

MONITORING OF TEACHERS' AND TEACHING PROFESSION STUDENTS' QUALITY OF LIFE

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Abstract: In the study we follow how teachers and students of education perceive the quality of their life. Our presumption is that the quality of life conceptions cohere with a shaping of value systems. There are changes in the value systems throughout the life that we tried to apprehend. We measured the quality of life through the SEIQoL method. It is appropriate to get information on nucleate value preferences because it does not pose any criteria beforehand. We compare results of the SEIQoL with the common questionnaire WHOQOL that contains 30 indicators of quality of life.

Key words: quality of life, teachers, students, value systems

Introduction

School provides a number of social functions from elementary knowledge acquisition that are necessary for life in society up to the acquisition of social values needed for its functioning. The school and its teachers are expected to conform to the requirements of society. Accordingly, the teaching profession obtains high social status. However, it becomes a stressful activity if conditions of work are not conducive to this compliance. It regularly involves tasks fraught with emotion and necessitates the making of on the spot decisions to solve problems, dealing with a constantly increasing administrative load, students' lack of interest in learning, their lack of discipline, even their violence and aggression. In society there is scant awareness of the conflicts inherent in the teacher's role. On the one hand he/she has to maintain student discipline while serving as an authority for them, yet on the other hand he/she should be like a friend, gain students' confidence and create a congenial atmosphere. In spite of the high psychological stress of teaching, this profession does carry such positives that enable teachers to go on working with enthusiasm and prevent them from succumbing to "Burnout Syndrome", so that at the best of times they do regard the opportunity to teach as one of the main factors defining their quality of life.

Most ideas about quality of life are connected to human health. At the present, the medical aspect of this problem is increasingly seen from its psychological vantage-point. While the teaching profession is not generally considered physically demanding, nevertheless in the middle of their professional career, most teachers experience physical fatigue, for example back-ache and feet-ache after finishing classes. A special problem can also be intensive vocal cords strain (Řehulka, Řehulková, 2006). However, the focal point of medical problems lies in mental stress that may give rise to psychosomatic diseases in its consequences. They might become evident as indigestion, cardiac arrhythmia and haematopoiesis troubles, spasmus bronchialis and respiratory troubles, headaches, increased internal strain and other syndromes of psychosomatic diseases (Nakonečný, 2004).

Psychological questions connected to the quality of life tend to be summarily understood as quantification of satisfaction with one's life. Such satisfaction is understood in this relation as a crucial motivator of activity. The aim of our study is to monitor how teachers' experience is placed within their value priorities, what creates meaning in terms of quality of life for teachers. We monitor what score they attach to their work and which other aspects are important to gain life satisfaction.

Research Question, Methods of Investigation and Examined Sample

In our report we want to deal with comparison of various methods and techniques for quality of life diagnostics. We focus on teaching profession rating in a structure of indicators creating the quality of life.

The most often used methods for assessing this phenomenon are multi-item scales where individual factors have been specified. In practice we meet miscellaneous variations of the WHOQOL (World Health Organization and Quality of Life) questionnaire, concerning quality of life measurement; it offers goals and situations from which an individual, with high probability, assorts personally important items that he/she would not have included in the list without prompting. The questionnaire was modified by Dragomirecká and Bartoňová (2006) for Czech conditions. It contains 30 items – the quality of life indicators and three scales of seven-stage scores dealing with each indicator's importance rating, satisfaction with its realisation rating and expectancy of improvement rating. In our research we utilized the first two scales that mean indicator's importance rating and satisfaction rating.

Another type of quality of life measurement method is the SEIQoL questionnaire (Schedule for the Evaluation of Individual Quality of Life) that does not pose any criteria in advance. It comes from personal ideas of what a respondent considers important in his/her life. The method basis is a structured interview in which the respondent thinks about goals of his/her life. In the questionnaire five life domains are presented so that the satisfaction rating with their realisation and comparison of their importance amounts 100%. The evaluation is arrived at by multiplying the importance rating by the satisfaction rating for every life domain.

The next method that is often used in our country because of a tight number of 21 criteria is the SQUALA method (Subjective Quality of Life Analysis). It proceeds from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. The importance rating and satisfaction rating with the stated criterion is scored on a five-stage scale for every item. The items deal with health, basic needs, leisure time, close relationships and orientation on social values.

The aim of our study is to compare quality of life indicators from teachers and students of education and to focus on interpretation of the profession's value among other quality of life indicators. Further, we monitor whether the method used influences the structure of indicators that create an individual's quality of life.

The collection of research data was made from available samples. The students' part of the samples was compiled by students of education from The University of Ostrava and The Silesian University in Opava. Teachers who provided information for our research were from Pardubice County (most of them from Letohrad neighbourhood) and from Moravian-Silesian County (from Ostrava and its neighbourhood). Students' ages ranged from 20 to 22 years, teachers' ages from 22 to 60 years (with the average $M = 39$ years).

Table No. 1: Description of Examined Sample

| Method | Teachers | Sex | | Students | Sex | | Total | Sex | |
|--------|----------|-----|----|----------|-----|----|-------|-----|----|
| | | F | M | | F | M | | F | M |
| SEIQoL | 48 | 48 | - | 108 | 95 | 13 | 156 | 143 | 13 |
| SQUALA | 41 | 32 | 9 | - | - | - | 41 | 32 | 9 |
| WHOQOL | 89 | 76 | 12 | 75 | 55 | 10 | 164 | 132 | 22 |
| Total | 178 | 157 | 21 | 183 | 160 | 23 | 361 | 317 | 44 |

Results and Discussion

Results were processed by means of descriptive statistics. Data about monitored variables are stated in the following tables.

Table No. 2: Teachers' Preferences of Quality of Life Indicators

| Ord. of imp. | Method SEIQoL | Satisfaction | | Method SQUALA | Satisfaction | | Method WHOQOL | Satisfaction | |
|-----------------|----------------------|--------------|------|---------------------------|--------------|------|------------------------|--------------|------|
| | | Ord. | % | | Ord. | % | | Ord. | % |
| 1. | Health | 2. | 35,6 | Physical self sufficiency | 2. | 69,1 | Satisfied life | 1. | 50,1 |
| 2. | Occupation | 4. | 24,5 | Health | 1. | 71,2 | Free society | 11. | 26,6 |
| 3. | Family | 3. | 25,8 | Family relationships | 3. | 66,2 | Kind-hearted partner | 8. | 32,4 |
| 4. | Social relationships | 9. | 15,8 | Love | 10. | 49,5 | Absence of pain | 7. | 32,7 |
| 5. | Children | 1. | 45,9 | Psychical comfort | 6. | 61,5 | Psychical comfort | 3. | 42,0 |
| 6. | Interests | 8. | 17,6 | Feeling of security | 4. | 65,5 | Having family | 5. | 38,1 |
| 7. | Partner | 5. | 24,3 | Free society | 9. | 51,2 | Sense of life | 10. | 30,6 |
| 8. | Material provision | 6. | 22,2 | Sleep | 11. | 20,0 | Quality of life | 2. | 46,5 |
| 9. | Education | 7. | 19,6 | Occupation | 7. | 57,4 | Belief in myself | 6. | 34,2 |
| 10. | Psychical comfort | 11. | 10,3 | Care of myself | 5. | 62,5 | Trouble-free sleep | 9. | 30,8 |
| 11. | Living | 10. | 12,5 | Social relationships | 8. | 52,4 | Satisfaction with work | 4. | 40,5 |

Table No. 3: Students' Preferences of Quality of Life Indicators

| Ord. of imp. | Method SEIQoL | Satisfaction | | Method WHOQOL | Satisfaction | |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|------|------------------------|--------------|------|
| | | Ord. | % | | Ord. | % |
| 1. | Health | 2. | 27,2 | Plenty of energy | 5. | 38,5 |
| 2. | Family | 4. | 25,8 | Having family | 2. | 46,1 |
| 3. | Education | 5. | 17,6 | Kind-hearted partner | 4. | 40,7 |
| 4. | Partner | 3. | 26,5 | Sense of life | 7. | 36,2 |
| 5. | Friends | 6. | 15,4 | Free society | 10. | 32,5 |
| 6. | Occupation | 8. | 14,0 | Not to be alone | 6. | 38,1 |
| 7. | Psychical comfort | 7. | 15,4 | Psychical comfort | 8. | 32,9 |
| 8. | Material provision | 10. | 9,2 | Social support | 3. | 44,2 |
| 9. | Freedom | 9. | 10,4 | Absence of pain | 11. | 28,8 |
| 10. | Belief in God | 1. | 36,2 | To decide imp. things | 9. | 32,7 |
| 15. | | | | Satisfaction with work | 1. | 63,5 |

All three methods require the respondent to cite importance rating and satisfaction rating with their realisation for every indicator of the quality of life. We work by analogy according to the SEIQoL method so that we derive a new variable from the data related to the importance and satisfaction level by multiplying them at every item. The definite value in all scales is the variable on which we base further research.

By analysis of the three questionnaire methods used for the quality of life indicators research, we might claim that by means of all the methods the basic values and domains, to which the respondents of our sample aim and which show the basic subjects of human effort, were confirmed. These domains are health, family and occupation that create the base for other relationships, partial goals and closer specification of respondents' effort. On the contrary, among the results of our sample, career development needs and other indicators of personal self-assertiveness are missing.

We have tried to determine whether both the groups, the teachers and teaching profession students, differ from each other as to from the point of the quality of life indicators' importance and in the satisfaction level with a monitored indicator. The analysis bases were the total score of the WHOQOL a SEIQoL questionnaires dealing with the quality of life. (We could not use the SQUALA questionnaire for this statistic processing because it does not have students' sample.) The results show that both the groups are not statistically different in dealing with the total value of individual quality of life indicators' importance. However, the satisfaction values are significantly different ($t = 2.032$, $P = 0.047$). The students show a higher level of satisfaction with quality of life (average students' level is 224.505, and teachers' level is 189.767).

Our hypothesis that questionnaire methods which, while evaluating the quality of life, offer goals and situations from which a respondent can select important items for himself/herself and which he would not state by himself/herself until prompt has been confirmed. If a respondent, while working with the SEIQoL method, shall mention five basic goals, their personal importance and satisfaction rating with their realisation, he/she does not mention the various attributes of the same domain but he/she is inclined to generalize. When one works with items that differentiate basic values, for example as regards the health: Absence of pain, having trouble-free sleep, not to be depressive, to

act independently, to be able to have a rest, to be satisfied with healthcare or similar, the importance of the individual indicators becomes minor. Results presented in the Table No. 2 and 3 clarify this aspect clearly.

On the contrary, questionnaires with many items dealing with an indicator, e.g. social relationships, might discover which kind of relationship an individual or a group is missing, which relationships annoy them or which relationships they long for or endeavour for. Also the content analysis of health in the WHOQOL questionnaire might prefer the item «Plenty of Energy» that the group of students mentions in the first place. For this group good health needn't represent Absence of pain as we show in Table No. 3. From the results of our pilot research one may come to a conclusion that if we work with an individual or a smaller group, the SEIQoL questionnaire is the right method to address basic issues or a respondent's problem. For broader investigation of bigger samples, the questionnaires with stated items that might illuminate some important problem are more sufficient. E.g. teachers' good sleep indicator appears at the WHOQOL and SQUALA questionnaires among the first ten quality of life aspects while at the SEIQoL questionnaires we have not met this problem at all (Šimíčková-Čížková, Vašina, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009).

The next question we query within the study concerns differences in quality of life indicators between the teachers and students of education. Because we did not make a correlation analysis, we cannot ascertain statistically important differences between the presented goals but we can only claim that both the groups mention preference for the same aspects, however, they differ in the satisfaction rating that they enjoy with them.

The importance of occupation for the quality of life is confirmed by both groups of our respondents. This indicator is given higher preference by teachers according to differences caused by age and respondents' experiences. The SEIQoL questionnaire construction as referred to above influences this aspect for the quality of life structure. The two next questionnaires WHOQOL and SQUALA split the questions connected with occupation into several items. This indicator importance in the quality of life structure moves, however it stays in its first half.

Conclusion

At The Ostrava University Education College we pay attention to the theme of “Quality of Teachers’ Professional Life” in the long term. In our report we are concerned with comparison of the methods for the quality of life investigation and with the importance of occupation in the structure of indicators that create the quality of life.

Our study shows positives and negatives of the methods which we used. The WHOQOL and SQAULA multi-item questionnaires might warn of some more considerable problem in the domains of health, close relationships or social values. For young people the health indicator might be Plenty of Energy while in adult age or in age of discretion the health indicator will be determined by indicators that are connected to Absence of Pain or Disease, Good Sleep or similar. If an occupation indicator is stated by the item “To be satisfied with work”, it has smaller importance in the hierarchy of life effort than Occupation domain as the important quality of life indicator.

Our investigation reveals a similar structure of the quality of life indicators for teachers as well as for students of education. The differences in importance ratings cor-

respond to the needs according to respondents' age and life experience. The students are more satisfied with the quality of their lives in comparison with the teachers and this is confirmed by the significant differences in statistical description. However, there are not significant differences concerning which quality of life indicators are considered important by both the groups.

Questionnaires with more items differentiate quality of life indicators and they are more suitable for monitoring of goals and values in bigger groups where they might cover more important aspects of some quality of life domain. Projective methods of SEIQoL type demonstrate a picture of principal-core domains of an individual quality of life and they create space for continued contacts with respondents especially in therapeutic activities.

Literature

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SLEDOVÁNÍ KVALITY ŽIVOTA UČITELŮ A STUDENTŮ UČITELSTVÍ

Abstrakt Ve studii sledujeme jak vnímají učitelé a studenti učitelství kvalitu svého života. Vycházíme z předpokladu, že představy o kvalitě života souvisí s utvářením systému preference hodnot. V tomto systému dochází v průběhu života ke změnám, které se snažíme prostřednictvím našeho šetření postihnout. Kvalitu života jsme ověřovali metodou SEIQoL. Je vhodná pro informaci o preferenci hodnot – jádrových,

protože neklade předem žádná kritéria. Výsledky této metody srovnáváme s běžnou dotazníkovou metodou WHOQOL, která obsahuje 30 indikátorů kvality života.

Klíčová slova: kvalita života, učitelé, studenti, systémy hodnot