

Evaluating Teachers at Slovak Elementary and Secondary Schools

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Abstract. The paper deals with the evaluation of teachers' work within elementary and secondary schools. Together 586 students of two Slovak universities, i.e. Slovak University of Technology and Slovak University of Agriculture evaluated their teachers of elementary and secondary schools. The aim of the research was divided into four parts. In the first two parts, the students evaluated the teachers' work while in the next two parts the students evaluated the teachers' behavior during lessons. During the research, the following research methods were used: the questionnaire method, the interview method, the method of discussion and the statistical interpretation. According to the results, 65 % of students knew only 1 to 5 teachers who they considered to be qualified and good teacher. On the other hand, 65 % of respondents knew 16 to 20 teachers who they considered to be unqualified and bad teachers. The results also confirmed that a fair, patient and tolerant teacher is much more appreciated among students than a willing, creative and humorous one. What is more, students do not like prejudiced, arrogant and nervous teachers. The detailed results can be found in the paper itself.

Keywords: evaluation of teachers' work, students' opinions, elementary and secondary schools

1. Introduction

Present curricula require students to learn in unconnected pieces, separate courses whose relationships to each other are not explained clearly. The content of the courses may be valuable but this view appears to ignore the need of connections and integration which should be the core of each education discipline [1]. Several arguments about student disengagement with educational processes have been presented. The engagement is seen as a function of a teacher's expertise and performance as well as the organisation of teaching. Sometimes, large class sizes and short class periods are becoming the norm. Those are not the only reasons why current organisation of education leads to student disengagement [2]. The role of teachers in education has been solved for years. Some authors [3-5] think that a teacher should have pedagogical competences to teach effectively, personal competencies and professional competencies which include not only the knowledge of a subject they teach but also communicative, diagnostic and organisational competencies. Others [6-7] point on the importance of pedagogical competencies which are the most important during educational processes. Those are planning and preparation, realisation and managing, diagnostics and evaluation as well as self-reflection and self-evaluation. Even there are different types of teachers, it can be said that a teacher plays an important role within educational processes. The natural authority of the teacher is based on his/her professional, pedagogical and human qualities and his/her willingness to help students during learning. However, everyone should not forget that the main role of a teacher is to teach the best way he/she knows.

2. Methodology

The aim of the research was focused on the influence of teachers on students as well as on the qualities which students like or dislike on teachers. Together 586 first-year university students participated in the research. The research sample is illustrated in Table 1.

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Table 1: The research sample

University	Men	Women
Slovak University of Technology	213	148
Slovak University of Agriculture	149	76
Total	362	224
586 students		

During the research, the following research methods were used: the questionnaire method, the interview method, the method of discussion and the statistical interpretation, i.e. frequency tables. To make the results of the research more transparent, all of them are illustrated in tables with their interpretation.

3. Results

A person who passed elementary and secondary schools in Slovakia should have met with approximately 30 different teachers. According to the Table 2, more than 65 % of respondents knew only 1 to 5 teachers who they considered to be qualified and good teachers. Students usually criticised teachers' way of teaching, the lack of motivation and discussions during the lessons. Some of the teachers were not willing to help students and a minority of them was not prepared for their lessons.

Table 2: "How many teachers would you mark to be qualified and you consider them to be good teachers?"

Frequency table 1	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
01 more than 31 teachers	5	0.9	0.9	0.9
02 from 21 to 30 teachers	17	2.9	2.9	3.8
03 from 16 to 20 teachers	22	3.8	3.8	7.5
04 from 11 to 15 teachers	57	9.8	9.8	17.2
05 from 6 to 10 teachers	98	15.8	15.8	33.0
06 from 1 to 5 teachers	385	66.7	66.7	99.7
07 none	2	0.3	0.3	100.0
Total	586	100.0	100.0	

On the other hand, more than 65 % of students knew from 16 to 20 teachers who they considered to be unqualified and bad teachers. Some of the teachers had a negative approach towards students, they were strict during the lessons as well as the students had to drill a lot.

Table 3: "How many teachers would you mark to be unqualified and you consider them to be bad teachers?"

Frequency table 2	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
01 more than 31 teachers	15	2.6	2.6	2.6
02 from 21 to 30 teachers	13	2.2	2.2	4.8
03 from 16 to 20 teachers	386	65.9	65.9	70.6
04 from 11 to 15 teachers	48	8.2	8.2	78.8
05 from 6 to 10 teachers	55	9.4	9.4	88.2
06 from 1 to 5 teachers	69	11.8	11.8	100.0
07 none	0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	586	100.0	100.0	

One of the most interesting results of the research was the fact that all the 586 students wrote one of the six qualities of teachers they liked the most. According to the results in Table 4 it is possible to say that those qualities of teachers are the most desired among the students. Even the results are approximately the same it is true that a fair, patient and tolerant teacher is much more appreciated than a willing, creative or humorous one.

Table 4: “Write one positive quality of a teacher that you like the most.”

Frequency table 3	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
01 fair	123	20.9	20.9	20.9
02 patient	114	19.5	19.5	40.4
03 tolerant	102	17.4	17.4	57.8
04 willing to help	85	14.5	14.5	72.3
05 creative	84	14.3	14.3	86.6
06 humorous	78	13.4	13.4	100.0
Total	586	100.0	100.0	

On the other hand, students mentioned more than 10 negative qualities they do not like on their teachers. The majority of them do not like those teachers who are dictatorial, prejudiced and arrogant. According to the Table 5, some teachers humiliate students or they are nervous during the lessons. Only some teachers offend students or they are impulsive, reserved and stereotyped.

Table 5: “Write one negative quality of a teacher that you really do not like.”

Frequency table 4	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
01 dictatorial	113	19.3	19.3	19.3
02 prejudiced	110	18.7	18.7	38.0
03 arrogant	102	17.4	17.4	55.4
04 humiliating	99	16.9	16.9	72.33
05 nervous	97	16.6	16.6	88.9
06 offending	27	4.6	4.6	93.5
07 impulsive	15	2.6	2.6	96.1
08 reserved	10	1.7	1.7	97.8
09 stereotyped	8	1.4	1.4	99.2
10 others	5	0.8	0.8	100.0
Total	586	100.0	100.0	

4. Conclusions

There are many surveys and researches on pedagogical, psychological and other aspects of teaching. They are usually very important statistically in the field of education. However, do they reflect the real students’ needs and demands? Do they really involve the students’ opinions on teaching, the way that could help them to study better? Or is it still about teachers, numbers and results? This is the time when a teacher should think of the way how to solve this task. In fact, it is very simple. Just ask students what they like. It may take some hours to find it out but it is worth it.

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6. References

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