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MOTIVATIONAL DECISION MAKING OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS: EMPATHY VERSUS APATHY

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Abstract: Basis of building the great university lies in enthusiastic teachers, managers and administrative staff of university who are full of creative and responsible energy and strong motivation. Because the prior task of universities is to cultivate the competences of students, in addition to perfect expert knowledge, the teachers have to put into their educative effort also a special personal insert. This insert is based on and given through the teacher's empathy and individual approach to students. However, current motivation of academicians struggles with many problems and barriers that are connected with an acceleration of societal and academic environs. University teachers have to cope with an increasing amount of scientific monographs, papers and studies needed for their best as possible preparation of the lectures and seminars, setup the new scientific projects, and permanent development of their own professionality and personality. They are often overburden, tired, and burned-out. In some moments of their professional life, university teachers face the difficult decisional problem: to continue in empathy towards students or start to be apathetic. Therefore, the introductive and theoretical part of paper analyze, synthetize, compare, and generalize the known on empathy and apathy, viewed both from the perspective of teachers' decision making (prefer rather apathy versus fight with tiredness and prefer rather empathy). Empirical-analytic part presents the results of questionnaire survey performed on the sample of 150 students of the University of Žilina (Slovak Republic) which was focused on searching the students' expressions on the application of individual (empathetic) approach of teachers to them. Because the obtained results underline the importance of empathy, final part of the study defines the relationship between teacher and students as a multidimensional, dynamic and accelerating relationship. This relationship would fulfill a psychological-personality, developmental-cultivation, cognitive-mental, communicational-argumentation, and motivational-acceleration dimensions.

Keywords: perfect university, teachers, students, empathy, apathy, decision making, survey.

INTRODUCTION

Higher education is a vital national resource, and an economic proving ground.[1] Universities, as basic elements of higher education space, have "common historical roots yet

[1] Cole, J. R. Toward a More Perfect University. USA: Amazon, 2016.

are deeply embedded in their societies".[2] We can state the universities are like living organism: they seek not only to survive, but to grow.[3] Indeed, great (research) university has to be a complex and adaptive comprehensive knowledge enterprise committed to discovery, creativity, and innovation, accessible to the broadest possible demographic, socioeconomically as well as intellectually.[4] Hallmark of originality, progress, respect, and significance of both nationally and internationally, must be delivered to each university just by their *teachers and scholars*.

In general, the mission of university teachers and scholars is to disseminate new knowledge and cultivate the personalities of students, and in this way, contribute to the overall increase of intellectual, cultural and economic level of the country. Their role, in terms of the characteristics of great university is to help students not only to learn new (from others) but mainly to encourage mental creative abilities of students and encourage their lifelong beliefs, willingness, and energy with which they want (desire) and can themselves create new, higher-quality, more concrete and more relevant knowledge.[5,6,7,8,9,10,11] It requires the teacher and the student to consider the impact of their work on others and engage in democratic practices that advance democratic partnerships, scholarship, and learning.[12] But to achieve such results, while successfully start and complete the process which the good university will grow onto the level of great university in, is possibly only by teachers' extraordinary effort and hard work. Above

[2] Altbach, P. G. Patterns in Higher Education Development. In: American Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1999, 15–37.
[3] Christensen, C. M. & Eyring, H. J. The Innovative University. Changing the DNA of Higher Education from the Inside Out. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011.
[4] Crow, M. M. & Dabars, W. B. Designing the New American University. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015.
[5] Murray, L., Glass, B. Learning Development in Higher Education: Community of Practice or Profession? In: Learning Development in Higher Education. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, 28–39.
[6] Cole, J. R. The Great American University. Its Rise to Preeminence, Its Indispensable National Role, Why It Must Be Protected. Philadelphia, USA: Public Affairs™, 2012.
[7] Buller, J. L. Positive Academic Leadership. How to Stop Putting Out Fires and Start Making a Difference. Boston: Jossey-Bass, 2013.
[8] Farr, Ch. Ben Nelson: This Entrepreneur Is Trying to Create a 'Perfect University' to Displace Harvard & Yale. VentureBeat Office News. 2014.
[9] Ulewicz, R. Application of Servqual Method for Evaluation of Quality of Educational Services at the University of Higher Education. Polish Journal of Management Studies, 2014, 9(1), 254–264.
[10] Vázquez, J. L., Aza, C. L. & Lanero, A. Responsible Human Resources Management in the University – A view of Spanish Students. Human Resources Management and Ergonomics, 2014, 8(1), 118–128.
[11] Blašková, M., Blaško, R., Kozubíková, Z. & Kozubík, A. (2015). Trust and Reliability in Building Perfect University. 6th World Conference on Psychology, Counseling and Guidance, 70–79.
[12] Hendrickson, R. M., Lane, J. E., Harris, J. T. & Dorman, R. H. Academic Leadership and Governance of Higher Education. Sterling: Stylus Publishing, LLC, 2013.

all, teachers must see the world, which knowledge rises and completes itself in, just *through the eyes, mind and heart of student.*

Teachers have the power and responsibility[13], as they may influence the attitudes and behavior of the whole group.[14] A good teacher can develop appropriate educational atmosphere which communication can become truly two-sided in: students in an atmosphere of greater understanding and confidence dare to ask on they do not understand[15], and vice versa, empathetic teacher can detect internal confusion, misunderstanding, or cognitive tension from the misunderstanding.[16] However, after longer acting at the university, teachers often get themselves into a psychological state which ***a conflict of their empathy and/versus their apathy arises*** in. A clash of attempt *to be empathetic* (towards students and colleagues) and attempt *to manage apathy or demotivation* occurs inside the teacher. This is an intrapsychic conflict consisting in a dilemma on what grounds to continue in being the excellent teacher, expert, author, researcher, colleague and so on, and expend on own work too much energy on the one hand, and on the other hand, why do not favor rather quieter, simpler, less exhaustive professional life and less complicated relationship with others.

A similar problem has been solved through the *managers in manufacturing companies* when they have resolved a conflict of their long-term empathy. As stated by Buda, interactions full of emotions, affects, and conflicts, that force individual to meditate on, heed more deeply the other, as well search oneself, have an important role in developing one's empathy. Researches and observations related to the working positions of managers, however, suggest the empathy of manager declines in parallel with time spent on the managerial post. The manager's confidence and understand, that his obligations can handle on his own power, grow more and more.[17]

The aim of the study is to open discussions on the conflict between necessity/will of the university teacher be empathetic to the student and/versus the effort to preserve teacher's dwindling energy and attenuate his or her empathy.

Methodology of the research. The theoretic-analytical parts of the study is focused on the empathy and apathy definition, and their connections in relation to the long-term decision-

[13] Sollárová, E. Socializace. In: Sociální psychologie. 2nd, Edition. Praha: Grada, 2014, p. 52.
[14] Harris, J. R. Where is the Child's Environment? A Group Socialization Theory of Development. Psychological Review, 1995, 102, 458–489.
[15] Brocher, T. Gruppendynamik und Erwachsenenbildung. Zum Problem der Entwicklung von Konformismus oder Autonomie in Arbeitsgruppen. Braunschweig: Georg Westermann Verslag, 1967.
[16] Buda, B. Empatia. Psychológia vcítenia a vžitia sa do druhého. Nové Zámky: Psychoprof, 1994, p. 232.
[17] Ibidem, p. 211

making of university teacher. The empirical part presents the expressions of Žilina University students dealt with the importance of individual approach to students viewed as the most important characteristics of empathy. Conclusive part of the study consists of the recap of empathy importance in the work of university teacher in the 21st century and determine the relationship 'teacher – student' as a multidimensional dynamic and accelerating relationship.

EMPATHY VERSUS APATHY AT THE UNIVERSITY

Empathy could be explained as a perspective taking[18] that is recognizable and credible to those persons who themselves occupy that perspective.[19] It is emotional state called up by the oncoming to another person's emotional state, where the resulting situation stems from the adoption of the other's point of view and understanding his or her feelings.[20] It's the listening to the other not only through the hearing but also through the eyes and heart.[21] This means the empathy has a cognitive basis that facilitates the detection of situations requiring the help. Very close even identical experiencing situation with another person is the result of empathy.[22]

If we may understand the empathy as a *longer-term, psychical characteristic/personality trait,* then empathy is a unique individual's ability to understand other individuals in the form of immersion oneself, cognitive entering, empathizing, and putting oneself into their mindset and psychic experiencing. Soanes & Stevenson[23] and Bratton[24] define empathy as the person's ability to understand and share the feelings, thoughts and situations of others and be sensitive to them. Goleman[25] perceives empathy as a basic human quality ... It is the understanding of the feeling of others, the ability to see the situation from their perspective and ability to respect their different emotions and beliefs. When defining empathy, Batson's view can also be used that empathy is insight, solidarity, understanding, and compassion towards other person.[26]

In soundness with this study aim, the empathy might be related to the efforts to improve permanently the quality of education and level of academic results. The training and mentoring students from the side of teacher can therefore be considered as the effort to as much as possible

[18] Ruby P. & Decety J. How Would You Feel versus How Do You Think She Would Feel. A Neuroimaging Study of Perspective Taking with Social Emotions. J. Cogn. Neurosci, 2004, 16, 988–999.
[19] Tettegah, S. & Anderson, C. J. Pre-service Teachers' Empathy and Cognitions: Statistical Analysis of Text Data by Graphical Models. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 2007, 32(1), 48–82.
[20] Hewstone, M. & Strobe, W. Sociální psychologie. Praha: Portál, 2006, p. 340.
[21] Mikuláštík, M. Komunikační dovednosti v praxi. Praha: Grada, 2003, p. 103.
[22] Slaměník, I. & Janoušek, J. Prosociální chování. In: Sociální psychologie. Praha: Grada, 2014, p. 289.
[23] Soanes, C. & Stevenson, A. Oxford Dictionary of English. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
[24] Bratton, J. Introduction to Work and Organizational Behaviour. 3rd Edition. New York: Palgrave, 2015.
[25] Goleman, D. Working with Emotional Intelligence. New York: Bantam, 1998.
[26] Batson, C. D. The Altruism Question: Toward a Social-psychological Answer. Hillsdale: Erlbaum, 1991.

get close with the student, his perception, and excitement from discovering new knowledge and challenges. Because the empathy is also "sharing joy or grief with others who are experiencing this feeling"[27], teaching and living for social justice cannot happen without the disposition of empathy and a sense of otherness.[28] It means, an empathic disposition has been seen as a desirable trait for teachers in diverse settings and often manifests itself in teachers' caring relationships with students.[29] This leads to a conviction of Halamandaris and Loughton[30], the ideal teacher must be first and foremost the possessor of empathy-competence. This one may be defined as the ability of a teacher to genuinely consider, as a first priority, the rights, feelings and achievements of the individual student, *in all teaching activities*.

When treating the teacher empathy, we have to consider its complexity and internal structure. The feelings and perceptions of empathetic person (teacher) meet the feelings and perceptions of empathized person (student) in empathic understanding. It represents a complex mixture of different emotions and personal philosophies. Additionally, according many authors, two basic components of empathy have to be considered in applying deeper relations: cognitive (understanding the student's views and feelings and the ability to take their perspective) and affective component (a teacher's appropriate emotional experience and response to student's psychological state). [31,32,33,34]

It means the teacher empathy is the ability to express concern and take the perspective of a student.[35] Teacher empathic communication and influence will result in students experiencing greater understanding and acceptance, and they will thus develop more positive attitudes toward themselves and toward schooling.[36] Also Holmberg confirmed that feelings of empathy and

[27] Kassin, S. Psychologie (Psychology). 2nd Edition. Brno: CPress, 2012, p. 703
[28] Woodward-Young, P. A. A Spot of Otherness: Using the Dot Game to Nurture Intellectual Empathy in Future Teachers. Democracy and Education, 2008, 17(3), 51–53.
[29] McAllister, G. The Role of Empathy in Teaching Culturally Diverse Students. Journal of Teacher Education, 2002, 53(5), 433–443.
[30] Halamandaris, P. G. & Loughton, A. J. Empathy Competence: A Search for New Direction in Canadian Teacher Education. In: Competency-based Education. Englewood Cliffs: ETP, 1973.
[31] Hewstone, M. & Strobe, W. Sociální psychologie. Praha: Portál, 2006
[32] Tettegah, S. & Anderson, C. J. Pre-service Teachers' Empathy and Cognitions: Statistical Analysis of Text Data by Graphical Models. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 2007, 32(1), 48–82.
[33] Batson, C. D. These Things Called Empathy: Eight Related but Distinct Phenomena. In: The Social Neuroscience of Empathy. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2009, 3–16.
[34] Stojilković, S., Todorović, J., Đigić, G. & Dosković, Z. Teachers' Self-concept and Empathy. 5th World Conference on Educational Sciences (WCES-2013), 875–879.
[35] Tettegah, S. & Anderson, C. J. Pre-service Teachers' Empathy and Cognitions: Statistical Analysis of Text Data by Graphical Models. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 2007, 32(1), 48–82.
[36] Feshbach, N. D. & Feshbach, S. Empathy and Education. In: The Social Neuroscience of Empathy. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2009.

belonging promote the students' motivation to learn and influence the learning favourably[37], and as the teacher should understand their students, their way of thinking and their emotional states, it is clear that the empathy is an important teacher's personality disposition.[38]

In addition to these opinions, also the results flowed from many long-term surveys stated that students, who have caring relationships with their teacher, feel higher motivation to the study and perform better academically in comparison with the student without empathic carefulness (e.g. surveys of Gay, 2000; Mendes, 2003; Djigić & Stojiljković, 2011; Blašková, 2014; etc.).[39,40,41,42]

On the other hand, *to be empathic is not easy*. On the contrary, it is very difficult. "There is a need of a certain emotional involvement, awareness of the problem, and a sense of own responsibility".[43] In our experience, the teacher perceives problems, troubles, and sorrows of their students concerning not only the education and study duties but also the difficulties related to the student's disappointments, loves, friendships, and so on. In this way, the teacher gains considerable *heaviness of the students' bad feelings* and their daunting vision of the world. (Fortunately, this can be sometimes compensated through the possibility the teacher can also feel joyful feelings of students, and experience with them their happiness and success.)

Another danger of too intense empathic perception is the teacher for some time as if 'shut down, unblock' his or her own personality during the empathic attunement to others (students). At this time, teacher replaces his or her own points of view, his or her own experience, imaginations and fantasies, and prefers just the views and imaginations of the student. It is possible that if the teacher too often 'sees through the eyes of students' and, moreover, what is even more complicated, if sees through the eyes of too many students in a short time, his or her personality may thereby suffer – may feel oneself attenuated and even neglected. This may be reflected in the further increase of experienced intra-stress.

[37] Holmberg, B. A Theory of Distance Education Based on Empathy. In: Handbook of Distance Education. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003, p. 82.
[38] Stojilković, S., Todorović, J., Đigić, G. & Dosković, Z. Teachers' Self-concept and Empathy. 5th World Conference on Educational Sciences (WCES-2013), 875–879.
[39] Gay, G. Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research & Practice. New York: Teachers College Press, 2000.
[40] Mendes, E. What Empathy Can Do. Education Leadership, 2003, 61(1), 56–59.
[41] Djigić, G. & Stojiljković, S. Classroom Management Styles, Classroom Climate and School Achievement. Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences Journal, 2011, 29, 819–828.
[42] Blašková, M. Influencing Academic Motivation, Responsibility and Creativity. 5th World Conference on Psychology, Counseling and Guidance (WCPCG-2014), 415–425.
[43] Buda, B. Empatia. Psychológia vcítenia a vžitia sa do druhého. Nové Zámky: Psychoprof, 1994.

A further complication in this area is the empathy has really to be believable, convincing, and honest. „Students must perceive that we care, and even that we like them deep down, as people … The teacher needs a genuine desire to build a connection with students and strategies for reframing experiences so that they elicit a student's interest rather than frustration".[44] Additionally, because the empathy represents one of the five modern communication skills (active listening, assertion, persuasion, meta-communication, and empathy) the communicational viewpoint (as mentioned above) must strongly be considered. E.g. Teven & Croskey[45] present it is important for a teacher to learn how to communicate in such a manner, that students will perceive that he or she cares them, whether or not that is the case in reality.

Based on these facts and difficulties, the teachers sometimes *resign themselves to the effort being empathetic*. Often it may not even be a result of conscious and deliberate decision (it is connected with the quality of concrete personality, perspectives of next life continuity, depth and type of experiences, impacts on psychic and emotions, responses to stress, etc.). Sometimes only the long time spent by a constant and repeated explaining the same theories, facts, models, and methods to students, repetitive putting pressure on students for study responsibly, again and again repetitive motivating them to perceive study as enriching process of opening their future life-professional track, etc., can cause the *teacher is already too tired* and needs to mitigate on expectations on himself or others and slow down his work tempo. If it is only a short-term decline in teacher's performance, it's natural. However, if it is planned, final and irrevocable state of the conscious choice – in the future to become only the average or even below-average teacher and researcher –, it is a huge loss. Indeed, long-term apathy is very dangerous.

Concretely, *apathy* means lack of interest, enthusiasm, or concern.[46] This represents a decrease or absence of emotional relationship to the surroundings; it is a common symptom or effect of mental tension (stress, frustration).[47] The concrete manifestation of this is indifference, in-passion, insensitivity manifested as slow or also complete disregard for the stimulus that normally causes immediate emotions.[48] Marshall states the apathy is typically

[44] Mendes, E. What Empathy Can Do. Education Leadership, 2003, 61(1), 56–59.
[45] Teven, J. J. & Croskey, J. C. The Relationship of Perceived Teacher Caring with Student Learning and Teacher Evaluation. Communication Education, 1997, 46(1), 1–9.
[46] Soanes, C. & Stevenson, A. Oxford Dictionary of English. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 70
[47] Paulička, I. et al. Všeobecný encyklopedický slovník, časť A – F Praha: Ottovo nakladatelství, 2002, p. 186.
[48] Otto. Ottova všeobecná encyklopédia, časť A – L. Bratislava: Agentúra Cesty, 2006, p. 63.

a manifestation of a deeper issue and even considers eight faces (archetypes) of student apathy.[49]

Despite the fact the mostly scientific articles and books deal rather with the apathy of students[50,51,52,53,54], or parents[55], many of them deal also with the emerging apathy of teachers, for example apathy towards restriction in preparation time and time for exercising professional judgement[56], working conditions, intrinsic motivation and professional commitment[57], extensive reading[58], bad work[59], complicated cultural norms of immigrant students[60], teaching/research[61], etc. Most of these publications are however devoted to the teachers in secondary and primary schools. Therefore it is necessary to pay attention also on the emerging *apathy of university teachers and scholars,* especially *in relation to the empathy applied towards students,* because the apathy can not only slow the growth of a particular university, but indirectly penetrate into other sectors of the economy.

Motivational decision making of teachers

Collision of the teacher's or scholar's empathy and apathy, that is the subject of this study, has a significant impact on teacher's or scholar's *long-term decision-making*. The teacher must decide whether and how much energy to insert into the preparation for next lecture versus

[49] Marshall, J. C. Overcoming Student Apathy: Motivating Students for Academic Success. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008.
[50] Babbage, K. J. High-impact Teaching: Overcoming Student Apathy. Lancaster: Technomic Publishing Company, 1998.
[51] Burden, P. A Cross Sectional Study of Attitudes and Manifestations of Apathy of University Students towards Studying English. The Language Teacher, 2002(3).
[52] Gázquez, J. J., Cangas, A. J., Padilla, D., Cano, A. & Moreno, P. J. P. Assessment by Pupils, Teachers and Parents of School Coexistence Problems in Spain, France, Austria and Hungary: Global Psychometric Data. International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy, 2005, 5(2), 101–112.
[53] Freire, P. Teachers as Cultural Workers. Letter to Those Who Dare Teach. In: Handbook of Research on Teacher Education. Enduring Questions in Changing Context. New York: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2008, 203–208.
[54] De Lay, A. M. & Swan, B. G. Student Apathy as Defined Secondary Agricultural Education Students. Journal of Agricultural Education, 2014, 55(1), 106–119.
[55] Vincent, C. Parents and Teachers: Power and Participation. London: Routledge Falmer, 1996.
[56] Klette, K. Working-Time Blues. How Norwegian Teachers Experience Restructuring in Education. In: The Life and Work or Teachers. New York: Routledge Falmer, 2005, 143–153.
[57] Ladebo, O. J. Effects of Work-related Attitudes on the Intention to Leave the Profession an Examination of School Teachers in Nigeria. Educational Management Administration Leadership, 2005, 33(3), 355–369.
[58] Litheko, S. R. S. & Maduekwe, A. N. Pre-service Teachers' Apathy to Extensive Reading: Imperatives for Best Practices in Nigerian Universities. Africa Education Review, 2011, 8(1), 55–78.
[59] Kincheloe, J. L. Teachers as Researches. Qualitative Inquiry as a Path to Empowerment. New York: Routledge, 2012.
[60] Cortez, M. T., Sorenson, R. D. & Coronado, D. A Case Study of a New High School Principal Instructional Challenges and Administrative Interventions Relating to Immigrant Students and Teacher Apathy on the U.S./Mexico Border. Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership, 2012, 15(1), 7–24.
[61] Sharma, M. Impact of Teacher Commitment on Teacher Freezing of Secondary School Teachers. International Journal of Research in Economics and Social Sciences, 2015, 5(5), 8–16.

whether rather use already prepared, but older, less modern texts. He must decide how to behave towards students, i.e. whether and to what depth to build warm and open relationships with them (supported by understanding and compassion the situation of students) versus choose the option not to embark in the relational field and remain unimpressed, emotionally cold against students. He must decide whether to continue with great enthusiasm in the scientific research activities and be the bearer of progress at his own department, faculty or university versus be only the ordinary scientist/researcher who only participates in research activities of other inspirers. The teacher certainly feels and solves a lot of such decisions.

Important for teachers and scholars in this area is knowledge the decision causes change and change is usually dynamic. It results in other happenings and consequences[62] and teachers have to decide what direction or ways of their future professional motivation would be preferred. These decisional situations really are complicated and could be also very frustrating because "difficult decisions often involve whether to approach or to avoid a demanding tasks or objective."[63]

When deciding on the choice between empathy and apathy, the teacher may use only his own *simple decision making models* on the one hand, i.e. intuitively, emotionally tinged decision without more complicated decision-making schemes. It seems that this is a choice between two basic options: empathy versus apathy. However, the teacher may select additional sub variants within empathic scenario (scenario for empathy), depending on *what particular form of his empathy* will prefer. For example, according to Cooper's study[64], the teachers could apply four particular types of empathy: fundamental, functional, profound, and feigned.

Subsequently, the decision-making scenarios can also be *further ramified and more deeply specified,* namely because:

- The logic in a decision to act involves selecting means and an end for a task[65], and teacher have to create the portfolio of further steps, tools, measures, facilities, etc.;

[62] Frankel, E. G. Quality Decision Management – the Heart of Effective Futures-Oriented Management. Topics in Safety, Risk, Reliability and Quality, 14. Springer Science + Business Media B. V., 2008, p. 37.
[63] James, L. R. & Rentsch, J. R. Justify to Explain the Reasons Why: A Conditional Reasoning Approach to Understanding Motivated Behavior. In: Personality and Organizations. New York: Psychology Press, 2012, p. 229.
[64] Cooper, B. In Search of Profound Empathy in Learning Relationships: Understanding the Mathematics of Moral Learning Environments. Journal of Moral Education, 2010. 39(1), 79–99.
[65] Betz, F. Managing Science. Methodology and Organization of Research. Innovation, Technology, and Knowledge Management, 2011, 9. Springer Science + Business Media, LLC, p. 187.

- Because of rising phenomena 'hypocrites' and apathy at colleges[66], all scenarios would envisage the possibility of rising hostility from the apathetic and lazy colleagues;
- In order to rectify apathy, the individual must pay attention to training empathetic ability and confirm the belief of one's good fortune in accordance with one's virtue[67];
- As teachers' empathic abilities increase, it seems likely that they would be better able to understand and respond appropriately to their students[68], and this can lead to the necessity to change or improve the form/level of applied empathy.

In deciding on empathy and apathy, the teacher can however proceed also more precisely, more scientific. This approach can be more convenient for many teachers and more coming to their natures. They may use more *advanced (heuristic) decision-making approaches and techniques,* and among the best we can include, for example, decision trees, decision tables, decision matrix, techniques of paired comparisons, etc. When using these ones, the teacher, however, must always consider very carefully a lot of aspects; it is necessary to think and compared with one another:

- All objective and subjective potentialities in empathetic as well apathetic variant;
- Expected costs of both options (materials, time, psychological, relational, etc.);
- Certain and uncertain factors that may affect the future reality;
- Direct reactions of the students (support when prioritizing empathy versus disagreement in a case of apathy);
- Impacts of both variants for a future teacher's career, his professional-pedagogical prestige and status;
- Ability to put up with any failure and resignation to the profession of teacher and scientists, etc.

The right way is the teachers in this motivational decision-making process – *deciding on the content and strength of their continuing professional motivation* – will feel the significance and indispensability of their profession, and allow win their empathy. They must not forget that the main domain of their profession is to teach and facilitate growth. Such efforts and help must be felt also from *overall engagement of the university and its management*. A similar idea is

[66] Jia, S. Hypocrites and Apathy in Campus and Its Effect on Moral Education of College Students. Journal of Yichun College, 2013, 4.
[67] Du, F. On Moral Apathy and Its Rectification. Journal of China University of Mining & Technology (Social Science), 2007, 4.
[68] Barr, J. J. The Relationship between Teachers' Empathy and Perception of School Culture. Educational Studies, 2011, 34(3), 365–369.

contained in the work of Hendrickson et al.: „Sound, authentic, creative, empowering leadership is indispensable, and it spells the difference between healthy, productive, sustainable academic institutions and programs and those that are in continual crisis, vulnerable, and failing."[69] More deeply, the mentioned above decision making of teachers and scholars must be supported by ambitious vision and mission of university and its pro-active culture.

According Cole, almost all truly distinguished universities create a seamless web of cognitive influence among the individual disciplines that affects the quality of the whole. It is not possible to build great universities without representation of the humanities as well as the sciences.[70] In our opinion, we may add just the *empathy* is the most important feature that represents the *basic principle of the university's humanity*. It is because "empathy can potentially foster openness, attentiveness, and positive relationships."[71] And, these processes whereby one person can come to know the internal state of another and can be motivated to respond with sensitive care are of enormous importance for our life together.[72] In other words, empathy motivates helping others and the desire for helping others, as well as inhibits aggression, facilitates people's social competence for interacting with others, and provides a sense of connection among people.[73]

METHODS

Empathy, as the term of general examination, could be understood from the many points of view. At the university, we can relate empathy to the expressing remarkable interest in students and their study, to providing help to students when it is needed, to decrypting students moods, responses and overall academic results, etc. When summing all mentioned similitudes, all of them are connected with and based on the application of individual approach to the students. Because of this, we focused our attention just on this aspect of empathy.

When trying obtain opinions of the students on importance of individual approach to the students (which may be considered as the basic feature of empathy application), we decided

[69] Hendrickson, R. M., Lane, J. E., Harris, J. T. & Dorman, R. H. Academic Leadership and Governance of Higher Education. Sterling: Stylus Publishing, LLC, 2013.
[70] Cole, J. R. The Great American University. Its Rise to Preeminence, Its Indispensable National Role, Why It Must Be Protected. Philadelphia, USA: Public Affairs™, 2012.
[71] McAllister, G. The Role of Empathy in Teaching Culturally Diverse Students. Journal of Teacher Education, 2002, 53(5), 433–443.
[72] Batson, C. D. These Things Called Empathy: Eight Related but Distinct Phenomena. In: The Social Neuroscience of Empathy. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2009, 3–16.
[73] Zhou, Q., Valiente, C. & Eisenberg, N. Empathy and Its Measurement. In: Positive Psychological Assessment: A Handbook of Models and Measures. American Psychological Association, 2003, p. 269.

and carried out a quantitative sociological survey, with the using a questionnaire technique. This survey was performed at the University of Žilina, Slovakia.

Survey characteristics and participants

Survey was realized with using questionnaire form worked out by Prof. Robert Ulewicz.[74] This one consisted of 40 expressions while students were asked to assess the level of agreement with presented expressions dealt with a lot of attributes of the great university, e.g. technical equipment, information availableness; teachers' manners, professionalism, individualistic approach to the students, trustworthiness, reliability, etc. In following part, we devote attention just on importance of teacher's individual approach to the students versus satisfaction of students with the real level/quality of applied individual approach at their university.

150 bachelor and master students in study programs Informatics and Management have participated in this survey. Of this number, there were 73.33% male and 26.67% female (higher number of male is caused by a fact the Faculty is technically oriented). Further respondents' characteristics are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Identification of questionnaire survey participants

Participants [Number (% of all)]			**Male** (% of number)			**Female** (% of number)		
150 (100)			**110** (73.3)			**40** (26.7)		
Level of study: **Bachelor**								
112 (74.67%)			**88** (78.57%)			**24** (21.43%)		
First year			**Second year**			**Third year**		
5 (3.33%)	**4** (80.00%)	**1** (20.00%)	**59** (39.33%)	**45** (76.27%)	**14** (23.73%)	**48** (32.00%)	**39** (81.25%)	**9** (18.75%)
Level of study: **Master**								
38 (25.33%)			**22** (57.89%)			**16** (42.11%)		
First year			**Second year**					
10 (6.67%)	**6** (60.00%)		**4** (40.00%)	**28** (18.67%)		**16** (57.14%)	**12** (42.86%)	

Results and discussion

The students have evaluated the quality of individual approach from two viewpoints: students' expectations („The teachers *should apply* individual approach to every student") and/versus students' experience in this field („The teachers *really apply* individual approach to every student"). They have assessed these levels at the scale 1–7 (1 = the lowest measure of agreement; 7 = the higher measure of agreement). Processed evaluations collected from the

[74] Ulewicz, R. Application of Servqual Method for Evaluation of Quality of Educational Services at the University of Higher Education. Polish Journal of Management Studies, 2014, 9(1), 254–264.

students were divided into three basic groups: (1) All (expressions of all students together); (2) Bachelors (expressions of bachelor students); (3) Masters (expressions of master students). In all of mentioned groups, we searched the students' expressions in regard to sex too (Table 2). Table contains absolute as well as relative frequencies (in per cent) and basic statistical characteristics for particular viewpoints – expectations versus reality.

Table 2. Expressions of students on importance (expectation) versus real application (reality) of teachers' individual approach to them

	All 150 (100.00%)				**Male** 110 (100.00%)				**Female** 40 (100.00%)			
	Expectations		Reality		Expectations		Reality		Expectations		Reality	
Value ≤ 3	17	11.33%	57	38.00%	13	11.82%	40	36.36%	4	10.00%	17	42.50%
Value = 4	31	20.67%	28	18.67%	27	24.55%	23	20.91%	4	10.00%	5	12.50%
Value = 5	42	28.00%	38	25.33%	30	27.27%	25	22.73%	12	30.00%	13	32.50%
Value = 6	31	20.67%	22	14.67%	21	19.09%	18	16.36%	10	25.00%	4	10.00%
Value = 7	29	19.33%	5	3.33%	19	17.27%	4	3.64%	10	25.00%	1	2.50%
Value ≥ 6	60	40.00%	27	18.00%	40	36.36%	22	20.00%	20	50.00%	5	12.50%
Value ≥ 5	102	68.00%	65	43.33%	70	63.64%	47	42.73%	32	80.00%	18	45.00%
Value ≥ 4	133	88.67%	93	62.00%	97	88.18%	70	63.64%	36	90.00%	23	57.50%
Mean	5.09		3.98		4.99		3.98		5.38		3.98	
Upper quartile	6.00		5.00		6.00		5.00		6.50		5.00	
Median	5.00		4.00		5.00		4.00		5.50		4.00	
Lower quartile	4.00		3.00		4.00		3.00		5.00		3.00	

	Bachelors 112 (100.00%)				**Male** 88 (100.00%)				**Female** 24 (100.00%)			
	Expectations		Reality		Expectations		Reality		Expectations		Reality	
Value ≤ 3	14	12.50%	40	35.71%	11	12.50%	31	35.23%	3	12.50%	9	37.50%
Value = 4	21	18.75%	22	19.64%	19	21.59%	18	20.45%	2	8.33%	4	16.67%
Value = 5	31	27.68%	27	24.11%	25	28.41%	21	23.86%	6	25.00%	6	25.00%
Value = 6	22	19.64%	18	16.07%	16	18.18%	14	15.91%	6	25.00%	4	16.67%
Value = 7	24	21.43%	5	4.46%	17	19.32%	4	4.55%	7	29.17%	1	4.17%
Value ≥ 6	46	41.07%	23	20.54%	33	37.50%	18	20.45%	13	54.17%	5	20.83%
Value ≥ 5	77	68.75%	50	44.64%	58	65.91%	39	44.32%	19	79.17%	11	45.83%
Value ≥ 4	98	87.50%	72	64.29%	77	87.50%	57	64.77%	21	87.50%	15	62.50%
Mean	5.12		4.04		5.05		4.03		5.38		4.08	
Upper quartile	6.00		5.00		6.00		5.00		7.00		5.00	
Median	5.00		4.00		5.00		4.00		6.00		4.00	
Lower quartile	4.00		3.00		4.00		3.00		5.00		3.00	

	Masters 38 (100.00%)				**Male** 22 (100.00%)				**Female** 16 (100.00%)			
	Expectations		Reality		Expectations		Reality		Expectations		Reality	
Value ≤ 3	3	7.89%	17	44.74%	2	9.09%	9	40.91%	1	6.25%	8	50.00%
Value = 4	10	26.32%	6	15.79%	8	36.36%	5	22.73%	2	12.50%	1	6.25%
Value = 5	11	28.95%	11	28.95%	5	22.73%	4	18.18%	6	37.50%	7	43.75%
Value = 6	9	23.68%	4	10.53%	5	22.73%	4	18.18%	4	25.00%		
Value = 7	5	13.16%			2	9.09%			3	18.75%		
Value ≥ 6	14	36.84%	4	10.53%	7	31.82%	4	18.18%	7	43.75%		
Value ≥ 5	25	65.79%	15	39.47%	12	54.55%	8	36.36%	13	81.25%	7	43.75%
Value ≥ 4	35	92.11%	21	55.26%	20	90.91%	13	59.09%	15	93.75%	8	50.00%
Mean	5.03		3.79		4.77		3.77		5.38		3.81	
Upper quartile	6.00		5.00		6.00		5.00		6.00		5.00	
Median	5.00		4.00		5.00		4.00		5.00		3.50	
Lower quartile	4.00		3.00		4.00		3.00		5.00		3.00	

The expectations of students considering the individual approach are relatively high, as evidenced by the average value of students' opinions where $\bar{x} = 5.09$ (maximum was 7 points).

Worse results were obtained from the viewpoint of real exercise of the teachers individual approach where $\bar{x}$ = 3.98, which represents only 57% of the maximum of value at the seventh. This shows that students feel a certain gap between their ideas about the desired quality of teachers' behavior towards them, and the real, everyday behavior of teachers at the lectures and seminars.

Closer examination shows the bachelors have slightly higher expectations ($\bar{x}$ = 5.12) than masters ($\bar{x}$ = 5.03). Reality was better perceived by bachelors again: $\bar{x}$ = 4.04, although there is a larger difference from the masters $\bar{x}$ = 3.79. Female have higher expectations of men (ratio of average values of male/female was 4.99/5.38, in a group of bachelors it was 5.5/5.38 and in a group of masters 4.77/5.38).

Reality in applying individual approach was also rated by female slightly better, total ratio of averages was settled 3.98/3.98; in bachelors group was 03.04/04.08 and in masters group was 3.77/3.81. Here must be realized that the number of male-students was higher and the difference between bachelors and masters was less, so, in the final analysis, the value leveled. The higher value of the expectations is testified by the upper quartile, which was in all cases at least 6 (it means that at least 75% of students attached the individual approach of 6 or 7 points to this criterion) and a median that was everywhere at least 5. Upper quartile for the reality in all cases was 5, and the median was 4 in all cases, except female-masters, where the value 3.5 was achieved (which is the mean of the minimum and maximum values).

If looking on data of value ≥ 5, then we find that the relative frequency in the group of all male was 63.64% (higher for bachelors: 65.91%, while for masters only: 54.55%) but for the female was much higher: 80.00% (bachelors: 79.17% and masters: 81.25%). In summary, 2/3 of male and 4/5 of female expectations were at the level at least 5. The reality at least 5 was felt by 43.33% of male and 45.00% of female (in both groups, the relative frequency was higher for bachelors), which is not too bad. Expectations at the below average value against the scale (in Table it is value ≤ 3) were assessed only by 11.33% of students (about 12% of male and 10% of female), while below-average reality is felt by 38.00% of the students (36.36% of male and 42.50% of female). Whereas these values are still lower than expected at the level of at least 5 (value ≥ 5) respectively than reality at this level, the situation at university should be improved in the future.

Similarly was oriented also the survey of Carpintero (2015). This one focused on the required qualities that mentors (mastered teachers) at the university should have. 28 former

graduate students have participated in mentioned research, and from the analysis of 20 most cited qualities flows that the five most valued qualities are: 1) Nearness; 2) Experience; 3) Open mind; 4) Empathy; 5) Ability to advise.[75] It means, because the empathy took fourth place in this list (of 20 qualities), also this survey confirmed the importance of teachers empathy.

Positive correlation between empathy of teachers and students was confirmed in research of Chang, Berger & Chang (1981). These authors searched measure of 12 graduate teaching assistants' empathy and perception of this one in a case of 447 students. Students with high self-esteem who perceived their teaching assistant as high in empathy when she or he was objectively rated high in empathy scored significantly higher in the learning measures than any other group.[76]

Mangione et al. (2002) have searched whether empathy could change at different levels of medical education. 98 internal medicine residents from all three years of training were studied. The Jefferson Scale of Physician Empathy was administered, and residents' empathy scores correlated with ratings on humanistic attributes made by postgraduate program directors. Although no statistically significant differences in scores were found among residents, study suggests that empathy is a *relatively stable trait* that is not easily amenable to change in residency training programs.[77]

Very interesting is also the study of Holmberg (2003). The role of empathy inherent in his theory of teaching-learning conversations generated four hypotheses: a) The stronger the conversational characteristics, the stronger the students' feelings of personal relationship to the supporting organization; b) The stronger the students' feelings that the supporting organization is interested in making the learning matter personally relevant to them, the greater their personal involvement; c) The stronger the students' feelings of personal relationship to the supporting organization and of being personally involved with the learning matter, the stronger the motivation and the more effective the learning; d) The more independent and academically experienced the students, the less relevant the conversational characteristics.[78]

[75] Carpintero, S. Qualities That Mentors in the University Setting Should Have. 7th World Conference on Educational Sciences, (WCES-2015). Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 197(2015), p. 258.
[76] Chang, A. F., Berger, S. E. & Chang, B. The Relationship of student Self-esteem and Teacher Empathy to Classroom Learning. A Journal of Human Behavior, 1981, 18(4), 21–25.
[77] Mangione, S., Kane, G. C., Caruso, J. W., Gonnella, J. S., Nasca, T. J. & Hojat, M. Assessment of Empathy in Different Years of Internal Medicine Training. Medical Teacher, 2002, 24(4), 370–373.
[78] Holmberg, B. A Theory of Distance Education Based on Empathy. In: Handbook of Distance Education. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003, p. 82.

On the other hand, in relation to the teacher empathy, we can find the several surveys which the authors have tried to measure the student empathy in. E.g., according Tettegah & Anderson, empathy is very difficult construct to measure. However, the findings in their study demonstrate how empathy can be measured and analyzed using log-multiplicative association models (LMA) and open-ended responses as stimulated experimental situation that are generated from observations of animated narrative vignettes (ANVs) : "The empathy codes and vignette condition comprise multivariate categorical data. We use log-linear models to test whether the elements of empathy are related in any way to vignette type, as well as to determine the complexity of associations between the codes."[79]

CONCLUSION

Ideally, the faculty members, administrators, and alumni who best appreciate the totality of the university's contributions to society will, in the spirit of self-regulation, play a leading role in revitalizing their beloved institutions.[80] Especially with regard to building a great university it is necessary to *maintain and strengthen empathy of university teachers*. It is always necessary so that the teacher can find inside himself a sufficient amount of the strengths for mastering attractiveness of easier (apathetic) way and successfully resist the attractiveness of becoming apathetic and reconciled with the given state. It is not an easy. Therefore it is essential, even this can be considered the alpha and omega in this difficult process, so that particularly *management of departments, faculties and universities* can powerfully assist their teachers and scholars in this field. If necessary, it is possible to also involve psychological counselors or coaches for combating stress. There may be asked other, charged with energy colleagues from other departments to help re-add desired power. It is possible to also mobilize the students so that they can become more empathic, accommodating towards their teachers too. Simply, there are certainly *a number of subjects and options to successfully manage decision-intrapsychic conflict between the empathy and apathy*.

It is necessary the teachers not only will preserve their empathic ability at the achieved level but even try to continue in developing it. It is true that such a process is necessary inconsistent with the deepening cultural and relational crisis. All existing companies and universities fight with this crisis. However, the relationship between university teacher (adviser,

[79] Tettegah, S. & Anderson, C. J. Pre-service Teachers' Empathy and Cognitions: Statistical Analysis of Text Data by Graphical Models. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 2007, 32(1), 48–82.
[80] Christensen, C. M. & Eyring, H. J. The Innovative University. Changing the DNA of Higher Education from the Inside Out. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011, p. 11.

mentor) and the student represents the *dynamic relationship* that is able to *excellently* ***accelerate.*** Such a relationship can and should be in the second decade of the 21st century the preferred form of conduct for improving potentially the most creative relationship which exists in a professional environment at all: the relationship teacher/scholar – student. This relationship is an ***active real reflection of a multidimensional action.*** It must be in-depth endorsed and correctly performed *in all of these dimensions of academic and human experiencing:*

- *Psychological-personality* – interaction of personality traits (positive and negative) and intrapsychic processes taking place in the personality of the teacher and/versus the personality of student, respectively personalities of a greater number of involved students should be realized;
- *Developmental-cultivation* – increase in knowledge potential of the students and facilitation of cultivating their personality in terms of an ethics and societal and individual effectiveness should be done; the starting point and the prerequisite for this is a lasting improvement of the teacher's knowledge base and human dispositions;
- *Cognitive-mental* – instilling new ways of learning to the student should be done, teacher should influence, strengthen and dynamize their mental processes, and lead (force) them to critically assess not only an objective, external reality but also their own actions and outcomes; based on the active feedback from students, the teacher should evaluate and develop his own intellectual skills and relationship with students;
- *Communicational-argumentation* – relationship between teacher and student should be activated, based on an open and clear, but friendly communication; rules for mutual communication and cooperation should be established and agreed; mutual respect, esteem, and trust should be built between teacher and student;
- *Motivational-acceleration* – mutual intra- and inter-motivating behavior which own motivation to be a good teacher should be built and applied by teacher in, and at the same time, encouragement, amplification and endeavor to retain consistently the students' motivation should be done; students have to identify and apply their motivation, while strengthening the teachers' motivation to continue in being a good teacher/mentor.

It is clear that all of the five dimensions specified in the relationship between the teacher and student should not only be performed but should be further and constantly (in the future) developed and improved – because the every relationship (thanks to its participants) could be

progressed. An excellent result from such an empathic relationship is the *teacher can take pleasure from the nearness and deeper understanding with students*. These positive feelings and reflections are often an excellent feedback and moral satisfactions (the reward) for every passionate and good teacher. Just for this reason it is necessary to fight the pedagogical, personality and life apathy and win over it. Teachers need to assess continuously the correctness of their behavior, must be open to students, and strive constantly to *help students in their study and personality cultivation*. They must not be satisfied with the easy solutions but every decision must always be taken with regard to people who will be impacted by any performed pedagogical relations (students, colleagues, parents). This means the empathy is really helpful and beneficial.

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UNIVERSITETO DĖSTYTOJŲ MOTYVUOTO SPRENDIMO PRIĖMIMAS: EMPATIJA IR APATIJA

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Santrauka

Efektyvaus universiteto kūrimas priklauso nuo entuziastingų dėstytojų, vadybininkų ir administracijos, skatinančios išradingai ir atsakingai veikti ir būti motyvuotiems. Dėstytojo edukacinės pastangos neatsiejamos susijusios su asmeniniu indėliu į visą ugdymo procesą. Šis indėlis grindžiamas dėstytojo empatijos jausmu. Šiuolaikinės akademinės bendruomenės narių motyvacija susijusi su problemomis, kurios atsiranda dėl tam tikrų akademinių ir bendruomeninių aplinkybių. Universiteto dėstytojai neretai perkrauti darbu ir pavargę. Tam tikrais atvejais profesinėje srityje dėstytojai susiduria su konkrečia problema: ar studentų atžvilgiu būti empatiškiems, ar pasinerti į apatiją. Straipsniu siekiama išanalizuoti, susintetinti, palyginti ir apibendrinti tai, kas žinoma apie apatiją, atsižvelgiama į tai, kokį sprendimą priverstas priimti dėstytojas (dažniausiai apatiški jausmai konkuruoja su nuovargiu, nustelbdami empatiją). Remiamasi apklausos rezultatais, gautais apklausus 150 Žilinos universiteto (Slovakijos Respublika) studentų. Iš gautų rezultatų matyti, kokia svarbi empatija. Ši ypatybė sąlygoja daugiadimensį, dinamišką santykį tarp dėstytojo ir studentų.

Pagrindinės sąvokos: tobulas universitetas, dėstytojai, studentai, empatija, apatija, sprendimo priėmimas, apklausa.

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