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QUALITY AND INSPIRATIONAL TEACHING AT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS FROM THE STUDENT'S POINT OF VIEW

Abstract: *Teaching and quality of teaching are a key component of higher education, complex and versatile, both theoretically and practically. This paper will present what is called quality and inspiring teaching, through literature review, and what is a good and inspiring teaching for students, which corresponds to the 21st century. The ideas that are considered in this paper are based on research by foreign authors and on conducted research through a survey of students from one of the faculties of the University of Kragujevac.*

Keywords: *higher education, quality of teaching, inspirational teaching*

1. Introduction

This paper was created with the aim to answer several questions about the quality of teaching and inspirational teaching at higher education institutions in our country. What nowadays refers to quality teaching? The global preoccupation of universities in the 21st century is to ensure and improve the quality of teaching, but if we take into account everything that comes under the quality of teaching, we will see that it is not only about teaching, but also about the quality of teaching methodology, the quality of professors and lecturers, the quality of the relationship between a professor and a student. All of the quality components mentioned above are also important in order to ensure better quality of classes. When it comes to inspiring teaching, we first think about teaching that will motivate us, encourage us to think about what we learn and what we listen to in order to achieve academic success. To what extent and how deeply the quality of teaching and its

components has been explored and talked about, as well as the inspirational teaching, we will see in a review of the relevant literature of authors dealing with the quality of teaching and inspirational teaching.

2. Literature review

According to the authors (Green, 1994; Westerheijden, et al., 2007), quality is a multidimensional concept. Due to the unclear concept of quality and different meanings for stakeholders, as well as the complicated nature of the educational product (Becket N, Brookes M, 2006), many authors agree it is difficult to manage quality in higher education. Quality in education is a multi-dimensional concept that is present in the strategies and documents of higher education institutions

The quality of the teaching process is ensured through the interactivity of teaching, the inclusion of examples in the teaching, the professional work of teachers and associates, the adoption and adherence to work plans

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per course, as well as monitoring the quality of teaching and taking the necessary measures in case when it is established that the quality of teaching is not at the appropriate level (Lazic, 2018). The Quality Assurance Strategy for Higher Education Institutions, defines the rules for ensuring the quality of the teaching process. It is provided with quality programs and syllabuses, quality work plans, lectures and exercises, quality teaching publications, quality assessment procedures and quality professional work of teachers and associates (Lazic, 2018). According to *the Strategy for the Development of Education in Serbia by 2020*, the improvement of the teaching process should be ensured through the improvement of the competencies of the teaching staff in a professional, scientific and didactic way.

(Phillips 2000, as cited in Stibbe, 2009), that inspirational higher education should enable students (and staff) to move towards fulfilling and meaningful lives, characterised by generosity, intelligence, community spirit and a healthy level of self-esteem.

Kiper, H. / Mischke, V (2008) ,: "The quality of teaching consists of the quality of the process and the quality of products, that is, individually achieved goals, the developed achievements of students and more or less successful use of time (Bognar L., Kragulj S. 2010). Meier, H. (2005), offers about ten characteristics of good teaching, including: - clear structure, - high percentage of real learning, - stimulating atmosphere, - clarity of content, - establishing a sense of communication, - various methods, - individual stimulation, - intelligent exercise, - transparency of expected accomplishments, - prepared environment (Bognar L., Kragulj S. 2010).

Su and Wood (2012) argue that "... definitions of teaching excellence cannot be adequately obtained from typologies and descriptions of techniques and skills". In their study Su and Wood (2012) reported that certain key characteristics for example,

being a good communicator; having a sense of humour; providing a supportive and safe space and using educational technologies were acknowledged by students as being important.

The fact is that literature review comes to terms that are closely related and in correlation with the inspiring teaching, which are: "good teacher" (Harden & Crosby, 2000), "teaching effectiveness" (Tang, 1997), quality teaching (Gibbs, 2010), "successful teaching", or the "excellent tertiary-level teacher" (Ellington, 2000).

Sammons P. et al. (2014), for example, posit a roadmap to inspiring teaching, advising teachers to begin with well-thought-out personal and classroom mission statements, then working to model behaviours, build mutual respect, listen to students and build relationships.

Harmin (2006) adopts a more narrowly focused approach focusing on active learning as the desired outcome of inspiring teaching, targeting a younger student age bracket (Sammons P. et al. 2014).

Ryan and Gilbert (2001) take an ambitious stance, using words like 'exciting' and 'creative' interchangeably with 'inspiring', and implicitly defining inspiration in terms of a lifelong impact: "What is it that inspirational teachers do? In short, they plan for their students to be inspirational" (Sammons P. et al. 2014).

Through a literature review, we can define the main components that are interconnected and make up the notion of inspirational teaching: teaching style, teacher/ student relationship, content, environment. (Williams et al., 2016.).

Figure 1: The data was illustrated using thematic networks (web-based illustrations), recognised as being a robust tool for systematically analysing and presenting qualitative data. Thematic networks allow for the extraction of basic themes; organising themes and global themes which can be found in Figure 1. (Williams et al., 2016.).



Figure 1. Thematic network for inspiring teaching.

(Source: Williams et al. (2016.), *Inspiring to inspire: Developing teaching in higher education*)

3. Methodology and research results

The sample for this small study were two students, of the third and fourth year, of the faculty of the University of Kragujevac who, based on answers to questions from the questionnaire, presented their attitude and opinion on what is a good and inspiring teaching for them. The number of students who participated in the survey was 30 students, two study programs, which is a total of 60 respondents. Selected students who participated in the survey are attending lectures in the third and fourth year of basic academic studies, since they have the most experience in the class for at least three years.

The survey questionnaire contained 6 questions, where students were able to express their opinion on inspirational

teaching: What is inspirational teaching for them, have they attended inspirational classes, whether inspirational teaching at their faculty is common or is it a rarity, and how much Inspirational teaching affects the quality of lectures.

Based on the processed data, we have come up with the following results: Answering the question whether inspirational teaching was common or rare in their faculty, 88% (53 students) of students answered that it was rare, and the remaining 12% (7 students) stated that inspirational teaching at college was common. In Figure 1, a rarity / commonality is graphically represented, we have the opportunity to conclude that inspirational teaching at the college where student survey was conducted is a rarity.

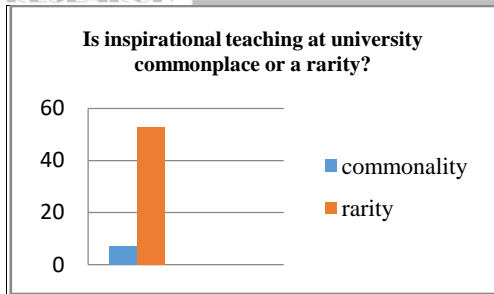


Figure 2. Inspirational teaching, rarity / commonality

When discussing how an inspiring lecture should look, students had the opportunity to circle all of what they consider to be important out of the seven offered characteristics (Figure 3), in order to make the lecture inspirational. The following features were offered in the questionnaire: Authoritative, Encouraging, Energetic, Fun, Motivating, Creative and Captivating.

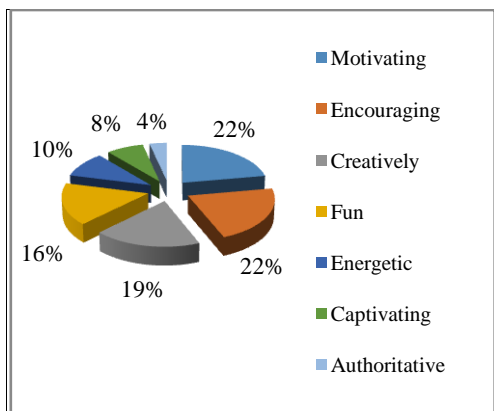


Figure 3. Characteristics of an inspirational lecture

By reviewing and analyzing data from the questionnaire, we can select several important components that students have identified as important for good, high-quality and inspiring teaching. Here is what students consider important:

- Professional and good professor, lecturer, (more modern organization of lectures, professionalism of

professors from the area taught, creative work, motivational lecture).

- Student / Professor Relationship (clearly defined criteria for all students by professors, workshops for students, student involvement in classes)
- More lectures by guest professors (Mobility of professors)
- Equal amount of lectures and practical teaching, (after each lecture of theory, make practical realization of teaching, with as many practical examples as students will be in touch with in continuing education, in a random place and in general in life).

We will deal more with the question of what a good professor means for a student, who through his lecture will inspire and motivate the student for even better work and better academic success.

Who is a good professor: Professional, accessible, authoritative, inspiring, who has methods for motivating students who can keep the student's attention through creative and interesting lectures.

Of course besides all this, there must be student motivation and a desire for improvement, as well as their own discipline and the ability to understand the topic that is being talked about.

4. Conclusion

Inspiring and quality teaching, as we can conclude from the review of the data of this short survey, is not so present on our higher education institutions. Whether this is the case on other universities, it remains to be concluded after possible further research on this topic. What is significant is that inspirational teaching is closely related to the theme of quality teaching, that is, it is an integral part of quality teaching, all through the great role of teachers, professors, lecturers, who must be professional and

possess the breadth of knowledge in the field they teach students. Through inspirational teaching, we can enhance the overall quality of teaching, whether it is lectures at a university, a high school, or a secondary school. Inspirational and quality teaching,

with quality and professional personnel, modern technologies in the handsets, practical examples and more modern curricula, makes the main component of higher education for the 21st century.

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