

Problems that Pedagogical Staff Face when Acquiring Qualifications

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Abstract: A quality education that responds flexibly to changes in the educational needs of pupils and students at all levels of education, as well as to the demands of future employers on the labour market, must become Czech Republic's priority. It plays an important role in tackling unemployment, as well as in the economic development and the increase in competitiveness of our country. The paper deals with problems in pedagogical staff training and education. The aim is to propose suitable measures leading to the elimination of current problems in training and education of teacher candidates at the Institute of Education and Communication, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague. The main method used is a data analysis based on a survey among students enrolled in the study programme "Pedagogy for Teachers in Vocational Subjects". The analytical outcomes indicate that high time requirements and low employers' support are the main problems that teaching staff face. It indicates there will be necessary to focus on changing the approach of teaching staff employers who require enhancing teaching staff education, however they are not willing to offer a desirable support.

Keywords: education, lifelong learning, development of pedagogical staff, motivation and obstacles to study.

Introduction

Teacher education is a responsible process that can be viewed from several perspectives. On the one hand, it is possible to mention the teacher's ability to communicate, to deliver the curriculum right, the ability to self-reflection; on the other hand, teacher education is also linked to the legislative requirements on the profession (Petty, 2014). The quality of teaching force is often perceived as a major factor in nation's attempts to improve its overall educational performance (Akiba, Wiseman, 2013). The importance of teacher policy and enhancing teacher's effectiveness has been also analysed by OECD, accenting the need of high-quality teaching (OECD, 2005). Similarly, the noticeable trend to extend pedagogical studies and raise the standards of teacher training in Europe is indicated by Z. Sedereviciute-Paciauskiene and R. Vainoryte (2015). All these questions are topical in the Czech Republic (CR) as well. The education system in the Czech Republic has its strengths, including, among other things, the tradition in adult education (from guilds and fellowships in the 19th century, interest and later professional organizations in the first half of the 20th century, the development of corporate education in the 1970s, to the present notion of lifelong learning in its various forms). However, education in the CR also has its weaknesses, including, among other things, political instability and unclear division of competences between the state and its territorial components, even though the plans for the development of adult education in the CR are outlined in several dozens of documents developed at national level. Secondary education plays a crucial role in the Czech education system, as it prepares young people for direct entry to the labour market and, in case of specializations that are concluded with a graduation exam, for further study at higher vocational schools or universities. In May 2017, the implementation of the individual project "Modernization of Vocational Education" began; the aim of the project is, among other things, to boost employment prospects of graduates of secondary vocational schools on the labour market. One area was also focused on linking the National Register of Qualifications with School Education Programmes with the aim to respond more flexibly to current needs of the labour market (MSMT, 2018).

The Education Policy Strategy of the CR up to 2020 (Education Strategy 2020), which replaced the National Programme for the Development of Education of 2001 (White Paper), set three key priorities. The first priority is the reduction of inequalities in the education sector. The second is the support of quality teacher education. The third priority is a responsible and effective management of the education system. In the context of the above changes, new requirements for pedagogical staff emerged and the existing requirements were extended and their competencies need to be developed—(Strategy for

Education..., 2018). The changes in education policy also emphasize the need to develop the management of educational institutions. Directors of schools must continuously expand their area of activities, as well as their management skills. In addition to being responsible for instruction, they also assume extensive competencies in other areas of activities of the school linked to management, personnel policy, administration, etc. Specific forms of training of school managers already exist today; however, the question remains whether they reflect the necessary changes in the required competencies.

In accordance with the above mentioned, the main aim of the paper is to identify motivation for study and the problems that adults face in connection with their studies at the Institute of Education and Communication (IEC) of the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague.

Methodology

The first part of the paper introduces theoretical approaches to management of human resources in the education sector. It also contains an analysis of the situation in Czech education system based on information obtained from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The first method of research is the analysis of the available documents, especially those related to education. They include legislative documents, selected materials and surveys carried out by the OECD, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) and relevant bibliography. The second pillar of the research is a questionnaire survey among students of the 1st – 3rd year of part-time study of the Bachelor study programme Pedagogy for Teachers in Vocational Subjects (PTVS) at IEC in the years 2012–2013, 2015–2016 and 2018–2019. The results are categorized according to the 1st degree (enumeration of absolute frequencies) and the 2nd degree, where the relations between two variables are discovered. Using a contingency table, the relationship between the two variables is measured using the Chi-squared test, the Pearson's and Cramer's contingency coefficients, which determine the degree of dependence of the variables.

Management of human resources in the education sector

In the theory of management, human capital is considered to be part of the intellectual capital, which counterbalances the financial capital, and in addition to the human capital it also includes structural and customer capital ("relational capital") (Tureckiova, Veteska, 2008, 27). W. Smith and R. Tinning (Smith, Tinning, 2011, 238) also distinguish between cultural and symbolic capital. "Cultural capital is a specific competence that can be utilized when an individual's abilities and his/her performance are in harmony. The accumulation of the cultural capital is one of the means to increase performance. The ownership of the symbolic capital allows the holder to exercise all his competencies and use them also in the framework of social relationships. In the field of education, the acquired knowledge about schools, teaching and learning form the symbolic capital."

At school, effective leadership of people can be characterized by the existence of visions and long-term goals, a strategy of how to achieve them, a sufficient level of creativity, sensitivity towards both workers and pupils, a good division of labour, pro-active and professional management of change, but above all the ability to motivate and inspire co-workers to fulfil the vision and goals of the school. Effective leadership of the school depends primarily on the personality of the director and in their relationship with colleagues and pupils (Svetlik, 2009, 271). Leadership of people is an art or a process of influencing people so that they contribute willingly and enthusiastically to achieving of group goals (Weinrich, Cannice, Koontz, 2009, 368). People are the most valuable capital of any school. Experience shows that a school can only be as good as the people who work in it (Svetlik, 2009, 288). A good and creative atmosphere among teacher staff is a very important element which directly affects also the atmosphere among pupils. M. Armstrong's definition: "People and their collective skills, abilities and experience, coupled with their ability to deploy these in the interests of the employing organization, are now recognized as making a significant to organizational success and as constituting a significant source of competitive advantage" (Armstrong, 2006, 14) is exceptionally true for education.

The style of leadership affects the strategy, the structure, the systems, the processes and the relationships within an organization and ultimately it creates an organizational culture that enhances the performance of the organization (Pillay, Pillay, 2012, 540). H.C. Ngambi adds that "One of the most important leadership skills that are important to enhance the morale in the workplace is good communication and the ability to cope with change" (Ngambi, 2011, 765). While the pedagogical literature is increasingly

concerned with the motivation of pupils, very little theoretical study has been done into the motivation of pedagogical staff and in general only certain practical experience can be used, unfortunately rather negative one, such as teacher burn-out (Svetlik, 2009, 281).

Remuneration is a specific area of care for employees. Teachers' salaries or wages have been low in the Czech Republic for a long time now, which contributes to the low appeal of this profession. This is due to relatively low funding of education, in which salaries or wages are the main cost. The teachers' dissatisfaction with the remuneration is also documented in the research under the title "An Analysis of the Prerequisites and Educational Needs of Pedagogical Staff for Improvement of Their Work", which was carried out by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in 2006. The research shows that teachers themselves say that the prestige of their profession would be enhanced if their remuneration increased (32 % of respondents), that the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports should take care of the increase in prestige (25 %) and that the importance of the teaching profession should be promoted by the media (15 %). On the other hand, the same percentage of teachers involved in the research say that it is primarily the responsibility of teachers and the teachers' associations to increase the prestige of the teaching profession. The fewest teachers (10 %) are of the opinion that no special effort to raise the prestige is needed – every teacher has the prestige they deserve (MSMT, 2009, 50–51). The fact that teachers first mention the low remuneration is in line with the OECD survey (OECD, 2017), which states that in the OECD countries teachers earn on average 96 % of the salaries of employees with a similar education, while in the CR it is 63 %. The average salary of a teacher after 15 years of employment in the OECD countries is on average USD 34,534 per year, while in the CR it is USD 18,971 per year (OECD, 2017).

The quality of the pedagogical staff to a significant degree depends on their education; consequently, focus is put on education in all the countries of the European Union (EU). In 2010, the European Council adopted the new Europe 2020 strategy, which draws on the previous Lisbon strategy. Its key priorities include an emphasis on environmental issues, innovation and education. The so-called European Higher Education Area was introduced in 2010, in the framework of which member states decided to use common tools and implement reforms of higher education. The Eurydice Information Network was established to promote cooperation and mobility. Also, EU education programmes have a big impact on the professional development of teachers. In 2017, the Erasmus programme was ranked as one of the most successful programmes contributing to the professional development of teachers (European Commission, 2017, 5).

In the area of vocational training, the principles of European cooperation are defined by the Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training, so called ET2020. In addition to a vision for the development of education in Europe by 2020, it outlines a total of four strategic goals that correspond to the complex focus on lifelong learning (either formal, non-formal or informal), namely: 1) to implement lifelong learning and mobility; 2) to improve the quality and efficiency of education and training; 3) to promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship; 4) to improve creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training (European Commission, 2018).

Education in the Czech Republic and its funding

The economy of every country in the world is a mixed economy – a combination of private enterprise working through the marketplace and government regulation, taxation and programmes (Samuelson, Nordhaus, 2010, 25). National economy can be classified according to the way of financing into profit and non-profit sector. Non-profit sector, also called public sector, is characterized by state and self-governing ownership; a private ownership is typical for the private sector. How much of a priority education is for the individual countries can be judged, among other things, by the amount of money they spend on education. According to the OECD annual survey that compares educational systems of the OECD countries through selected indicators, it is clear that the CR spent 3.99 % of GDP on education in 2014. In the OECD countries, however, it was 5.16 % of GDP (OECD, 2017). In terms of total public expenditure on education, in the OECD countries it is on average 11.3 % of public expenditure. The CR with 7.8 % is significantly below the OECD average (OECD, 2017).

Lifelong learning in the Czech Republic

The general objective of the Czech Republic's Education Strategy is to improve the results and motivation of children, pupils and students at all levels of the education system. At the same time, it focuses on the development of the education system based on the concept of lifelong learning. Educational policy must therefore pay attention to all types of educational opportunities, i.e. not only to formal education, but also to non-formal education and the growing area of informal learning. One of the main implementation documents of the Czech Republic's Education Strategy is the Long-term Plan for Education and the Development of the Education System of the CR 2015–2020 (Long-term Plan). The Long-term Plan also includes a chapter on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Its objectives include creation of a functional environment for further education that will enable acquisition of knowledge and skills in the field of sustainable development and which will systematically offer up-to-date education programmes for educators, public administration, the business sector and non-profit non-governmental organizations focused on the practical application of sustainable development and that will ensure fair accessibility of ESD for the public in the CR (MSMT, 2014).

Education of pedagogical staff in the Czech Republic

In addition to the above-mentioned national documents, education of pedagogical staff in the CR is addressed by a number of legal standards. They include:

- Act No. 561/2004 Coll. on Preschool, Elementary, Secondary, Higher Vocational and Other Education, whose amendment by Act No. 101/2017 Coll. brought about, among other things, a reform of the financing of regional schools and regulation of rights and obligations of pedagogical staff.
- Act No. 111/1998 Coll. on Higher Education Institutions, which includes a provision on lifelong learning programmes (Section 60).
- Act No. 179/2006 Coll. on Verification and Recognition of Further Education Results, which regulates the National Register of Qualifications.
- Act No. 262/1996 Coll., the Labour Code, which stipulates the obligations of employers to take care of the professional development of employees, deepening and enhancement of qualification (Sections 230 – 235), Act No. 435/2004 on Employment, which defines the measures for the development of human resources (§ 104 – 110) within the active employment policy.
- Act No. 563/2004 Coll. on Pedagogical Staff, as amended. The problem is that, along with this law, a career charter (system) should have been introduced that would define the right to financial remuneration for employees that would comply with the requirement to work on their professional and career growth. However, it was rejected by the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament in July 2017.

Results and discussion

Own research at the Institute of Education and Communication

The Czech University of Life Sciences (CULS) in Prague offers a bachelor programme PTVS. The PTVS programme is intended primarily for teachers of practical education at secondary vocational schools or vocational schools who need to obtain the appropriate education for the profession. In addition, it is also attended by people who are self-employed or by employees in other sectors who are considering a future career in the field of practical education.

Questionnaire survey

The questionnaire survey was conducted in three waves, between 2012–2013 (in the tables as A), 2015–2016 (in the tables as B) and 2018–2019 (in the tables as C), so that students of the PTVS programme in all years of their study who were currently studying at IEC could participate in it at one time. In the 2012–2013 academic year, a total of 67 students, in 2015–2016 a total of 74 students and in 2018–2019 a total of 102 students in the 1st – 3rd year of the PTVS bachelor programme participated in the survey, i.e. 243 students in total. The questionnaire was anonymous and contained 10 questions; respondents could only choose one answer option. The data were arranged in tables of absolute frequency. Due to the low occurrence of frequencies of some of the variants of answers to question 3, the variables were re-categorized and merged into the answer “Self-employed and others”; for the last

3 questions there were no “No” and “Don’t know” answers. Results of questionnaire survey among students of PTVS are shown in the tables below.

Table 1

Identification data of the respondents

Sex	Female						Male					
	A		B		C		A		B		C	
	51		60		64		16		14		38	
	175						68					
Age	30 years and younger			31 – 40 years			41 – 50 years			51 years and older		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
	22	15	33	19	17	22	15	25	29	11	17	18
	70			58			69			46		
Position on the labour market	Employee in the education sector			Employee in another sector			Self-employed and others					
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C			
	47	38	40	18	24	47	2	12	15			
	125			89			29					

Table 1 shows that, under 30 years of age, followed by the age category 41–50 years, the remaining two categories are less represented, 125 students are employees in the education sector.

Table 2

Reasons for starting a study and problems with it

Reason for studying at IEC	Employer’s requirement to increase qualification			Own interest to increase qualification, need to educate oneself			Expected financial gain after completion of studies			Increase in employment prospects					
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C			
	17	18	24	36	44	61	1	4	5	13	8	12			
	59			141			10			33					
Biggest obstacle to studying at IEC	Time demands			Financial demands			No support from employer			Studies are too demanding			No problems		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
	40	36	55	2	4	3	17	18	24	0	4	6	8	12	14
	131			9			59			10			34		
Are you satisfied with the form of study?	Fully satisfied			I’d appreciate more contact instruction			I’d appreciate less contact instruction								
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C						
	59	58	92	3	9	4	5	7	6						
	209			16			18								
What, apart from knowledge, does study at IEC provide to you?	Good feeling that I work on my development			Possibility to meet new people			Possibility to leave stereotype at work			Possibility to know new environment					
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C			
	45	42	81	16	20	11	3	5	8	3	7	2			
	168			47			16			12					

Table 2 clearly demonstrates that the most common reason for studying at IEC was own interest in improving qualifications and the need to educate oneself, followed by employers' requirement to increase employee's qualification, to a lesser degree also an increase in employment prospects; only 10 respondents expect a financial gain after completion of studies. Furthermore, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents stated that the biggest obstacle to their studies was time demands (131), followed by low support from the employer (59). Of the total number of respondents, 86 % students are satisfied with the form of study at IEC, the number of respondents who would appreciate less contact instruction is not significantly different from the number of respondents who would appreciate more contact instruction.

In addition to acquiring the necessary knowledge and competencies, the most common reasons for studying at IEC include the students' good feeling that they work on their development (168), the possibility to meet new people (47), to a lesser extent also the possibility to know new environment and to leave stereotype at work at least for a while.

Table 3

Satisfaction with studies at IEC

Study materials are appropriate	Yes			Rather yes			Rather no		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
	36	35	37	27	30	51	4	9	14
	108			108			27		

From the point of view of quality, the studies fulfilled your expectations	Yes			Rather yes			Rather no		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
	43	43	40	20	18	51	4	13	11
	126			89			28		

Based on previous experience, would you choose to study at IEC again?	Yes			Rather yes			Rather no		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
	56	57	74	8	13	26	3	4	2
	187			47			9		

Table 3 shows that the respondents are mostly satisfied with the study materials (*yes*, or *rather yes* – 216 respondents), yet it is necessary, even given the low number of 27 students who are rather dissatisfied, to think about how to improve the quality of the study materials or their accessibility. In terms of the quality of education, the studies fulfilled the expectations of the majority of respondents (*yes*, or *rather yes* – 215 respondents), almost all of them would again choose to study at IEC (*yes*, or *rather yes* – 234 respondents, which equals 99% of respondents).

In the next part, the dependence on whether or not a student is employed in the education sector or in another sector or self-employed in relation to the reason for studying and the biggest obstacle at IEC was assessed by a contingency table using the Chi-squared test, the Pearson's and Cramer's contingency coefficients. There was a total of 125 employees in the education sector and 118 respondents employed in other sectors or self-employed. The initial conditions were as follows:

- H_0 : the variables are independent,
- H_1 : the variables are dependent,
- Selected level of significance: $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 4 provides the findings as follows. The relationship between the position of the respondent on the labour market and the reason for studying at IEC is medium (the Pearson's coefficient of contingency is 0.44 and the Cramer coefficient of contingency is 0.5). Therefore, we reject H_0 about the independence of the variables and accept the alternative hypothesis H_1 and conclude that a dependence exists between whether the respondent is an employee in the education sector and their reason for studying at IEC. Employees in the education sector, unlike other employees or self-employed persons, more often cited the employers' requirement to start studying, but 56 of them also cited their own interest to increase their qualification and educate themselves.

Table 4

Contingency table of absolute frequencies between the position on the labour market and the reason for studying at IEC

Position on the labour market	Reason for studying at IEC											
	Employer's requirement			Own interest, need to educate oneself			Expected financial gain			Increase in employment prospects		
Employee in the education sector	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
	18	17	20	21	18	17	3	1	1	5	2	2
	55			56			5			9		
Employee in another sector or self-employed	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
	0	0	4	16	22	42	0	0	4	4	14	12
	4			80			4			30		

Table 5 reveals that time demands were mentioned 128 times (out of which 68 in case of employees in the education sector) as the biggest obstacle, followed by not having support from the employer (58 in total). In this case, the dependence between the position of the respondent on the labour market and the biggest obstacle to studying at IEC has not been proven (the Pearson's coefficient of contingency is 0.06, the Cramer's coefficient of contingency is 0.06). Therefore, we do not reject H_0 about the independence of the variables and we conclude that no dependence exists between whether the respondent is an employee in the education sector and obstacles to the studies.

Table 5

Contingency table of absolute frequencies between the position on the labour market and the biggest obstacle to studying at IEC

Position on the labour market	Biggest obstacle to studies at IEC														
	Time demands			Financial demands			No support from employer			Studies are too demanding			No problems		
Employee in the education sector	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
	22	24	22	4	1	1	10	8	11	5	0	3	6	5	3
	68			6			29			8			14		
Employee in another sector or self-employed	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
	9	17	34	1	1	2	5	12	12	1	0	3	4	6	11
	60			4			29			4			21		

However, it is still surprising that 29 employees in the education sector state that they have no support from the employer, although the previous table clearly shows that in many cases the employer is the one that requires their employees to participate in further education.

Conclusions

The Czech Republic has limitations in the education of pedagogical staff, especially in the framework of employers' support in the care for employees. The role of the state will be to continuously increase the motivation of the two actors. The Education Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic up to 2020 has set as one of its strategic priorities the support of quality education and teachers. In 2017, however, the career charter for teachers was rejected in the legislative process; it aimed to support the lifelong professional development of teachers and link it to the remuneration system. The individual project "System for Supporting the Professional Development of Teachers and Directors" may provide a certain alternative solution. Its aim is to develop a new concept that systematically and comprehensively supports the professional growth of educators with an emphasis on quality.

In line with the facts presented, the researchers have focused on the motivation for studying and the problems that adults, the target group, face in connection with their studies at a particular educational institution. The following are the most interesting findings: Women were the dominant group among the target group of teacher candidates concerned. The most common reason for studying at IEC was own interest of the respondents in improving their qualification and the need to educate oneself, followed by employer's requirement to increase employee's qualification. It can be concluded that the majority of the respondents stated that the biggest obstacle during their studies was connected with time demands, followed by low support from the part of their employer. A positive fact, as for the quality of education, is that the majority of the teacher candidates are satisfied with the part-time form of study, they evaluate the study resources in a positive way, and overall, the studies fulfilled their expectations and almost all of the respondents would choose to study at the particular institution again.

To conclude, and hopefully to indicate the positive development on the political scene, in the course of 2017, a draft amendment to the Education Act was adopted which introduces a new system of financing of regional schools, which will replace financing through the "national norms" that are determined by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports as the amount of expenditure for education of one pupil or student. This change in financing was also recommended by the OECD. The main difference will be the consideration of the size and structure of the specializations and the financing of pedagogical work according to direct pedagogical activity. Only after the changes are implemented, i.e. after 1 January 2019, it will become evident how this change will affect the teacher assessment and the amount of funds provided to individual schools. Regional schools will continue to be financed from funds appointed for development programmes through the Operational Programme "Research, Development and Education" from the European Structural and Investment Funds, while individual system projects will also be supported. A more efficient use of the resources from the European Social Fund could again lead to the development of teacher competencies. In addition to the Structural Funds, teacher education can also be financed from the programme Horizon 2020.

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