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PUPILS ATTITUDE TOWARDS DIDACTIC CAREER

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Abstract. In this article we present the results of a stage within a pedagogical experiment on improving the attitude of high school students towards the teaching career. Being a fairly current topic, but also quite complicated, based on the fact that it is a long process and it is difficult in a short period of time to form positive attitudes towards an activity, but this is not impossible. The attitude of the pupils towards the teaching career can be different, depending on many factors, from which its external manifestation in the form of opinion or actions, can be unstable and be different from each other. We assume that capitalizing on a model of guiding pupils in the teaching career would have a positive impact on the level of attitude of pupils towards the teaching profession. In this regard, in this article we mention the tools that have been applied in this regard, and have demonstrated their effectiveness with positive comparative values.

Keywords: *pupils, teaching career, motivation, attitude towards teaching career.*

Rezumat. În acest articol prezentăm rezultatele unei etape din cadrul unui experiment pedagogic privind îmbunătățirea atitudinii liceenilor față de cariera didactică. Fiind un subiect destul de actual, dar și suficient de complicat, reieșind din faptul că este un proces de durată și este dificil într-o perioadă scurtă de timp ca să formezi atitudini pozitive față de o activitate, dar, acest lucru nu este și imposibil. Atitudinea elevilor față de cariera didactică poate fi diferită, în dependență de foarte mulți factori, de aceea manifestarea ei exterioară sub formă de opinie sau acțiune, poate fi instabilă și să fie diferită una de cealaltă. Presupunem că valorificarea unui model de ghidare al elevilor în cariera didactică ar avea impact pozitiv asupra nivelului atitudinii elevilor față de profesia didactică. În acest sens, în acest articol menționăm despre instrumentele care au fost aplicate în acest sens, și și-au demonstrat eficiența obținând valențe comparative pozitive.

Cuvinte cheie: *elevi, carieră didactică, motivație, atitudinea față de cariera didactică.*

1. Introduction

Guiding pupils in teaching career is a topical issue for contemporary society, in the context of a rapid evolution of both professions in the labor market and the options of young people when choosing a future profession. Scientific documentation allows us to state that there are several studies and classifications of the reasons that determine the choice of a teaching career by pupils.

Motivation refers to the inner factors of the individual that stimulate, maintain and channel behavior in relation to a goal [1, p.381]. On the other hand, motivation refers to the influences that govern the initiation, direction, intensity and persistence of behavior [2, p. 431].

Attracting human resources in education, however, for the work at the department is not the only difficult aspect of the problems developed in our study. As we will detail later, we are dealing with extremely difficult issues, because it is important not only to make sure that graduates knowingly choose such a career, but - moreover - that the most valuable human resources are drawn to a teaching career [3, p.8].

In their research entitled „Teacher education in Singapore: What motivates students to choose teaching as a career?“, as a result of which they noted that there are generally three categories of reasons needed to pursue a teaching career:

(1) extrinsic motivation (including elements such as work remuneration and other benefits - such as the security offered by such a job); (2) intrinsic motivation (the joy of teaching and the school environment in which the instructive-educational process takes place); and (3) the altruistic aspects (the fact that the teaching profession offers the opportunity to become a decisive element in the life of young people, in the major decisions that the latter will take) [4].

One of the least important motivating factors is the pursuit of a teaching career due to the influence of others (it is interesting to note that if this is important for other careers - he did what his family told him for example, continuing a its tradition - in the teaching career is no longer significant). Between the two extremes were other motivations (which we find in most studies in the field: a positive experience with a teacher who thus served as a career model, the security offered by such a job, more time great to spend with family, etc.) [3, p.7]. Family traditions influence the choice of a career, and the father's model is decisive [5, p.57; 6, pp.69-70].

Having young children as their own “professional model” of success in their teaching career, in some cases children can imitate their parents' behavior, later embracing this profession. In addition to the benefits of the teaching profession that the child sees every day in his parents, or one of his parents who practice this profession, the professional parenting model can become a tool to influence the choice of future teaching career.

In the paper „Recruitment and retention: Insight into the motivation of primary trainee teachers in England“; The authors emphasize [7] that the main reason for pursuing a teaching career is the impact that this profession has on social dynamics. Regarding the study itself, the authors note several categories of factors, important for those who choose the teaching career, of these:

Pragmatic factors: extended vacations enjoyed by teachers; the fact that the teaching profession provides good job security; the ease with which you get this job, once you have the necessary qualifications.

Social factors: the support that the teaching profession offers to the progress of society; the fact that it is socially deserving to have such a profession; the teaching profession involves considerable variety and challenge, a wide variety of subjects can be taught.

Factors related to working with children: schools are pleasant jobs; the teaching activity itself is a pleasant endeavor; the pleasure offered by the activity with a specific age category (children); the desire to help students succeed.

Extrinsic factors: encouragement from others to pursue a teaching career; in the vision of some of those interviewed, the teaching career becomes a springboard for other careers;

the choice of the teaching profession is generated by the perception of the subjects that they are unable to follow another profession.

Subjective factors: previous experiences as a student generated the desire to be a teacher; passion for the field to be taught [8].

Thus, in an experiment we proposed as a research variable, the attitude of students towards the teaching profession as a motivating factor for choosing a teaching career.

2. Methods

In order to form the pupils' attitude towards the teaching career, were created situations and contexts in this sense. Thus, the formative pedagogical experiment was attended by 29 students of the 11th grade from the Public Institution Theoretical High School "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" who represented the experimental group, and another 29 students who represented the control group, of which 15 students from the Theoretical High School "Lucian Blaga", and 14 students from the Public Institution Theoretical High School "Princess Natalia Dadiani".

The content and the procedural dimension of the didactic orientation program in the career constituted training sessions in this respect, and on the other hand their involvement in a system of activities oriented towards the didactic career.

Ajzen consider that the evaluative dimensions of attitude can take many forms such as good-bad, harmful-beneficial, pleasant-unpleasant, and likable-dislikable [9].

In order to evaluate the pupils' attitude towards the teaching career, based on the questionnaire adapted from Ustuner M. [10], Tezci E. [11], Terzi A. [12] (the original version of the questionnaire contains 34 statements) we developed and applied a questionnaire consisting of 25 statements regarding the teaching profession. When preparing the questionnaire, we took into account the following aspects:

- ✓ *identifying a need* - due to the lack of such measuring instruments and the real need to prepare the questionnaire;
- ✓ *defining the objectives and indicators of the questionnaire* - we established the target group, so to whom it is addressed and why this questionnaire was chosen;
- ✓ *selection of a group of experts in this field* - allowed to make a first version of the questionnaire;
- ✓ *writing and composing items* - writing the actual questions;
- ✓ *field phase* - application of the questionnaire to real subjects from a certain target group, analysis of items;
- ✓ *revision of items* - analysis and structuring of items, elimination of incorrect ones (reformulation of some items);
- ✓ *preparation of the final version of the questionnaire* - the items are checked again;
- ✓ *establishing the rules of interpretation* - checking the fidelity and validity of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire "Pupils' attitude towards teaching career" was developed by the method of experts attended by 2 representatives from university, a statistician and a school manager.

Attitudes are generally thought to be reflected in behavior, but there are several factors that can disrupt this, namely:

- a) the influence of the immediate situation which involves numerous stimuli that act directly on the behavior;
- b) the action of several complementary or contradictory attitudes on the behavior;

c) the gap between the moment when we study the attitudes of a subject or a group and the moment when the real behavior is observed [13].

Based on this theoretical support, we aimed to evaluate not so much the direct behavioral aspect of the pupils, whether or not I would choose a teaching career?, but the intention (option) to choose this profession or teaching career?).

Between attitude and their external manifestations in the form of opinion or action, there isn't a perfect and unconditional compliance. This is evidenced by another perspective that questioned including the stability of attitudes. According to research authors Erikson, West Pines, Wilson quoted by H. Bloch et al. [14] the subject has a "database", a complex set of factors relevant information to form an attitude, but are only partially activated in attitudes [15].

Thus, we established 5 criteria of the attitude towards the teaching career, namely:

- ✓ Criteria I Compatibility with the teaching profession;
- ✓ Criteria II Attitude towards teaching;
- ✓ Criteria III Attitude towards the prestige of the profession;
- ✓ Criteria IV Attitude towards the working conditions of the teaching profession;
- ✓ Criteria V Attraction to the teaching profession.

Pupils ticked each statement that matched their opinion, giving 5 points for Total agreement, 4 points for Agreement, 3 points for Indifference, 2 points for Disagreement and 1 point for Total Disagreement (Linkert Scale). Following the addition of the score obtained for each statement in the questionnaire out of the 25, each pupil obtained a general score that represents the level of attitude that the pupil has towards the teaching career.

3. Results

In order to evaluate the efficiency of the pupil guidance program in the teaching career, we performed the control stage within the pedagogical experiment carried out. To achieve the goal proposed at this stage, we applied to pupils - similar experimental group, questionnaire to assess attitudes towards teaching, the method of analysis was the pair test - the test to determine the average differences before and after the intervention.

We used the t test for the paired samples to assess the statistical significance of the differences between the means for two sets of scores. In our case, highlighting the differences and statistical significance even after the intervention through training activities demonstrates the impact that the training program had on the development of pupils on certain indicators of research variables. In the table below we present the comparative results obtained by the experimental group, before and after the training experiment.

Table 1

The results of the experimental group on the attitude towards the teaching career, pre and post training program

	Criteria	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Criteria 1	compatibility with the teaching career	18.41	29	3.905	.725
	post compatibility with the teaching career	22.55	29	2.886	.536
Criteria 2	attitude towards teaching	9.21	29	1.897	.352
	post attitude towards teaching	10.41	29	1.597	.297

		<i>Continuation Table 1</i>			
Criteria 3	attitude towards the prestige of the profession	16.03	29	2.556	.475
	post attitude towards the prestige of the profession	16.10	29	3.016	.560
Criteria 4	attitude towards working conditions	15.76	29	2.824	.524
	post attitude towards working conditions	19.93	29	1.963	.364
Criteria 5	attraction for the teaching career	13.03	29	1.569	.291
	post attraction for the teaching career	14.76	29	1.504	.279
Total average	pre	72.45	29	6.484	1.204
	post	83.48	29		

At the pre-experiment stage at criteria 1, the compatibility with the teaching profession was obtained with a coefficient of 18.41. Obtaining a score of 22.55 post-experiment, shows us that following the involvement of pupils in career-oriented activities, some pupils found that their personality qualities are compatible with the qualities of a teacher, that they may have a predisposition, a penchant for teaching, that the teaching profession is suitable for some of the pupils, that their personality corresponds to the requirements of the respective profession and that they can be successful in choosing this profession, and that they like to converse with people who work in this field. Regarding the attitude towards teaching, the pupils recorded pre-experiment 9.21 and post-10.14.

This criteria has been slightly improved compared to the other criteria. Thus, we can say that regardless of the involvement in the activities of the training program, it remains a less influenced aspect by this, and the difference of 0.93 is accumulated from the fact that some pupils mentioned that they obtained satisfaction after being involved in the system of activities oriented towards the didactic career.

Regarding the pupils' attitude towards the prestige of the profession, this criteria remains unchanged, being obtained before 16.03 and after 16.10. This explains why involvement in certain activities cannot in any way influence the attitude towards the prestige of a profession and that it actually depends on other major dominant factors, such as the perception of members of society about this profession. What is certain is that the change in pupils' attitude towards the prestige of a profession takes a long time, and cannot be so easily influenced only by activities at the level of a doctoral research, but by concrete actions at the level of society, members of society, family, school, group. of friends, community. At criteria 4, the attitude towards working conditions, we attest a major improvement of the coefficients, from 15.76 pre-experiment to 19.93. With such a result, we can say that as a result of this involvement of the pupils, also having the direct role of teacher, they discovered that they will be able to overcome the difficulties in this profession, that eventually they could face a more demanding work schedule, that the lack of financial incentives would not prevent them from working in the teaching profession and that they could adapt to these working conditions.

The last indicator of the attitude towards the teaching career, the attraction towards this profession, we attest that the students enrolled in the pre-experimental stage 13.03 and in the post-14.76 stage.

This shows that the pupils who participated improved their attitude towards the idea of becoming teachers and changed their attitude towards the choice regarding the choice of a teaching career.

In short, in the experimental sample we obtained significant differences before and after the intervention through the training activities, namely:

- The average for the variable compatibility with the teaching profession up to the training program (M (mean preexperiment)=18.41, SD (Std. Deviation)=3.90) and after the training program (M (mean postexperiment)=22.5, SD=2.88), differs significantly ($t = -6.59$, $DF=28$, $p=0.000$).

- The average for the variable attitude towards teaching up to the training program (M=9.21, SD=1.89) and after the training program (M=10.14, SD=1.59), differs significantly ($t = -4.70$, $DF=28$, $p=0.000$).

- The average for the variable attitude towards working conditions up to the training program (M=15.76, SD=2.82) and after the training program (M=19.93, SD=1.96), differs significantly ($t = -7.60$, $DF=28$, $p=0.000$).

- The average for the variable attraction towards the teaching profession up to the training program (M=13.03, SD=1.56) and after the training program (M=14.76, SD=1.50), differs significantly ($t = -7.42$, $DF=28$, $p=0.000$).

- The total average up to the training program represents $M = 72.45$, after $M=83.48$.

In the figure below, we also represent how the pre- and post-experiment research variable has changed.

It is certain that in a short time you cannot radically change attitudes, but at least we can improve its values.

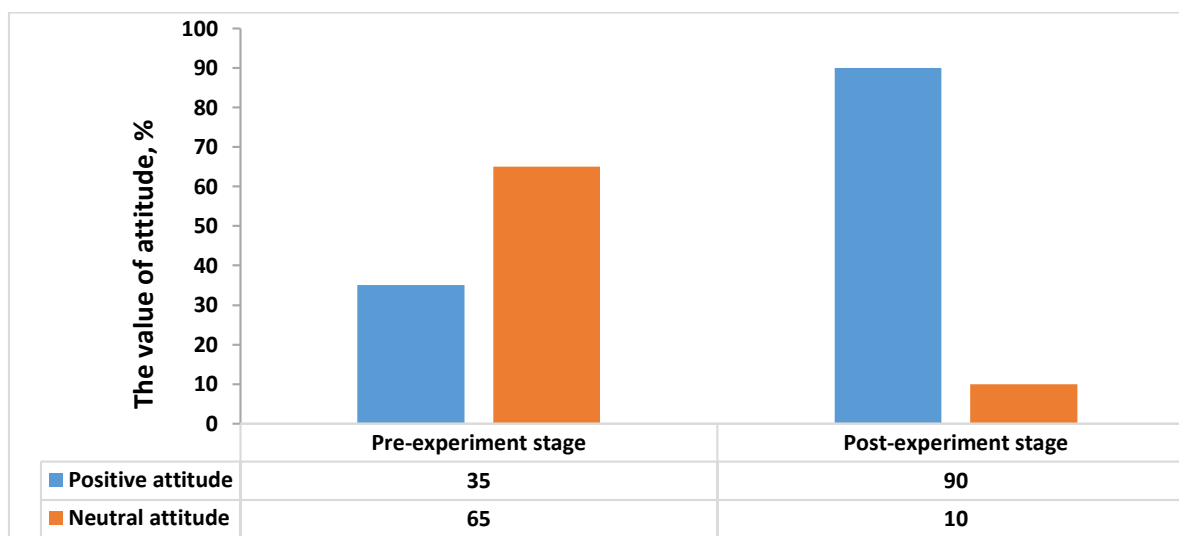


Figure 1. Modification of the research variable at the pre- and post-experiment stage.

5. Conclusions

Analyzing the results of the statistical processing, we obtained the following correlations from the pupils of the experimental group:

- There is a significant positive relationship between the attraction to the teaching profession and the compatibility with the teaching profession ($r = 0.481$, $DF=29$, $p=.008$), as the attraction for the teaching profession increases, so does the compatibility with the teaching profession.

– There is a significant positive relationship between the attitude towards teaching and the attraction towards the teaching profession ($r= 0.525$, $DF=29$, $p=.003$), with the increase of the attitude towards teaching, the attraction towards the teaching profession also increases.

– There is a significant positive relationship between the attitude towards the prestige of the profession and the attraction towards the teaching profession ($r= 0.418$, $DF=29$, $p=.024$), as the attitude towards the prestige of the profession increases, so does the attraction towards the teaching profession.

– There is a significant positive relationship between the attitude towards working conditions and the attraction towards the teaching profession ($r= 0.381$, $DF=29$, $p=.042$), as the attitude towards working conditions increases, so does the attraction towards the teaching profession.

From a statistical point of view, it has been shown that there is a positive relationship directly proportional to the attitude towards teaching and the attraction towards the profession, with the increase of the attitude towards teaching increases and the attraction towards the teaching profession. The more the pupils became involved in the system of activities oriented towards the teaching career having the direct role of teacher, the more they are attracted to choose this profession. Being the direct actors in those situations and direct experiences, changing their attitude towards the working conditions, both increases the attraction towards the teaching profession.

Conflicts of Interest. The author declares no conflict of interest.

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