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# VALUES, EDUCATION, QUALITY AND ENGAGEMENT IN A PEDAGOGY OF JOY

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## Abstract

Education is the most important process that a child undergoes from birth and even earlier, according to some specialists. The earlier the child's education begins, the better s/he will be able to integrate into society and life. It is debated on how we will act to achieve a successful education, adapted to individual needs, but also to meet the requirements stipulated by educational policies. Modern pedagogy supports a child-centred education, which should equip the child with those skills necessary for continuous and autonomous development, and the educational act to be performed as pleasantly as possible, in a stimulating and motivating climate. Living in a constantly changing world, every child must be able to adapt to changes and know how to learn throughout his/her life. Educational institution, education will survive to the extent to which it manages to adapt to social requirements. The purpose of our study is to underline the role of school and education to prepare students for professional life. Therefore, school and all other institutions, especially the university have a mission centred on education and scientific research, focused on knowledge, research and social assumption in a global, continuously changing society.



*Keywords:* Educatıon, engagement, joy, pedagogy, qualıty, values

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## 1. Introduction

The study purpose is to underline the interest that pedagogy specialist's show towards education and mostly tries to find proper methods to improve pre-service teacher training. Our main concern as trainers is the initial quality training of future teachers (Brower, 1992). We have noticed a recent decline in the quality of teacher training which is reflected in the educational act in the classroom and in the preparation of children. There are a variety of factors that contribute to this poor student preparation. Since 1997, researchers (Ozga & Sukhnandan, 2002) have identified several causes: unrealistic expectations about student life, a random choice of university path instead of an assumed and well-informed choice, but also difficulties in self-determination. In an increasingly technological society, in which children are called "digital natives" (Prensky, 2001), the development of these skills and abilities will be pursued, also e-learning provide opportunities for all learners to achieve more information (Edmundson, 2007).

If the student does not make a constant effort towards dedicated and applied study, she will face gaps in knowledge, the stress of the exams, the inability to assimilate the multitude of information in a short period of time. The study involve effort but in a pleasant way (Ekström et al., 2021). The specialists identify some specific features of the student involved, which will have tailored results:

i. academic achievement;
ii. social interaction;
iii. future goal development;
iv. autonomy;
v. identity formation;
vi. time management; and
vii. physical maintenance/wellbeing (Kelemen, 2012a).

In the assimilation of knowledge taught in the courses and seminars, the quality of the didactic act in the higher education institution is particularly important. The information presentation should be reinforced by eloquent examples, and the teaching should be done interactively, so that teachers always get a realistic feedback from the students. A particularly important aspect is the choice of career according to personal skills and abilities. When choosing the field of study, students must be well informed, so that their educational path is according to previous training (Shi et al., 2020). Another problem that hovers over a serious student preparation is the limited study time caused by employment during their studies. A student who works, even part-time, is subjected to distortions and additional stress that influence the quality of training.

Evans et al. (2009) model proved that the time spent on campus learning is valuable and contributes to a good student preparation. In recent decades there has been a decline in the value given to university studies, which have become easily accessible mass studies, and students give less dedication and involvement. We have also noticed the fact that exams are taken with little effort (Bay & Pacharn, 2017). However, we must also accept the aspect that sometimes the courses do not correspond to the students' expectations, as they have a different perception of reality.

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### 1.1. Strategies for increasing students' implication in their one formation

The study stresses out the interest that pedagogy specialist's show towards education and mostly tries to find proper methods to improve pre-service teacher training. A career in teaching and education has become unattractive for new generations of graduates and we will point out the reasons that led to a low interest for this career: low social value of teaching profession, low income, and lack of students` interest for learning (Post et al., 2019). In the university, the students who will become teachers must accumulate specialized skills so that they will be able to carry out a high-quality educational process (Kelemen, 2012b).

In order to make students more involved in the learning process, it is necessary to find the most appropriate pedagogical, stimulating and motivating methods, but especially to make them aware of the need for intensive study in order to acquire skills in the field of training. Studies show that to make students more responsible, it is necessary to have involved professors and an engaged university that must make students aware of the importance of attending courses and seminars, of active participation in student life and internship (Akomaning et al., 2011). When it comes to attending courses, teachers should pay more attention to teaching strategies, such as:

i. better course publicity;
ii. links to schools;
iii. pre-course briefings;
iv. 'taster sessions';
v. guidance;
vi. presentation of course overviews;
vii. clear entry criteria;
viii. initial diagnostic procedures; and
ix. the use of current students to disseminate information (Kelemen, 2016).

### 1.2. Learning community

Learning is a process that involves the accumulation of knowledge, the formation and the development of skills. On the other hand, students' skills and attitudes towards the knowledge process play an important role in deep learning motivation strategies (Tuckman, 2003). Starting from the premises that students come to universities from high schools with different fields of study, with a certain type of specialized training, the educational process must take into account the aspect that students (Radford & Roth, 2011):

i. have knowledge in some areas and less in others;
ii. understand new information if it is presented in an appropriate conceptual context;
iii. assimilate new concepts if they are presented in relation to practice.

Learning must be effective for each student. Topics should be approached in a reflective manner but also with emphasis on controversial perspectives so that they challenge students to think. It has been shown that students learn much better if a learning community is created, in which everyone is capitalized on with their life experience, in which they complement and support each other. It is a constructivist

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approach to learning, where critical and metacognitive thinking techniques are used (Buchanan, 2011). It is very important for the student group to carry out collaborative projects, so that the relationship between students becomes closer, friendlier and with a certain mental comfort that contributes substantially to the students` well-being and improvement of academic performance. The emotional and psychological support provided by the team contributes to overcoming obstacles and to a better understanding of the problems studied by sharing opinions (Jacobi, 1991). The question is whether it is realistic to think that you can turn learning, which involves effort, involvement, long exercise and perseverance, into a pleasant activity and what methods you can use to achieve a joy pedagogy.

Students actively participate in learning when:

i. learn from each other in real social context;
ii. learning is based on personal and involved effort;
iii. knowledge is integrated into a cumulative system;
iv. learning is achieved through active involvement;
v. learning subjects are connected with the reality they know;
vi. learning objectives are in line with their own goals;
vii. students feel motivated and valued.

## 2. Problem Statement

Our concern is to find the most appropriate intervention strategies for the rigorous preparation of students in pedagogy programs so that they become good teachers, able to carry out a quality educational process in the classroom. Improvement is a teleological concept and has axiological connotations, so it starts from competence to performance. For this reason, we have studied various articles addressing this issue in the literature found in various databases, including EBSCOhost (Academic Search Premier, APA PsycArticles, APA PsycInfo, ERIC, Psychology and Behavioural Sciences Collection), Elsevier / ScienceDirect, and Web of Science, Google Scholar and Research Gate. Most articles focus on the development of student learning quality and on the development of cognitive strategies, but the most important is to take off the student out of the comfort zone (Kettanun, 2015), but without neglecting the affective aspects providing students engagement in joint activity (Radford & Roth, 2011). The use of skill development strategies is also approached. Many studies focus on problem-based learning strategies and tasks to provide innovative education for students who enter the labour market in the future as it raises their competitiveness and promotes the long-term development of society.

For that we must to provide opportunities to develop learning environments that foster these capacities and increase the quality of education (Crosling et al., 2015). Focus is also placed on active learning and very important on finding ways to switch extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation.

## 3. Research Questions

The professionalization of the teaching career is an increasingly common concept in faculties with departments for the training of the teaching staff. Some authors perceive quality in education from several

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perspectives: stakeholders' perceptions, quantifiable elements, course design elements, and external standards (Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2003). Others consider that the responsibility is of the teacher involved in the teaching act, (qualifications of teaching staff). It is considered that the better trained a teacher is, the more positive his/her influence will be on students in their training. We find a new paradigm regarding the didactic act as a pedagogy of joy. We have tried to check the way in which the students from the Pedagogy of primary and pre-school education and from the masters in the field of education sciences perceive the quality of their own training as future teachers.

## 4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to underline the importance of competence study, to enhance the student's basic knowledge of future didactic profession and make students to be aware of the necessity of deep learning.

## 5. Research Methods

We have conducted qualitative research (Marshall & Rossman, 2014), applying a questionnaire to a number of 250 undergraduate students in the final year of study, 100 undergraduate students and 150 master's students. The questionnaire includes 10 questions on students' perceptions of their own training in relation to the educational process. These were converted into 9 measurable points on a scale: high agreement, agreement, disagreement, and K-Means Cluster analysis was used (Kelemen, 2012b.).

Questionnaire:

1. The quality of education depends on the quality of the study program.
2. The quality of education depends on self-determination.
3. The quality of education depends on the quality of one's own learning.
4. The quality of education depends on the quality of the courses.
5. The quality of education depends on the quality of the specialized practice.
6. The quality of education depends on the quality of teaching.
7. The quality of education depends on the students` previous training.
8. Quality in education depends on the family socio-economic environment.
9. Quality in education depends on class attendance.
10. The quality in education depends on the pedagogical comfort felt in the university.

## 6. Findings

**Table 1.** Quality in education

| Students | n | % | n | % | n | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bachelor, final year | 20 | 74.1 | 7 | 25.9 | 27 | 100 |
| Master, 1st year | 48 | 84.2 | 9 | 15.8 | 57 | 100 |
| Master, 2nd year | 86 | 83.5 | 17 | 16.5 | 103 | 100 |
| Total | 154 | 82.4 | 33 | 17.6 | 187 | 100 |
| $X^2$= 1,501 | | p= .472 | | | sd=2 | |

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Table 1 shows that 84,2% of the students believe that the quality of education depends on students 'proactive learning, 83,5% of the students believe that the quality of education depend of self-determination in act of education, 74,1% of the students believe that quality in education depends on bond between theory and practice, while 25.9% are convinced that the quality is education depend on process of education; while 15.8% of students believe that the quality of education depends of previous education; while 16.5% believe that the quality of education depends on clarity of courses. According to the table, there is no statistically significant differentiation between the students from Bachelor and Master degree (X2(sd=2, n=187)= 1.501, p >. 05).

**Table 2.** T test results of the score averages of students' vision about quality of education in their University

| Students | Degree | n | X | Ss | t | Sd | *p* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students | Bachelor | 92 | 11.70 | 2.46 | 1.070 | 185 | ,286 |
| Students | Master | 95 | 11.27 | 3.02 | | | |

According to the table 2, there is no statistically significant differentiations in the averages of the students' Test scores by the Bachelor and Master degree of them perception about the quality of process of education from their university (t=1,070, p>.05).

The Investigation of the relationship between the evaluation score by grades of students from Bachelor and Master Degree

**Table 3.** Presents the one-way variance analysis results of the Bachelor and Master degree status evaluation with grades

| Source of Variance | Sd Squares | | Square | F | p | Significant Difference |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grades | 114.588 | 2,184 | 57.294 | 7,047 | ,000* | Bachelor |
| Grades | 310.129 | 2,286 | 87.120 | 8.573 | ,000* | Master degree |
| Total | 424.717 | | | | | |

*p<.05

Table 3 shows a significant differentiation in the averages of the students' test scores by (F (2,184) = 7,047, and 2, 286=8, 573, p<.0,5). Groups are compared to each other in order to determine that between which groups the difference is located. Test is applied since the variances have a homogeneous distribution. According to test results, there is a significant difference between the students of the Bachelor graduated and the students from Master degree concerning the results to evaluation of final year.

The results obtained are strongly influenced by the attachment to the institution, by the previous school status, by the participation in courses and extra-curricular activities, by the social affiliation (educational status of parents' education), by the age of the students, by previous school success.

## 7. Conclusions

According to the above results, some suggestions and recommendations are needed to optimize the students` motivating abilities. Teachers need to pay attention to the way they make students aware of the

need to teach a certain subject, to demonstrate its importance for their good professional training. By adopting attractive teaching-learning methods, a joy pedagogy can be achieved, in which the learning effort should not be felt as an insurmountable one and which should lead to the formation of a consistent and serious attitude towards a qualitative training. Courses should be designed to encourage critical thinking, active participation and practical examples. An academic environment adapted to the new teaching-learning technologies is an advantage in obtaining a highly qualitative didactic act. Teaching based on interactive communication promotes a state of emotional comfort to students by facilitating the understanding of the notions, their application in practice and the achievement of objectives (Clarke, 1998). We consider that several factors are responsible for optimizing student learning, first of all a curriculum adapted to the need to train specialized skills for the teaching profession, quality programs and courses, quality of the instructional-educational process, quality of infrastructure, quality of university atmosphere and interpersonal communication but also the way in which the university responds to the students` needs of initial and continuous training and education.

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