THEORETICAL MODELLING OF THE COLLABORATION BETWEEN CONSUMERS AND PROVIDERS OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL'S MISSION

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Abstract

The article deals with the problem of the collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services in the implementation of school's mission. The concept of the consumers and providers of school services has been presented, the mission of the school of today has been defined, the contradictions of its implementation in the postmodern society have been highlighted, the importance of the collaboration between parents as consumers of educational services and pedagogues as providers of educational services in the implementation of school's mission has been substantiated, the factors conditioning collaboration, the principles determining the involvement and participation of the consumers of educational services, and the essential elements of collaboration have been actualized. A theoretical interpretation of the concept of value creation in interaction has been presented. Referring to the analysis and meta-analysis of the development and structure of the collaboration process at school a theoretical model of the development of collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services at school has been conceptualized.

Keywords: consumers of educational services, providers of educational services, collaboration, school's mission.

Introduction

Policy makers and theoreticians of education emphasizing the essential importance of education as a social phenomenon for society, the quality of its existence and development in future point out that the education of the 21st century has to meet a new qualitative level of contemporary postmodern society, which is conditioned by the intensification processes of the changes in all fields of life. As their consequence, the reality and purpose of education itself also change because education as a multidimensional and specific social system functions in the interaction with other systems (Gumuliauskienė, 2014). Education as an open social system not only has to react to current political, educational, cultural, social, technological,

economical situation of society solving problems conditioned by factors unfavourable to education and control them but also model and respond to progressive influence on social development of society (Kalantzi & Cope, 2012). Education must be given bigger social and value-focused purposefulness and effectiveness concentrating on the demands of the society of today and future and dynamic labour market, the expectations of the consumers of educational services, and requirements of quality increasing the value of education. Therefore, ambitious aims are set to school: to turn from traditional education based on the reproduction of knowledge to education that stimulates thinking and creativity, development of leadership, the system that encourages to learn and increases the self-management of communities (*Good School Concept,* 2015). Good school is understood as "a school that bases education on fundamental humanistic values, that strives for meaning, discoveries and the success of person's education, that follows the agreements of school community and constant learning in its activity. Appropriate implementation of school's mission, i.e. good (desirable, acceptable) educational outcomes and rich, memorable, meaningful, pleasant experiences of life at school are considered as the most important indicator of school's successful activity. Educational outcomes (personality maturity, achievements and progress) and the process of achieving them are equal" (*Good School Concept*, 2015, p. 3). In the Concept strong interrelations between community members (learners, pedagogues, parents) ensuring the implementation of educational aims, based on humanistic principles of benevolence, respect, confidence, solidarity and equality are emphasized. The aim of school is together with parents to educate creative people, personalities, active citizens of Lithuania, willing to strive for new knowledge and improve, able to take responsibility for themselves and the state (*State Education Strategy 2013-2022*, 2013).

According to Keczer (2014), education is a professional service, constantly changing, interactive and requiring a big focus on a consumer. Vargo & Lusch (2004) describe service as an activity that is useful for a service consumer and provider, and is performed applying specialized competences (knowledge, skills). In the concept of service the following aspects are important: processual approach, usefulness (service solves consumer's certain problems), interaction between a consumer and provider of service. Provision of service is impossible without active involvement and participation of consumers themselves. Management theories treat consumers' involvement and participation as the opportunity of increasing the competitiveness of an organization (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Involvement is related to the degree of consumer's personal interest in a certain service and is considered as a prerequisite of confidence, commitment, emotional attachment and loyalty (Damkuvienė, Bersėnaitė & Balčiūnas, 2014). In the concept of the roles of a consumer and provider of service suggested by modern management theories there lies an attitude towards service consumers as subjects having valuable resources. In case of educational services the collaboration between consumers and providers as subjects having valuable resources is a significant instrument that gives new experiences, meanings and value to school, enables to decrease limits between consumers and providers of educational services in order to effectively implement school's mission. To create and develop culture based on collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services is an aspiration of every school and in some sense a strategy for change. Development and implementation of such culture is becoming the culture of all school community members that is predominant in solving problems, communicating, acting, influences the transformation of the quality of education and growth of child's personality.

The data of the conducted research confirm that the involvement of parents as consumers of educational services has positive influence on child's learning achievements, school attendance, attitudes towards school, the way a child feels at school (Menheere & Hooge, 2010), learning motivation, child's cognitive and metacognitive abilities. Parents' involvement in education creates safe interrelations. Feeling emotionally safe children learn how to positively react to their achievements, their self-esteem and skills of managing feelings improve (Pomerantz & Moorman, 2011). Seeing a model of positive collaboration-based relationships with school learners apply it in their relationships with peers. Therefore, in order to implement school's mission not the relationship between a provider and consumer of service is important but the relationship among school community members based on involvement and collaboration of community members, interaction between all the participants of educational process and active learning together. School as a creator and provider of services must know learners and parents as consumers, perceive their demands and the opportunities given by them to act together, to be able to create value based on creation and maintenance of long-term relationships. Scientific research shows that the relations of the involvement of parents as consumers of services in children's education and collaboration with school are rather complicated. Collaboration is a contextualized phenomenon influenced by internal and external school context. To develop an effective system of collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services is a complicated task for school because the essential problem of the development of collaboration in Lithuania is that collaboration is not considered as a value. Individualist culture is characteristic to Lithuania: personal achievements are valued higher than group ones (Raišienė, 2006). Contemporary society has a distinct tendency of consumerism, changing character and intensity of social relations, confusion of social roles, striving to meet market demands, increasing competition of society members and subjects of the system of education. Therefore, the values emphasized in the European and Lithuanian strategic plan in the reality of mainstream school are difficult to implement. It is shown by the scientists' research (Targamadzė, 2007, Traškelys, 2010, Duoblienė, 2012; Martišauskienė & Vaičekauskienė 2016, Barkauskaitė, 2016, etc.). The problematic character of collaboration is also related to the problems of the lack of the perception and distribution of powers, roles and responsibilities of consumers and providers of services, mutual dialogue in formulating educational aims for a particular child taking his/her needs into account (Westergard & Galloway, 2010), inability of consumers and providers of services to communicate their expectations and demands and agree on roles, responsibilities, preferable forms and ways of parents' involvement and participation, and values, on which the relationships that are being created are based (Martišauskienė & Vaičekauskienė, 2016). The relationships of equal partnership and mutual understanding are necessary for the collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services. The value that conditions mutual understanding the most is mutual respect. It is related with partners' positive attitudes towards each other in spite of diversity (differences in age, experiences, world-views, competences, etc.). School culture also has influence on collaboration (Hargreaves, 1998, Kontautienė, 2006, etc.).

The collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services is not a self-contained and simple process. Therefore, the management of the collaboration system between consumers and providers of educational services at school is a relevant problem. The analyses of the results of external assessment of schools for 2007-2016 show that the relationships in school community are both among strengths and activities to be improved and chosen for improvement. It is possible to think that schools consider community relationships

as important in educational process striving for learners' better achievements and progress (*National Agency of School Assessment*, 2017). The collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services in the implementation of school's mission remains a relevant **scientific problem** because of the change in the perception of the role of parents as consumers conditioned by the transformation of the demands of society and market that encourages to focus on creating a different relation with school (it is not communicated and agreed what the expectations, demands, responsibilities to each other are, for what kind of relationship school strives); because of the perception of the importance of the collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services for the implementation of school's mission (the perception of collaboration as an instrument or way to achieve set aims or outcomes is predominant, however, it is not encouraged that it become an organizational value for all community members and aspiration in the implementation of school's mission); because of traditional forms, ways and content of collaboration with providers of educational services offered by school. The problem has been analysed referring to the interdisciplinary approach and based on the need to conceptualize a theoretical model of the development of collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services at school that could be used as a managerial instrument for the management of collaboration system at school.

The object of the research – collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services.

The aim of the research – to conceptualize a theoretical model of the development of collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services at school.

The methods of the research – analysis of the sources of scientific literature, meta-analysis, modelling.

The research is based on the following methodological approaches:

Substantiating the approach towards culturally meaningful education of versatile personality with *humanistic philosophy of education* (Hargreaves, 1999; Rogers, 2002; Bitinas, 2000).

The value created by communication is treated according to *the approach of holistic process* where consumers and providers of educational services are perceived as equal active partners getting involved into exchange systems. According to this approach value can be created only when both parties participate together employing the competences of both parties in co-creation that is characterized with dialogue, collaboration and involvement of both parties (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). The changing role of a consumer encourages to focus on the *creation of value together with a client* (Prahalad, 2004).

Social constructivist theory (Taylor, 2000; Hruby, 2001), that allows to substantiate the collaboration between consumers and providers of services as a process of the construction of new meanings and knowledge applying personal experience in new situations.

System theory, that forms the basis of treating the collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services as a united system, where the activity of one element influences the activity of the whole system (Bertalanffy, 1950).

Importance of collaboration and preconditions of its creation at school

School acts in changing and complicated social environment, disposing of limited resources and involving many various groups of interested persons such as educational policy makers, representatives of business world, school government, pedagogues, learners, parents, society. The groups of different interests can have different expectations about what the

school of the 21ˢᵗ century should be and how it could implement the aims set for it and the challenges that occur. The mission defined in Good School Concept (2015) is an aspiration for mainstream schools. Namely in this context of change the quality of education as a result of the implementation of school's purpose becomes the main challenge for education.

Another important challenge – the aims of modern educational programme – is to develop learner's competences *(State Education Strategy 2013-2022, 2013)* and it sets a task – to strive that the competences gained by learners will establish conditions for them to be full citizens of the rapidly changing society and enrich educational environment that stimulates learning, practical application and creativity at schools. It requires systemic changes in the field of the contents of education, educational technologies, pedagogues' professionalism, school management, and other fields.

The Lithuanian school of today strives to adjust to changing environment, to become effective, perceiving reality and situation, improving management system, able to balance between constant change and ensuring stability and continuity, the component of which is constant development and improvement (Kudokienė & Repečkienė, 2006). Mainstream school in a complicated and insufficiently intensive way moves the emphasis from the focus on learners' academic achievements to community values and competences necessary for dynamic labour market. School should prepare a learner not for examinations but for life, i.e. develop his/her general and social competences to a greater extent. It is not a problem only of mainstream school. It is related with insufficient ensuring of the harmony between the formation and implementation of educational policy of the state. It is shown by controversial assessments by education experts, scientists, policy makers, pedagogues' community, consumers of educational services (parents and learners). Scientists analysing the experiences of national and European reforms of education generalize them with evident paradoxes, the essence of which – the regulations established in strategic documents of education – often lose their practical meaning, they are of imitative character and do not bring the expected effect because of the whole complex of contradictions and other factors that influence them. It should be stated that so far in the practice of education the focus on academic achievements predominant because of formal requirements makes the content of strategic regulations narrower, a person's skills important in real life and his/her competences do not "fit in" learner's individual progress and formal system of the evaluation of his/her achievements, therefore, they do not become the priority aim of education (Gumuliauskienė & Malinauskienė, 2018).

The content of general education itself, actualizing which school implements its functions also requires change. Internationally and nationally scientists and educational community have many discussions and search for answers what competences will be needed in future and what the opportunities to ensure that citizens gain main competences necessary for the changing world are (Wang, Lavonen & Tirri, 2018, Child & Shaw, 2016, Binkley, Erstad & Herman, 2012, Voogt & Roblin, 2012, etc.). These discussions were especially actualized by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Schwab, 2017). In *World Economic Forum* (2016) the TOP 10 of the competences especially relevant for the labour market and a person in forthcoming years (up to 2020) was presented. Scientists unanimously agree that in the 21ˢᵗ century the following competences are necessary: communication, collaboration, digital literacy, public spirit, problem solving, critical and systemic/contextual thinking, creativity, productivity in order to contribute to the development of the contemporary society. Thus in future a person's success will depend on many competences, the ability to apply them in various situations and constant learning, opportunity to communicate, share and use information. However, in any

case now the most important thing is to transform schools so that learners could gain thinking, problem solving, collaboration and communication skills, which they will need in life and work (Voogt & Roblin, 2012).

Perceiving the inevitable reality of and demand for change, striving for changes in quality of education, increasing their own responsibility for the quality of services provided schools have to more effectively optimize their internal resources. One of them is the potential of the collaboration of school community. Collaboration is an efficient strategy of the improvement of the educational institution, an effective instrument, when an educational institution itself takes the role of a subject that is active, responsible, constantly learning, implementing educational innovations, developing communication of different type, with initiative and independence organizing the life of the community of its institution.

Because of multilayeredness and complexity of education and its dependence on the influence of the whole complex of factors the transformations in school are not systemic and do not have the intensity and scope that is expected. Therefore, in order to respond to the challenges of the school of the 21st century collaboration is an especially important factor of the development and evolution of a person, organization and society that is treated as a "new method, strategy" by scientists (Kontautienė, 2006) that helps to create the basis for striving for a common outcome (synergy) (Vizgirdaitė, 2013). According to Hargreaves (2008), collaboration is one of the most promising paradigms of postmodern age as the principle expressing and uniting action, planning, culture development, organization and research. According to Kontautienė (2000), collaboration embodies principles important for the processes of transformation: the opportunity for every participant to publicly express his/her opinion; it strengthens confidence, applying suggested innovations encourages to consciously correct them or even counteract them; increases the power of reflection, encourages every participant of education to constantly develop and understand education as an unending process of constant development. Team learning, consulting, planning, collegial discussions or professional dialogue, research on improvement, mutual monitoring and feedback are characteristic to collaboration (Teresevičienė & Gedvilienė, 2000). Only in collaboration with others values, customs, lifestyle are shared, experience is transferred to future generations. Communication helps to discover similarities and differences, stimulates personality growth.

To make collaboration at educational organizations successful it is necessary to well prepare for it, perceive the stages of the creation of collaboration, to distinguish important elements that stimulate collaboration. According to Johnson, Johnson & Smith (2007), the following elements are important for collaboration: individual responsibility for one's activity, employing knowledge and experience one possesses, mutual help, encouragement, motivation. Clear group processes are important for collaboration – the processes that took place in collaboration are periodically analysed and reflected upon, the further opportunity to develop them is foreseen. Collaboration requires respective social skills – it is impossible to work effectively if skills of communication, management, decision taking, conflict management are not applied (see Figure 1). All these elements must be evaluated and planned in every stage of collaboration. Dettmer, Dyck & Thurson (2005) distinguish the following stages of collaboration: *preparedness to collaborate* (defining aims, demands, expectations, roles, functions); *foreseeing the environment and instruments of collaboration* (distribution of resources important for collaboration) and *constant evaluation of collaboration and reflection of activity* (Dettmer, Dyck & Thurson, 2005) (see Figure 2).
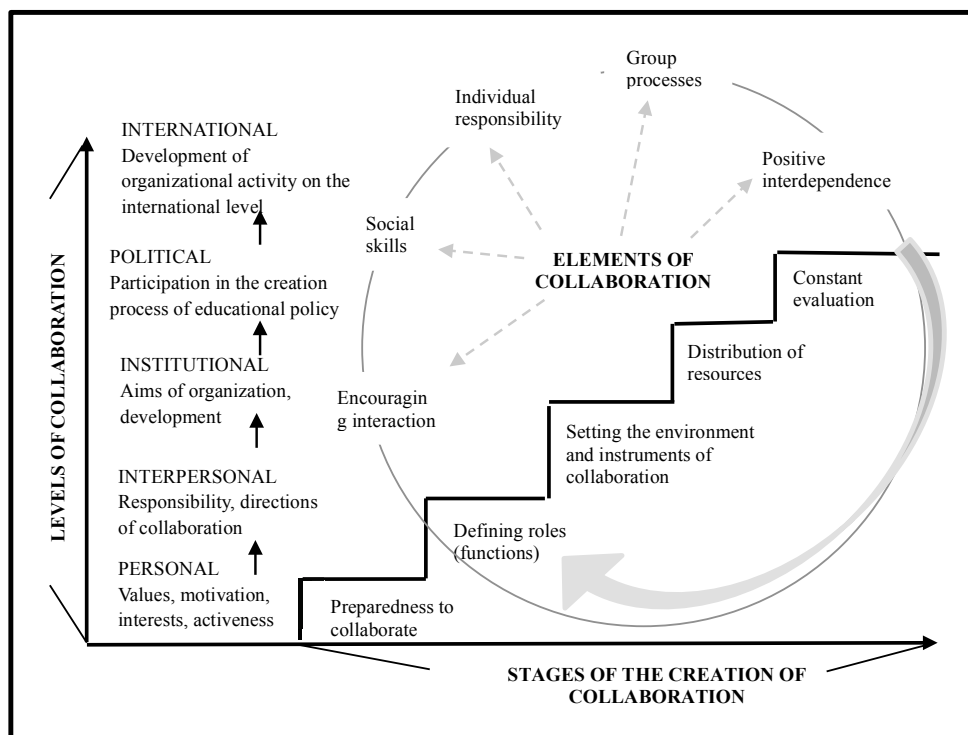
Fig. 1. Stages and elements of the creation of collaboration

(compiled by the authors referring to Dettmer, Dyck & Thurson, 2005;
Johnson, Johnson & Smith, 2007; Child, Shaw, 2016)

Educational organizations also need to know the levels of collaboration, taking which into account the actions of parents' involvement are formed. Taylor (2009) distinguishes personal level of collaboration, where it is important to coordinate values, motivation, interests and ability to act; interpersonal, where responsibility and directions of collaboration are evaluated; institutional level, where parents already represent the aims of organization and strive to improve school. On the political level of collaboration parents participate in the process of educational policy making and contribute to its improvement; on the international level parents improve the activity of the organization representing school internationally. Consequently, the collaboration between pedagogues and parents at school is not limited only to personal and interpersonal levels, it is also necessary to plan parents' involvement on other levels in order to develop school outside its boundaries as well, to attentively think over the actions of every stage of collaboration (how and by what means parents will be involved, what kind of parents' involvement is expected by pedagogues and to communicate it clearly) and the elements stimulating collaboration (collaboration forms, instruments, how to involve parents and how constantly strengthen them while learning together).

Collaboration is chosen as an action strategy because it gives the consumers and providers of educational services an opportunity to gain the power of initiation, implementation and assessment of decisions. Collaboration with parents and their involvement in activities is necessary for the implementation of common aspirations, it is related to values – mutual confidence and respect, to such fields of responsibility as constant need for change, following common agreements, openness of collaboration relationships, preparedness to collaborate,

setting possible directions of collaboration and sharing the common vision in the implementation of the mission of the school of the 21st century.

Relationships between consumers and providers of educational services

If we treat school as a service organization at first it is necessary to answer the question who the real school consumers are. The identification of the consumers of educational service is not simple and superficial. Mukhopadhyay (2005) distinguishes internal and external school consumers. As internal school consumers he considers pedagogues, administrative staff, technical staff who at the same time are service providers, meanwhile employers, state, trade unions, local community and parents are considered as external consumers. According to the author, a learner as one of the consumers of an educational organization is both an internal and external consumer. On the one hand, a learner and a person representing him/her not only gets service, but at the same time actively participates in the processes of the creation and provision of service. It makes him/her an internal consumer of services. A learner is an external consumer because a part of the process of service creation is invisible to him/her. Thus learners are both internal and external consumers. The indetermination of situation is also influenced by not completely clear and different roles of learners at the institution: are they members or consumers of the educational organization (Targamadzė, 2001) or the "raw material" of mass education industry (Želvys, 2003)? Since not every learner is completely conscious and mature to clearly evaluate his/her learning processes, it is inevitable that learners' parents who are able to express their own and children's needs, to name problems, can suggest certain solutions, become inseparable from school activity as well, therefore, in the present article parents are treated as consumers of services.

Modern schools must follow the most progressive management theories, understand changing world-view of consumers and their attitude to service providers, the value they create, involving consumers in school processes. Scientists emphasize the importance of the focus on a consumer because school depends on its consumers. Therefore, the providers of educational services should understand consumers' wishes and needs, their demands should be determined and implemented, perceived by the whole community and the meeting of consumers' needs should be measured and monitored analysing information (reviews by learners and their parents, results of the activity conducted, learners' achievements, etc.) (Martišauskienė & Traškelys, 2013, 2016). When school understands the needs and expectations of its consumers, closely and openly communicates with a consumer, it is easier to achieve the set aims and improve its activity. Not separate elements of service nor the stages of the process but their sum total, participation together not only in receiving service but also in creating it are important to parents. A consumer reacts not only to the result obtained. It is also important to him/her in what way this result is achieved. Thus it is necessary to perceive that the competences of educational service providers, the ways of their application, quick and prompt response, carried out commitments are the basis for service provision and a guarantee of relationships based on trust (Damkuvienė, Bersėnaitė & Balčiūnas, 2014).

Only when consumers get actively involved in service creation, co-production of service or co-creation emerges, and it is treated as a phenomenon, rising paradigm, behaviour, process, form and model of service provision. The co-production approach is especially relevant to educational organizations, when it is focused on constant interaction with consumers based on long-term relationships, where value is created during a long period of relationships from the initiation to termination of relationships (Raipa & Petukienė, 2009). Value that is defined

as experience perceived by a consumer while using service (Vargo & Lusch, 2004) can be created in the context of co-creation only acknowledging a consumer as an active participant when a consumer and organization are active, involved in each other's activities, characterized with dialogue and collaboration where both parties have an opportunity to participate in the processes that unite them (Damkuvienė, Bersėnaitė & Balčiūnas, 2014). Consumers creating value employ their knowledge, thinking, emotions and experience and while using service give them their own meaning, provide useful insights and suggestions on the improvement of service. Therefore, not only knowing a consumer but also learning together with him/her, from him/her, consumers' learning from each other is especially important. It is admitted that while participating consumer has an opportunity to create bigger value, to perform an important role in communication about service, in this case mutual learning and sharing knowledge is possible.

The place of value creation is moved to the process of collaboration and the creation of common field, where organization is treated as an initiator, empowerer, facilitator of this process, and consumer is invited to participate in the process of value creation. Consumers that are involved in interactive processes with organization are named as co-providers of service or co-creators of value and treated as equally active collaboration partners (Jurgelevičiūtė & Sūdžius, 2010). Consumer's involvement and participation influences the creation and perception of value because consumers perceive the value they create themselves (Starkutė & Valinevičienė, 2013). Consumers' needs become primary. Consequently, consumers are very important and necessary not only as a guarantee of future activity but also as a main lever regulating future quality of school's activity. The more effectively and with better quality school will work, the better will be its image, the ratings will grow, the number of students will increase, and it will be easier to attract better specialists.

Hsiuju et al. (2004) state that co-participation consists of three broad aspects: sharing information, responsible behaviour and personal interaction. First, consumers should share information with a service provider to ensure meeting of their personal needs. Second, consumers admit their duty and responsibility to positively collaborate with a service provider. Third, the aspect of personal interaction means that there will be trust, support, collaboration and commitment. Kotze & Plessis (2003) distinguish three factors that influence effective collaboration and creation of value: clarity of role, ability and motivation. Consequently, in educational organizations both pedagogues as service providers and parents as consumers must know what is expected from them and how they should behave in particular situation so that value would be created not only for the organization but also for a consumer himself/herself. Therefore, every educational organization must define the fields of organization and consumer and their roles in them so that everything would be understandable and clear both for consumers and members of organization while creating relationships based on collaboration. A part of activities that take place in the field of organization are invisible to a consumer. Referring to the strategy of organization, the set aims, taking the values possessed and the type of activity into account creation and development take place in the field of organization as well as the preparation to give value to a consumer.

Distinguishing the fields of the relationships between organization and consumer and their roles it has been referred to the stages of the life cycle of relationships (Grönroos & Voima, 2013; Damkuvienė, Bersėnaitė & Balčiūnas, 2014) that are supplemented with the indicators of knowledge, interaction and involvement that are distinguished in the Indicators of School's External Assessment (2017) in the context of collaboration with parents. They

clearly define the roles of parents as consumers and pedagogues as service providers (Figure 2).

Thus since the initiation of relationships it is important for school to identify consumers' demands and expectations and communicate them to a consumer, and agree whether these expectations could be met, what values school follows, what the attitude towards education, problem solving, etc. is, what kind of collaboration and involvement is expected from parents by school, what roles parents have in school activities, meanwhile the consumer's role is to express expectations and needs, and evaluate whether school's philosophy and the position expressed is suitable.
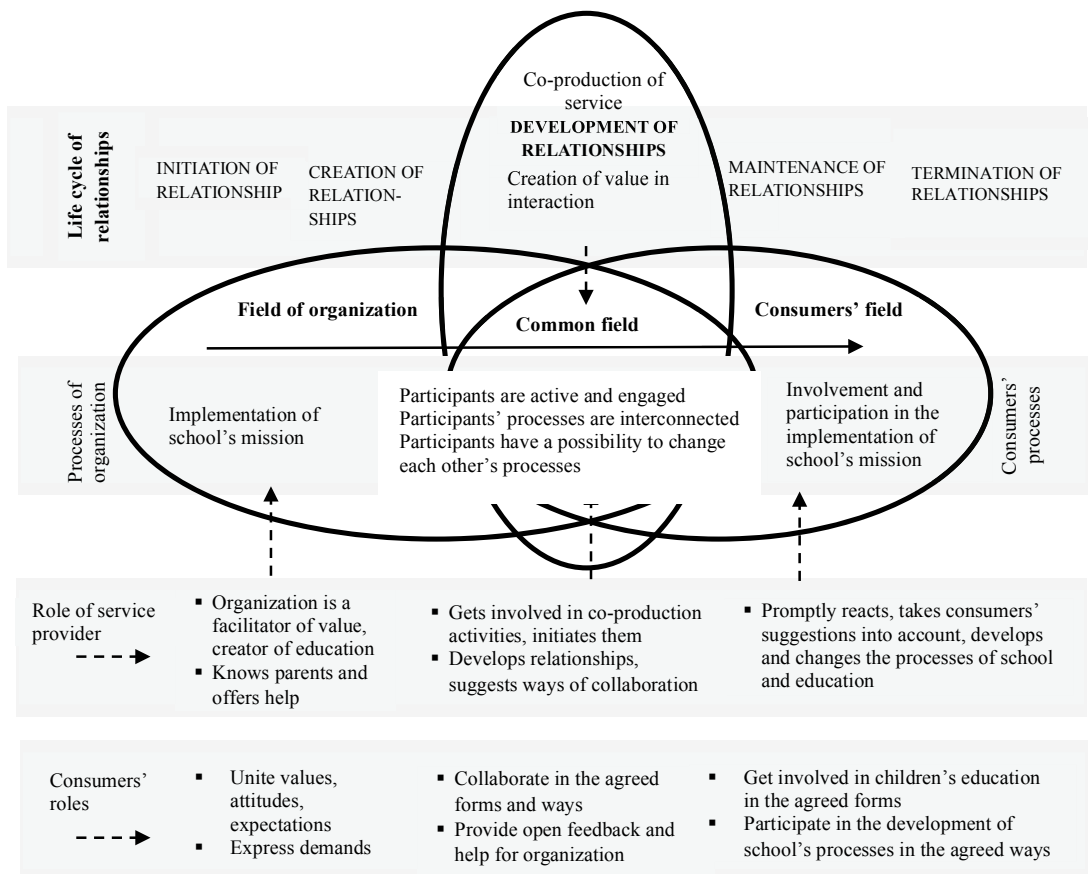

Fig. 2. Fields and roles of the organization and consumer

(compiled by the authors referring to Grönroos & Voima, 2013; Damkuvienė, Bersėnaitė & Balčiūnas, 2014; Indicators of School's External Assessment, 2016)

At the stage of the creation of relationships school encourages its consumers to follow the values set by school, openly communicate and give feedback so that further developing relationships with a consumer school could offer additional services to consumers striving for their loyalty. Parents as consumers are involved into school processes, are encouraged to participate in decision taking and responsibly represent school providing feedback. Pedagogues are interested in parents' possibilities to help children grow and offer parents suitable ways and forms of help and collaboration, parents participate in school's improvement, get involved in children's education in various forms (expanding their cultural horizons, encouraging

cognitive activeness, helping to set ambitious educational aims and strive for them, also participating in school activities, individual and group meeting with pedagogues, initiating meaningful activities, projects, delivering lessons or other activities). In the common field pedagogues and parents communicate at the time suitable for both parties, collaborate (devote time and initiate meetings, conversations, etc.) maintaining and encouraging learner's progress, strengthening his/her mental and physical health and socialization (Indicators of School's External Assessment, 2016). At the stage of the maintenance of relationships consumers feel trust in the organization and commitment to it. Thus value is created both to consumer and organization – relationships with school based on trust. At this stage it is very important that school having gained consumers' confidence would put further efforts in meeting consumers' needs and expectations. A consumer can terminate relationships with organization if profit is much lower than he/she expects. Modern school should constantly offer innovations, communicate about the uniqueness of service, conduct the monitoring of the process of the creation and development of value for a consumer in order to identify possible interferences and problems to avoid them.

Collaboration system at school in the implementation of mission

As school tries to match the demands of society and future with consumers' demands and expectations, it is important to perceive that in spite of all the challenges the purpose of school was and is to convey the treasury of culture to a person and help him/her socialize in society (Targamadzė, 2007). Therefore, in order to implement school's mission not the relationship between service provider and consumer is very important but the relation among school community members based on the involvement and collaboration of community members, their interaction and active learning together. What type of school culture will be chosen depends on particular organization or community, on the creator and consumer of the culture of this community and their interrelation (Duoblienė, 2012). Acknowledging parents as equal partners full educational interaction that is characterized by tolerance of community members, high level of consciousness, possessing and mastering certain skills, expression of individual efforts, harmony in community manifesting itself by democratically taken decisions and responsibility emerges. Thus every member of educational organization becomes an active participant of school's life, organizer and creator (creating an organization).

However, in the creation and development of the collaboration system the main initiator is a pedagogue who must see collaboration as a system, consistently develop and expand it. For the effectiveness of collaboration it is especially important that parents not only get involved in children's education but also the way they get involved, what role they take, how actively they participate. Stages of collaboration (Burt & Spellman, 2007) correlate with certain types of parents (Driessen, Smit & Sleegers, 2005) (see Figure 3), the distinguishing and identification of which at school would help to understand and know parents.
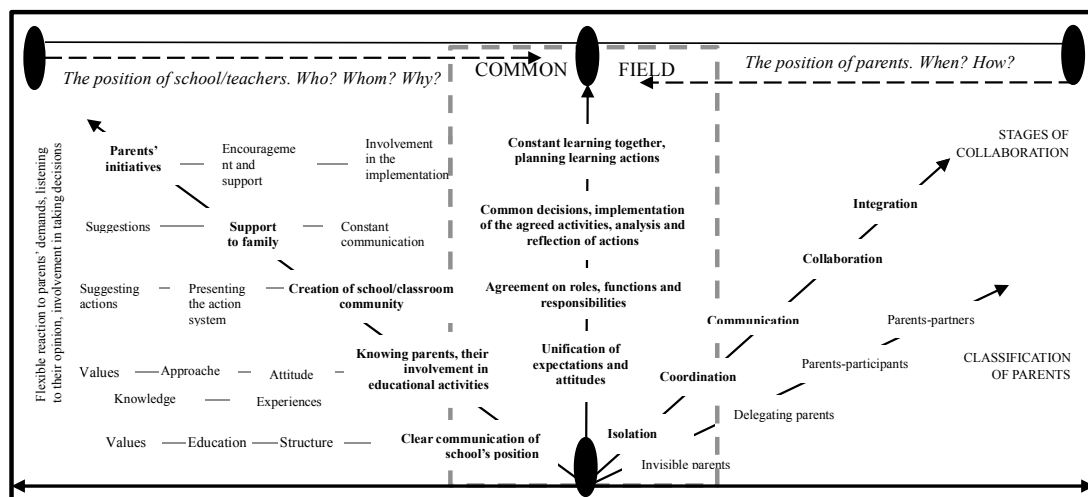
The position of school/teachers. Who? Whom? Why? — COMMON FIELD — The position of parents. When? How?

Flexible reaction to parents' demands, listening to their opinion, involvement in taking decisions

Parents' initiatives — Encouragement and support — Involvement in the implementation

Constant learning together, planning learning actions

STAGES OF COLLABORATION

Suggestions — **Support to family** — Constant communication

Common decisions, implementation of the agreed activities, analysis and reflection of actions

Integration

Collaboration

Suggesting actions — Presenting the action system — **Creation of school/classroom community**

Agreement on roles, functions and responsibilities

Communication

Parents-partners

Values — Approach — Attitude — **Knowing parents, their involvement in educational activities**

Unification of expectations and attitudes

Coordination

Parents-participants

CLASSIFICATION OF PARENTS

Knowledge — Experiences

Delegating parents

Values — Education — Structure — **Clear communication of school's position**

Isolation

Invisible parents

Fig. 3. Theoretical model of collaboration with parents (consumers)
(compiled by the authors referring to Driessen, Smit & Sleegers (2005),
Kontautienė (2006), Burt & Spellman, 2007)

In the process of isolation the type of invisible parents who rarely participate in school's life, do not approve collaboration, like to get information unilaterally, in one direction, is distinct. At the stages of coordination and communication the type of delegating parents manifests itself, they weakly participate in school's life because, in their opinion, school's administration and teachers are responsible for their children's education, they talk, share information, collaborate in every particular case in order to coordinate the provision of service. At the stages of collaboration and integration high mutual confidence of teachers and pedagogues manifests itself, they work together planning, analysing and getting involved. At these stages *parents-participants* and *parents-partners* actively participate in school's informal life, they help, suggest, recommend, and parents-partners actively participate in school's formal activity as well, share experience, knowledge and actively contribute to the development and improvement of school.

In order to create and develop effective collaboration system from the very beginning clear school's communication (on the issues of structure, value principles, philosophy of education, etc.) on how, what is going on at school, what role is expected from parents and what parents can expect from school is especially important, as well as knowing parents as collaboration partners, perception of values, attitudes and approaches (i.e. in what ways and how parents can get involved in the activities of education and school's development) and using the knowledge, competences, experience and opportunities they have involving parents. Only knowing parents, perceiving their needs and expectations it is possible to create the community of the classroom and later that of school, support the initiatives suggested by parents and implement them together.

The system of consumers and providers of educational services should be managed both on classroom and school level: the aims are set, the programme is created to implement them, in which particular measures to achieve the aims of activity, the time of their implementation, shared responsibility and expected outcomes are planned. In order to make collaboration effective and efficient constant monitoring, (self-)assessment and improvement of the collaboration process is conducted. It is very important that the collaboration of service

consumers and providers be a significant field of school's strategic management, and school managers have positive attitudes towards collaboration, be active initiators and participants of this process themselves, provide necessary support, encourage the community to develop school culture based on collaboration.

Conclusions

The school of the 21st century must perceive the emerging issues related to the needs, expectations, involvement and roles of parents as service consumers as an opportunity and treat as a prerequisite striving to implement school's mission. It is important to understand that the effectiveness and success of school's activity primarily depends on the attitude of school itself towards the involvement of parents as consumers and their participation in service provision. School must take into account the demands of society and market that encourage to focus on a different relation that is created with parents as consumers of educational services.

For every school it is important to find the answer – for what role of a service consumer does the school strive, what relationship does it expect to create, to what extent is it ready to invest in the creation of strong and successful collaboration, what value does it want to create together? It is worth to refer to the ideas of the approach of holistic process that value can be created only with such collaboration that is characterized with dialogue, encourages the involvement and mutual understanding of all community members, forms the feeling of belonging to community, and parents as consumers of educational services and pedagogues as service providers are perceived as equal active partners employing the competences, knowledge, experience and different world-view of both parties. The basis for the collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services in the implementation of school's mission is the ideas of philosophy of humanistic education that form school community members' attitude towards culturally meaningful education of versatile personality.

The theoretical research has revealed that in the school of the 21st century collaboration is a strategy of culture development, organization of school processes and successful striving for results uniting community members, the way to achieve a common outcome (synergy) and implement school's mission. Therefore, it should be developed as a system consistently foreseeing possible collaboration actions in advance, planning stages and maximally and effectively involving parents. A theoretical model of the development of collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services at school is recommended to be used as a managerial instrument for the management of collaboration system at school that helps to systemically and consistently plan the stages of collaboration foreseeing the factors that stimulate collaboration and define the roles of the providers and consumers of services at school, that helps to create collaboration-based culture at school. Modern school management is looking ahead, thinking about future, about how to be the school that is constantly learning, creating, changing meeting the needs of learners, parents and society, where the following general management features would be predominant: collaboration on all levels, parents' involvement, and culture based on the trust of community members. Schools should be very interested in strengthening relationships because positive community relationships, care for every member of school community, not imitated culture condition learners' better achievements, influence the evolution of their versatile personality and future prospect.

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THEORETICAL MODELLING OF THE COLLABORATION BETWEEN CONSUMERS AND PROVIDERS OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL'S MISSION

Summary

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In order to effectively implement the mission of the school of the 21st century collaboration is an important instrument giving new experiences, senses and value to school, enabling to decrease boundaries between the consumers and providers of educational services. To create and develop culture based on collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services is an aspiration of every school and in some sense a strategy for change. Therefore, in order to implement school's mission not the relationship between a provider and consumer of service is important but the relationship among school community members based on involvement and collaboration of community members, interaction between all the participants of educational process and active learning together. School as a

creator and provider of services must know learners and parents as consumers, perceive their demands and the opportunities given by them to act together, to be able to create value based on creation and maintenance of long-term relationships.

To develop an effective system of collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services is a complicated task for school because the essential problem of the development of collaboration in Lithuania is that collaboration is not considered as a value. Contemporary society has a distinct tendency of consumerism, changing character and intensity of social relations, inflation of traditional relationships and values, confusion of social roles, striving to meet market demands, increasing competition of society members and subjects of the system of education (Targamadzė, 2007, Traškelys, 2010, Duoblienė, 2012; Martišauskienė & Vaičekauskienė 2016, Barkauskaitė, 2016, etc.). The problematic character of collaboration is also related to the problems of the lack of the perception and distribution of powers, roles and responsibilities of consumers and providers of services, mutual dialogue in formulating educational aims for a particular child taking his/her needs into account (Westergard & Galloway, 2010), inability of consumers and providers of services to communicate their expectations and demands and agree on roles, responsibilities, preferable forms and ways of parents' involvement and participation, and values, on which the relationships that are being created are based (Martišauskienė & Vaičekauskienė, 2016). Therefore, the collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services in the implementation of school's mission remains a relevant ***scientific problem*** because of the change in the perception of the role of parents as consumers conditioned by the transformation of the demands of society and market that encourages to focus on creating a different relation with school (it is not communicated and agreed what the expectations, demands, responsibilities to each other are, for what kind of relationship school strives); because of the perception of the importance of the collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services for the implementation of school's mission (the perception of collaboration as an instrument or way to achieve set aims or outcomes is predominant, however, it is not encouraged that it become an organizational value for all community members and aspiration in the implementation of school's mission); because of traditional forms, ways and content of collaboration with providers of educational services offered by school.

The object of the research – collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services. ***The aim of the research*** – to conceptualize a theoretical model of the development of collaboration between consumers and providers of educational services at school. ***The methods of the research*** – analysis of the sources of scientific literature, meta-analysis, modelling.

In order to create and develop effective collaboration system from the very beginning clear school's communication (on the issues of structure, value principles, philosophy of education, etc.) on how, what is going on at school, what role is expected from parents and what parents can expect from school is especially important, as well as knowing parents as collaboration partners, perception of values, attitudes and approaches (i.e. in what ways and how parents can get involved in the activities of education and school's development) and using the knowledge, competences, experience and opportunities they have involving parents. Only knowing parents, perceiving their needs and expectations it is possible to create the community of the classroom and later that of school, support the initiatives suggested by parents and implement them together.

The system of consumers and providers of educational services should be managed both on classroom and school level: the aims are set, the programme is created to implement them, in which particular measures to achieve the aims of activity, the time of their implementation, shared responsibility and expected outcomes are planned. In order to make collaboration effective and efficient constant monitoring, (self-)assessment and improvement of the collaboration process is conducted. It

is very important that the collaboration of service consumers and providers be a significant field of school's strategic management, and school managers have positive attitudes towards collaboration, be active initiators and participants of this process themselves, provide necessary support, encourage the community to develop school culture based on collaboration.

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