

STUDY REGARDING THE NEED TO ADAPT THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER'S IMAGE TO THE DEMANDS OF THE SOCIAL PARTNERS

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Abstract

The teaching profession is often regarded by the public with trust and responsibility, needing the highest standards of professionalism. As a result, the teacher is given both the public trust and the responsibilities to practice this profession according to the highest possible standards and ethical conduct.

The persons being taught are like a sponge, absorbing everything, good and bad, and their socialization is very important, depending mainly on parents and teachers.

This paper aims to highlight the most important personality traits that the parents and students expect to exist in a physical education teacher, and emphasize the variables that differentiate their opinions, comparing them with results recorded by Polish researchers. The values recorded in this study are close, proving the fact that at an European level, we cannot speak of major differences in regards to the image of the physical education teacher.

Key words: *image, professor, student*

INTRODUCTION

The role played by image in society has been recognized for a while, the human resources people, the televisions or politicians being aware of the fact that the proverb "the clothes do not make the man" is no longer current, the benefits that can be obtained by creating a positive image being incommensurable.

Unfortunately, until recently it did not mean too much for the employees of public institutions, such as health services or education. Social significance, as well as the uniqueness of a profession was enough to ensure being positively perceived by others. Changes came together with social and technological progress, resulting mainly, from the rising level of education of citizens and from the development of communication technologies. At that time an image gained significance and became one of the important ways of communicating with the surroundings.

If in regards to the image of institutions, things are slightly better, with educational markets that have as main goal to promote the image and culture of the organizing institution, drawing in students from one school to another, things are not that good at an individual level, people forgetting unfortunately that **"It's not the walls that make a school, but the minds inside it"** (King Ferdinand I, 1923)

The way in which a teacher's job is perceived in today's society is, apart from the attitude, skills and knowledge possessed by the teachers, influenced by such factors as traditions and the level of the development of education, government policy,

attitude of other teachers to their profession, power and direction of professional organizations' influence, type of school, etc.

The scandals in the media lately focused on the attitude or actions of certain teachers should make one think about the need to form an image as favorable as possible for the teacher in general, and for the physical education teacher in particular.

Taking up the task of creating or modifying one's own image requires getting acquainted with the premise that in the educational process, the teacher is not alone, interacting with the parents, superiors, colleagues, or students. More than that, the teachers have different functions in school or outside it, such as class master, management positions in school or inspectorate, mentors, public or political positions, etc., all these activities overlapping one another and sometimes decisively influencing the image of the teacher.

Of course, the created image is different, according to the recipient and their expectations. This indicates that an image is an individualized, changeable, complex category, and as a result, one needs to take into consideration the fact that the task of creating or modifying someone's image needs a familiarization with the expectations of the beneficiaries and their ideas first, and then actually creating it.

AIM

This paper aims to highlight the most important personality traits that the parents and students expect to exist in a physical education teacher, and emphasize the variables that differentiate their opinions, comparing them with

results recorded by Polish researchers in 2011 (Zalech, M. 2011).

HYPOTHESES

This study started from the following hypotheses:

1. The creation of the best possible image for the physical education teacher must take into account the general environment where the teacher performs his/her duties, and the adaptation of his/her behavior to the demands of the social partners.
2. The European students' expectations in regards to the physical education teacher's image are, by and large, the same, the differences being insignificant and generated by the national cultural framework.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was conducted on 381 eleventh grade students from the "Ferdinand I" National College and the "Stefan cel Mare" National College, both in Bacau. The choice of the two groups was dictated by reasons tied to the availability of the teachers, and to the fact that at the eleventh grade level one can speak of a total accommodation of the students to the college lifestyle, and at the same time, their behavior is not

yet marked by the worry of the impending Baccalaureate exam at the end of the twelfth grade. The study also included five physical education teachers from the two colleges, two men and 3 women.

In order to be able to compare the results with the ones from another European country similar to Romania from the point of view of the evolution of physical education, M. Zalech's 2011 study, "Positive Personality Traits As an Element of Creating the Image of a Physical Education Teacher", was used.

The subjects' task was to indicate three positive traits that should distinguish a physical education teacher. The respondents selected their answers from the following traits: fair, being a partner, benevolent, patient, calm, consistent, caring, understanding, trustworthy, friendly, with a sense of humor, self-possessed, or they could add one feature of their own. The research was anonymous and included 196 students from the first college and 185 students from the second one.

The statistical analysis was used, with the $p < 0.05$ threshold for the statistical significance.

RESULTS

The recorded results are synthesized in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1. The Romanian and Polish students' preferences regarding the physical education teacher's personality trait

| No. | Traits | Bacău, Romania | Lublin, Poland |
|-----|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. | other traits | 6.70% | 3.70% |
| 2. | self-possessed | 21.30% | 18.30% |
| 3. | sense of humor | 41.70% | 47.60% |
| 4. | friendly | 26.40% | 19.40% |
| 5. | trustworthy | 14.50% | 14.70% |
| 6. | understanding | 56.60% | 39.20% |
| 7. | caring | 3.20% | 4.80% |
| 8. | consistent | 17.20% | 20.10% |
| 9. | calm | 25.70% | 24.90% |
| 10. | patient | 39.60% | 30.00% |
| 11. | benevolent | 8.30% | 14.30% |
| 12. | being a partner | 15.00% | 17.60% |
| 13. | fair | 62.10% | 45.40% |

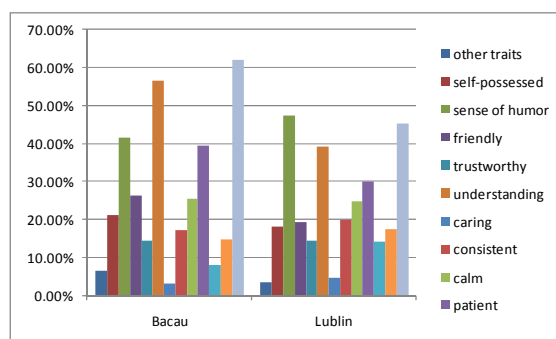


Figure 1. The Romanian and Polish students' preferences regarding the physical education teacher's personality traits

The analysis of the particular aspects selected by the students showed a few differences regarding the hierarchy of the physical education teacher's personality traits, as follows:

If the Polish students think that the first place should be occupied by the sense of humor (47.60%), 62.10 % of the Romanian students believe that fairness should come first.

Regarding the second trait, the Polish students think that this should be fairness, with 56.60% of their options, while the Romanian students put tolerance on second place, with 56.60% of their preferences.

In regards to the third place, we also encounter differences: the Polish students believe that the teacher should be understanding, 39.20% of the options proving that, while the Romanian students chose the sense of humor (41.7%).

Only when it comes to the fourth trait, the Romanian and the Polish students put the teacher's patience on the same level, with 39.60%, and 30.00%, respectively.

The least frequent indicated traits were "care" and "other traits". For the last option the traits indicated were: nice, athletic, hardworking, helpful, exigent, active, the teacher should take into account the students' abilities when assessing them, good natured, , responsible, passionate about his/her work.

For both the female and the male students, the most important traits characterizing a physical education teacher are the same.

The difference is only in the percentage boys and girls who chose each of these traits.

DISCUSSIONS

Tasks which teachers encounter, their duties and competences as well as desired features constituting an ideal teacher have been described in literature in detail (Jinga, I., Istrate, 1998, Joița, E, 2000, Berti Ch, Molinari L, Speltini G., 2010); an ideal teacher should be prepared for performing various functions and roles in the process of education and upbringing.

Creating a positive image well-associated among students, parents and superiors is one of the more difficult and more complex tasks.

One of the most desired characteristics of a physical education teacher chosen by the students was "understanding". This indicates how significant it is for students to have a teacher who is tolerant of their mistakes, is able to unite the group, always gives positive feedback, does not point out their mistakes continuously, and does not over-criticize.

The importance of this feature also results from the fact that its insufficient level in a teacher, especially in the cases when students have low self-esteem, may lead to the loss of self-confidence and discouragement.

The majority of students believe that teachers should act in a fair way. It is required from teachers to set clear criteria which do not favor any of the class members and to use professional impartiality while taking any decisions. This trait is easily noticeable by students, whereas its lack may lead to improper relations in class.

According to students, a teacher should be primarily patient. Signs of this feature include persistent heading towards the aim and the ability to wait for the realization of the given tasks for a longer time or to wait for weaker students to complete a task.

According to the respondents, a good teacher is a person who is characterized by a well-developed sense of humor, because the physical education lesson is perceived by most students as a relaxation class, and not necessarily as a rigorous, military-like activity.

The fact that students want some understanding and patience from their teachers shows indirectly that they realize their own imperfections. The presence of professional athletes in the classroom shows the other students that sometimes they are far from performing perfectly, but at the same time, individualized treatment is needed, to allow each student to reach his/her maximum degree of perfection in relation to their individual abilities.

The motor baggage that the students bring from the previous grades does not allow them a quick access to the taught motor actions, and as a consequence, the teacher must establish for each student individually the learning algorithms in concordance with their experience and interests.

This shows that professionalism alone, without properly shaped personality traits of a teacher, does not guarantee success or social profit.

Just like in the Zalech study (2011), the analyses carried out in this study revealed statistically significant relations between the students' choices of particular personality traits and a school they attend.

The differences between the anticipated teacher's personality traits depending on the type of school which the subjects attended could originate in the students' present socio-educational environment. Another reason for the diversity of choices depending on the school might also be constituted by experiences which students have or have had with their previous physical education teachers.

CONCLUSIONS

The collected and analyzed data allowed the following conclusions:

The values recorded in this study are close, proving the fact that at an European level, we cannot speak of major differences in regards to the image of the physical education teacher. An important observation is that in regards to the first four traits

desired by the students, they were the same for the Polish and the Romanian students, the differences being only in hierarchy, but even here, one cannot say there are significant differences.

Knowledge of the desired personality traits depending on the indicated variables may enable the teacher to correct the current attitude to students and may lead to exerting more efficient influence on them.

The personality traits most frequently indicated by students as the desired ones should constitute the foundations for building a positive image or help to modify an existing one. A positive image among students may improve relations with them, facilitate classroom work, increase authority or help to shape proper attitude in regards to physical culture.

The process of teacher education should be enriched with examples of skills enabling teachers to reveal the desired traits in contact with the youths in form of a range of behaviors taking into account the students' age, gender or school environment.

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