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Characteristics of effective teacher

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Abstract

Developing a desired teacher behavior is the subject of many studies. It is important to find the aspects that make teacher attractive not only to implement a rigorous training before starting teaching career but also to further improve their professional activity, knowing that the focus is on continuous training of the teacher. When teacher know how to be attractive for teenage pupils many of school problems diminishes: school dropout, violence and absenteeism. This study aims to identify some of the personality traits and behaviors of the effective/ineffective teacher and is intended to be a starting point for more research.

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1. Introduction

Education is an important area of society, factor that raises more and more problems that are reflected in the entire process of teaching. The ability of the teacher to be liked, to motivate students, to help them understand and assimilate information received depends on the quality of teaching and learning. Effective school learning requires good teaching and good teaching requires value judgments that build professionals to educate their students (Porter & Brophy, 1988).

The teacher has a strong influence on student, determines him to learn, how or what to learn and also he cause interaction between students. For teenagers of today convincing ability to support an idea, an opinion, a principle, a solution, a value judgment is vital. If he does not know how to listen, negotiate, persuade effectively, evaluate the

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arguments for taking a correct decision has no chance in society (Bradea, 2009). Considering the degree to which teachers influence students, stated that teachers should promote positive outcomes in the lives of students, in that school purchases, positive attitude about school and interest in learning (Stronge, 2007). Teacher attitudes, behaviors and beliefs have a significant impact on student's cognitive acquisitions (Palardy & Rumberger, 2008).

“Good teachers understand what students everywhere can confirm: teaching is not just talking, and learning in not just listening. Effective teachers are able to figure out not only what they want to teach, but also how to do so way that students can understand and use the new information and skills” (Hammond, Bransford & LePage, 2005, p. 88).

An effective teacher can avoid devaluing messages, may make decisions to motivate the students and can overcome the pitfalls of excessive authoritarianism and permissiveness (Gordon, 2012).

In a study conducted in 2003, Koutsoulis (Scrivner, 2009) found that students listed the qualities of effective teachers, features such us: friendly, forgiveness, respect, compassion, fairness, attitude comprehension. In a quasi-retrospective longitudinal research, Walker (2008) identifies twelve characteristics of effective teacher needed for students to behave appropriately and acquire the information received. These features are: preparation, positive attitude, high expectations, creativity, fairness, personal touch, developing a sense of belonging, accepting mistakes, sense of humor, respect for students, forgiving attitude and compassion.

Burden and Bird (Hunt, Wiseman & Touzel, 2009) suggest that “the most essential teacher characteristics may be placed into the three organizing categories of knowledge, skills and dispositions”.

An effective teacher is one who does things right. They plan their lesson, prepare the learning environment, conduct proper lesson introductions, ask questions, and use instructional media material. Effectiveness in teaching is much more than just doing things right. The effective teacher touches the lives of students. Effective teacher is the result of three components: ability, personality and knowledge (Anderson, 2009).

It's very important as a teacher to develop, to become effective in the work that inefficiency has many disadvantages. The behaviour of an ineffective teacher has a deleterious effect on the work of others and also damages the school's reputation (Jones, Jenkin & Lord, 2006).

It's also important to know what motivates students, what the teacher's behavior leads him to learn. Stronge and Tucker (Holland, 2003) pointed out that students with three straight years of effective teacher had 60 percent greater achievement than those unfortunate enough to have a succession of ineffective teachers. An ineffective teacher can ruin a child's chances of succeeding in school (Holland, 2003).

2. Present study

The purpose of this study was to present a clarification of the meaning of effective teacher – strengths and weaknesses. The objective of the research was to detect the student perception of what a “good” and a “bad” teacher means, which are the personal and professional aspects of teachers in educational environment. Also the study wanted to examine the differences in the perception of teacher according to the biological sex of the students.

The study was based on the following general hypothesis: The perception of the strengths and weaknesses of teacher varies by students gender.

The following operational hypotheses were formulated:

- Hypothesis 1: Female students disapprove excessive authority and ironic language more than male students.
- Hypothesis 2: Female students approve more than male students the features: communicative, sensitive and rational.
- Hypothesis 3: Female students approve feature like persevering in work more than male students.

Research subjects are high school students (grades X and XI) and were randomly selected. There were a total of 52 subjects, male and female, aged 15-17 years. School in which subjects were selected belong state education system. No incentives were uses or other extrinsic motivation of subjects.

Study data were obtained by application of a questionnaire in which subjects selected from a predefined list of characteristics what they appreciate or complain to teachers. The questionnaire was obtained by consulting the literature and previous studies. Thus relevant features were extracted and adapted to the current educational

environment. Structurally, the questionnaire includes two multiple choice items, the first item containing 10 statements weaknesses of the teacher and the second 15 statements representing qualities.

3. Results

From preliminary analysis of data because we have dependent and independent variables measured on nominal scale order, each with two categories (absence or presence of such features), was applied non-parametric test χ^2 for independent samples.

Test χ^2 for independent samples revealed statistically insignificant results about gender differences for the following teachers negative appraisal: give excessive demands χ^2 (1, N=52)=0.787, p=0.375; excessive authority χ^2 (1, N=52)=1.261, p=0.262; heavy work/low grades χ^2 (1, N=52)=0.103, p=0.749; working without passion χ^2 (1, N=52)=0.080, p=0.777; uncertain explanations χ^2 (1, N=52)=0.923, p=0.337; too much lecture χ^2 (1, N=52)=0.495, p=0.482; not accept students opinion χ^2 (1, N=52)=0.693, p=0.405; impulsive behavior χ^2 (1, N=52)=1.3, p=0.254; ironic language χ^2 (1, N=52)=0.310, p=0.578; too tolerant χ^2 (1, N=52)=1.038, p=0.308. Thus, the perception of any of the traits investigated did not differ in terms of biological sex of the students.

The first secondary research hypothesis is not confirmed, not only female students but also male students disapprove excessive authority and ironic language.

Statistically insignificant results were found for the positive characteristics of teachers: communicative χ^2 (1, N=52)=2.364, p=0.124; good training χ^2 (1, N=52)=1.564, p=0.211; presence of sense of humor χ^2 (1, N=52)=0.433 p=0.510; friendly with students χ^2 (1, N=52)=0.591, p=0.442; balanced / calm χ^2 (1, N=52)=0.094, p=0.760; flexible in thinking χ^2 (1, N=52)=0.0001, p=1.00; good organizer χ^2 (1, N=52)=2.073, p=0.150; honest χ^2 (1, N=52)=0.391, p=0.532; sensitive and rational χ^2 (1, N=52)=0.083, p=0.773; responsible χ^2 (1, N=52)=1.359, p=0.244; exacting χ^2 (1, N=52)=0.165, p=0.685.

Second research hypothesis is not confirmed, female and male students appreciate both, without a significant difference the traits: communicative, sensitive and rational.

Table 1. Crosstabulation.

Crosstab		Persevering in work		Total	
		Accord	disaccord		
Gender	Male	Count	5	21	26
		Expected Count	9.5	16.5	26.0
	Female	Count	14	12	26
		Expected Count	9.5	16.5	26.0
Total	Count	19	33	52	
	Expected Count	19.0	33.0	52.0	

Table 2. Chi-Square for “persevering in work”.

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.718 ^a	1	.010		
Continuity Correction ^b	5.308	1	.021		
Likelihood Ratio	6.925	1	.009		
Fisher's Exact Test				.020	.010

Linear-by-Linear Association	6.589	1	.010
N of Valid Cases	52		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.50.			
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table			

Test showed statistically significant differences for the variable persevering in $\chi^2(1, N=52)= 6.718, p=0,010 < p=0,05$, schoolboys did not see the significant feature of a “good” teacher as schoolgirls do. The third secondary research hypothesis is confirmed.

Tabel 3. Crosstabulation.

Crosstab			Master on his knowledge		Total
			Accord	disaccord	
Gender	Male	Count	5	21	26
		Expected Count	8.5	17.5	26.0
	Female	Count	12	14	26
		Expected Count	8.5	17.5	26.0
Total	Count	17	35	52	
	Expected Count	17.0	35.0	52.0	

Tabel 4. Chi – Square Tests for “master on his knowledge”.

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.282 ^a	1	.039		
Continuity Correction ^b	3.146	1	.076		
Likelihood Ratio	4.379	1	.036		
Fisher's Exact Test				.075	.037
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.200	1	.040		
N of Valid Cases	52				
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.50.					
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table					

There is a statistically significant difference for students and schoolgirls in terms of characteristics: master of his knowledge $\chi^2(1, N=52)= 4.282, p=0,039 < p=0,05$; tolerance $\chi^2(1, N=52)= 4.952, p=0,026 < p=0,05$ and for control of emotions and behavior $\chi^2(1, N=52)= 4.457, p=0,035 < p=0,05$.

Tabel 5. Chi-Square Tests for “control of emotions and behavior”.

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.457 ^a	1	.035		
Continuity Correction ^b	3.095	1	.079		
Likelihood Ratio	4.715	1	.030		
Fisher's Exact Test				.075	.038
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.371	1	.037		
N of Valid Cases	52				
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.00.					
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table					

Tabel 6. Chi-Square Tests for "tolerance".

Chi-Square Tests	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.952 ^a	1	.026		
Continuity Correction ^b	3.792	1	.052		
Likelihood Ratio	5.036	1	.025		
Fisher's Exact Test				.050	.025
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.857	1	.028		
N of Valid Cases	52				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 12.00.
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

4. Conclusions

The research investigated the perception of personal and professional characteristics of teachers among high school students. The teenage pupils appreciate different traits of teachers like: calm, tolerance, presence of sense of humor, friendly, a well prepared teacher, it seems to be exactly what they need at this confusing age. Instead, both male and female students disagree with features like: excessive demands and authority, working without passion, uncertain explanations, ironic language and also being too tolerant. Characteristic of perseverance is appreciated by female students more than male students, also the tolerance and control of emotions and behavior. When desired or undesired traits are known, through a self-assessment every teacher can identify what in his own behavior, communication or presence in class is wrong or right. Every teacher can make changes by oneself for the manner of thinking, acting and teaching.

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