New Trends and Issues Proceedings on Humanities and Social Sciences

Volume 4, Issue 6, (2017) 196-201

ISSN 2547-8818
www.prosoc.eu

Selected Paper of 6th International Conference on Education (IC-ED-2017), 26-28 June 2015, University of Zagreb Zagreb – Croatia

The research of the relationship between teachers' professional skills and student expectations improving study environment

Aida Stikliene[a*], Aleksandras Stulginskis University, LT-53361 Akademija, Lithuania.
Anzelika Dautarte[b], Aleksandras Stulginskis University, LT-53361 Akademija, Lithuania.
Edmundas Bartkevicius[c], Aleksandras Stulginskis University, LT-53361 Akademija, Lithuania.
Remigijus Zalkauskas[d], Aleksandras Stulginskis University, LT-53361 Akademija, Lithuania.
Algirdas Gavenauskas[e], Aleksandras Stulginskis University, LT-53361 Akademija, Lithuania.

Suggested Citation:
Stikliene, A., Dautarte, A., Bartkevicius, E., Zalkauskas, R. & Gavenauskas, A. (2017). The research of the relationship between teachers professional skills and student expectations improving study environment. *New Trends and Issues Proceedings on Humanities and Social Sciences.* [Online]. *4*(6), 196-201. Available from: www.prosoc.eu

Selection and peer review under responsibility of Prof. Dr. Milan Matijevic, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Abstract

The teacher's attitude towards the teaching process and communication skills is of particular importance and plays a crucial role in today's rapidly changing world. It has to go together with raising the consciousness and awareness of individuals on study environment issues and ensuring them contribute to solutions of learning problems. Research was conducted with 405 prospective professionals who study at Aleksandras Stulginskis University Faculty of Forest Sciences and Ecology. An interactive questionnaire 'Study subject in student's eyes' developed at Aleksandras Stulginskis University (2014–2017) was used as data collection tool. This article analyses the teacher's pedagogical work from the student's point of view. Multivariate analysis and regression tree model were used in the interpretation of the results. The results confirmed the hypothesis that hard-working students better evaluate teachers' professional skills. It seems that elder course students with age have higher expectations from the teaching environment.

Keywords: teacher's attitude, Aleksandras Stulginskis University, pedagogical

* ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: **Aida, Stikliene,** Aleksandras Stulginskis University, LT-53361 Akademija, Lithuania.
E-mail address: aida.stikliene@asu.lt / Tel.:+0323-234-123-122

1. Introduction

The relationship between a student and a teacher is particularly significant in this age of fast-moving technologies. Communication is a common everyday attribute, but qualitative communication is not common to all members of the university community. Therefore, it is important to highlight the main disturbances of communication and take measures for the development of communication competencies (Tereseviciene et al., 2015).

Communication and student motivation are topics that are often analysed and discussed (Alberto et al., 2013; Frith, 2009; Guerrero & Floyd, 2006; Jurik, Groschner & Seidel, 2014; Kenneth, 2007; Lambrechts, Mula, Ceulemans, Molderez & Gaeremynck, 2013). In fact, communication in the audience is a complicated and unpredictable process. Communication is often strongly influenced by the degree of personal socialisation. The audience needs to have a mutual understanding, therefore, not only the presentation of the information, but also the ability of the audience to receive, evaluate, analyse, fuse and adapt it to the solution of real situations is important (Adamoniene, Statkeviciene, Kriksciunas & Pugevicius, 2007; Daukilas & Kasperiuniene, 2015).

Usually, we use a variety of ways and means of communication. We gradually move away from academic lectures and try to incorporate new technologies into the transfer of ideas, information and expectations. Other ways – in terms of using visual tools, tasks of varying levels of engagement, written information and so on, remain relevant. The teacher should pay attention to non-verbal communication, increase his ability to use various tools to find opportunities for engaging with students. The teaching and learning process cannot take place without communication (Kenneth, 2007; Norliza, Zalizan, Norzaini & Saemah, 2010). The teacher, able to communicate, creates a more successful learning environment, which can lead to learning success (Guerrero & Floyd, 2006).

For teachers of the 21st century, it is important to have belief in self-efficacy in order to achieve targets of modern education, to keep struggling with problems, and to create new and creative solutions (Kahyaoglu, 2014). Williams and Williams (2011) discuss five *key ingredients* generating motivation: student, teacher, content, method and environment. A student has to perceive himself as a part of system and has to recognise the value of personal input and ownership. Student ownership is expressed through mutual goal setting and individualising learning assignments (Lent & Gillmore, 2014). Students become more responsible for learning, thus empowering them to engage their personal interest; critical thinking and evaluation skills.

The aim of this study is to explore elements of the teacher's pedagogical work from the student's point of view, depending on the students' age, gender, subject final mark and academic consciousness.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The study was conducted in 2014–2017 at Aleksandras Stulginskis University, Faculty of Forest Sciences and Ecology in Lithuania. The participants were prospective professionals, studying Forestry (240 participants) and Applied Ecology (165 participants) Bachelor level study programmes. The research instrument was implemented on a total of 405 students aged 18–21, of whom were 132 females (32.6%) and 273 males (67.4%).

2.2. Research instrument

Survey 'Study subject in student's eyes' (SSSE): The 17 items were written regarding academic adjustment, the courses; academic issues; study habits; course schedule and their department. The results of one item covering evaluation of teacher pedagogical skills and abilities are presented in this study. Four factors of students' pattern participant age (study year), gender, obtained final subject

mark and academic consciousness/cheating were considered. All the statements included in the analysed items are flat statements covering attitude to study process. The statements (Q): (1) Teachers ability to engage students in the content of the subject; (2) Teachers ability to apply scientific knowledge; to reveal a variety of views and opinions in the field of the subject; (3) Teachers ability to emphasise and reveal the essential moments; (4) Teachers ability to communicate knowledge in a clear, consistent, understandable way; (5) Teachers ability to illustrate theoretical knowledge with practical examples; (6) Teachers professionalism in subject field; (7) Teachers communication skills with students; (8) Teachers punctuality, regularity; (9) Promotion of students' creativity and initiative; (10) The clarity of student knowledge assessment criteria; (11) Objectivity and reasonableness of students' knowledge assessment; (12) Clarity of self-study (controls, papers, etc.) tasks; (13) The use of visual and technical teaching aids (board, posters, layouts, video and audio equipment and records); (14) Recommended references correspondence to subject content; (15) Teachers' co-operation and counseling outside of lectures (possibility to find a tutor during on-call time, contact individually, etc.). The answers were designed on a five-point scale, being 'Very well' (five points), 'Good' (four points), 'Satisfactory' (three points), 'Bad' (two points), 'Very bad' (one point).

2.3. Data analysis

Redundancy analysis (RDA) is carried out by Canoco 4.5 (Leps & Smilauer, 2003). The data were centred and standardised, focused on inter-student statements correlation Monte Carlo test was applied of 499 permutations under reduced model – test of significance of first canonical axis. The Regression tree model was applied to separate the most important factors related to students' statement about teachers' professional skills.

3. Results

Findings of the study that aims to determine the teachers' pedagogical skills from the perspective of the student are given below.

According to the data presented in Figure 1 can be stated significant positive assessment of teachers by study years students compared to assessment by IV study year students. There was no significant difference in the distribution of responses according to the gender of the participants. Monte Carlo test was applied of 499 permutations under reduced model - test of significance of first canonical axis: eigenvalue = 0.069 (F-ratio = 29.292, P-value < 0.005). The first two axes explain 7.4% of students responses variation, while the responses and students pattern relations is presented of 93.7%.Ordination diagram (Figure 1) shows that students' statements about teachers professional skills correlate among each other. The best explained by students are the statements Q (1)–(4), Q (10)–(12), Q (14)–(15). The students' statements about teachers professional skills fall onto the first axis, which is related to the students' fairness, hard work and study experience (study years).

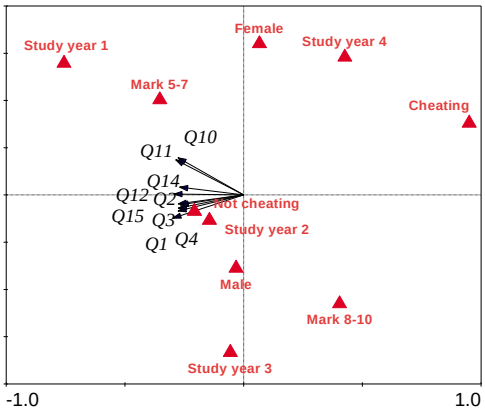

Figure 1. RDA ordination diagram of relations among the students response statements (continuous variables presented by arrows) about teachers' professional skills by students pattern (nominal variables)

Since the students response statements are correlated among each other, the general evaluation about teachers' professional skills is calculated by the arithmetic average of all statement grades by students' responses.

The students' academic consciousness and responsibility to learn subject (by the final mark obtained for the subject) are almost the main factors influencing teachers' skills evaluation (Figure 2). It seems that elder course students with age are more accustomed to the studies and become more demanding.

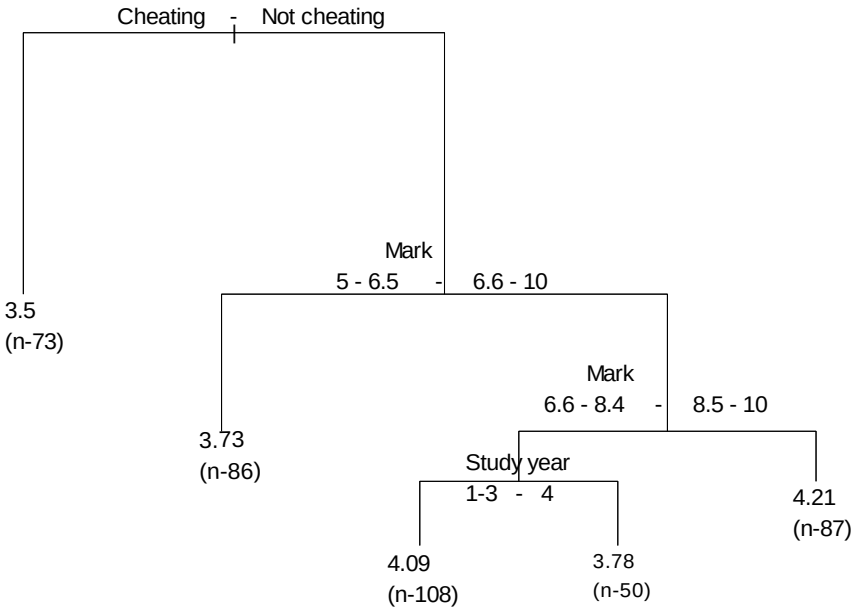

Figure 2. The regression tree model by segregating students pattern factors influencing the results of teachers professional skills evaluation. Arithmetic average of all statement grades by students responses was used as response variable (denotes terminal nodes), n – number of respondents.

4. Conclusion and Discussion

The teaching and learning process will not take place without communication (Frith, 2009). Hence, teachers with good communication ability will be able to create a more favourable environment. Students are looking for engagement into the study subject, teachers' ability to reveal a variety of

views and opinions in the field of the study subject and communicate knowledge in a clear, consistent, understandable way. The second most important point for students is a clear criteria of student knowledge assessment.

It is obvious that in order to achieve better learning outcomes, teachers should strive to give students more autonomy in learning and be responsible for it, creating the opportunity to choose the most appropriate individual or cooperative educational methods (Lai, 2011).

The variety of teachers' work styles allows students to form an attitude and to choose which teaching characteristics are relevant to learning. Obviously, the elder students go deeper into their studies and are more demanding for teaching excellence; they particularly need the teacher's availability.

Basically, the students rated the teachers positively, but they also had suggestions. Most of the students suggested that teachers communicate more with students, use various visual and technical tools, engage in subjects taught and spend more time on practical tasks.

References

Adamoniene, R., Statkeviciene, S., Kriksciunas, B. & Pugevicius, A. (2007). On educational problems of professional career in the context of socio-cultural development of Lithuania. In *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Changes in Social and Business Environment, Panevezys, Lithuania, 8–9 November 2007* (pp. 7–11). Selected papers/Kaunas University of Technology. Kaunas: Technologija. ISSN: 1822-7090.

Alberto, V., Pedro, M., Gonzalez-Tablasa, M. M., Perez, L., Lopeza, E. & Garciaa, I. (2013). Motivation and learning strategies in the use of ICTs among university students. *Computers & Education, 61*, 52–58.

Daukilas, S. & Kasperiuniene, J. (2015). Principles of connectivism learning theory in international studies. In *Proceedings of the 7th International Scientific Conference on Rural development 2015 towards the transfer of knowledge, innovations and social progress, Aleksandras Stulginskis University, Lithuania, 19–20 November 2015* (pp. 1–5). Akademija: Aleksandras Stulginskis University. ISSN: 2345-0916. ISBN: 9786094490927.

Frith, C. (2009). Motivation to learn. *Educational Communications and Technology,* University of Saskatchewan. Retrieved from http://www.usask.ca/education/coursework/802papers/Frith/Motivation.PDF

Guerrero, L. & Floyd, K. (2006). *Nonverbal communication in close relationships*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Jurik, V. Groschner, A. & Seidel, T. (2014). Predicting students' cognitive learning activity and intrinsic learning motivation: How powerful are teacher statements, student profiles, and gender? *Learning and Individual Differences, 32*, 132–139.

Kahyaoglu, M. (2014). The research of the relationship between environmentally aware prospective teachers' qualities and self-efficacy beliefs towards environmental education. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences. 116*, 4493–4497.

Kenneth, D. M. (2007). *Classroom teaching skill*. New York, NY: Mc Graw Hill.

Lai, E. R. (2011). *Motivation: A Literature Review*. New York, NY: Pearson Research Report.

Lambrechts, W., Mula, I., Ceulemans K., Molderez, I. & Gaeremynck, V. (2013). The integration of competencies for sustainable development in Higher Education: an analysis of bachelor programs in management. *Journal of Cleaner Production, 48*, 65–73.

Lent, R. C. & Gilmore, B. (2014). 10 Standards for motivation. *Educational Leadership. 72(*1), 66–67.

Leps, J. & Smilauer, P. (2003). *Multivariate analysis of ecological data using CANOCO*. Cambridge, UK: University Press.

MathSoft. (1998). *S-PLUS 4 Guide to Statistics*. Seattle, WA: Data Analysis Products Division. Retrieved from https://www2.stat.duke.edu/courses/Spring00/sta242/SGUIDE.PDF

Norliza, A. M., Zalizan, M. J., Norzaini, A. & Saemah, R. (2010). Communication skills and work motivation amongst expert teachers. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 7*, 565–567.

Studiju dalykas studento akimis. [Survey "*Study subject in student's eyes*"]. Retrieved from http://sprendimai.asu.lt/apklausos/

Tereseviciene, M., Volungeviciene, A., Zydziunaite, V., Kaminskiene, L., Rutkiene, A., Trepule, E. & Daukilas, S. (2015) *Technology enhanced learning integration into organizations.* (scientific study). Vilnius, Lithuania: Versus aureus. ISBN: 9786094671197.

Williams, K. C. & Williams, C. C. (2011). Five key ingredients for improving student motivation. *Research in Higher Education, 12*, 1–23.