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## Assessment of Textbooks. Comparative Analysis: Students vs. Teachers

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**Summary:** *The present study tries to determine the different attitude of students enrolled in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year of study in the blended weekend classes programme (N=144) on the assessment of textbooks and face-to-face activities. The study also took into consideration the results of teachers (N=16) that self-assessed the textbook using an eight-indicator questionnaire. The results for the intergroup comparisons underline that the freshmen and the teachers have higher expectations on the informational design and on the contents of the textbook, but also on its units' utility than the second year students or the seniors (F=11,452, p<.001). There were similar results for the assessment of face-to-face activities; the teachers and the freshmen expressed higher demands than the 2<sup>nd</sup> year students and the seniors (F=10,064, p<.001). The main concern for the teachers should be the needs of the freshmen because these have a higher degree of expectations for the academic courses performed by the teachers directly within face-to-face activities and/or indirectly through textbooks.*

**Key words:** *Pedagogy of Primary and Preschool Education, blended weekend classes, textbook, face-to-face activities*

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Pedagogy of Primary and Preschool Education (PPPE) of the Bachelor's Degree Programme within blended weekend classes (BWC) is one of the specializations offered by the Faculty of Social and Humanistic Sciences, University of Oradea; it trains teachers for primary and preschool education levels, as well as future professionals in the fields of special needs psycho-pedagogy, psychology, welfare work, sociology, philosophy. The program is part of a coherent and unitary theoretical, but also training system, having different and specific courses for each of the specializations enlisted above.

Pedagogy of Primary and Preschool Education within the blended weekend classes study programme has been implemented as the University of Oradea intended to offer the youth in Bihor County and its adjacent areas the possibility of specializing in a field of general interest and of great job opportunities due to the lack of professionals in the field of Educational Sciences. The blended weekend classes study programme is designed for various socio-professional categories that desire to complete their present level of education, many of the enrolled students in BWC being already teachers. More details about the specificity of BWC study programme can be found in Popa et al (2014).

The management of Pedagogy of Primary and Preschool Education study programme in blended weekend classes, as a modern form of university level education, is supervised by

the Centre for Distance Learning and Blended Weekend Classes (DIDIFR – Romanian term), a specialized institutional structure.

The Centre for Distance Learning and Blended Weekend Classes (from now on DL/BWC) offer the students the PPPE study programme within the blended weekend classes form, learning materials designed to ensure quality training based on individual study. That is why the DL/BWC Centre, University of Oradea had created a model for this type of learning materials that was approved by the University Senate. Thus, all study resources and textbooks (SSI – Romanian abbreviation) of DL/BWC for the PPPE-BWC students are particularly created for the whole PPPE-BWC study programme, having an attractive graphic design and a unitary structure.

The academic courses are delivered over a three-year period to allow the students to develop general and specific skills in their field of study, on both: the cognitive-scientific level and on the practice/training and value level. Each of the academic courses is divided into the following types of activities:

- face-to-face activities (S – Romanian abbreviation) and check-out tests, having the same number of classes as the full-time learning study programme;
- practical activities (L, P – Romanian abbreviation) – lab activities, project work, training practice and other types of face-to-face activities, having the same number of classes as the full-time learning study programme;
- the number of classes for DL/BWC is counterbalanced by the individual study programme and all the learning resources given to every student as a facility of the learning tuition fee;
- face-to-face activities – seminar, lab activities, project work and field practice – have the same number of classes as that stated in the Curriculum Framework for the full-time learning programme.

Within the PPPE-DL/BWC study programme, the learning materials – textbooks (SSI), cover the whole range of units and topics enlisted in the course chart/analytical framework and they are learning tools that effectively and successfully replace the presence of the teacher in the traditional teaching approach. In this environment, the teacher becomes the course coordinator who uses specific bidirectional communication means and coordinates the student in his/her individual study of the academic course, motivating him/her as much as possible. The coordinator does that by also using the textbooks handed to the students at the beginning of the academic year. The entire process of course coordination is done by both: face-to-face activities and specific communication channels delivered on the DL/BWC e-Learning platform <http://distance.iduoradea.ro>.

The means by which DL/BWC designs and completes the textbooks is decided and detailed in the pages of *Procedure for updating academic materials for DL and BWC study programmes* (P.L. – IDIFR 02, Romanian abbreviation). This procedure aims at improving periodically the textbooks designed with DL/BWC technology for the academic courses enlisted in the curriculum framework for BWC study programmes, to achieve the objectives of quality assurance in education as stated by the quality management demands of University of Oradea.

In order to learn well at any we believe that the setting of the environment is critical for student success (Caine, R. N. Caine, G., McClintic, C., & Klimek, K., 2009; Sousa,

2011). By setting up an environment in which we all use a sociologist's perspective, an open mind and a non-judgmental attitude, (Ferris & Stein, 2014) in our work with each other. In this environment success is the goal and support is the watchword.

In order to assist students in their academic development we have work to develop ways to assist students in their abilities to be successful at the college or university. In the weekend program at the university students have face-to-face classes on the weekend only. They have assignments online, again in an asynchronous manner. The students also have all of their material for each class online: the schedule, due dates, tests and quizzes, and their textbooks and other materials. The texts have been developed by their instructors using a system developed specifically for the weekend program adult learner. The weekend program students are accomplishing the exact same goals as the day students but they are using a very different process to accomplish that goal.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### ***2.1.Goal***

The present study tries to determine how the attitudes of the students enrolled in the blended weekend classes study programme, at Pedagogy of Primary and Preschool Education, influence the assessment of textbooks and face-to-face activities. These results are combined with the data from the university teachers' self-assessment of their own textbook and face-to-face activities.

### ***2.2. Subjects***

The study was implemented on 144 undergraduate students from the University of Oradea, specialization of Pedagogy of Primary and Preschool Education, enrolled in blended weekend classes, from the 1<sup>st</sup> year (N=73), 2<sup>nd</sup> year (N=39) and 3<sup>rd</sup> year (N=32). There were also added research data on the assessment of textbooks and face-to-face activities done by the university teachers that work with the subjects (N=16).

### ***2.3. Research tool and process***

The subjects filled in two online questionnaires designed on the procedures on quality management followed at the level of DL/BWC of University of Oradea, on the assessment of the quality of textbooks and face-to-face activities by choosing the suitable answer on a five-level Likert scale.

## **3. RESULTS**

### ***3.1.Results on textbook assessment***

The results for the students and teachers on textbook assessment are given in *table 1*.

*Table 1: Results on textbook assessment – Univariate ANOVA*

Source	SP	df	PM	F	p
Intergroup	8,515	3	2,838	11,452	.000
Intra-group	38,166	154	,248		
Total	46,681	157			

According to the research data in table 1, there are statistically significant differences  $F(3,154)=11,452$ ,  $p<.001$ , thus the results on textbook assessment differ depending on the years of study of the subjects.

The averages  $a_{\text{year}_I}=4,426$ ,  $a_{\text{year}_{II}}=4,862$ ,  $a_{\text{year}_{III}}=4,929$ ,  $a_{\text{teachers}}=4,377$  underline that the freshmen and the teachers have the lowest average. They have a higher level of expectations than the students of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> years of study. Post Hoc Tests (*Hochlerg GT2*) had statistically significant results between the results of the assessment done by the freshmen and the one done by the students of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of study ( $p<.001$ ), between that of the freshmen and the seniors ( $p<.001$ ), between the teachers and the 2<sup>nd</sup> year ( $p<.001$ ) and between the teachers and the seniors ( $p<.001$ ), while the results were statistically insignificant between the 2<sup>nd</sup> year and the seniors and between the teachers and the freshmen.

The results for students on face-to-face activities assessment are given in *Table 2*.

*Table 2: Results on face-to-face activities assessment – univariate ANOVA*

Source	SP	df	PM	F	p
Intergroup	7,882	3	2,627	10,064	.000
Intra-group	40,466	155	.261		
Total	48,348	158			

There were statistically significant differences on face-to-face activities assessment  $F(3,155)=10,064$ ,  $p<.001$ , which means the students also have different expectations on these activities, depending on their year of study. The research averages,  $a_{\text{year}_I}=4,432$ ,  $a_{\text{year}_{II}}=4,879$ ,  $a_{\text{year}_{III}}=4,883$ ,  $a_{\text{teachers}}=4,449$ , show that the assessments done by the freshmen and those done by the teachers had the lowest averages, i.e. a higher degree of expectation. The analysis of Post Hoc Tests (*Hochlerg GT2*) present statistically significant results between the freshmen and the 2<sup>nd</sup> year ( $p<.001$ ), between the freshmen and the seniors ( $p<.001$ ), between the teachers and the 2<sup>nd</sup> year ( $p<.001$ ) and the seniors ( $p<.001$ ), but statistically insignificant between the 2<sup>nd</sup> year and the seniors ( $p=.991$ ) and between the teachers and the freshmen ( $p=.899$ ).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The results for the intergroup comparisons underline that the freshmen and the teachers have higher expectations on the means the textbook is completed, on its contents and efficiency than the students of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of study. There were similar results on face-to-face activities assessment: the teachers and the freshmen had higher expectations than

the students in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of study. Future studies could focus on the way the students of PPPE, but in full-time learning programme, assess textbooks and face-to-face activities, for better understanding the expectations of the students, in general, and certain differences between the two study programmes, in particular. These data could also be followed longitudinally to observe the changes in results due to the students' year of study.

The main course of action for teachers would be to consider even more the freshmen's needs. They have a higher level of expectations on the academic teaching performed directly through face-to-face activities and/or indirectly, through textbooks.

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