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## Machiavellians in a School Class

### Abstract

Machiavellianism is a personality trait of which the essence is created by a specific view of the social world that is treated as a place of combat, by egocentric motivation, subjective treatment of other people and a tendency to achieve goals by means of interpersonal manipulation. This article presents the results of a few researches dedicated to the phenomenon of Machiavellianism in children and the youth, and to stressing problems and threats created by the Machiavellian pupils at school; it also suggests some ways to overcome those problems.

**Key words:** *Machiavellianism, manipulation, children, bullying.*

### Introduction

Machiavellianism is a personality variable quite rarely analyzed in the context of the social behaviours of children and adolescents. More often, it is associated with the behaviours of people in organizations. However, for the last few decades a sufficient quantity of empirical data has been gathered in order to enable the analysis of Machiavellianism among children and to measure its influence over children's and adolescents' functioning in a group. This article is a review of researches into Machiavellianism among children and it is reflection upon the way of using the results of those researches in the work of teachers and those who are responsible for children's upbringing.

A Machiavellian is a person who strives for acquiring personal gains by means of interpersonal manipulation (Christie & Geis, 1970; Fehr, Samsom & Paulhus, 1992). The core of manipulation is exercising a conscious influence over the interaction partner such as for the partner not to be aware that he/she is a subject of manipulation. The subjectively treated partner becomes an obedient tool in the