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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMICS TEACHERS – REFLECTIONS ON PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING PROGRAMS

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Abstract: *The objective of this article is to identify the degree of participation of academics teachers in the training programs. Research method corresponds to a descriptive study that used quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques. The sample included academics teachers participating in a questionnaire survey of four public universities in Romania and Spain, with a total of 240 people in Romania and 240 in Spain. Variables selection of teachers were home country higher education institution that teaches; faculty to which it belongs, sex, age in higher education, professional category. For analysis and interpretation of data we used SPSS 17.0 program. The results obtained through question 4, not to generalize the entire population, there is a low level of participation in training programs to teachers of our country (22,86%), compared with teachers in Spain (65,83%). Academic life allows us to think of a project on short, medium and long term, including professional development. Finally, we propose to have training programs for university staff as a result of reflection and individual and collective responsibility.*

Keywords: *development professional, lifelong learning, training of teachers*

1. INTRODUCTION

The professional development of teachers is studied and presented in the relevant literature in many different ways. But always at the core of such endeavors is the understanding that professional development is about teachers learning, learning how to learn, and transforming their knowledge into practice for the benefit of their students' growth [1].

The paper is organized as follows. The theoretic considerations regarding the definition of teachers training and development professional are presented in Section 2. The research methodology it developed in Section 3. The results research is presented in Section 4. Finally, conclusions are provided in Section 5.

2. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

2.1 Definition of teachers training

Fullan (1993) considered to teacher training is having the honor of being simultaneously the worst problem and the best solution in education. Teacher education still has the honor of being simultaneously the worst problem and the best solution in education.

For the concept of "training" are used and other concepts using similar or partly similar meanings, as we found in the literature: staff development, professional development, personal development, career development, etc.

As considered Iucu (2004), training means "all activities aimed at updating regularly the initial training, to adapt it to new demands of

conducting educational processes, and to assimilate knowledge and skills".

2.2. Definition of development professional

In a previous paper [3] we have presented the current literature review of the development professional (Iucu, 2007; Benedito, 2007; Potolea & Toma, 2008) elaborated some of the starting points of our communication with regard the professional development of the university teacher. We present a synthesis of the definitions of professional development (Marcelo, 2009):

- The concept of professional development is understood as synonymous with other concepts, considering the various theoretical frameworks underlying the different strategies of action undertaken trainer undoubtedly bring with teacher various positions at the class, the curriculum changes and life cycles career.
- Work opportunities that encourage creative and reflective skills in the teachers, thus, enabling them to improve their practices (Bredeson, 2002).
- The professional development of teachers is the professional growth the teacher acquires as a result of his/her experience and systematic analysis of his/her own practice.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research undertaken lies in education, opting for an integrated strategy, which correlates with the quality quantitative research. Frequently, the research conducted, the two types of paradigms, quantitative and qualitative, and have, and have supported each other and become complementary. The research was conducted between November 2008 - July 2009 in four institutions of higher education in Spain, was quoted as institutions representative units in the country. Also, for a comparative study we resumed the investigation and in our country between September 2009 - July 2010, comprising a

total of four institutions of higher education in Romania.

a) Participants

Universe: population analyzed the teachers of public universities in Romania and Spain, divided into areas of knowledge the humanities and experimental.

Sample: intentional, as any sampling according to two variables (type of university study), four universities decided to select different features: large universities with a long history, universities belonging to different territorial areas. A total of 245 university teachers from Romania and 240 from Spain were sampled, to whom the questionnaire was provided.

b) Design

Approach: Descriptive, pilot study.

Technique: to know the views that teachers may have about possible participation in a training program, we designed a questionnaire for training needs and technical college teachers to collect information through a survey and were asked among others, the following question: Does participation in an appropriate training program in university education?

Variables selection of teachers were: country of origin (Romania, Spain); institution delivering higher education, faculty to which it belongs, sex (male/female), age in higher education, professional category (junior, assistant, lecturer, associate professor, associate professor, consultant).

The questionnaire was constructed in the first phase of 16 items, which was applied on a pilot sample of 22 teachers, male and female within an institution of higher education in Spain. Also, after the initial questionnaire consisting of 16 items, of which five open-response items, was applied to a pilot sample of 25 subjects formed within an institution of higher education in our country. At the time of application, the final questionnaire included a white sheet for subjects to express their views and suggestions as it deems appropriate, both on the instrument in general and regarding description categories and items in particular.



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Following this pilot application we wanted to examine: (a) the teacher on the instrument, (b) use of evaluation categories, (c) understanding the terminology used in the questionnaire, (d) overall assessment of the instrument.

Final version questionnaire was developed based on the results of the pilot study, consisting of 14 items. The procedure for obtaining the data was the questionnaire in writing. In so doing the analysis and interpretation of data, we used SPSS 17.0 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences - Statistical processing program for Social and Human Sciences).

c) Procedure

The procedure for obtaining the application data was written questionnaire sent to teachers by internal mail and email.

4. RESULTS

Teacher participation in training programs in Romania is regulated by national legislation and community expectations defined.

As a general objective of training is considered supporting the improvement of the national training system. Spain made in education, a shift towards a new paradigm, which reflects a constructivist conception of learning.

The results obtained through question 4, not to generalize the entire population, there is a low level of participation in training programs to teachers of our country (22,86%), compared with teachers in Spain (65,83%). The situation presented in detail in the following:

Table 1.

Subjects Participation in training programs	Teachers Romania No. -245		Teachers Spain No. -240	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	56	22,86%	158	65,83%
Not	174	71,02%	72	30%
Non-response (NR)	15	6,12%	10	4,17%

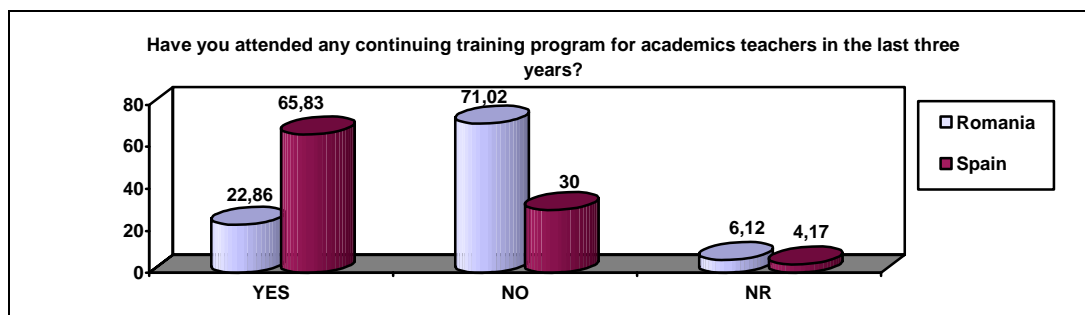


Figure 1. Graphical representation of teacher responses regarding participation in training programs

As can be seen, a percent of 71,02% teachers in our country have participated in training programs in the past three years,

compared with only 30% teachers in Spain. Also, notable that a small percentage of subjects responded (6,12% -Romania; 4,17%-

Spain), which shows that this question has an insignificant number of subjects who did not respond.

Teacher training is an ongoing process that is based on the concept of lifelong learning.

An important contribution to development lies in the teaching career of lifelong learning; especially through the results we determine the level of education, for the purposes of this efficiency.

Analyzing the answers given by university teachers in the institutions of both countries of

the point (b) in the question 4, we can see that most of the subjects interviewed in both countries (80% subjects in Romania and 85,83% subjects in Spain) considers appropriate pedagogical training for participation in higher education, significant fact in favor of building the training programs at university level.

Distribution of answers is reflected in Table 2 and graphic below:

Table 2. Distribution of answers regarding the importance participating in training programs of academics teachers

Importance the participation in training programs	Teachers Romania No. -245		Teachers Spain No. -240	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	196	80%	206	85,83%
Not	33	13,47%	23	9,58%
Non-response (NR)	16	6,53%	11	4,59%

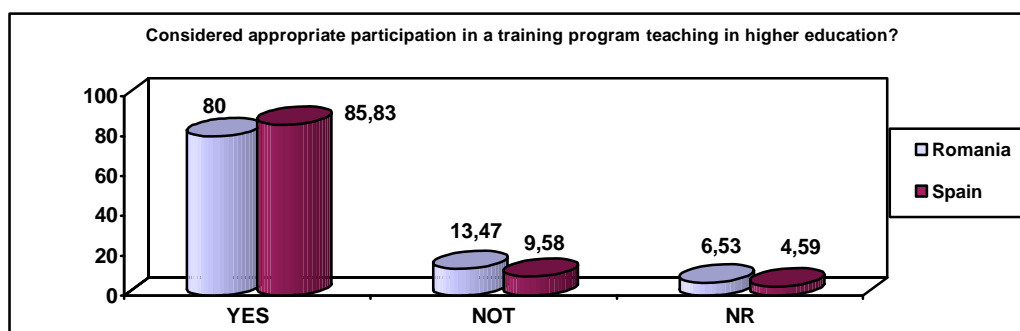


Figure 2. Graphical representation of answers regarding the importance participating in training programs of academics teachers

Observed that only a percentage of 13,47% subjects in Romania considered appropriate pedagogical training, for which university staff believes that pedagogical training programs are important, especially early career, but not decisive, and in Spain only percentage of 9,58% subjects.

We can say that in this category we find two kinds of people: some who do not feel the need for training, because it possible considered they have a certain level of training (appears effect prestige) and people do not realize they have this need (not it aware importance of the psycho-pedagogical professional development, but in fact have this need). Also, notable that a small percentage of subjects in Romania (6,53%) and Spain (4,59%) did not answer this item.

5. CONCLUSIONS & ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Conclude the most important data obtained from the collection; highlight some ideas and conclusions that could guide the reflection and debate around issues of training.

In summary, the results allow us to observe that the data show similarities and differences between the teachers surveyed in both countries.

Interestingly, both teachers in Romania as those of Spain considered it necessary to participate in training program (80% subjects of Romania and 85,83% in Spain).

It stands out from the results that teacher training is an essential factor in improving the quality of university education.



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It highlights the need for training and updates the idea of a permanent training of professor. We are talking about updating scientific knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. Need to be updated as scientific knowledge, their specialized fields is due to constant change and new knowledge is generated and is given to knowledge through basic and applied research and dissemination of scientific discoveries. Academic life permits us to thinking a project of life on the short, medium and long term, including the professional development.

As suggestions that we need some key to the success of teacher education: creating training programs, dynamic reflective target, transparent ethics, modernizing experiential, empathic psychosocial climate. Also establish educational systems technical support and evaluation for teaching performance, based on a holistic, systemic, thoughtful, critical and continuous professional development.

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