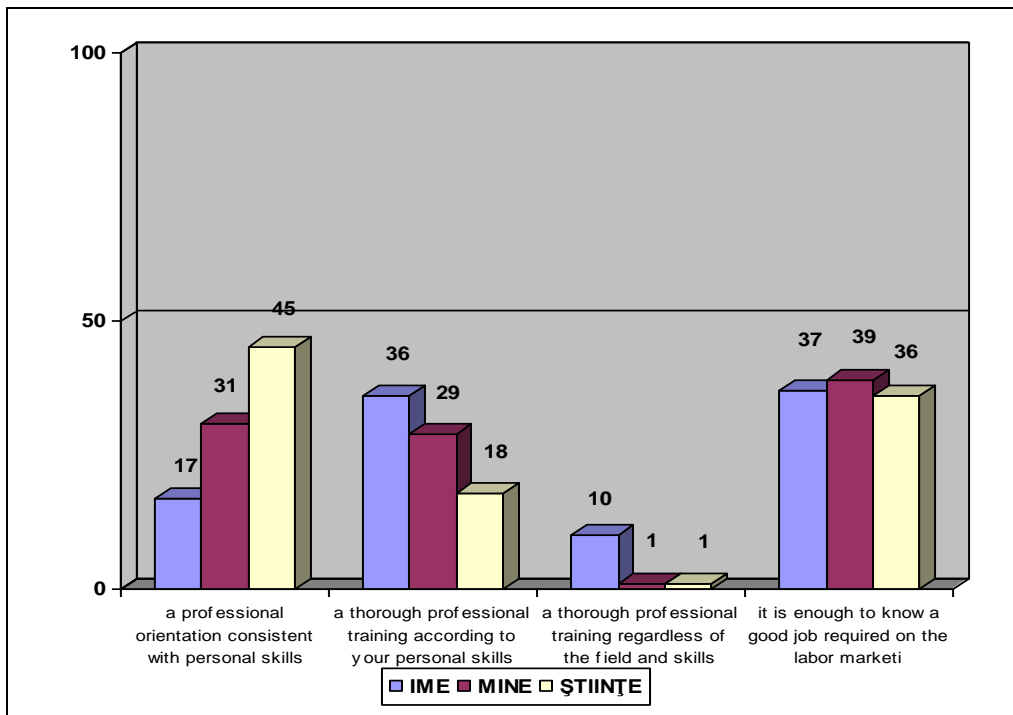**Figure 3. The most important aspect today to get a job (%)**

Figure 4. The important factor for successful personal development (%)

4. CONCLUSIONS

School abandonment is a serious problem faced by contemporary society; school has become abandoned, above all, because today it does not matter in the hierarchs, it is not perceived as a value in itself; both children and pupils no longer think of school as a future.

The effects of school abandonment show that this type of behavior is considered particularly serious.

First, those who abandon the school do not have the professional qualification indispensable for socio-economic integration, nor the moral and civic formation necessary for the exercise of the role of the parent and the citizen of a community.

Secondly, with no qualifications, those who drop out of school are future unemployed and represent, in the medium and long term, a source of social and loss-making difficulties that exceed the investment required by initial training.

In the future, it is recommended the existence of a program that aims to develop the competences of teamwork teachers and to use strategic planning to identify factors that would encourage such risk situations at school level, to prevent and last resort, to solve crisis situations that have the effect of dropping out of school.

Therefore, whether the child is integrated into a pre-primary, primary, secondary, high school, vocational or university education system, it is important to follow closely how the educational system evolves, making it as efficient as possible through appropriate interventions both parents, teachers, and the child's home community for greater security in preventing school abandonment - a serious problem in Romania.

REFERENCES:

[1]. **Bogathy, Z.** (2002) *Introducere în psihologia muncii,* Tipografia Universității de Vest, Timișoara
[2]. **Ghivirigă, M.** (2006) *Tendințe contemporane ale orientării școlare și profesionale,* Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, București
[3]. **Iosif, G.** (2001) *Managementul resurselor umane. Psihologia personalului,* Editura Victor, București
[4]. **Mathis, L.R.; Jackson, H.L.** (1994) *Human Resourse Management,* West Publishing Corporation
[5]. **Mathis, R.; Rusu, C.; Nica, P.C.** (1997) *Managementul resurselor umane,* Editura Economică, București
[6]. **Szilagyi A.** (2008) *Manualul consultantului în carieră,* Institutul European, Iași
[7]. **Tabachiu A.** (1997) *Psihologia muncii. Note de curs,* Editura Universității Politehnice, București
[8]. http://cursdeguvernare.ro/abandonul-in-universitati-mai-mult-de-unul-din-trei-studenti-nu-ajunge-la-licenta.html

[9]. http://dar.episcopiadevei.ro/index.php/2015/10/20/ce-este-abandonul-scolar-cauze-si-modalitati-de-prevenire/

[10]. http://miscareaderezistenta.ro/externe/exclusiv-romania-locul-3-in-ue-la-abandonul-univer sitar-42036.html

[11]. http://stiri.tvr.ro/principala-cauza-a-abandonului-universitar--alegerea-gresita-a-domen iului--centru-de-inva--are-la-universitatea-de-vest_827675.html#view