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A STUDY ON IMPROVING STUDENTS' MOTIVATION FOR SEMINAR CLASSES

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Abstract

Aim. The aim of this research is to emphasize the motivational expression and development of the Bachelor's degree students, through their involvement in the motivation and self-motivation process during the seminar classes.

Material & methods. This paper is an experimental study carried out on a number of 30 students from two groups, an experimental one (15 students) and a control one (15 students). Results have highlighted a higher level recorded for the experimental group compared to the control group, after the practical intervention regarding the value mean in the assessment of the knowledge and of the results of their skill assessment records. As an objective, we intended to present the motivational development, during a semester (the first semester of the 2013-2014 academic year). As research methods, we used: the bibliographic study, testing, case study, graphical method.

Results. Results have been centralised on age categories, are listed in the tables and graphically represented. They are considered in two groups and highlight the increase of motivation and the behaviour's improvement.

Conclusions. The conclusions drawn underline a positive evolution of students' behaviour towards seminar classes, their collaboration with the teacher and their attitude towards their fellow students. The hypothesis according to which students' motivation during the seminar classes can help to improve their behaviour has been validated.

Key words: motivation, students, seminar, improvement.

Introduction

Achievement of the major tasks related to professional training "cannot be conceived without intervening in the adaptation and formation of a specific behaviour" (Rață, 2004, p 28).

During the education period of vocational training, there are intensive transformations of the adolescent and they are related to the physical, intellectual, affective, social, moral, aesthetic, functional, motivational features which form the human behaviour.

The motivation as part of the psychological side which must be formed within the teaching-learning process is very important, especially for the career development.

It implies the discovery of personal identity and "it starts by knowing yourself, by knowing who you are and what you want from your life, for you to focus better in the future" (Ciobanu, 2004, p. 27).

A reason is that psychic phenomenon which has an essential role in triggering, orienting and changing behaviour and motivation includes the totality of reasons.

A reason is the main cause of behaviour, but not every cause can also be a reason.

If we want to better understand our students' choices, to understand their position they will adopt in different situations or to exert an educational influence on them, it is necessary to know their

reasons for such decisions.

Motivation depends on the capacities, skills, values and attitudes formed and grown over time, but also on the inner predisposition of each individual.

Particularly related to the sports domain, motivation is influenced by the capacity to perceive, understand and adapt to the ever-changing situations. Innate predispositions have a polyvalent characteristic, which means that different psychic features and profiles may be carried out based on the same hereditary background under the influence of environmental factors.

They do not preset certain qualities and traits of human personality, but they provide the necessary basis for learning.

Hypothesis of research

This study started from the hypothesis according to which motivating students during seminars can help to improve their behaviour.

Research tasks

For carrying out this research, the following tasks were established: choosing the groups subject to research; finalizing the complete duration of research; establishing samples of assessment; choosing the intervention manner; elaborating a program to

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support assessments; analysing, processing, interpreting the results; highlighting conclusions; writing the paper.

Subjects, location, time, methods of research and assessment samples

Subjects comprised in this research are represented by 30 students divided into two groups, an experimental one (15 students) and a control one (15 students).

The *location* was represented by the Faculty of Movement, Sports and Health Sciences in Bacau.

Research was carried out over a period of four months (October 2013 - January 2014), with optimal conditions for performing the suggested intervention.

The research methods used were the bibliographic study, testing, case study, graphical method.

The test for assessing behaviour was represented by the observation sheet for assessing the attitude development (towards the methodology for teaching the physical education and sport discipline, towards the teacher, towards fellow students).

This sheet aims to assess: students' behaviour during the appreciated seminar (by means of: positive attitude towards the contents discussed, attention and memory skills, continuous training skill, interest for additional information), students' collaboration with their teacher (assessed by: cooperation, attitude of respect and desire to be noticed) and students' attitude toward fellow students (assessed by: collaboration, a spirit of fair-play and desire to work in a group).

Applied intervention

This research is an experimental study on motivational expression and development of the students, based on systematic observation during the seminar classes.

For increasing students' interest and motivation to prepare for the seminars, the experimental group was involved in the process of assessing their fellow students, in leading and carrying out seminars and in the assessment at the end of each of the lessons.

After the first assessments and self-assessments, students have become more realistic regarding their professional level and evolution development, which have motivated them in their efforts.

Processing, analysis, interpretation and presentation of results

The results have been collected in table no. 1 and include the average values of the two groups.

Related to students' behaviour during the seminar, there can be observed different values for the two groups:

- for the *positive attitude* towards the contents discussed, the experimental group recorded 11 subjects in the initial assessment and 15 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 4 subjects between the two, and the control group recorded 10 subjects in the initial assessment and 11 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 1 subject. A negative difference of 4 subjects can be observed in the experimental group in the initial assessment, and zero subjects in the final assessment, but in the control group, 5 subjects in the initial assessment and 4, in the final assessment;

- regarding *the attention and memory skills* in the experimental group, 13 subjects were attentive in the initial assessment and 15 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 2 subjects between the two tests, and in the control group, 13 subjects were attentive in the initial assessment and 14 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 1 subject. A negative difference of 2 subjects can be observed in the experimental group in the initial assessment, and zero subjects in the final assessment, and in the control group, 2 subjects in the assessment and 1 the final assessment;

- regarding *the continuous practice*, the experimental group recorded 9 subjects in initial assessment and 14 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 5 subjects between the two. The control group recorded 10 subjects in the initial assessment and 11 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 1 subject. A negative difference of 5 subjects can be observed in the experimental group in the initial assessment, and 1 subject in the final assessment, and in the control group, 5 subjects in initial the assessment and 4 - in the final assessment;

- regarding *the interest for additional information*, the experimental group recorded 6 subjects in the initial assessment and 11 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 5 between the two subjects. The control group recorded 5 subjects in the initial assessment and 7 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 2 subjects. A negative difference of 9 subjects can be observed in the experimental group a negative difference of 9 subjects in the initial assessment, and 4 subjects, in the final assessment, and in the control group, 10 subjects in the initial assessment and 9 to final assessment.

Centralizing table no. 1 – Students' Attitudinal Development

ASSESSMENT ITEMS		Positive			Negative	
		I	F	Dif	I	F
Students' behaviour during the seminar class						
Gr. E	Positive attitude towards the discussed contents	11	15	4	4	0
Gr. C		10	11	1	5	4
Gr. E	Attention and memory skill	13	15	2	2	0
Gr. C		13	14	1	2	1
Gr. E	Continuous practice skill	9	14	5	6	1
Gr. C		10	11	1	5	4
Gr. E	Interest for additional information	6	11	5	9	4
Gr. C		5	7	2	10	9
Students' collaboration with their teacher						
Gr. E	Cooperation	7	15	8	8	0
Gr. C		8	11	3	7	4
Gr. E	Respect attitude	11	14	3	4	1
Gr. C		11	12	1	4	3
Gr. E	Desire to be noticed	6	15	9	9	0
Gr. C		7	12	5	8	3
Students' attitude towards their fellows						
Gr. E	Collaboration	5	15	10	10	0
Gr. C		5	14	9	9	1
Gr. E	Fair play	6	15	9	9	0
Gr. C		8	13	5	7	2
Gr. E	Desire to work in a group	12	15	3	3	0
Gr. C		11	14	3	3	1

Discuss. Regarding the *students' collaboration with their teacher*, there are different values in the two groups:

- for *cooperation*, the experimental group recorded 7 subjects in the initial assessment

and 15 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 8 subjects between the two. The control group recorded 8 subjects in the initial assessment and 11 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 3 subjects.



- There is a negative difference of 8 subjects in the experimental group in the initial assessment, and a subject in the final assessment and in the control group 7 subjects in the initial assessment and 4 in the final assessment. According to Elien Waite (2014), cooperation should be the spirit animating the classroom, its law of existence, but also the teacher's main objective;
- for the *respect attitude*, the experimental group recorded 11 subjects in the initial assessment and 14 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 3 subjects between the two, and the control group recorded 11 subjects in the initial assessment and 12 subjects in the final evaluation, with a difference of 1 subject. It can be observed in the experimental group a negative difference of 4 subjects in the initial assessment, and 1 subject in the final assessment, and in the control group, 4 subjects in the initial assessment and 3 in the final assessment. Respect is "an attitude or esteem, consideration or special appreciation towards someone or something" (<https://www.google.ro/search>), *an attitude which influences and ensures the normal development of society*;
 - for *the desire to be noticed*, the experimental group recorded 6 subjects in the initial assessment and 15 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 9 subjects between the two. The control group recorded 7 subjects in the initial assessment and 12 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 5 subjects. It can be observed in the experimental group a negative difference of 9 subjects in the initial assessment, and zero subjects in the final assessment, and the control group, 8 subjects in the initial assessment and 3 in the final assessment.
- Regarding the students' attitude towards their fellows, there are different values in the two groups:
- for *collaboration*, the experimental group recorded 5 subjects in the initial assessment and 15 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 10 subjects between the two. The control group recorded 5 subjects in the initial assessment and 14 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 9 subjects. A negative difference of 10 subjects can be noticed in the experimental group in the initial assessment, and zero subjects in the final assessment, and in the control group, 9 subjects in the initial assessment and 1, in the final evaluation;
 - for the spirit of fair-play, the experimental group recorded 6 subjects in the initial assessment and 15 subjects in the final

- assessment, with a difference of 9 subjects between the two, and in the control group it recorded 8 subjects in the initial assessment and 13 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 5 subjects. There is a negative difference of 9 subjects in the experimental group in the initial assessment, and zero subjects in the final assessment, and in the control group, 7 subjects in initial assessment and 2 - the final assessment;
- for *the desire to work in a group*, the experimental group recorded 12 subjects in the initial assessment and 15 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 3 subjects between the two. The control group recorded 11 subjects in the initial assessment and 14 subjects in the final assessment, with a difference of 2 subjects. There can be noticed a negative difference of 3 subjects in the experimental group in the initial assessment, and zero subjects in the final assessment, and in the control group 3 subjects in the initial assessment and 1 subject in the final assessment.

Students' behaviour is influenced by "the behaviour of the teaching staff shaping their personality and influencing their life's evolution." (Botezatu, Rata, 2008, pag 54).

Forming a positive attitude towards the discussed contents, educating the capacity of attention and memory, getting used to the capacity of permanent training, raising the interest for additional information, improving students' collaboration with their teacher are essential elements in the process of vocational training, but they also increase motivation for the teaching act.

The academic environment constitutes the determinant factor for developing motivation, since it comprises all the natural, social, cultural elements contributing to the formation of professional motivation.

Conclusions

Based on the data analysis, we have drawn the following conclusions:

- the hypothesis according to which the students' motivation during the seminar classes can help to improve behaviour has been validated;
- the number of students in the experimental group has recorded a higher level than in the control group on the three criteria for the assessment of behaviour;
- the number of subjects who have improved the aspects regarding the attitude towards the discipline, towards the teacher and towards their fellows has increased;



- these results would not have been obtained, without their involvement in the assessment process and without students' help to know and to form their own personality.

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