

EDU WORLD 2022**Edu World International Conference Education Facing Contemporary World Issues****TEACHER'S WELL-BEING - A PREMISE FOR THE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY**

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Abstract

The educational community is described by numerous changes (due to technological, economic, social, demographic pressures, etc.). Equally extensive are the demands on student performance and the scientific or academic results of teachers in front of whom they need to be sufficiently proactive. Reflections on the education and professional efficiency of teachers are starting points in identifying professional development strategies. The need for safety of the teacher in the educational environment is natural, being assimilated to any other professional environment. Therefore, the teacher's well-being is a variable with immediate effects on his/her professional development. Studies show that teacher's well-being is conditioned by his/her worries, among the most varied (personal, professional, economic, social, etc.). Highlighting the dynamic evolution of teacher's concerns (beginner, experienced, with expertise), the study seeks to outline the idea that developing a professional community that facilitates collaboration, sharing ideas and experiences, finding solutions and unitary decisions based on common beliefs is the vision of a securing educational system.

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1. Introduction

Teachers' professional development is a complex process, which includes various activities - exchanges of experience and good practices, participation in projects /programs, collaborative activities, specialized and pedagogical research, experience and self-reflection on their professional activity, etc.

The professional development perspective of the teaching community is based on competent and motivated teachers, who benefit from professional development throughout their careers, including participation in networks and professional communities.

When the target of the development of the educational system is the teacher, its professional development projects will take into account some complementary directions:

- The principles of the effective teacher: the principle of the relationship between attitude and behavior, the principle of non-escalation, the principle of behavioral consistency (Pânișoară, 2009);
- Interactive strategic approaches, which characterize an effective didactic process: constructivist approaches, activation in school knowledge, reverse connection mechanisms (Bocoș, 2013);
- The rules regarding the interactions and conditionings in the class of students: interactions through communication, socio-affective interactions, needs for knowing each other (Iucu, 2000);
- The variables that define the professional development of the teacher - the teacher's worries and concerns: worries about the family, worries about the future, worries about job security, worries about the various and inherent institutional responsibilities (Albu, 2013).

2. Problem Statement

2.1. The professional community

Adult education programs are built on three fundamental dimensions of learning: learning through interactive strategies, which capitalize on everyone's experience, results-oriented /performance-oriented learning, learning experiences organized around categories of skills.

The approach of professional mentoring as a facilitating element for professional development involves the teacher's awareness that change is a necessary condition for adaptation in order to achieve new personal / professional outcomes, as well as increasing the teacher's motivation to leave their comfort zone in order to discover new possibilities for action in the didactic act. Thus, promoting teacher's self-assessment to achieve performance in the classroom becomes essential for redefining educational practices aimed at expanding professional potential, used as a source for the development of skills in school.

It is necessary for schools to become professional learning communities, in which collaboration between teachers "is structured in ways that enable teachers to focus on how to become more effective practitioners" (Cole, 2012, p. 7).

The community should be made up of "equals", i.e. actors pursuing the same goals and sharing a common temporality (Díaz-Vicario & Gairín Sallán, 2018). According to Porras et al. (2018), teacher interactions promote reflective practice, as they question their own knowledge and learning process and find the best ways to encourage the professional development of their colleagues (Porras et al., 2018).

Collaborative learning allows members of a community to enrich and build new didactic and practical knowledge applicable in the classroom (Bedoya-González et al., 2018). Collaborative learning is possible when teachers share a common philosophy on students' learning process, but also demonstrate a personal commitment to collaboration (Pratt et al., 2016).

Developing a culture of collaboration in schools is “the most important factor to foster successful initiatives to improve the performance of a school” and “the most important strategy for the progress of any school, on long term” (DuFour, 2015, pp. 4-8). Classroom-based professional learning groups should take into account external research as well as data on school performance, as the analysis has been shown to have a particularly positive impact on teachers' practices, professional ethos and student learning (Louis et al., 1996).

The cooperative learning model is highlighted by five fundamental principles (Pânișoară, 2006): positive interdependence between group members, promoting interaction (in the sense of encouraging each other, sharing resources, support in solving problems), individual and group responsibility - the group must be responsible for achieving their own goals, and each member must be responsible for his or her contribution to the achievement of the group's own goal, the development of interpersonal and group communication skills (team-building), the development of group processes (the group must decide which actions of its own members are useful and which are not for the group's goals, to determine what type of behavior to adopt in the stages that will follow, etc.). Individual involvement in group learning activities is a guarantee of each student's ability to perform the same tasks in independent activities. The group processes relevant to the success of cooperative learning aim at: reflecting on collaborative activity, in the sense of identifying effective or ineffective actions of participants and making decisions about continuing or changing some of the activities.

The self-directed learning model from a socio-cognitive perspective (Pintrich, 2000) highlights two defining aspects in professional development: self-monitoring (monitoring of cognitive processes, monitoring of motivation, monitoring of effort) and self-assessment /reflection (individual judgments on performance, reporting to objectives, emotional reactions, assessment of tasks: comparison between achieved results and expected results).

According to Pierce's (2015) model, coaching is a cycle of four elements: OBSERVATION (direct monitoring of teacher's activity, in order to gather relevant information), MODELING (demonstrations provided by the mentor in order to illustrate how to perform an activity, but also the impact on the learner), FEEDBACK (reverse information provided by the mentor after the analysis of the activity performed: specific, operative, corrective, positive), MENTOR - TRAINEE ALLIANCE – the collaboration between the two)

The visible learning model (Hattie, 2014) shows that participants' learning becomes visible to those who organize it, ensuring the clear identification of attributes that make visible progress in the learning process. In this sense, teaching and training become visible to the participants, so that they become their own teachers, which is the basic feature of lifelong learning or self-education.

The model of transformative learning (Illeris, 2014) illustrates that the learner actively builds his/her own mental structures for learning, and biological, psychological and social conditions are the basis of learning, where a distinctive element is the interaction of social and psychological environment in

the process of learning. The transfer of learning is influenced by previous experiences and knowledge, which helps them to relate what they know to what they have learned; the participants' desire to apply what they have learned; the presence of a practical perspective on the contents to be learned; inclusion of some practical exercises; the assimilated content (knowledge, skills, values) to be relevant and practical; establishing links between content and students' experiences, prior knowledge.

2.2. Well-being and professional learning

Identified by "the relative presence of a positive effect, the absence of a negative effect and satisfaction with life" (Cenkseven-Önder & Sari, 2009, p. 1224), **well-being** is defined by two general components: emotional and cognitive. The emotional component consists of positive and negative effects on life, while the cognitive component is related to each individual's life satisfaction of.

Professional development requires an extensive approach to the benchmarks for maintaining an optimal level of well-being for teachers. Studies have shown that the level of well-being of teachers significantly influences the dynamics of students' classes, their performance the well-being (Roffey, 2012). Also, the institutional dynamics, the educational performance and the structure of the professional relations are aspects that can be negatively or positively influenced by the well-being levels of the teachers (Pagán-Castaño et al., 2021).

Professional relationships significantly influence well-being, and facilitating contexts of collaboration, debate and exchange of best practices is a suitable environment for developing relationships on a positive note, which will make a positive contribution to the well-being of the teaching staff.

The appreciation of work and the valorization of teachers are aspects that positively fuel the well-being, this should be done regularly, both in the mentoring process and in collaboration with the management team, especially when teachers achieve certain performance in their educational activity.

A consistent and authentic approach to the well-being of school members will support the positive development of the school climate and culture, facilitating an optimal level of well-being that will subsequently lead to an increase in teacher performance. In this sense, the preoccupation of teachers for professional development will take into account directions such as: identifying their own personal and professional development needs, developing an individual plan for continuous training and career development in the short, medium and long term, regular participation in various types of continuous educational programs, involvement in formal and informal vocational learning activities to expand and improve their professional activity, participation in institutional development by involving in or initiating projects and / or professional programs.

3. Research Questions

The study aims to identify dimensions of the development of a professional community of teachers from: variables that determine the well-being of the teacher at the beginning of the teaching career, variables that determine the well-being of the teacher who has some years of teaching experience) and variables that determine the well-being of the teacher with didactic expertise.

The analysis of these variables is based on the model of professional development internships (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2003) according to which debutant teachers are characterized by a level of professional orientation, experienced teachers prove a level of consolidation and exploration of professional practices, and expert teachers are the ones who confirm the formative impact in the professional community.

We appreciate that the well-being of the teacher is conditioned by the way in which everyone makes an objective and valid self-diagnosis of their own professional “worries”, adapted to the level of professional development.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to make a diagnosis of teacher’s worries in the Romanian educational system, associated with the level of professional development (beginner teacher, experienced teacher, expert teacher).

- i. The survival level (debutant teacher): to what extent the students will like him/her, to what extent they will listen to him/her, what will the students’ parents and colleagues think about him/her, to what extent they will cope with class inspection or class assistance situations
- ii. The level of consolidation and exploration (teacher with a number of years of career): worries about the resources and materials needed to complete the teaching process, worries about the efficient and rational use of teaching time, worries about how to approach content, worries about involving all students in the teaching activity
- iii. The expert level /formative impact (expert teacher): how to cultivate in students the feeling of success and self-efficacy, how to meet the social and emotional needs of students, how to motivate less motivated students, how to better prepare students for the next educational stage.

5. Research methods

We identified and designed a list of teachers’ concerns and worries in focus group meetings with groups of teachers involved in professional development programs. Each teacher had the opportunity to study the list of proposed worries and to argue on the choice of one or more worries. Also, the inclusion in one of the of professional development categories (debutant teacher, experienced teacher, expert teacher) was the personal choice of each individual. Year gaps on professional experience were not provided. Through collaborative practical activities, maps with teachers’ worries and concerns were made.

Thus, the opinions of a number of predominantly female teachers were debated, who teach in primary, secondary and high school education, with different specialties (philology, technical disciplines, sciences - mathematics, computer science, physics, chemistry, biology).

6. Findings

Concerns that teaching time is not enough to prepare their lessons thoroughly and rigorously; most teachers appreciate that they do not have teaching time for lesson design and interaction with students,

most of the time the teacher has to respond to different professional tasks (communication with parents, communication with decision makers, administrative tasks associated with teaching). The danger of this approach is a superficial didactic process, the improvisation in the implementation of the teaching process, the scarce planning of the learning activities. Debutant teachers show rigidity in the lesson planning process and in the efficient dosing of teaching time; experienced teachers say the teaching time is insufficient, as they associate time with the volume of content to be taught. An argument that supports this concern of teachers is the teaching experience, which will facilitate an appropriate attitude of the teacher towards the teaching contents, the means of approaching contents and the rhythmicity of teaching.

Concerns about the use of interactive technologies in the educational process are expressed by all categories of teachers. Although online education is a reality of recent years, beyond being a challenge due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education system, teachers identify difficulties in the efficient use of online resources. Limited skills in using technology are expressed by teachers with teaching expertise, motivating that teaching expertise is not conditioned by expertise in the use of technology; the same respondents also invoke the high costs of integrating technology into teaching. The improvised adaptation of IT resources to the teaching process is a factor expressed especially by debutant teachers, but also by those with teaching experience, noting that this was the compromise situation by which teachers have adapted to online education, but the quality of teaching work has been affected (both in terms of student outcomes and teaching efforts). Insufficient time resources for pedagogical adaptations of computer applications, etc., the need for increased individual effort to discover and select multimedia resources, superficial validation of open resources that are not always adapted to students' learning needs are other factors that teachers appreciate as difficulties in development of the digital educational model.

Concerns about motivating students to learn, expressed by all categories of teachers, are related to school variables (school is no longer the only training institution, a higher emphasis is put on complementary educational structures, such as after-school and non-formal institutions, sources of additional training, private educational institutions), family variables (school is no longer sufficiently appreciated by students and their families, who no longer trust the formal education system), but also by system variables (generated by frequent curricular reforms). All teachers with didactic expertise appreciate the great efforts they have to put into motivating students for learning, to develop their interest in school, regardless of the educational subject they teach. Especially in the case of teaching science - mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology - teachers express the low interest of students in these contents. Some of the reasons described here are also common with those expressed by teachers of humanistic subjects (low interest in school, in general, increasing school absenteeism, especially in high school students), but also some reasons specific to the scientific field (lack of attraction of these professional skills in the labor market, the low level of intellectual development of current generations, which is reflected in the difficulty of students to assimilate and understand scientific content, insufficient individual effort and exercise in the student's learning process).

The low interest of students is recognized as the main danger for the current educational system. Teachers express the need to intervene with ways to increase and support the interest in school for students, according to their needs: for those students who come from family backgrounds striving to

support the student at school, teachers appreciate the need for system-wide intervention with ensuring visible mechanisms for reducing school dropout; for students with learning difficulties, the need to carry out early remedial activities is expressed. Regarding the need for curricular reorganization and replacement of subjects in the curricula, this remains a problem that teachers no longer give credibility to the system to find a viable solution in the near future.

In terms of students' motivation to learn, it becomes a prerequisite for ensuring progress in learning, as an indicator of visible learning. All categories of teachers reinforce the need for interventions of different nature for the development of school motivation (counseling and remedial measures for students with difficulties, incentive and pedagogical assistance for demotivated students)

Expert teachers who teach science subjects emphasize concern about how students can cultivate a sense of success and self-efficacy. Distrust of one's own strengths, lack of confidence that one can succeed or is good at what one does, lack of objectivity in school assessments, insufficient attention paid to the personal training of students beyond their schooling - skills are some of the arguments that expert teachers expressed.

Through their teaching experience and expertise, expert teachers strengthen student-centered educational approaches, capitalizing on individual learning effort, imposed effort, but also self-imposed, on learning discipline. In this sense, educational models that will favor the feeling of success are based on transformative learning, through which the student seeks, discovers, researches, etc.

Considering, as a whole, the elements emerged from these discussions and analyzed from the perspective of the three categories of teachers - debutants, with teaching experience or teaching expertise, but also the scientific field represented - philology, technical disciplines, sciences - several directions in addressing the teacher's concerns and the effects on his/her well-being in the professional community can be outlined:

- i. The degree of cognitive depth of debutant teachers is relatively superficial, as they are focused more on their own person, on professional achievement, on the implementation of isolated professional tasks; their concerns are not defined by the needs of professional development and efficiency;
- ii. In the case of experienced teachers we find worries associated with didactic improvement and ensuring visible learning; their efforts in shaping a professional community are expressed, but associated with a list of fears, difficulties and mistrust in the education system;
- iii. Teachers with expertise demonstrate a significant detachment from the system and its role in the framework of professional development of human resources; personal efforts for one's own professional development and self-fulfillment are complementary to institutional strategies for supporting and developing human resources. The concerns of this category of teachers are outlined around the student and the student's training needs.

7. Conclusions

In the description of these results we find variables of interactive learning models - visible learning, transformative learning, collaborative learning – from which the need to outline them optimally in the development of a professional community able to secure the teacher and ensure his/her professional

well-being. Under these circumstances, school's concern must be focused on motivating students for lifelong learning and supporting the continuous professional development of teachers through professional communities.

Lifelong learning of teachers is an anguishing process, which requires many cognitive dissonances, reflections, but also hesitations, doubts, decisions and metacognition (Albu, 2013, p. 12). Regardless of the worries revealed, the presence of fears or uncertainties within the school with a dynamic and visible evolution is obvious.

Moreover, having quite limited time for personal life due to the congestion of professional tasks, teachers can facilitate joint efforts to develop a professional community, in which tasks are distributed uniformly, teachers are capitalized and the products of their work are validated. The collaborative activity between teachers on the one hand, between teachers and students on the other hand, is facilitated by the use of interactive educational environments, which favors the development of collaboration in the physical / virtual educational space.

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