Social Roles of the Child Brought Up in Multi-Child Family: The Role of Student, the Role of Friend, the Role of School Community Member

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Abstract: In specialist literature, school performance of the child is presented in different ways and aspects. It should be emphasised that the quality of school performance is strongly affected by intra-family socialisation processes. Interactions between family, school and particular elements of external social world are mutual. Therefore, the article focuses on family and school influences, including opposite influences expressed in different social roles (performed by secondary school students: 201 respondents): the role of student, the role of friend and the role of school community member. The empirical part of the article discusses school performance and interactions of the child brought up in multi-child family.

Key words: the role of student, the role of friend, the role of school community member, socialisation, family, school

1. Introduction

Various academic sciences have always taken an interest in the issue of multi-child family, which is presented in different cognitive aspects:

- as a multi-categorial pedagogical system (pedagogy) (B. Krzesińska-Żach, 2003);

- demographic, which relates to regularities in family population development and describes its past, present and future nature (demography, social policy) (D. Graniewska, 1989);

- family structure and relationships between its members (sociology, social psychology) (A. Kotlarska-Michalska, 2002);

- possible threats to well-functioning families, e.g., unemployment, poverty (economy, statistics) (R. Milewski, 1994);

- forms and types of social contributions (the sociology of family, the sociology of upbringing) (K. Segiet, 2001).

All of these sciences consider multi-child family a basic social unit (The European Social Charter, Part I, Item 16).

In specialist literature the child's school performance is presented in various ways and aspects. However, it should be emphasized that the quality of the child's school performance and interactions largely depends on

socialisation processes.

2. Socialisation and School Performance of the Child from A Large Family

Socialisation, which occurs within a family, is typically affected by family interactions and family characteristics. Family interactions are also influenced by external factors which exist in the social world outside a family, in its systems and social structures: microstructures, mesostructures, macrostructures and the society itself (Z. Tyszka, 2001). Interactions between family and school or external social world are mutual. Therefore, I focused my research on family and school interactions, bearing also in mind opposite reactions.

In order to assess school performance of children in large families and to identify social space in their educational environment which appears to determine socialisation possibilities, I based my reflections on the theory of socialisation proposed by Klaus J. Tillmann. He accepts the definition of socialisation developed by Dicter Ciuden and K. Hurrelmann, according to which socialisation is the process of "originating and developing personality which occurs in correlation with socially transmitted financial and social conditions. This process reveals how a person becomes capable of social actions and activities" (K. J. Tillmann, 1996). I believe, similarly to Hurrelmann (1994), that personality of children in multi-child families is a specific and characteristic for each person structure of individual traits, attitudes, attributes and competencies. Personality comprises feelings, emotions, knowledge and attitudes towards different values.

As regards interdisciplinary approach to general school performance of children brought up in large families, I would like to agree with Hurrelmann's (1994) idea that a child in a multi-child family should be considered "an individual who creatively transforms and develops internal and external reality".

Thus, a large family child's outcomes seem to be determined by intra-family and intra-school socialisation. As a result, the role of family in the process of socialising ought to be emphasized since it is manifested by the three roles that children play in their lives: the role of student, the role of friend and the role of school community member. This view proves that socialisation processes occur within specific social roles and they tend to have normative or prescriptive dimension.

In specialist literature it is explained that a social role is a defined and socially accepted set of rules and expectations regarding a desired individual's behaviour in specific situations (K. Olechnicki, P. Załęcki, 1998). That is why the assessment of school performance and particular social roles helps to identify to what extent a child fulfils specific social expectations, social rules and obligations typical of each role.

In my theoretical and empirical research I present the social role of the child as a combination of various "sub-roles":

- the role of student (acquiring knowledge and skills),
- the role of friend and schoolmate (a member of peer group),
- the role of school community member (a member of school collective group and a "side" in student – school interactions) (E. Jarosz, 2006).

3. The School Roles of Children Brought Up in Large Families — The Results of Author's Research

I assumed that social function of the family and educational function of school should become priorities. Therefore, I focused my research interests on these two environments. I conducted my research in the

Świętokrzyskie region in 2009. The research covered 200 multi-child families, including 201 secondary school students and 200 parents[1].

In my research the method of diagnostic survey and the method of individual cases were applied as well as the techniques of questionnaire: author's student questionnaire and parent questionnaire, E. Zwierzyńska and A. Matuszewski's standardised questionnaires "Me towards the class", "The class towards me" (*Polish:* "Ja wobec klasy", "Klasa wobec mnie") and sociometric tests developed by J. L. Moreno.

The research question *How is the process of socialisation developed in multi-child families?* Helped me to address the main research problem.

In order to solve the research problem I tried to respond to the following questions:

(1) How does the respondent perform the role of student?

(2) How does the respondent perform the role of friend?

(3) How does the respondent perform the role of school community member?

The social role of student in school environment primarily involves interactions with other people — teachers, students as well as non-personal school environment factors.

In my research I attempt to outline the most important relationships and characteristics of each social role performed by the child being brought up in the multi-child family. The above-mentioned role of student has become the subject of diagnosis based on the following factors: the possibilities of compulsory education, students' school achievements, students' school failures, their interests and hobbies, students' abilities, their relationships with teachers, school attendance, motivation to learn, educational and professional aspirations, author's subjective assessment of students' school performance, parents' attitude towards their children's school responsibilities, parents' educational aspirations towards their children, parents' support for their children's learning and parents' involvement in school life.

In this article I discuss only several aspects regarding the role of student: students' school achievements (Table 1), author's subjective assessment of their school performance (Table 2) as well as students' interests and hobbies (Figure 1).

The knowledge of students' school achievements is one of the most important components of the socialisation process, especially as regards the role of student.

Majority of the respondents — secondary school students, both boys and girls are characterised by medium level of school achievements. Fifty-four students (27% of respondents) reported high level of school achievements, whereas only 3 persons (1.5%) claimed poor level of their school achievements. The conclusions based on the research findings seem to be slightly different to the previous ones[2]: a multi-child family does not have to be a threat to proper socialisation of the child as regards the role of student and school achievements.

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[1] The research was conducted in 5 secondary schools in Kielce and its region (Gimnazjum nr 5, Gimnazjum nr 9, Zespół Państwowych Szkół Plastycznych, Gimnazjum in Morawica and Gimnazjum in Suków) in 2008.

[2] Maria Tyszkowa claimed in her research that "a large number of children in a family (more than 3) negatively affect the level of school achievements. In multi-child families children tend to have worse financial and learning conditions. Parents in such families devote less time to older children (students) since they are busy with taking care of their younger children. It is common that older children appear to be overloaded with household duties such as babysitting their siblings or domestic chores. The position of the youngest child in the family does not facilitate achieving good results at school. Parents are older and probably tired so they do not take much interest in school matters of their offspring". M. Tyszkowa, Czynniki determinujące pracę ucznia: studium psychologiczne, Wyd. PWN, Warszawa 1964, p. 93.

Table 1 Students' School Achievements (N = 201)

The level of school achievements	Sex				In total	
	Girls		Boys		N	%
	N	%	N	%		
high	34	27.0%	20	27.4%	54	27.1%
average	90	71.4%	54	71.2%	**144**	71.4%
low	2	1.6%	1	1.4%	3	1.5%
In total	126	100.0%	73	100.0%	201	100.0%

Source: author's research.

From pedagogical point of view it is important that the research proved statistically significant difference between subjective students' self-assessment of their school achievements and the number of siblings in the family (Table 2).

A significant majority of the respondents, 126 students (63%), described their school achievements as average. This group was dominated by the students with two siblings (36%), those with three brothers or sisters (19%), and finally, by the group of respondents who described themselves as very good students. These choices were made by secondary school students with two, three and four siblings, in total 70 respondents (35%). Four persons only (2%) assessed themselves as poor students. They were representatives of the biggest groups of respondents — families with three or four children.

The respondents brought up in the largest multi-child families (2+6 and 2+7) described themselves as average students (3%).

Table 2 Respondents' Opinion on Their School Achievements vs. the Number of Siblings (N = 201)

Number of siblings	Respondents' opinion on their school achievements			In total
	very good	average	poor	
TWO	42	73	2	117
%	20.90%	36.32%	1.00%	58.21%
THREE	25	38	2	66
%	12.44%	18.91%	1.00%	32.84%
FOUR	3	9	0	12
%	1.49%	4.48%	0.00%	5.97%
FIVE	0	4	0	4
%	0.00%	1.99%	0.00%	1.99%
SIX	0	2	0	2
%	0.00%	1.00%	0.00%	1.00%
IN TOTAL	70	126	4	201
%	34.83%	62.69%	1.99%	100%

Source: author's research.

Secondary school students also addressed the questions regarding their interests. Ninety-seven respondents (45.5%) reported sport interests, including dancing, 51 students (25.4%) were interested in arts, 40 students (19.9%) reported human sciences as their hobbies, and finally technical or technological interests, including IT were declared by 34 children (16.91%). A slightly smaller group of 27 respondents (13.4%) reported medical sciences, whereas 24 persons (11.9%) mathematics and 23 students (11.4%) natural history as their hobbies. Five

respondents only (2.4%) reported economical interests and 6 persons (2.9%) other ones.
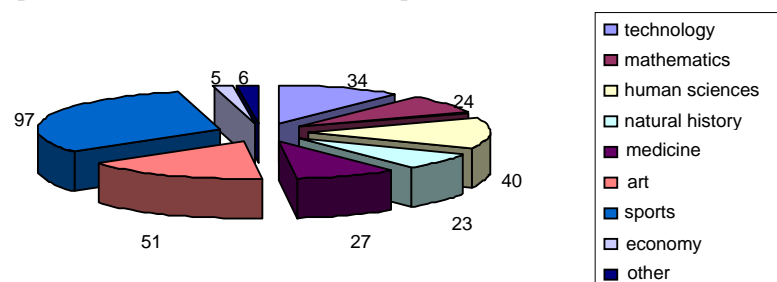

Figure 1   Secondary School Students' Interests
Source: author's research.
*Note: There are more than 100% answers since the respondents could choose more than one hobby or interest.

The role of friend has been determined by the following factors: ability to socialise with peers, the level of social abilities (socialising), social position among peers (sociometric position, peer acceptance, the lack of peer acceptance, the sense of well-being in the class), participation in informal social groups such as peer or subculture groups. In my research I also consider subjective aspect of the role of friend performed by a child in multi-child family, that is child's personal opinion on their role of friend. I applied the above-mentioned standardised questionnaires "Me towards the class", "The class towards me" as well as sociometric tests developed by J. L. Moreno. In addition, as part of qualitative research, I identified within the role of friend, through the method of individual cases, untypical profiles among the respondents.

Social interaction, as a direct tool of socialisation is created by social space of the environment in which the child plays the role of friend. For the needs of this article, the role of friend has been determined by such factors as the sense of respondents' well-being among their classmates (Table 3), participation in peer groups (informal) (Table 4) and the respondents' opinion on the lack of acceptance in the class (Table 5).

Table 3   Sense of Respondents' Well-Being among Their Classmates by Sex

Sex	Respondents' well-being among their classmates				In total
	very good	Good	average	poor	
Girls	34	75	16	1	127
%	16.92%	37.31%	7.96%	0.50%	63.18%
Boys	22	44	8	0	74
%	10.95%	21.89%	3.98%	0.00%	36.82%
In total	56	119	24	1	201
%	27.86%	59.20%	11.94%	0.50%	100%

Source: author's research.

A significant majority of the respondents (119 persons, 59.2%), mainly girls (75 respondents, 37.3%) have a good sense of well-being among their classmates, whereas 56 students (27.8%) reported very good sense of well-being in the class. It is interesting that students' opinions are polarized, that is similar in terms of numbers, in groups of girls and in groups of boys. Neutral, which means average well-being was reported by 24 of secondary school students (11.9%). Only one person felt uncomfortable (poor) in the class.

Table 4   Respondents' Participation in Peer Groups

Item	Which peer group do you belong to?	N	%
1.	School peer group	160	79.6%
2.	Youth organisation	17	8.5%
3.	Church organisations	9	4.5%
4.	Interests clubs	29	14.4%
5.	Local group (intentional) in the place of living or in boarding house	62	30.8%
6.	Youth groups of shared interests	5	2.5%
7.	Volunteering	17	8.5%
8.	Other organisations	4	2.0%
9.	None/no response	22	10.9%
In total		201	100.0%

Source: author' research

The research findings analysis led me to the conclusion that most of secondary school students identified with their peer groups at school — their classmates (160 students), whereas 62 students belonged to local peer groups in the place of living. Only a few secondary school students were involved in other associations or youth organisations. Five persons developed their interests in various interests clubs.

Table 5   Lack of Peer Acceptance

In my class I am teased or bullied by other classmates.		
Type of response	N	%
Never	88	43.5%
Seldom	52	26.0%
Sometimes	40	20.0%
Often	21	10.5%
In total	201	100.0%

Source: author's research.

With reference to the respondents' opinions on the lack of acceptance by their classmates as compared to the frequency, a significant majority — 88 students (43.7%) never suffered from teasing or bullying, 50 students (24.8%) seldom experienced such behaviour, and 40 students reported to be sometimes teased or bullied. It is worrying that as many as 21 secondary school students (10.4%) were teased or bullied by their classmates.

As far as qualitative aspect of empirical research is concerned, I present the analysis of the research material below based on the sociometric tests and two out of seven untypical research findings among the children brought up in multi-child families.

Having asked well-thought out and specially formulated questions concerning each problem, all the responses to each inquiry were collected. The respondents mentioned codes attributed to each surname of the group members who, according to the respondents' opinion, met the requirements included in the questions. Thanks to this technique, the sociometric position of children in the class was identified. The above-mentioned technique was based on eight-question survey. The respondents were supposed to choose three partners by a certain necessity. If they previously chose three persons with whom they wanted to share an activity, they also had to mention three codes for the persons they did not want to get involved in this activity. The questions included in

the survey were as follows:

(1a) Who would you like to share your interests with?

(1b) Who wouldn't you like to share your interests with?

(2a) Who would you like to go on holiday with?

(2b) Who wouldn't you like to go on holiday with?

(3a) Who would you like to do a school project with?

(3b) Who wouldn't you like to do a school project with?

(4a) Who would you like to leave your personal belongings with?

(4b) Who wouldn't you like to leave your personal belongings with?

Tables 1, 2, 4, based on the analysis of the responses to sociometric questions, presents a detailed picture of social conditions among children brought up in multi-child families.

The research findings analysis proved that secondary school students with four, five or six siblings received lower rates of sociometric positions in the class than students with two or three siblings.

Students included in the first two sociometric groups are popular among their classmates and fully accepted by their friends. Thanks to these factors, they easily identify with their peer group and willingly contribute to the school life. Six per cent of the respondents raised in the families with two brothers or sisters and 4.5% with three siblings were represented by the sociometric stars or leaders most often chosen by other group members. The smallest group of sociometric stars, only 2.5% of the respondents were represented by secondary school students brought up in the families with more than three children. Almost the same number of students raised in families with two and three children were fully accepted by their classmates (36.3% and 30% respectively). Significantly less students brought up in families with four or more children (11.1%) were fully accepted by their classmates. Students partially accepted (those in conflict with other classmates or popular among some of the classmates) represented the most numerous group of families with four, five and six children (51.6%), whereas 21.4% of secondary school students brought up in families with two children were partially accepted by their peers. The same sociometric position was taken by 36.4% of the respondents brought up in families with three children. The number of students partially isolated or having indifferent relations with other classmates was similar in each family type. Data collected for fully isolated students appeared to be similar in all types of the multi-child families. The sociometric test proved that 5.8% respondents with two siblings, 3.4% with three children and 4.2% with more than three siblings were partially rejected by their classmates. The lowest sociometric position (complete rejection) was taken by 4.1% of the respondents brought up in the most numerous families. The sociometric analysis of the positions taken by rejected students shows that only 2.6% of the respondents were raised in four-child families and the smallest percentage (0.9%) was represented by secondary school students with two bothers or sisters.

To sum up discussion on the school position of children (sociometric positions of students brought up in multi-child families), it should be emphasised that these children are usually accepted by their peers. Most of secondary school students were partially or completely accepted by their classmates, particularly those with two or three siblings. What is more, it turned out that children brought up in large families with the most numerous number of children represent those in conflicts with their peers and those who are popular among their classmates.

Table 6   Sociometric Positions of the Respondents Brought Up in Multi-Child Families (N = 201)

Type of sociometric position	Number of siblings	Sociometric questions								Average percentage
		1a and 1b		2a and 2b		3a and 3b		4a and 4b		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Sociometric star	two	6	5.1	8	6.8	6	5.1	8	6.8	**6.0**
	three	4	6.1	3	4.5	2	3.0	3	4.5	**4.5**
	four and more	1	5.5	1	5.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	**2.8**
Full acceptance	two	42	35.9	45	38.5	39	33.3	44	37.6	**36.3**
	three	21	31.8	15	22.7	20	30.3	23	35.0	**30.0**
	four and more	2	11.1	1	5.5	3	16.6	2	11.1	**11.1**
Partial acceptance	two	22	18.8	27	23.1	32	27.3	19	16.2	**21.4**
	three	32	48.5	28	42.6	21	31.8	15	22.7	**36.4**
	four and more	7	39.0	9	50.1	10	55.8	11	6.3	**51.6**
Partial isolation	two	25	21.4	25	21.4	18	15.4	22	18.8	**19.3**
	three	5	7.6	15	22.7	13	19.7	17	25.7	**18.9**
	four and more	3	16.7	4	22.3	3	16.6	3	16.6	**18.1**
Complete isolation	two	10	8.5	8	6.8	13	11.1	18	15.4	**10.5**
	three	1	1.5	2	3.0	4	6.1	4	6.1	**4.2**
	four and more	2	11.1	2	11.1	1	5.5	1	5.5	**8.3**
Partial rejection	two	10	8.5	3	2.6	9	7.8	5	4.4	**5.8**
	three	1	1.5	2	3.0	4	6.1	2	3.0	**3.4**
	four and more	2	11.1	1	5.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	**4.2**
Complete rejection	two	2	1.8	1	0.8	0	0.0	1	0.8	**0.9**
	three	2	3.0	1	1.5	2	3.0	2	3.0	**2.6**
	four and more	1	5.5	0	0.0	1	5.5	1	5.5	**4.1**
In total	two	**117**	**100.0**	**117**	**100.0**	**117**	**100.0**	**117**	**100.0**	**100.0**
	three	**66**	**100.0**	**66**	**100.0**	**66**	**100.0**	**66**	**100.0**	**100.0**
	four and more	**18**	**100.0**	**18**	**100.0**	**18**	**100.0**	**18**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Source: author's research.

In the next stage of the research, qualitative analysis, individual cases of children in large families, exceptional for each sample, were distinguished. It means that specific profiles were created by individuals. Four secondary school students were identified by means of the tool "Me towards the class".

Having analysed untypical concentrations, students who in the sociometric test received the lowest or the highest sten scores were then identified. They were characterised either by the lowest level of social skills, which was expressed by the lack of involvement in class or school life, or by the highest level of social skills expressed in supporting others. Statistically significant differences were identified for three secondary school students with the highest sten scores, the highest level of social skills, which was expresses by complete peers' acceptance.

A detailed interpretation of the above-mentioned cases (profiles) is presented below.

3.1 Case I (U029)

Personal details: a 14-year old boy, living in the suburban region and brought up in a typical family with four children. He is the youngest child in the family, his mother is a housewife and his father is a breadwinner.

Parents' personal details: 43-year-old mother and 44-year old father, both with academic degree. The respondent described his family financial situation as sufficient. Based on his responses, it seems to be clear that his family provides him with adequate care or holiday arrangements, and parents keep control over their children's behaviour.

This student goes to school which is located near his place of living. In his self-assessment against the class, the respondent appears to be an average secondary school student.

A conduct mark: excellent.

An average score of all school subjects: 4.0.

The level of peer acceptance: 3.0.

The boy claims to feel very good among his classmates and to have a few friends. In his opinion, he is considered to be a good friend by his schoolmates. As far as barriers to future success are concerned, he mentioned the lack of financial assets, the lack of acceptance and problems in private life. It is therefore interesting that the respondent claimed previously to be popular among his friends.

On his five-point scale the respondent rated: family, health, friendship, work and love. The first value (family) consequently appears in his several responses. He declared that he would like to have at least two children in his adult life.

In addition, the boy assessed school conditions as good.

As far as the qualitative variable is concerned, that is indicating the school subjects which are difficult for a child raised in multi-child family, he mentioned mathematics and physics.

The student chose the response "seldom" to assess the frequency of his own behaviour towards his male and female classmates. In detail, he seldom talks to his classmates and the other classmates seldom ask him for help or advice; he seldom teases his friends and he also seldom discusses class matters with his classmates; he seldom bothers critical friends' comments and he seldom teases his classmates; he is seldom likely to reach an agreement when other class members plan something to do together and he seldom appreciates others' achievements; he seldom accepts other students' ideas and never enjoys his friends' successes; he seldom shares hobbies and interests; he seldom agrees with other students' arrangements; when it is necessary to cooperate, he seldom participates or encourages his friends to participate in school and class events; he seldom shares his things with friends and he seldom invites his classmates to visit him.

Based on the research methodology and author's categorisation of the social skills level, the general result of intra-school socialisation represented by this student may be described as average. However, as regards the tool "Me towards the class", the level of socialisation was placed below 3.5 sten scores. It proves that the student has a sense of unsatisfied social needs. In his opinion, he does not receive enough support from his classmates. The respondent feels that they do not appreciate his value. In the contrary, he feels a sort of threat from his peers. The student does not show any aggressive behaviour against his classmates.

This arrangement of the research findings regarding intra-school socialisation of the child manifested by the three social school roles is represented by an average student, with average level of socialisation skills, a school friend with low level of socialisation as well as the school community member between average and low level of socialisation.

The results received by the respondent coincide with the level of social acceptance in the class in the sociometric test developed by Moreno.

Pedagogical situation of the respondent seems to be unfavourable for his socialisation and development. It might be assumed that in the next years of secondary school the student may become socially isolated from other classmates, even socially unadapted or reluctant to meet his own or other students' needs.

Undoubtedly, this case requires pedagogical and educational assistance.

3.2 Case II (U153)

Personal details: a 16-year-old girl living in a city and brought up in a typical family with three children. The girl is characterised by good health condition, she is the youngest child in the family where mother works and father remains unemployed.

Parents' personal details: 43-year old mother and 41 year-old father, both with Master's degrees.

The girl admits that she dislikes spending time at home because her parents tend to "overload her with household responsibilities".

The respondent described her family's financial situation as poor. She does not receive any pocket money from her parents. It seems to be clear from her responses that she is raised in the family who provides her with adequate care. Unfortunately, nobody arranges free time for the girl, including holiday time. The student is not able to assess her independence herself.

She would like to have three children in the future. The student goes to school which is located away from her place of living. As a result, she commutes to school by bus.

In her self-assessment against the class, the respondent appears to have poor school achievements.

A conduct mark: good.

An average score of all school subjects: 3.5 and lower.

The level of peer acceptance: 3.0.

The girl claims to feel bad among her classmates and to have a few friends. In her opinion, she is considered to be a good friend by his schoolmates.

The respondent admits that she tends to miss classes at school because of her female classmates who encourage her to do so.

She spends her free time in discos, in front of a computer screen or meeting friends.

When comparing the student's responses with her parents' opinions, it may be assumed that her parents engage their daughter in household duties.

As far as barriers to future success are concerned, she mentioned: the lack of acceptance, problems in her private life, and problems in obtaining academic degree.

On her five-point scale the respondent rated: family, health, love, freedom and honesty.

In addition, the girl assessed school conditions as good.

As far as the qualitative variable is concerned, that is indicating the school subjects which are difficult for a child raised in multi-child family, she mentioned Polish language and mathematics. As regards her situation against the class and her attitude towards the peers, the respondent chose, similarly to the case of the above-mentioned male student, the response "seldom" to assess the frequency of her own behaviour. She seldom talks to her classmates and seldom gets interested in her classmates' problems. She also seldom involves in her friends lives.

To conclude, it should be emphasised that the girl is not an active class member. The respondent tends to isolate from the class community, which means that she does not perform properly one of the social roles — the role of friend/classmate.

According to methodological assumptions, the general level of the respondent's intra-school socialisation might be described as low. The girl is characterised by low self-esteem which may result from difficult financial situation of her family, one of her parents' unemployment as well as her poor school achievements.

The arrangements of the research findings regarding intra-school socialisation reveals that the respondent has low level of social skills and, as a school community member, she does not willingly participate in her school or class life.

Taking pedagogical point of view into consideration, it might be assumed that some factors negatively affected socialisation processes in the respondent's family and school life.

3.3 Case III (U056)

The child, code U056, brought up in a large family turned out to be an individual and specific case. She received untypical results based on the tools "Me towards the class" and "The class towards me".

Personal details: a 16-year-old girl, living in suburban area. She is raised in a typical family and has four siblings. She is the oldest among her brothers and sisters. Her mother is a housewife and her father has been unemployed for two years. The respondent is characterised by very good health condition.

Parents' personal details: 47-year-old mother with high school education; 52-year-old father with vocational education.

The girl claims that she enjoys spending time at home saying that she has "a very good home life".

The respondent describes her family financial situation as "good". She does not have to share her bedroom. She eats breakfast every day. It is clear from her responses that she is being brought up in the family who provides children with adequate care and free time activities. The student describes herself as resourceful and self-reliant.

In the future she would like to have a large family with four children. The respondent goes to school which is located near her place of living. She willingly attends school. In her self-assessment against the class, the student seems to have very good achievements. However, in her opinion, she is an "average" student.

A conduct mark: very good.

An average score of all school subjects: 4.4.

The level of peer acceptance: 4.0.

The girl claims to feel good among her female and male classmates. She has a few friends. In her opinion, she is perceived to be a good friend.

The respondent does not have any problems at school. However, she occasionally tends to miss classes, which is caused by her laziness or friends' encouragement.

The teenager is involved in voluntary work.

Similarly to majority of the respondents, she spends a great deal of her free time in front of the computer screen. She gets on well with other school community members. The student emphasised that she asks her teachers when she needs help.

Her parents keep control over the student's progress in learning.

As far as barriers to future success are concerned, she mentioned: the lack of acceptance, problems in her private life, and the lack of financial assets.

On his five-point scale the respondent rated: love, health, calmness, education and family.

It is interesting that she failed in her assessment of school conditions.

Having analysed in detail the respondent's situation in the class and her attitude towards their peers, it might be stated that the student enjoys talking to classmates and offers them help. She seldom teases her peers and always informs her classmates about important matters. She is seldom criticised by her classmates and she often offers advice to her friends. The respondent never provokes her classmates and always helps them in learning. She

was able to assimilate into the class and she wants to integrate with her classmates. The respondent appreciates and always enjoys other students' achievements. She often accepts her classmates' ideas. The student willingly shares her hobbies or interests with other classmates, she is able to cooperate with others and she is open to relations with male and female classmates. The student eagerly participates in school events.

To conclude, the respondent demonstrates high level of socialisation. As the oldest among her siblings she is unusually mature and aware of her choices regarding school or private life. She presents a great deal of independence and a sense of responsibility for her and others.

On the sten scale she received more than 7.5 scores, which is proved by the high level of social skills. The general level of the respondent's intra-school socialisation appears to be high. It is clearly visible in performing the role of student (high school achievements, very good conduct marks), the role of friend (respect and recognition from her classmates) and the role of school community member (good relationships with teachers, involvement in the class or school life).

Her parents' involvement in the process of their daughter's socialisation is manifested by their behaviour.

It can be concluded that this student, compared to the other respondents, seems to have well-developed social skills, she is so called "social activator".

The research findings based on the tool "The class towards me" prove the above-mentioned conclusion. The 16-year-old student always enjoys kindness and politeness of their friends. She can rely on her classmates. The respondent's friends never reject her ideas. She always feels accepted by other and willingly participates in class or school projects. The student is respected by her peers even if she criticises them. Her friends, always friendly towards the respondent, appreciate her school achievements and want to interact with her. The respondent is considered to be a respectful person.

4. The Role of School Community Member

To thoroughly identify *the role of school community member*, I focused on the analysis of the respondent's non-educational relationships with teachers, good relationships with the head teacher, the respondent's attitude to school, school regulations and school discipline, the student's involvement in school life, adaptation (and the sense of adaptation) to the school environment, representing school outside, as well as care of school property.

In this article, I discuss selected aspects concerning the role of school community member including the respondent's attitude to school (Table 7) and good non-educational relationships with the head-teacher.

Table 7 Respondents' Attitude to School

Sex	Do you like school?		In total
	Yes	No	
Girls	114	13	127
%	56.72%	6.47%	63.18%
Boys	69	5	74
%	34.33%	2.49%	36.82%
In total	183	18	201
%	91.04%	8.96%	100%

Source: author's research.

A significant majority of the respondents (183 students, 91%) like school. Only 18 students (8.9%) do not like school. The respondents may be willingly attending school because it is the second environment, apart from family, who encourages adolescents to individual activity.

Table 8   The Respondents' Opinions on Good Relationships with Their Head Teachers

Sex	Good relationships with head teachers		In total
	Yes	No	
Girls	53	74	127
%	26.37%	36.82%	63.18%
Boys	37	37	74
%	18.41%	18.41%	36.82%
In total	90	111	201
%	44.78%	55.22%	100%

Source: author's research.

The research analysis also involved head teachers' motivating actions and good non-educational relationships. As many as 90 respondents (44.7%) assessed their head teachers as helpful in solving problems, positively motivating and inspiring their students. Unfortunately, it is sad that majority of the respondents (111 students, 55.2%) did not prove to have good relationships with their head teachers.

5. Conclusions

The research findings presented above are a small part of the bigger research project. Therefore, I summarise only several aspects of school socialisation regarding the child brought up in multi-child family and the three social roles.

It is emphasised in specialist literature that socialisation is a group function. If a family role is to socialise, it should be a large unit. This correlation is visible in the respondents' opinions which can be concluded: the bigger number of children in the family, the higher level of social skills they present.

A multi-child family can make useful contributions to the society. According to empirical research, the family still appears to be "social and educational institution". Numerous interactions within a multi-child family can result in children's positive attitude towards school, participation in social peer groups at school, higher self-assessment as a very good and average student accepted by other classmates.

With reference to the research findings included in the article, which discusses the three social roles performed by the child brought up in multi-child family, I reached the conclusion regarding "social segregation" which is manifested, among other things, by average school results received by the child brought up in a large family.

Generally, it might be claimed that a large family is a proper space to socialise a child, which is proved by the respondents' rather higher than lower optimal self-assessment, a variety of interests and hobbies, definitely good and very good position among their peers, a sense of peer acceptance, participation in peer groups and positive attitude towards school.

It might be concluded that the respondents, secondary school students in multi-child families are characterised by perseverance in pursuing their goals; they do not need additional encouragement or motivation from their teachers or head teachers. They are highly motivated to achieve success, which is proved by the fact

that more than half of the respondents do not have motivating relationships with their head teachers. Their head teachers seem not to be respected by their students.

To sum up, multi-child families are not so called "handicapped social groups". Children in large families are properly socialised. Secondary school students brought up in multi-child families often get on well with their peers. They are rarely isolated. Children in large families learn from each other; their behaviour patterns are reflected in their siblings' behaviours. A number of siblings may benefit in creativity, especially if there are boys and girls within one family. They interact and learn unconventional and open behavioural patterns, developing different social roles.

The final conclusion is that regardless of size, the family may create and develop proper conditions for children's socialisation.

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