

Significants variables of academic success

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Abstract

The professional performance of the teacher is a multidimensional construct. In the scientific literature and also in the assessment tools of academic activities in various universities there are multiple enumerations, more compressed or extended, of the qualities or characteristics of the effective teacher. This variety suggests, on one hand, the complexity of teaching, and, on the other hand, the absence of an integrative conceptual model of what success means in the professional academic environment. Therefore, the objective of the current research, carried out on a total of 612 subjects was to detect the factors associated with succes in the academic environment. The results represent a taxonomy of the fulfilment of the teaching performance and provides possible courses of action to take in order to optimize the teaching process.

Keywords: *academic performance, teaching, learning.*

1. Introduction

The academic success is a multidimensional construct that integrates a number of factors that are both related to the actors involved in education (teacher, student) as well as to the institutional context-specific factors. In the present study we aimed to identify a set of indicators of the teaching activity that define the teacher-student relationship and influence positively or negatively the achievement of the academic success. The research, conducted based on questionnaires, had an evaluative, diagnosis and prognosis role. In this paper we will present the students' answers to the questions that have investigated the factors that prevent/ help achieve the academic succes. The analysis was conducted both on closed response items (Likert scale) and on open response items which allowed the respondents to express their views, useful for perceiving various differentiation aspects.

2. The results of the investigation

2.1. What factors are most relevant in defining the academic success?

Generally, it is estimated that the academic success is the result of the activities of teachers and students in the educational process. Assessing the role of each factor according to its importance for the results (academic success), we see that the score of each dimension and the total score ranks above the theoretical average of the response scale. The teacher's lectures, seminars/ labs, the teacher-student relationship but also the student's effort are the four factors analyzed on a Likert scale (level 1- least important, level 5- very important) based on their relevance to achieving their own academic success. By analyzing the frequency of the responses, we find that teaching at

seminars and the student's effort represent, in the view of 40% of the students, the most relevant factors in setting up a successful academic career (Table 1).

Table 1. The importance of the factors involved in defining the academic success

The importance	The teacher's classes		The teacher's seminars		The teacher-student relationship		The student's effort	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
level 1	6	1,0	4	,7	11	1,8	10	1,6
level 2	17	2,8	19	3,1	38	6,2	16	2,6
level 3	119	19,4	65	10,6	123	20,1	97	15,8
level 4	191	31,2	187	30,6	155	25,3	146	23,9
level 5	207	33,8	269	44,0	213	34,8	265	43,3
undecided	7	1,1	2	,3	6	1,0	12	2,0
total	547	89	546	89	546	89	546	89
non-response	55	10,6	56	10,8	56	10,8	56	10,8

2.2. Wath factors impede the academic success?

Having processed the free answers, we have put together as a result, a list of factors that, in the students' opinion, prevent achieving the desired success in the learning activity (Table 2). For 30% of the students, time mangement is a significant factor that influences the academic success. Only 12% of the students believe that no factor can interfere negatively with the desire to succeed.

Table 2. Impediments to the academic success

Impediments to the academic success	Frequency
time for learning	189
lack of motivation	98
nothing	75
course content	68
teaching methods	65
attitude/behavior of teachers	62
curriculum	48
cognitive ability	21
behavior limitations	20
education system	19
peer grup	15
the assessment method	11
poor performance valorisation	10
material conditions for study	9
schedule	7

2.3. What factors help students achieve the academic success?

The students' free responses have generated a list of ten resource factors that support the success in the academic environment. We notice the same need of time management and activation of motivational resources, in addition to emphasizing the practicality of activities.

Table3. Factors that support the academic success

Support the academic success	Frequency
more practice/ practical work	91
time management support	69
perseverance, will	61
job safety	43
teacher-student relationship	41
effective teaching	40
schedule that meets students' needs	37
more systematic organization of the course	37
motivation	34
cognitive ability	29

The comparison of the two sets of answers, draws attention to the major role assigned by students to the studying conditions provided by the university. It's about the option for more practical activities and ensuring the best development of practice, the involvement in securing a job, providing technical, informational and financial resources necessary to conduct the teaching process, extracurricular activities to support the learning activity, the pedagogical training of the teachers, the planning of the teaching activities by taking into account both the teaching requirements and the students' needs.

2.4. The teacher's profile that is respected by students

In line with research that investigated the psychological profile of the teacher, effective teaching is firstly represented by a series of attitudes, like: replacement of control with participation, stimulating students', strategical option for communication, training, motivation, and secondly by professional capacities such as: a good preparation in the subject taught, the ability of human networking, communication capabilities, the negotiator ability and the ability to assign tasks correctly having realistic expectations.

The list of the qualities that students respect the most in a teacher corresponds to the following profile:

Table 4. Teacher's profile respected by students

Teacher's profile	Frecvency
professional	66
correct, demanding	65
dedicated to the teaching activity	48
serious	54
respectful	43
open to communicate, available, sociable, kind	41
undstanding, empathetic, tolerant, good listener	32
honest	31
patient, calm	22
smart, with a sense of humour	19
nice character	15

3. Conclusions

The concept of „academic profession” in the european context brings changes that require a new paradigm of academic training, focused on the student’s learning and his work, and requests an increase in the teaching position of the professor in order to stimulate his motivation and to recognize the efforts made to improve quality and innovation.

This approach leads to drawing some conclusions with the value of theoretical and methodological prerequisites for futher intervention:

- The student’s perspective on improving the quality of the training process is aimed primarily at teachers to use modern teaching strategies, interactive and differentiated in line with the psycho-individual particularities of the trainees with the purpose of bringing out the maximum level of potential of the students. Overall, the students felt that the academic success depends primarily on the quality of the teaching work in general, but especially on the designing and implementing of the training strategies, in particular.

- Based on the immediate educational reality, the development and certification of the academic skills is required in the view of expanding or in depth mastering the pedagogical skills necessary to work with students. The emphasis should be placed on the fundamental values in education like the intellectual freedom, the student’s autonomy, nurturing human relationships, the major objective of active pedagogy being to empower the student, to help him grow, to shape his personality and to develop his self-confidence through the use of pedagogical practices centered on the individual or collaborative student’s learning activity .

- Is is necessary to be aware of the importance of the university didactics to ensure the academic success of the students and to create a curriculum for training and development which proposes course designs, good practice guides for the development of the teaching/ pedagogical skills, via actions of promotion, dissemination and multiplication, online debates, conferences, seminars or workshops.

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