Pedagogical factors and conditions for supporting transition from the primary school to the junior high school

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There are many difficulties associated to school transition: meeting new children who may not understand his difficulties; meeting new teachers who do not recognize he has difficulties; learning about the school explicit and implicit rules; learning new teachers' names and their expectations and styles of teaching; learning about the timetable and the appropriate books and tools required; carrying equipment around all day – no central place to return to – therefore increasing the chances of losing equipment or having incorrect equipment for the next class; coping with change determined by others not himself; independently organizing his work and managing his own timetable.

Transition-to-school programs most commonly involve three groups of participants "THE NETWORK": children, families, school and local community.

Any transition-to-school approach should recognize and respond to the broad range of factors shaping this period of a child's life, including the cultural background of the child and their family, participation in early childhood services, the school environment and the social and emotional skills of the student.

Some researches [4] highlights that when families, schools and communities work together in positive and collaborative ways, a child's capacity to achieve their learning potential is significantly enhanced – and so are their general health, wellbeing, positive outlook and sense of purpose in life.

Families know their children very well. Sharing some of the knowledge they have about their child with early childhood services and schools can help the transition to school. Families who actively support their children during transition to school, and who build positive relationships with staff, are likely to continue their positive engagement with school. This, in turn, supports children's longer-term positive engagement with school. Families are children's first and most enduring educators; however, early primary school teachers can provide professional insight into a child's learning and development. They observe children's learning and development, and actively support each child to develop skills, knowledge and learning dispositions. This means they have specialized knowledge and insights about how a child's learning and development has progressed prior to going to passing to the junior high school. Importantly, they also understand what sorts of teaching

strategies work best for individual children. This information is important to share with to those who will help children settle into school, and who are responsible for building on the learning and development that has occurred before. There is a diverse range of perspectives on pupils' transition to junior high school among elementary school teachers, school teachers. The research indicates some common perspectives from them:

• Many children have no difficulty in the process of transition;

 • Socio-emotional and interpersonal development assists a pupil's transition to school;

• Family participation assists a pupil's transition to school

• Pupils who have attended an early childhood service make the transition to school more easily than those who haven't.

There is no formula for successful transition networks [5], but positively maintaining regular communication, often through face-to-face meetings about key issues, is critical. An analysis of transition practices has highlighted how these networks can function successfully. When establishing or reviewing a network, it is useful to:

• identify a key person who has organizational or leadership responsibilities in relation to developing, maintaining and enhancing transition networks;

• uncover assumed understandings and beliefs between early childhood professionals and school staff about programs in early childhood services and in schools, and identify perceptions about transition to school in order to air any difference in views, and develop common understandings;

• allocate time to develop partnerships and build trust – regular meetings and contact with educators from all services facilitate the establishment of common ideals about roles in transition;

• establish common approaches, philosophies, processes and programs for transition planning based on locally identified and understood needs in the community;

• plan a professional development calendar that includes all educators and other professionals;

• develop a process where families are encouraged to enroll their child into their chosen school during particular periods to assist in school planning.

Transition networks are an important way of establishing and enhancing communication, providing opportunities to identify positive and constructive solutions to any issues, as well as developing new approaches to working together

Community through Developing, Implementing and Evaluating the Transition Program. Community engagement relies on practices that encourage openness, welcome new ideas and encourage fresh perspectives. The process of developing and maintaining an inclusive and collaborative approach to transition to school should be regarded as an ongoing one. The profile of families, schools and the community changes from year to year, as do the needs within each community. Therefore, it is important to continually understand and reflect on the demographics of each community over time   In their departmental survey conducted across, In Israel there are Local Councils, the council is responsible to support the new programs in school with in the "networking" they plan how to develop schools, the local council follow up with schools, parents committee, ministry of education, consolers, so that, it is one of the keys to develop the schools environment to better future.

New South *Wales* government schools to investigate the nature of school transition programs, *Galton et al.* [1] concluded that the majority of activities undertaken by schools fall into the 'administrative' and 'social and personal' categories. It is evident, however, that schools are becoming increasingly focused on curriculum continuity, teacher discourse and lesson observation related to effective learning and quality teaching practice. The pedagogical sequence would create a condition in which less and less pupils would drop out in transition from one school to another. Pupils would feel security and a sense of educational, social and pedagogical continuity from kindergarten until the end of 12th grade.

Different examples of positive experiences of transition were reported by local authority officials, although sometimes these related to the admissions process as a whole, rather than specifically to transition. Some areas cited for development and improvement included the National Pupil Database. Some expressed the general desire for schools to be of an 'equal' standard- current preference systems can lead to certain schools being 'favoured', and it was considered desirable to promote and value all schools for their merit in different areas. There was an acknowledgement that schools needed to work harder to engage families: engaged families are more involved in the children's education, which, in turn, leads to children receiving a higher standard of education. A comment made was that the reception intake was a good time to begin involving parents, as this is when they first become involved with the school system. Additionally, it was noted that the transition between pre-school and primary was also hard: some felt that this area deserved as much attention as transition at secondary level, particular with children coming from a huge range of nurseries at pre-school level. In fact, different results showed an awareness of the challenges facing

schools, and the need to work together with schools, parents and children to facilitate the transition process.

In transition to a six-year school, in which the Junior High School is adjacent to High school, the study program is organized and allows for study continuity between the Junior High and High school. In order to improve the achievements in matriculation, the achievements in Junior High school, have to be improved. According to *Oplatka & Tovin* [10], Junior High School teachers report the transformation of Junior High School to a kind of High School where the output of study material is stressed and there is also a beginning of preparing pupils for matriculation [3].

According to NTFPEI [8], in order to appropriately respond to all pupils and meet all study and educational targets of the educational system, and in order to encourage the realization of abilities and the aspiration for excellence of each and every pupil, it is necessary to create a quality pedagogical sequence starting from kindergarten till the end of primary school.

The process of change. Change in the school environment can make the individual stuck in anxious circumstances. Anxiety about lack of control of his environment can lead to the individual feeling panicky all of the time and this has a knock-on effect on his performance. He may lash out at others or withdraw into himself in a form of self-protection.

The place of new change for students is the Junior high school. This causes additional strains on the child who is also trying to cope with his underlying difficulties and now has more problems layered on top. This can result in a breakdown in the child's mechanisms for coping and is why we sometimes see junior high school being a crisis time, after the child has seemingly being able to cope in primary school.

The move to junior high school exposes the child at key times in the school day such as coping alone in the playground at break and lunch times. He can no longer cover up his difficulties by looking as if helping the younger children. Teachers may not be present all of the time to supervise in the same way as in the primary school playground and not all teachers in a large school will be aware of the child's difficulties.

The differences in the new school "junior high school" are and not limited to the following; Classes may be larger; bigger school environment; No personal desks and the use of lockers to store belongings

Subject specific teachers; Independent travel to school; Homework – greater volume and expectation; the need for greater organizational skills and meeting deadlines; Career choices at a time when the child may not see he has any strength.

Why Supporting Strategies. There are different strategies to support the transition programs, Information should also be transferred over so that all teachers know a profile of strengths and difficulties, the main ways to represent the strategies are; Providing a fun, welcoming and enjoyable learning environment; Draw up a map of school/ give opportunity to take photos to become familiar with school setting; Take photos of the buildings, rooms and teachers to aid memory; Parents to be given the opportunity to visit school; Timetable given as soon as possible – keep several copies on view around the house; Encouraging older pupils/siblings and staff to welcome the new children, Baseline assessment undertaken to check where learning level is and level of remediation required; Consideration of adaptations required for classroom/sport and new subjects; Consideration of help required for organizing work; Consideration of help required in note-taking; Consideration of where locker placed in school, and method to transport books and equipment; Mentor/tutor introduced before new term; Buddy system in place for first 2 terms; Use of angle boards/position in class /amount of room required taken into consideration; Adaptation of tools if required such as protractors, rulers, pens; Extra time allowed for homework; Work written down for individual on an ongoing basis if required; 3 way communication card between school – different teachers, with home and with the individual; Consider school uniform – adapt garments for ease of dressing; Do as much rewards and treats.

Making transition to a new school causes anxiety in students and can challenge the coping skills of many adolescents, especially those at risk. Typically, the move to a new school includes changes in school climate and size, peer relationships, academic expectations, and degree of departmentalization among peers. When adolescents move into middle school or high school, the anxiety is complicated further by other normative changes such as puberty, social and emotional development, the growing importance of peer relationships, and the development of higher order cognitive skills. Students who experience the stresses of numerous changes often have lower grades and decreased academic motivation, and they eventually drop out of school. Schools can prepare students for the transitions by becoming aware of students' needs and by taking a proactive role in addressing those needs.

The Challenges which must be addressed within transition process are:

- On the individual level - identity, emotions and ability,

- On the interactional level – loss of and forming new relationships, social roles,

- On the environmental level - new surroundings, curricula, and learning experiences.

All of these influences have brought many challenges to state and local education and community service agencies nationwide. Several of these major challenges are identified and briefly discussed below, along with recommendation for educators, policymakers, and families.

Challenge 1: Promote Students' Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy

Self-determination is a concept reflecting the belief that all individuals have the right to direct their own lives. Students who have self-determination skills are more likely to be successful in making the transition to adulthood, including employment and community, transition services must be based on students' needs and take into account students' interests and preferences. To accomplish this, students must be prepared to participate in planning for their future.

Several recommendations in relation to this challenge include:

- Provide opportunities for decision-making starting in early childhood, and encourage children to express their preferences and make informed choices throughout life.
- Begin self-determination instruction early in the elementary grades.
- Intensify teaching of specific self- determination skills in high school.
- Support students' development and use of self-advocacy skills, and teach students to develop an internal locus of control.
- Make work-based learning, self-directed learning, and career exploration opportunities available to all students.
- Incorporate self-determination and career development skills in the general education curriculum.

Challenge 2: Increase the School Completion Rates of Students with Disabilities

School completion is one of the most significant issues facing special education programs nationally. There are several strategies to address this challenge are:

- Develop methods and procedures to identify, document, and widely disseminate research-based information on best practices in developing transition programs.
- Determine the incentives and methods needed to fully implement evidence-based models, practices, and strategies within state and local school district programs.
- Conduct research to demonstrate and effective transition programs strategies that work with high-risk groups of students, such as students with emotional/behavioral disabilities, minority students, and students living in poverty.

Challenge 3: Base Decisions on Meaningful Indicators

The following recommendations apply in relation to this major challenge:

- Promote the use of alternate assessments, including authentic or performance-based assessments, portfolios, and other documentation to support graduation decisions.
- Clarify the implications of state graduation requirements and the appropriate use of alternative diploma options for students with disabilities. Consider the potential impact of alternative diplomas on a student's future access to postsecondary education and employment opportunities. State and local education agencies should thoroughly discuss the meaning of these alternative diplomas with postsecondary education program representatives and employers.
- Clarify the implications of different transition activities for continued special education services.

Challenge 4: Assure Access to and Full Participation in Postsecondary Education and Employment

Young adults with disabilities continue to face significant difficulties in new schools, in addition to accessing necessary community services such as healthcare and transportation.

Recommendations to address this challenge include:

- Assure that prior to each student's attendance from high school, the student's
- Promote the value of preparation for and participation in the primary schools.

Challenge 5: Increase Informed Parent Participation in Planning and Decision-Making

Research has shown that parent participation and leadership in transition planning play an important role in assuring successful transitions for youth with disabilities. Much of the discussion in the research literature centers on the role of parents as participants in the development of their children. Recommendations for increasing parent participation include:

- Provide comprehensive parent/family training, including training to help parents and families understand the changing nature of their role and what they can do to foster self-determination and promote informed choice.
- Work to reduce the confusion and frustration experienced by parents and families by coordinating services and streamlining access to information and programs.
- Work with community organizations serving culturally and racially diverse populations to assure that programs and services meet the needs of all parents and families.

Challenge 6: Improve Collaboration and Systems Linkages at All Levels

Effective transition planning and service depend upon functional linkages among schools, rehabilitation services, and other human service and community agencies. However, a number of factors have stood as barriers to effective collaboration, including:

(a) lack of shared knowledge and vision by students, parents, and school to support students' needs and interests.
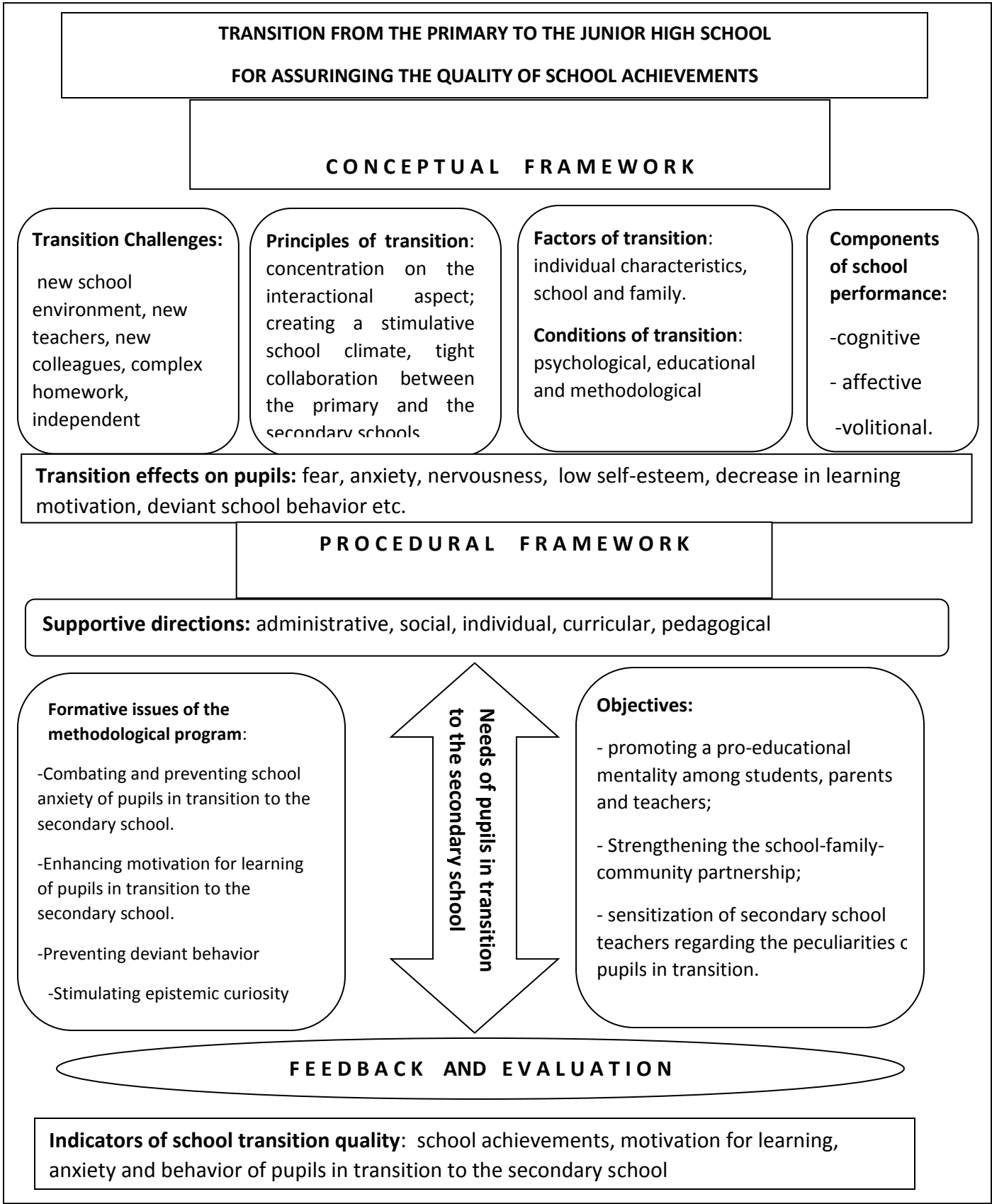
(b) lack of shared information across school and community agencies, and coordinated assessment and planning processes, to support integrated transition planning.

(c) lack of meaningful roles for students and parents in transition decision-making process.

(d) lack of meaningful information on anticipated post school services needed by students and follow-up data on the primary school outcomes and continuing support needs of students that can be used to guide improvement in systems collaboration and linkages.

The Pedagogical Model bases on the epistemological aspects of school transition and includes factors, conditions, principles and a methodological program aimed at assuring the quality of school achievements of pupils in transition to the junior high school.

The *Pedagogical model of transition from the primary to the junior high school* viewed: the development of an integrated educational program for an easy adaptation to the junior high school; participatory, informative and counseling approach to pupils' parents to foster the development of a pro-education mentality and sustainable partnerships between school-parents-community; professionalisation of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the transition program; developing methodologies, tools and procedures appropriate to the transition needs from the primary to the junior high school in order to reduce the discrepancies in the curricular approach; the development and implementation of the transition program.

TRANSITION FROM THE PRIMARY TO THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

FOR ASSURINGING THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENTS

C O N C E P T U A L   F R A M E W O R K

Transition Challenges:

new school environment, new teachers, new colleagues, complex homework, independent

Principles of transition: concentration on the interactional aspect; creating a stimulative school climate, tight collaboration between the primary and the secondary schools.

Factors of transition: individual characteristics, school and family.

Conditions of transition: psychological, educational and methodological

Components of school performance:

-cognitive

- affective

-volitional.

Transition effects on pupils: fear, anxiety, nervousness, low self-esteem, decrease in learning motivation, deviant school behavior etc.

P R O C E D U R A L   F R A M E W O R K

Supportive directions: administrative, social, individual, curricular, pedagogical

Needs of pupils in transition to the secondary school

Formative issues of the methodological program:

-Combating and preventing school anxiety of pupils in transition to the secondary school.

-Enhancing motivation for learning of pupils in transition to the secondary school.

-Preventing deviant behavior

-Stimulating epistemic curiosity

Objectives:

- promoting a pro-educational mentality among students, parents and teachers;

- Strengthening the school-family-community partnership;

- sensitization of secondary school teachers regarding the peculiarities c pupils in transition.

F E E D B A C K   A N D   E V A L U A T I O N

Indicators of school transition quality: school achievements, motivation for learning, anxiety and behavior of pupils in transition to the secondary school

2.1 The Pedagogical model of transition from the primary to the junior high school

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