

THE PSYCHO-SOCIAL CONTEXT OF EVALUATION ACCORDING TO ACADEMIC PROFESSORS. CASE STUDY

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Abstract: *Lately, the timing and process of evaluation seem to have become very important for the dynamics and regulation of the education system and in determining the quality of its performance. In achieving pupils'/ students' quantitative and statistical performance, but also qualitative, more spiritual (less targeted by the administrators of the system and by researchers in formal education), a decisive role is played not only by the level of the results obtained in tests/ exams but also by the psychosocial atmosphere in which evaluative situations take place. The study captures and presents some of the options of a group of teachers from UPG Ploiești regarding several dimensions of the psychosocial context of evaluation and draws attention to the fact that the evaluative act is not confined - as we tend to believe - only on the technical, quantitative, standardized aspects, but includes, on the one hand, the evaluator's vision of the state of the evaluated individual before, during and after the exam and, on the other hand, the attitude of the teacher-evaluator in view of creating an atmosphere conducive to the best performance of that student in the exam.*

Keywords: *evaluation, academic professor, student, professor-student relationship, psycho-social implications of evaluation*

1. Introduction

Looking more closely, it seems that the administrators of the education system have been and are more concerned with the moment and the process of evaluation than with the moment and the process of teaching or the moment and the process of learning. It gives the impression that, in relation to the other fundamental steps of the education process, evaluation has been given priority. Professors are increasingly filling in the role of evaluators.

This tendency requires that - as theoreticians and/ or practitioners of education - we pay more attention to the design and implementation of evaluation, we understand - as realistically as possible - what is its impact, not only on the general state of the education system, but also on the overall (psychosocial) context of the training and shaping of new generations, in general, and of future intellectuals/ specialists in different fields of activity, in particular. It is about the influence assessment has on the working atmosphere created between professor and student.

In this sensitive context, it becomes important: (a) to understand to what extent can evaluation shape or, conversely, distort students' attitude to learning; (b) to understand the atmosphere that can create between the professor - evaluator and the student - evaluated, in anticipation, during, and after the completion of the evaluation (respectively, either one of tension, fear, estrangement, animosity, adversity, or one of trust, encouragement, closeness, free/ creative expression).

From this perspective, the vast majority of specialists in the theory and methodology of evaluation (Bocoş, Jucan, 2008; Clipa, 2008; Cuceş, 2008; Jinga *and colab.*, 1999; Lisievici, 2002; Manolescu, 2010, 2006; Meyer, 2000; Pachef, 2008; Stoica, Mihail, 2007; Vogler, coord., 2000) dealt marginally, in passing, implicitly with such dimension of (formal) education. In this approach, we assume that evaluation (whether academic or at secondary/ tertiary level) is not (and cannot be) reduced to its simple technical mechanism but it also includes the psychosocial context in which it is carried out and which, it (re-)creates it, more or less deeply.

Qualitative-spiritual performances (and not just the quantitative-statistical ones) occur if we ensure (as professors - evaluators) the correctness, equidistance, and professionalism of the evaluation, as well as the psychosocial context in which this is carried out. Thus, a warm, humane, hospitable, safe and encouraging, understanding and emotionally balanced context can facilitate the establishment of an atmosphere conducive to the best performance the student is capable of (in an exam).

2. Research methodology

The purpose of our practical-investigative study was to research academic professors' perception upon the psycho-social context of evaluation. For this, we used the questionnaire based survey method, which we applied between March and May 2016, to a group of 55 subjects, university professors at the Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti. According to their seniority in education, the experimental group had the following structure:

Table no. 1. The structure of the experimental sample composed of university professor subjects

Seniority in education range	Number	Percentage
0-5 Years	-	-
6-10 Years	1	2%
11-15 Years	13	23,5%
16-20 Years	14	25,5%
21-25 Years	7	12,5%
26-30 Years	11	20%
More than 31 years	9	16,5%
Total	55	100%

3. Data and results

Table no. 2. The most important feature of the student - professor relationship during evaluation in the opinion of university professors*

Feature	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i
Percentage	4	42	-	15	2	-	15	-	22%
ge	%	%		%	%		%		**

* a. courtesy; b. exigency; c. compassion; d. understanding students; e. attachment; f. authority/ imposition; g. firmness; h. detachment/ indifference; i. other answer.

** Subjects also proposed: correctness - 41,5%, objectivity - 33%.

Table no. 3. The most important feature of the student - professor relationship during evaluation in the opinion of university professors, according to seniority in education*

Seniority in education	a	b	c	d	e	g	h	i
0-5 Years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6-10 Years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11-15 Years	-	35,5%	-	15%	-	15%	-	38,5%

16-20 Years	7 %	43%	-	21,5 %	7 %	-	21,5 %	-	-
21-25 Years	-	58%	-	-	14 %	-	14%	-	14%
26-30 Years	9 %	55%	-	18%	-	-	-	-	18%
More than 31 years	-	34%	-	-	-	-	22%	-	44%

*a. courtesy; b. exigency; c. compassion; d. understanding students; e. attachment; f. authority/ imposition; g. firmness; h. detachment/ indifference; i. other answer.

Table no. 4. The first thought that (almost) automatically/ instantly comes to mind for university professors during evaluation*

Option	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k
Percentage	-	-	36 %	31 %	2 %	-	11 %	2 %	4 %	7 %	7 %

*a. not to damage students' image in front of their colleagues; b. to indulge students during their evaluation; c. be true to their own criteria; d. appreciate students' performance during the evaluation as they know best, irrespective of their previous performances; e. appreciate students' performance during the evaluation as they know best, irrespective of the (psychological) effect evaluation has on their state of mind; f. parents' reaction towards their children's evaluation; g. the potential university professors assume evaluated students have in terms of further development; h. that students do not commit fraud/ cheat; i. the emotional tension students undergo during evaluation; j. the future prospects of the student currently subjected to evaluation; k. another answer.

Table no. 5. The first thought that (almost) automatically/ instantly comes to mind for university professors during evaluation, based on seniority in education*

Seniority in education	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k
0-5 Years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6-10 Years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11-15 Years	-	-	15%	55%	-	-	-	7,5%	7,5%	7,5%	7,5%
16-20 Years	-	-	28,5%	21,5%	7%	-	28,5%	-	-	14,5%	-
21-25 Years	-	-	58%	28%	-	-	-	-	-	14%	-
26-30 Years	-	-	55%	27%	-	-	18%	-	-	-	-
More than 31 years	-	-	45%	22%	-	-	-	-	-	-	33%

*a. not to damage students' image in front of their colleagues; b. to indulge students during their evaluation; c. be true to their own criteria; d. appreciate students' performance during the evaluation as they know best, irrespective of their previous performances; e. appreciate students' performance during the evaluation as they know best, irrespective of the (psychological) effect evaluation has on their state of mind; f. parents' reaction towards their children's evaluation; g. the potential university professors assume evaluated students have in terms of further development; h. that students do not commit fraud/ cheat; i. the emotional tension students undergo during evaluation; j. the future prospects of the student currently subjected to evaluation; k. another answer.

Table no. 6. Professor's understanding of students during evaluation, as perceived by university professors*

Option	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k
Percentage	43	7	-	4	2	2	-	-	31	4	7
	%	%		%	%	%			%	%	%

* a. ask students for everything they know, all they are capable of presenting on the subject they are being evaluated on; b. postponing the moment of the evaluation until students are capable of satisfactory performance; c. postponing the evaluation until students offer an adequate performance in relation to professor's expectations; d. postponing the evaluation until students perform according to the evaluator's criteria; e. postponing the evaluation until students perform according to the requirements of the learning plan; f. making concessions/ overlooking the ambiguities, confusions, errors, hesitations students manifest during evaluation; g. (always) being lenient with students during their evaluation; h. evaluating students whenever they offer for it; i. taking into consideration students' emotions at the time of their evaluation and put into their account the confusions, gaps, and errors found in their performance; j. there is no understanding for students under evaluation, they must always learn; k. another answer.

Table no. 7. Understanding students during evaluation in the opinion of university professors, based on seniority in education*

Seniority in education	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k
0-5 Years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6-10 Years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11-15 Years	54%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	46%	-	-
16-20 Years	35,5%	15%	-	-	-	7%	-	-	35,5%	7%	-
21-25 Years	58%	-	-	14%	-	-	-	-	14%	1%	-
26-30 Years	55%	9%	-	-	9%	-	-	-	27%	-	-
More than 31 years	22,5%	11%	-	11%	-	-	-	-	22,5%	-	3%

*a. ask students for everything they know, all they are capable of presenting on the subject they are being evaluated on; b. postponing the moment of the evaluation until students are capable of satisfactory performance; c. postponing the evaluation until students offer an adequate performance in relation to professor's expectations; d. postponing the evaluation until students perform according to the evaluator's criteria; e.

postponing the evaluation until students perform according to the requirements of the learning plan; f. making concessions/ overlooking the ambiguities, confusions, errors, hesitations students manifest during evaluation; g. (always) being lenient with students during their evaluation; h. evaluating students whenever they offer for it; i. taking into consideration students' emotions at the time of their evaluation and put into their account the confusions, gaps, and errors found in their performance; j. there is no understanding for students under evaluation, they must always learn; k. another answer.

4. Findings, comments and interpretations

1. The evaluation situation involves a lot of precaution, a state of tension, of possible break from the course of the professor-student relationship that unfolded during the semester; it is an important act and a significant moment in the evolution of the student, of his/ her relationship with himself/ herself, friends/ colleagues, parents, but also with the teacher himself/ herself. Given this specificity, the professor-student relationship can get different (psychological) nuances as compared to those during the academic year.

Thus, regarding *the most important feature of the professor-student relationship during evaluation* was, for 42% of respondents, *exigency*. Being exigent, i.e. (very) careful, rigorous, impartial, cool-headed and as detached as possible from (previous) personal experience with students (in an assessment situation), is for these subjects the priority in their profession. On the next place, with 22 points, there were professors who formulated *other answers*. Among these, 41.5% referred to *correctness* and 33% to *objectivity*. For those, during evaluation their relationship with students is manifested as a priority and preponderantly either on the coordinates of correctness or those of objectivity.

15% of respondents considered the most important feature of their relationship with students during the evaluation is *firmness*, and other 15% considered that *understanding* remains the defining (behavioural) note.

Insignificant percentages were obtained by subjects who considered *kindness* is the most important feature (4%) or *attachment* (2%). Also, we notice that options such as *compassion*, *authority/ power* and *detachment/ indifference* were not chosen. We can understand from this proximate account that professors-evaluators have excluded from their attitude compassion, the arrogant act of authority or detachment/ indifference. Therefore, even if in their relationship with students, during the evaluation, there cannot be compassion or the narrow, rigid and excessive imposing of their own information, perspectives and/ or conclusions, neither can it be detachment/ indifference. In the crucial moments of the assessment, the

subjects eliminated not only compassion, rigidity, but also detachment. For them, evaluation, a valid and honest evaluation, cannot take place under the conditions of cold detachment or the indifference of the evaluator. We believe that these are elements demonstrating the professional but also psychological maturity of the respondents.

Concerning the same complex but also exciting issue, but analysing it from the point of view subjects' seniority in education, the situation is as follows:

- the highest percentage (58%) was obtained by those with a seniority between 21-25 years for the option *exigency*. For them, the most important thing is to be demanding when evaluating; it follows, with 55%, for the same answer option, those with 26-30 years seniority. Third place - 43% - is subjects with 16-20 years seniority. The lowest percentage (31.5%) was obtained by the respondents with the lowest seniority included in the research group (i.e. those with 11-15 years seniority).
- the highest percentage for the option *firmness* (22%) was obtained by subjects with the highest seniority (over 31 years of teaching career); they were followed, by 21.5%, by those with 16 to 20 years seniority.
- the group that did not get any percentage for the option *firmness* is the category of university professors with 26 to 30 years seniority.
- instead, it is interesting to note that 14% of those with 21 to 25 years seniority chose the option *attachment* at the time of assessment (be it oral, written or by projects or portfolios). There are subjects who, having reached such seniority in higher education, believe that *attachment* is beneficial in making an assessment that does not demoralize, confuse or overwhelm the evaluated. It seems to them that attachment is a constant feature of their relationship with students, whether it is in the course/ seminar/ laboratory activity or in the context of academic assessment.
- in their turn, 21.5% of those with 16 to 20 years seniority believe that the most important feature of their relationship with students during tests is their *understanding*; they are followed by those with 26 to 30 years seniority, with a score of 18% and 11-15 years seniority respectively, with a score of 15%. No subjects with 21-25 years and over 31 years seniority have opted for *understanding*. For them, the moment of the evaluation excludes the evaluator's understanding.

2. In any life situation, we can either have learned, reflected, acquired, agreed upon attitudes (coming from the outside, from the social environment), or immediate, spontaneous, unreflected, (almost) automatic reactions, coming from within (pre-dating decisions and conscious acts), defined in most cases by the desire to do good, not to be mistaken, not to

bring troubles, to avoid regrettable behaviours, to revive, invigorate and rejuvenate.

In particular, the same is the case with the professor - evaluator. They can have both learned, acquired, and self-controlled attitudes, but also unfiltered, poorly controlled, and temper-related tendencies, that pertain to an *implicit* way of understanding life, people, the world, their role among peers, or human development. We therefore considered important to know *the (almost) automatic way they react when it comes to assessing students*, quantifying their performance and assigning value to their cognitive, axiological and/ or practically-applicative abilities.

Faced with such a requirement, 36% of respondents - university professors - mentioned that *the first thought that comes (almost) automatically to mind* is *to be faithful to their own evaluation criteria*. Therefore, the benchmark they envision is fidelity to their own standards and criteria, regardless of how involved the student was in previous coursework or of the value of their contributions to the didactic process, or their motivation to learn.

The next place is occupied by 31% of the subjects who mentioned that the first thought that comes to mind, during an evaluation, is to appreciate as they best know the student's performance *at the time*, regardless of her previous performance. This category of subjects does not correlate the present moment with the past in student's activity. They believe that the past of their activity in the discipline they coordinate (and control) should not be involved in the final/ summative evaluation. The skills and knowledge proven at the time of the exam are the moment of truth.

These are the two main options for university teachers participating in the research. As a result, at a great distance, there are the following options in order:

- 11% say that the first thought that comes (almost) automatically to mind when evaluating is *the potential they assume in terms of the later development of the student who, at some point, undergoes an evaluation*. We note that there are professors who consider not only, or at least not primarily, what is exhibited or demonstrated by the evaluated student at a given time in their presentation but what they promise as work potential, in terms of commitment, development, innovation, in a more or less near future. In their case, the moment of evaluation is perceived as a given point in a continuum, as a test in a process, as an illustration of what might be - in a later stage of professional maturity.
- 7% of subjects have an attitude close to the one previously analyzed; they answer that the first thought that comes (almost) automatically to mind when evaluating is *the future of the student who was at one point in the*

situation of evaluation. This category of respondents also correlates the present moment of the evaluation act with the evaluated student's future.

Such an approach seems welcome when the evaluator gives a positive connotation to the future of the student in question; it may have a beneficial psychological impact; more specifically, to give the student confidence and courage, to motivate him to persevere, research, follow up on their ideas and projects, imagine and propose new ones.

On the contrary, if the evaluator gives a negative connotation to the future evolution of the student, then the psychological impact may be destructive, demobilizing, leading to loss of self-confidence and to the discouragement of the student, causing them to drop out or look for other opportunities.

Table no. 5 also shows that 4% of the professors – evaluators are thinking, in the first instance, of *the emotional tension that students experience before, during and after the exam*. We can understand from this that very few evaluators consider the emotional impact of the evaluation, even if they themselves - when they were students - have experienced the same emotional tension during exams. It seems that, in their opinion, such issues should not concern them. Nevertheless, only 2% of respondents mentioned that the first thought that automatically comes to mind when evaluating students is *to appreciate as best they know students' performance at that time, regardless of the (psychological) effect an evaluation has on their inner, spiritual state*. Hence, it may appear that, however, the higher education professors are not indifferent to the (psychological) effect caused by the tension and the results of the examination. It is, we think, an aspect that can and should be investigated later on.

From the data obtained in this item, it appears that only 2% of respondents think of frauds from the part of their students in a test situation. This may reflect the fact that professors have a (high) trust in their students or that, throughout their own teaching career, they have not been confronted with situations that would lead them to focus on possible misbehaviours. It seems that putting their trust in students and giving them all the assistance they need creates an atmosphere of respect and honour, which, in one way or another, discourages the thought and/ or temptation of fraud during the examination.

Finally, we would like to point out that no one chose the options that stipulated that the evaluation *should not be prejudicial to the student's prestige in front of colleagues, to humour the student during the assessment* or the option *to take into account the parents' reaction regarding the evaluation of their child*. There are data which, we believe, prove the balance, discernment and responsibility with which higher education professors regard their evaluative practice.

Regarding the same requirement, but analyzed in terms of seniority in education, we can see (and note) the following:

- the highest percentage (58%) was obtained by professors with 21-25 years seniority, who noted that their first thought, when evaluating, is *to be faithful to their own criteria*. They were closely followed, with 55%, by those in the next seniority range (26-30 years) and, with 45%, by those over 31 years of seniority. We could, – cautiously, of course – draw the conclusion (which requires further verification) that long periods of seniority lead the university evaluators *to respect their own criteria*, in order to get the conviction that they were correct, equidistant, impartial, rigorous. For this option, those with a seniority of 16 to 20 years (28.5%) and between 11-15 years (only 15%) obtained low percentages. These results may indicate that, as the number of years in education increases, professors – evaluators tend to become true to their own criteria that they apply during exams.

- instead, the lowest seniority in the research sample group (11-15 years) reached the highest percentage (over half: 55%) in the option that suggested that, in evaluation conditions, *they appreciate as they know best the student's performance, irrespective of his past performances*. We note the fact that they give priority to the *present* moment. They understand that this is the only time relevant, the others - the past and the future – being under risk of altering the examination results. All other seniority categories did not score over 28% (21-25 years), 27% (26-30 years), 22% (over 30 years) or 21.5% (16- 20 years).

- we note that only those with 16 to 20 years seniority (28.5%) and 26-30 years seniority (18%) mentioned that their first thought that comes to mind when they are in the evaluation situation is the one about the potential they suspect in *the later development of the student who is currently in the position to be evaluated*. We understand that there are also concerns about the future evolution of students, which depends to a greater or lesser extent on the results of each examination; it is known the fact that in most cases a young man's vision of themselves is outlined by the successes and/ or failures during each event or fragment of their life. These categories of professors therefore seem to understand that there is a significant, not to be neglected, relationship between the present and the future of an act of evaluation.

- looking closely, we can see that the same seniority category (16-20 years) scored the highest percentage (14.5%) for the option that invokes *the future of the student who at a certain moment in time is under evaluation*. Thus, together (28.5% + 14.5% =), 43% of those who are in the first stage of their professional career (as compared to those who near its end) correlate, or tend to correlate, the moment of the evaluation with the potential that the

evaluated person might later display in the future - near or more distant - of their professional development, of their professional performances.

- the only category of seniority that achieved a certain percentage (even if small: 7.5%) for the options referring to *the fear of fraud* (that the student would be willing to engage in) and *the emotional tension* they experience before, during and after an evaluation, were subjects with 11 to 15 years of seniority. All other categories of seniority did not mention these variants.

As we can see, the vast majority of evaluators are not concerned about the psychological, emotional states evaluation triggers. They do not think that taking these experiences into account would improve their evaluation or motivate students to learn more.

3. As a human being, the professor – evaluator is always in the situation of understanding his/ her student, not only during activities such as teaching, learning, debate, applications, design, but also during oral and/ or written tests. Understanding the students is a priority in the process of attracting and motivating them, and encourage an invigorating relationship with themselves.

For example, with regard to how they conceive understanding the students in the particular context of the evaluation, most respondents (43%) consider that this means *asking for (everything) they know, (everything) they are able to present in relation to the subject/ topic under evaluation*. For them, when they are willing to understand the student under evaluation, they assume it means that they would no longer take into account the strict and sufficient requirements in allowing them to pass the exam, but leave them aside and be willing to listen and record what students can offer - whether or not it fits the evaluation standard - in relation to the subject(s) under examination. It is assumed that the evaluator is also willing to consider data, knowledge, secondary demonstrations, less related to the subject under consideration, that they take into account elements indirectly related to the exam requirements. Therefore, understanding a student in the oral exam requires not to reject him/her the moment we realize that he/ she has no precise knowledge, that he/ she is confused or that they improvise upon the subject; it is to listen to him/ her further, to help him/ her explain their ideas, arguments, operations, the answer. And when it comes to a written examination, understanding would involve reading with the utmost attention and extracting from the text all the ideas, arguments supporting the solution.

Therefore, it seems that for these 43% of the respondents, understanding the student during the exam means to give him/ her wider circumstances in view of analyzing and appreciating the answer, whether oral or written.

Next, with 31%, are the respondents who think that understanding the student means *taking into account the emotions that he or she is experiencing under evaluation and blaming on them the confusions, the gaps, the errors observed in their presentation / performance*. Whether we like to recognize it or not, we know that always - depending on the emotion of the evaluator - the evaluation activity involves an increased emotional load. We also know that an intense emotional state can have negative, dissipative, disturbing repercussions on the functioning of their thinking at its full capacity. Or, there are evaluators who take these aspects into consideration when evaluating students, but also evaluators who do not take them into consideration (and thus even contributing to the disturbing, inhibiting effect of emotional states - such as embarrassment, fear, guilt, shame, etc.).

Those who understand that emotional states always accompany any exam situation take them into account when judging, evaluating, weighting students' knowledge, abilities, and skills.

From the data we obtained, we found that the respondents were divided into these two main categories: some who believe that understanding students is to accept everything the student knows, everything he/ she is able to present, without taking into account the requirements/ the strict constraints of the initially imposed standards, others who believe that understanding implies blaming the imperfection, ambiguities, and imprecisions of their response on their negative-inhibitive emotions.

With even smaller percentages there are also respondents who:

- in a percentage of 7, believe that understanding the student means *postponing the evaluation until such time he/ she is capable of a satisfactory performance* (in relation to the criteria of passing the exams); we note, as a consequence, that for the vast majority of the participants in the research such an attitude is unacceptable;
- 4% of respondents rejected the fact that it might be about understanding the student when he/ she displays doubts, superficiality, when he/ she tends to improvise or get the information mixed up. On the other hand, the fact that only 4% rejects the evaluator's understanding can lead us to the conclusion that the vast majority of higher education professors agree that *understanding is part of the evaluation practice*.

We also have to mention that the subjects did not choose the options that suggested as understanding of the student to:

- postpone the moment of evaluation until such time as they are capable of a proper performance;
- always be lenient with the student about to undergo evaluation;
- evaluating the student every time they put themselves up for it (but only they decide to do so).

These seem to be the limits within which the professor-evaluator agrees to be understanding towards the student undergoing an exam/evaluation.

Next, we develop the analysis taking into account the seniority of the respondents in education:

- those with a seniority of 16 to 20 years consider, equally, that understanding the student during their evaluation means: for 35.5%, *asking them for everything they know, and are able to present on the topic under evaluation*; and for a further 35.5%, *taking into account the student's emotions at the time of their evaluation, and blame the confusion, gaps, and errors in their performance on their emotions*. It seems like a coherent attitude. In fact, subjects belonging to this category of seniority have scored, in relation to the other categories, the highest percentage when it comes to taking into account the emotional burden assumed by any evaluation context.

- looking at table no. 7, we can see that even the group of professors with the highest educational seniority (over 31 years) had the same equal percentage distribution (22.5%) between the same types of options as those with 16 to 20 years seniority.

- among those who have opted in their majority to identify understanding during evaluation with *asking the student everything they know and/ or is able to do/ present* were also those with a seniority between 26-30 years (55%), and respectively, those with 11-15 years seniority (54%).

- however surprising, there are also respondents who have agreed that understanding the student in an evaluation situation means *postponing the time of the evaluation until he/ she has a performance that meets the requirements of the school curriculum*. These are the ones who have seniority in education between 21 and 25 years (14%) and those over 31 (11%).

- it should also be mentioned that respondents with the lowest seniority in the experimental group, namely 11-15 years, obtained the highest percentage (46%) in terms of understanding the student in the sense of *taking into account the emotions they experience under examination*. Whatever happens - to a greater or lesser extent - it seems that such a way to consider understanding the situation of the student in the role of the evaluated is encountered across the entire university career of a professor.

5. Possible conclusions and recommendations

School evaluation is a much more complex process and with far deeper implications in the (solid or fragile) shaping of the young individual's personality and in the evolution of his/ her relations with the professor (who is at some point in the role of the evaluator) and with the others in his life, than it seems at first glance. It consists not only of the simple and mechanical

gesture of grading a performance, but also of a psychosocial context created (more or less voluntarily) before the examination, during its course and persisting (more or less intense) after its completion.

The performance of higher education refers not only to the (high) level of grades obtained by students, but also to their human quality, to their relational, pro-social traits. Therefore, the professor will not only pursue the quality of the specialty training of the students with whom he/ she works during a stage of their career but also the atmosphere that he/ she creates so that students can achieve the highest culmination of their training.

In this broader context, the vision of the examining professor (in higher education) is significant when referring to: (a) his/ her relationship with students (during examination); (b) his/ her mental background preceding the examination - established and internalized throughout his/ her teaching experience - which prompts him/ her to automatically adopt a certain attitude when assessing; (c) how the professors understands *tounderstand* the student during an examination.

As a result of the processing and interpretation of our micro-research data, we came with the following recommendations:

- expanding the concept of school evaluation by integrating the psychosocial aspect; tracking not only quantitative-statistical performance but also qualitative-spiritual performance;
- the examining professor should be more preoccupied with creating a stimulative, encouraging psychosocial context for the creative expression of ideas and solutions found by a student during the examination;
- attention paid to the emotional impact involved in any exam situation in order to trigger and encourage stimulative, invigorating emotional states favourable to the fullest possible expression of the student's mental, cognitive and aptitude potential;
- continuing research to test the effectiveness of this concept of evaluation with the aim of applying it and increasing the performance of those in an assessment situation.

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