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## Teacher Profile In Romania: Defining Features And Priorities Of The Training Programs In Teaching Career

Ion Ovidiu Pânișoară<sup>a\*</sup>, Nicoleta Duță<sup>a</sup>, Georgeta Pânișoară<sup>a</sup>, Emilia Tomoaica<sup>a</sup><sup>a</sup> Bucharest University, Panduri street, 061071, Bucharest, Romania

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### Abstract

Study aims at presenting the main trends of elaborating of a possible profile of teaching staff and introduction of these overriding in the initial and continuous training programs for teachers. The results of the study were obtained by applying survey based on a questionnaire. Study included a total of 564 teachers at national level. The results revealed outlining some dominant traits of today's teachers: the central element is the patience and the principal element of risk is bureaucratization of the education system which leads to a reduction of the practice importance and of labor in the department of the teacher. Continuing training is both a challenge and a necessity for teachers, with a view to increase their professionalism, update and deepen their knowledge through the development of the profession.

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### 1. Introduction

Teacher Profile in Romania: in the context of changes in recent years and crisis, knowing the profile of the teacher is an urgent topicality. In the context of professional mobility (and teacher mobility in Europe) the highlighting main characteristics is important.

### 2. Theoretical perspective

The topic on teaching profession is so generic that it has turned out to be almost oceanic. A teacher is a highly

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\* Corresponding autor : Ion Ovidiu Pânișoară  
E-mail address: [opanisora@yahoo.com](mailto:opanisora@yahoo.com)

valued personality in a society and teaching is considered to be the most sacred and distinctive profession. The theoretical framework is based on the current literature review (Marzano 2007; Iucu 2004; Pânișoară I.O 2008, 2009, and Pânișoară G. 2010; Calderhead 2008; Kirchner 2009, Berube 2010). In the conditions of contemporary society the teaching profession becomes one of the professions with the highest degree of mobility. Fullan (1993) considered to teacher training is having the honour of being simultaneously the worst problem and the best solution in education.

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".

Marzano (2007, p. 162) states "teacher's beliefs about the chances of school success of his/her students influence teacher's actions with the students, which influences students' results. If the teacher believes that the student can succeed, then he/she should behave in a way that helps them succeed".

Following the idea expressed, there are many studies in the research literature that have led to the same conclusion: "the relationship between teacher's attitude and their expectations about students' effectiveness and results and the way in which these beliefs is reflected in the different marking of students", according to Coleman et al, 1966, Felice, 1981, Payne, 1994, Weinstein, 2002. On the other hand, teachers with a negative attitude can induce "resistance from their students, impede their development and become one of the factors leading to harmful prophecies that are self-achieved" (apud. Gordon et al. 2006, p. 157).

Delaney (2010) considered to another aspect of the pedagogical nature of being *respectful* is to be helpful. This is defined as the professor who is sincere in his or her efforts to help students achieve in the course. The professor who is helpful encourages students to ask questions, is available during office hours and over email, and provides guidance on assignments and examinations.

Daugherty, Logan and Turner (2003) have conducted a research in which they aimed at describing the successful teacher starting from his/her psychological traits. According to these researchers, an effective teacher is defined by a particular style of personality, creative thinking and motivation. To test the impact of the first psychological feature – the personality style in determining an effective teaching-learning process, these researchers cited a study by Hughes (1987), who used Myers-Briggs typological indicator (MBTI) (apud. Berube, 2010, pp.6-7). This instrument which "identifies the basic personality types and the scoring scale indicates the types of activities that seem best suited to the personality types identified by means of the test" was used to identify the personality types that are optimal for the profession of teacher. The study concluded that "extrovert people, sensitive personality types were more resistant to stress than those styles that are predominantly emotional and perceptive", they identified that 20% of students in the final year in programs for the teaching profession that they have tested fell within the extrovert, intuitive, emotional and perceptive personality type category".

Clark and Guest (1995) suggest that certain personality characteristics will be required for tomorrow's classrooms. The ISFJ and other permutations of this type (i.e., ESFJ, ESTJ, ISTJ) have been referred to as the "Stabilizers" or "Traditionalists" in the teaching profession. Clark and Guest suggest that more risk-taking catalysts, visionaries, and trouble-shooters will be needed, as teachers expand their roles to become motivators, mentors, counselors, and guides (Rushton, 2007).

To demonstrate the correlation between the creativity of the teacher and his/her students' performance, Daugherty's team used the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (Verbal Form) on a group of 53 teachers from a university in the U.S. "This test measures creative thinking skills based on fluency, flexibility and originality." What is extremely interesting is the strong correlation demonstrated by this test between the teacher's degree of creativity and the educational results of their students. Cited researchers believe that "creativity can be taught in teacher training programs" and that "creative people are characterized mainly by self-motivation or intrinsic motivation", and also by external rather than internal control, because creativity is expressed for oneself and not in order to impress others. In fact, a successful teacher possesses flexibility and originality in varying degrees.

According to the results of the studies conducted by Lipman, 1998, Payne, 1994 (in Sternberg & Subotnik), a successful teacher is characterized by the following features: "dedicated, aware of the needs of his/her students, attentive to all his/her students during class, always engaged intellectually and emotionally, having high expectations from his/her students, recognizing both the weaknesses and qualities of students".

While, according to Payne's studies (1994), the ineffective teacher is not "reflective about his/her own teaching methods, is unmotivated and views some students as being impossible to relate to them and to be taught". To the same conclusion arrives Tomasco (1980) who showed that teachers perceived as effective are those "willing to help, modest and democratic" (apud. Calderhead, 2008, p. 6). The attributes of a quality teacher (apud. Wilkerson &

Lang, 2007, cited by Scrivner, 2009), are: "knowledge about the subject he/she teaches, competences and dispositions. Teacher's attitudes impact his/her behaviour both in terms of the expertise in the scientific and cultural field he/she teaches to students and in terms of the choice of instructional strategies, professional development planning and relationship with his/her students".

The same conclusions were reached by Murray et al. (1990, cited by Harris & Cullen, 2010, p.182) who state that the following the research conducted, students rated as effective teachers those who have sound knowledge, those who are attached and enthusiastic about the subject they teach.

An interesting research on the topic is the one made by Sears, Kenedy și Kaye (1997) who used the MBTI personality test on a number of 4483 students who attended the training program for the teaching career at Ohio State University. The research objectives were the identification of the personality types of the people who tended to stay in the program, or to leave it, and of those who will receive the teacher diploma (apud. Kirchner, 2009, pp. 37-38). More recently, Ralph (2003) conducted a study on teaching effectiveness using how well students learn as the criterion. This study took place in a Canadian university and students represented four different instructional settings: Business, Sociology, Education, and Physical Education. The students were given 32 hypothetical instructor profiles and were asked to rank nine selected teaching factors developed by Marsh and Bailey (1993). Ralph identified five attributes of effective instructors: commitment to learners; knowledge of material; organization and management of the environment; desire to improve; and collaboration with others. Ralph concluded that "exemplary teaching is identifiable and the quality of its constituent components can be assessed" (Delaney, 2010, p. 53).

### 3. Method

The survey of teachers was conducted by email between November 10, 2011 and December 20, 2011, among 564 Romanian K-12 public school teachers enrolled on the Romanian online community teachers' platform didactic.ro. Teachers' demographic profile is:

Table 1. Teachers' demographic profile

	Urban	Rural	% all respondents	Female %	Male %
Kindergarten Teacher	60%	40%	16%	99%	1%
Elementary Teacher	49%	51%	24%	88,14%	11.86%
Middle Teacher	48%	52%	34%	69,34%	30.66%
High School Teacher	92%	8%	26%	68,89%	31.11%

The data gathering procedure was the implementation of the questionnaire. In the process of analysing and interpreting the data obtained, we used the SPSS 17.0 statistical software.

### 4. Results

First of all we should take a look at what we are dealing with. Are teachers a distinctive social-professional category? Are there some core underlying elements both at national and international level? A set of studies seem to admit that we are right, to confirm such an assertion: for example, R. Zimmerman (1968) describes the structure of teachers' motivation in the following terms: (1) high educational expectations; (2) economical motivation and financial expectations; (3) need for high ethical standards; (4) need for communicating facts and ideas to other persons at interpersonal level (Pânișoară G., Pânișoară I.-O, 2010).

The results are characteristic for the nowadays-Romanian society. We will find that, for some of the teachers, their perception about their career and the importance for them to get the most important three certifications for their career development are influenced by their social difficulties.

Nevertheless, 25% of teachers who responded to the survey believe that the most important quality of the teacher is the patience, for 24% of them are the professionalism and the love and the respect for children (9%).

The biggest flaw in the Romanian teachers' perception is, for 13% of them, the obedience and their dependence on the national education system, their resistance to change and innovation, the poverty and the fact that they are not well prepared for being teacher (8%). The majority of the teachers (31%) believe that they are most effective after

10-15 years of teaching experience in the classroom and only 16% of respondents believe that after 20 years of experience in teaching.

The most important positive element for those who get the most important certificate in the Romanian teaching career (the first degree certification) is, for 27% of respondents, their increased interest in better preparing themselves in pedagogical course and in the subject they teach, the growth of their salary (19%), and the obligation of a research paper (18%). It is surprising that 4% of the respondents believe that there is no positive element for the one who get the first teaching degree certificate. The most important negative factor for the teachers who get this certificate is the money spent for the ceremonial after passing the exam (17%), the capping (12%), the stress are for getting this professional certificate (11%).

The most important positive factor for those who obtain the certificate for the second degree certification in Romanian national system of education, in the opinion of 25% of the respondents, is the improvement of their teaching expertise, their professional development (21%), the refreshment of their didactic and subject matter knowledge (16%). One again we met the response nothing for 6% of the teachers. The most important negative factor for those who get this certificate is that they are working very hard to get it (15%), too much theory and not enough practice (11%), stress (13%), the growth of the salary doesn't met the teachers' expectations (11%), none (6%). 10% dislike the organization of getting this certification.

In order to outline a possible profile of the teacher, we conducted a rank hierarch, and the analysis of the particular traits selected by teachers revealed that the most desired features characterising the teachers according to review literature, the defining features what appears in our research are:

Table 2. Defining features of the teachers

<b>Defining features of the teachers</b>	<b>RANK</b>
knowledge of the subject	I
objective assessment / fair assessment	II
availability (available outside the classroom)	III
to carry connections between theory and practice	IV
love and enthusiasm for teaching the respective discipline	V
methodical and structured way (to prepare, organize and explain material in a structured way)	VI
respect for students	VII
clarity in the exposition	VIII
promoting the intellectual development of students	IX
presentation interesting of the subject	X
ease in expression	XI
competent in human relationships	XII
personal and original thinking, creative thinking and motivation	XIII
sense of humor	XIV

The teacher is not only a subject of education what assumes different roles teaching activity, but also an active person of their own training to that it may was performing an activity efficient and beneficial both from the viewpoint development of the personality the beneficiaries of education and as training and continuing development. Teachers have preferences for specific teacher' characteristics because some of them lead to results that students desire.

Teacher' personality (funny, good listener, empathetic etc.) is only one factor of a good teaching. The other property of being a good teacher comes from organizing the ideas in a lesson plan in a coherent way so that students will understand and remember.

## 5. Conclusions

The research aims positive of components situated in teacher training programs. Highlighting a possible profile of teachers lead to the coherent weighting of theoretical and applicative activities to develop the traits quantified. Continuing training is both a challenge and a necessity for teachers, with a view to increase their professionalism, update and deepen their knowledge through the development of the profession.

According to Zalech (2011) the shaping of such personality traits as fairness, understanding and patience should become one of significant elements taken into consideration in the curricula for future teachers and in training and re-education programmes for present teachers. The process of teacher education should be enriched with examples of skills enabling teachers to reveal the desired traits in contact with the youth in form of a range of behaviours taking into account students' age, gender or school environment (p. 127).

The question of professional qualities of teachers is actually answered by enumerating measurable competences. However, there are important qualities, which are not measurable, such as experience, reflection (judgment) and independence (Koch, 2008).

It is necessary to stimulate individual and collective reflection process in solving problematic situations in teaching practice; to create and maintain an environment of collaboration and social interaction; to develop collaborative projects and to relate the training through action research strategies.

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