

Quality of Teaching Assessed by University Students

Vasiliy Nikolaevich Stegnyy

Perm National Research Polytechnic University, Perm, Russia

Abstract: Relationship between teachers and students is one of the bottle-necks of educational system. The character of these relations is an active factor influencing young students' motivation to study the discipline, their interest in specialty. Sociological studies performed in Perm national research polytechnic university in 2013 allowed to define and analyze on empirical level: the level of satisfaction of students with quality of teaching; the character of relations between teachers and students, including deviant forms of relations; interest of students in specific discipline, motives to feel satisfaction with teaching a disciple, forms of passing exams and pass-fail exams (credits). Students assessed the quality of teachers' work, efficiency of informational sources which are most often used by students in their preparation for exams.

Key words: Quality of teaching • Assessment of a teacher by students • Well-doing of a student • Assessment of teaching quality • Relations between students and teachers

INTRODUCTION

Problem of quality of teaching is of utter importance for the last 10-15 years and today it is intensively discussed both by scientific community and practitioners [1-2]. It is connected with the fact that quality of teaching has become one of the prioritized focuses of modern Russian society development [3, 4]. Though there are several dozens of criteria to assess this quality, we can emphasize such indicator as quality of education. This indicator is determined for 90% by staff policy of university, by choice of high-level teachers. We shall consider not a system of indicators characterizing this process but only one - how students assess teacher's work. Specific character of this indicator is manifested in opportunity to obtain feedback from teacher's activity.

Assessment of quality of teaching by students in modern university reflects not only management efficiency but the character of key relations formed in the process of educations: of teachers and students [5, 6]. In this work we shall consider the following indicators which reflect this side of educational process: assessment of teachers by students (in regard to specific discipline), interest of students in this discipline, motives of dissatisfaction with this discipline, sources of information which are used by students while preparing for studies, forms examinations used by a teacher.

Students' Opinion about Quality of Teaching in Modern

University: This study was performed in 2013 on the base of Perm National Research Polytechnic University. Respondents were students of this university. 250 students participated in the interviewing, all groups of students were presented depending on their results in studies: the following grades prevail in their grade-books: 5 = 7 %; 5 + 4 = 30 %; 5 + 4 + 3 = 24 %; 4 = 7 %; 4 + 3 = 14 %; mainly 3 = 11 %; there were cases when at exams 7% of students were not able to get satisfactory grade.

From all questioned students about 40% study with average grade 4-5, about 50% have satisfactory grades also; and 7% sometimes get even unsatisfactory grades at exams. It must be mentioned that respondents which represented the group were far from the most talented students, which allows to obtain information about particularities of relations between teachers and this group of student first of all (Table 1).

64% of students positively assessed their relationship with teacher, every 3rd student (27%) pointed out to relationship in correspondence with teachers' and students' status which is marked by them as friendly and business-like. Of course such relations signal not only about the quality of education but about the level of student's education (and culture) as well.

Table 1: Assessment of relationship with teachers by students

Character of relationship	% of those who gave positive answer
Relations in correspondence with teachers' and students' status	37,0
Friendly and business-like in the same time	27,0
Indifferent	17,0
Teacher underestimates your efforts and abilities	10,0
Teacher treats you in scornful manner and you respond to him in the same manner	5,0
Teacher treats students as children	4,0

Table 2: Interest of students in the discipline

What do you like in studies of this discipline	% of respondents
Interested in the discipline itself	30,0
Interest of the teacher in his discipline	29,0
Ability of a teacher to show link with future profession	24,0
Personal features of the teacher (level of culture, moral)	20,0
Skillful explanation of difficult points	19,0
System of giving the material	18,0
Inter-personal skills, paying attention by teacher to audience' particularities	11,0
Stimulation of thinking	10,0

Note: Sum can exceed 100% because every respondent gave several answers

Personal example of a teacher is a very important factor influencing socialization of student and efficient activity of a teacher. As a rule, such assessment refers to students who study well.

In the same time about 36% assessed their relationship with teacher negatively, they pointed out to indifference, underestimation of abilities and efforts, scornful attitude from teacher's side. Mostly these are students who study badly because they get unsatisfactory grades at exams and pass-fail exams and show little interest in the discipline.

Of course, one of the tasks which must be solved by the teacher - to develop interest of a student in his discipline. If the relations between them are based on interest, efficiency of teaching reaches maximum level. On this level not only knowledge matters but the understanding by student of the place of this discipline in professional activity.

Interest in the discipline manifests itself in different aspects, both functional and social/socio-psychological (Table 2).

Among these interests the following ones dominate: 30% of students pointed out that the discipline is interesting and the attitude of the teacher to it is good (29%); 24% of students pointed out to ability of a teacher

Table 3: Motives of dissatisfaction of students with studies of specific discipline

What don't you like in teaching this discipline	% of respondents
Personal features of the teacher	28,0
Strange to me manner of giving the material	23,0
Formal teaching	21,0
Oral faults of the teacher	20,0
The discipline itself is not interesting for me	13,0
The teacher do not pay attention to particularities of the audience	11,0
Giving material without system	9,0
Avoidance of up-to-date issues	6,0
No link with my future profession	2,0

Note: Sum can exceed 100% because every respondent gave several answers

to show link between the discipline and future profession; 20% of students pointed out to personal features of a teacher (level of culture, education, erudition, intelligence, politeness, correctness, moral); 20%-10% of students paid special attention to pedagogical skills of a teacher: skillful presentation of the discipline, manner of communication with students, accounting of student's particular features; stimulation of students' thinking.

Methodological training of a teacher is emphasized by those students who have lower grades, which depend not only on the level of their knowledge but on methodological, pedagogical training of a teacher, his ability to explain everything in detail to even stupid students. Teacher's ability to explain in such a way is praised by the students very high.

Students pointed out not only to satisfaction with teacher's work but dissatisfaction with studies of specific discipline (Table 3).

What is the thing with which students are not satisfied most of all? The basis of such dissatisfaction is not just one motive but the whole system. 28% of students are not satisfied with personal features of a teacher. 23% of students are put in a loss by strange way of giving material; formal teaching, oral faults of a teacher. 11% of students are sure that teacher does not take into account particularities of the audience; gives material without a system; the discipline itself is not interesting.

Students also pointed out (very few of them) to such motives for dissatisfaction as inability of a teacher to discuss actual issues. Only 2% of students pointed out to isolation of his discipline from future profession. It means that in fact almost all students and teachers identify specific correlation between discipline and future profession.

Table 4: Sources of information used by students in their preparation for studies (yes-answers, %)

Which sources of information do you use while preparing for seminars, course-papers, test-papers	Seminars	Course-papers	Test-papers
Lecture notes (one's own)	68,0	24,0	67,0
Internet-documents	49,0	36,0	33,0
Lecture notes (of my fellow-students)	21,0	9,0	19,0
University library	19,0	24,0	18,0
Teacher's tutorial	16,0	15,0	17,0
My fellow-students' tutorial	13,0	4,0	12,0
Other teachers' consultancies	6,0	4,0	3,0
Use services of those who can prepare material for money	1,0	6,0	4,0

Note: Sum can exceed 100% because every respondent gave several answers

Quality of knowledge and understanding of discipline depend not only on teacher's work but on independent work of student while preparing himself for seminars, course-papers and tests. What is used by student while preparing for these forms of studies? (Table 4)

While preparing himself for these forms of studies a student uses not just one source but the whole system in which one sources are in greater demand than the others.

Preparation for course-papers is the most careful. Here the most diversified sources are used: not only popular Internet but traditional sources - university library. This shows that scientific literature in the form "book"- "textbook"- "monograph"- "scientific journal" are still well-demanded sources of information for modern students.

A book (monograph, scientific journal) as scientific first-hand origin gives students system knowledge which can not be substituted by any other source of information [7]. It provides fundamental deep information which can be used for long, greatly improves the level of information with a student [8]. But the problem here is that books can also be in electronic form. Opportunity to download a book from Internet is quite well-spread thing today. In the same time for the period of Internet existence a man has not been able yet to adapt himself to computerized text in full (on psycho-physiological level) and this is the reason of difficulties in perception of this form by some students [9].

Nevertheless, structure and "specific weight" (the proportion) of sources which are used by students for preparation for seminars and tests coincide in general. About 70% of students use their own lecture notes. This shows that students treat lectures very responsibly and actively participate in teacher' work. Internet-resource becomes popular source of information which is natural for modern education because many disciplines are mastered with the use of computer programs [10].

Every 5th student (21%) uses the lecture notes of his fellow-student - this shows positive inter-personal

relationship formed in a group. 19% of students go to the library - this shows that students go on using books as source of knowledge. Teacher's tutorials are used by 16% of students and this aspect of educational process must be investigated additionally.

Fellow-students can also be "tutors" for some students - for getting extra knowledge; this once again points out to positive micro-climate formed in a student group.

There is a group among students which while preparing for course and test papers use the services of those who can in exchange for money prepare appropriate material. Such group amounts to 4-6% of all respondents. This is a group which must not exist but because the education, in accordance with law "About education", is sold on the market of educational services a system "demand-supply" exists - that is why there are a lot of advertisements of this kind. A teacher in this informational-commercial flow is just a "cog in a machine" which can not stem the evil tide. This form of preparation of course and test papers causes not only intellectual and moral damage but ruins the whole system of education as a whole, forms deviant relationship between a teachers and a students.

In this connection we asked respondents the following question: "If there are rumors that it is possible to pass exam or a pass-fail exam with this teacher by some "bypassing" ways, for example, for money, expensive gift.." and the answers were as follows: 66%-"I have not personally faced this situation"; 30% - "this is impossible: teacher would never do that"; 3.5% - "We hear from other students that they acted like this; 0,5% - We were in this situation ourselves". These examples show that almost all students refused from this form of relationship between a teachers and a students It is really so but few cases of this kind take place with teachers and 0.5% proves it. Though it is small portion of teachers but the professional and moral harm from it is huge.

Table 5: Forms of exams and pass-fail exams used by teachers

Which form of exam and pass-fail exam does the teacher of this discipline use?	% of respondents	
	Exams	Pass-fail exams
Cards (questions)	80,0	24,0
Tests	6,0	28,0
Library-research paper	7,0	11,0
Test-papers	9,0	28,0
Scientific articles (research work)	12,0	9,0
Interview	6,0	11,0

Note: Sum can exceed 100% because every respondent gave several answers

Interaction of teachers with students is performed not only at lectures, seminars, course- and test-papers but during exams and pass-fail exams. Teachers examine students in the following forms (Table 5).

While examining students teachers use different forms. In the same time 80% of teachers prefer traditional classical variant - cards and questions. Other forms and styles (tests, library-research paper, test-papers, research work, interview etc.) are rarely used.

In regard to pass-fail exams the situation here is different. No form dominates. Teacher also uses the whole system of forms, but 3 ones dominate: tests, test-papers, cards and questions. And here interview, library-research paper, research tasks connected with writing of a scientific article, preparation of scientific report are used more actively.

No innovations were found by us in the work of teachers with students This is not by chance. Because the students assessed the work of those teachers who while examining students gave them a lot of unsatisfactory grades.

Comparing the same students with how they pass exams and pass-fail exams with other teachers who use innovative forms and methods of teaching we have quite different results of student studies. They are much higher and degree of satisfaction of these students with work of such a teacher is much higher. Here real interaction between a teacher and a student takes place. Student understands what the teacher demands from him and strives to fulfill these demands. Work of such teacher satisfies about 80% of students.

Level of satisfaction with the teacher who has a lot of students with unsatisfactory grades is great too. The answers of respondents distributed in the following pattern: quite satisfied - 22%, satisfied - 37%; partly satisfied - 28%; unsatisfied - 13%. In students' opinion the main reason of low satisfaction is the discipline taught by a teacher, his level of culture, pedagogical training,

methodical and theoretical literacy, personal features. Such a teacher can hardly orientate in increasing flow of information, insufficiently knows discipline. At classes he focuses on empirical material, which he demonstrates by means of information technologies. Lecture is read mainly with the aid of note-book; the teacher is looking in it almost all the time. Teacher acts at a lecture on his own, students - on their own. This teacher has low attendance by students. Very often this teacher is a conflicting person. Formally he is right, but efficiency of it is minimum.

CONCLUSION

Our sociological study allows to arrive at a number of conclusions. Firstly, in general, between teachers and students positive relations exist which influences all the things of educational process in a positive way. Secondly, interest in discipline is determined by many factors including the personality of student and teacher, their attitude to their status. Thirdly, students' motivation for studying, attitude to the teacher and his discipline is of subjective character, which is formed under influence of objective factors. Fourthly, side by side with actively developing new forms intended to check students' knowledge and use of new sources of information the students keep using traditional forms of preparation for studies and teachers - classical methods of organization of exams and pass-fail exams.

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