Abstract

This study is intended to investigate the interrelationship of student-teacher in the private Hospitality and Tourism Higher Education in Cyprus. The researchers of this study formulated three main themes, especially sought to identify the qualities of a good teacher, positive relationship with a teacher, characteristics of caring academic demonstrate, and attributes of a good professor/lecturer. The purpose of this was to investigate the effects of student perceptions of their college teacher's interpersonal teaching behaviors on student achievement and affective learning outcomes. Analyses were conducted in order to investigate the effects of differing student perceptions of their teacher's interpersonal teaching behaviors. A qualitative approach was employed, whereby face-to-face and semi-structured interviews were conducted with 100 students in private tourism higher education in Cyprus. Using thematic analysis, the study concludes that it is imperative for teachers to develop positive academic relationships and establish close rapport with their students to facilitate the learning process.

Keywords:
academics/lecturers, students, hospitality and tourism management colleges, analytical analysis, interpersonal relationships and Cyprus
Introduction

Tertiary education’s life is stressful and not easy, anxiety produced for majority of students is due to a variety of factors such as social and academic competition, especially the separation from their families and the adaptation to a new educational system. Important researches have shown that students’ perception of their teacher’s interpersonal behaviour is an important factor in explaining their cognitive and affective outcomes (Wubbels & Levy, 1993, Brekelmans, Wubbels & den Brok, 2002; Henderson, 1995; Rickards, 1998; den Brok, 2001). A number of educationalists suggest that teachers ought to intentionally engender a sense of “community” (Diekelmann, 2002, Dunne, 1993; Palmer, 1999). Students should be invited with the help of words and actions to a greater openness of relationship as this facilitates a sense of kinship, with a cooperative spirit. Emphasis on the importance of teacher expectations over the past several decades supports the notion that teachers’ attitudes and actions are critical to students’ academic progress. Moreover, research on “teacher caring” (Noddings 1996), “effective teachers” (Ladson-Billings 1994), and “cultural sensitivity in teaching” (Delpit 1995) are examples of influential work emphasizing the centrality of teachers’ attitudes and actions toward students to whether the connection is academically productive.

The importance of the lecturer/professor and student relationship has remained crucial to the educational process from many different directions and perspectives (Freire, 2003; Purpel & McLaurin, 2004). For others, the significant aspect of the relationship is what happens between the teacher and the student (Hartrick Doane, 2002). The important role of rapport and relational practice is “fundamental to this human-centered process” (Paterson & Zderad, 1975). Indeed, some argue that the teacher-student relationship is more important than the content of education (Bennett, 1997; Palmer, 1998; Tompkins, 2005). The teacher-student relationship helps to engage students in college, influence their motivation and learning, and avoid problematic behaviors in college. Hospitality Institutions of higher education are more multigenerational than ever before, where faculty and students create a multicultural...
academic society. The Hospitality higher education present in the modern era brings unique challenges to engagement of students, creating a multi-dimensionality learning environment, including positive interactions and relationships, with positive effects on both students and faculty themselves (e.g., on teachers’ positive emotions; Gerda Hagenauer & Simone Volet, 2014). A constructive relationship between an academic and students is the driving factor for higher level of content acquisition (Pascarella and Terenzini 2005) and ethical and psychosocial development (S. Karau and M. Komorraju, 2010).

Due to the above mentioned statement it is significant to study teacher-student cooperation and relationship in order for teachers not to have a concerned disposition towards their students, believe in their student’ ability to learn and establish a harmonious relationship with their students. Because, these relationships exert a stronger influence on personality development, encourage and nurture student motivation, can enhance learning experience and boost student achievement.

The researcher’s history with teaching in higher education has evolved to include an innovator role, reflecting over 25 years of work in hospitality and tourism faculties, teaching, consulting students, researching and practicing this field to become cognizant and competent in applying international hospitality informatics to education and practice.

Several previous researches were focused on two critical aspects of the learning environment in higher tourism education (see Gerda Hagenauer & Simone Volet, 2014; Pascarella and Terenzini 2005; S. Karau and M. Komorraju, 2010): the student-teacher relationship and the communication between them. In this study, the attention was given to the interpersonal relationship quality between teachers and students in tourism colleges in Cyprus.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify the quality of a good teacher through investigating the interpersonal relationship quality between teachers and students. The specific objectives to be achieved in the research are:
1. To identify the qualities and attributes of a good professor/teacher.
2. To identify the positive-negative relationship between teachers and students.
3. To identify the characteristics which a caring academic demonstrate.

These questions are approached by studying the general trend of the development of student perceptions, the generalize ability of this trend across classrooms, and the relation of student perceptions related to each moment of interaction in classrooms.

Review of the literature

Much emphasis has been placed on identifying what effective teaching is and how teachers, who are unequivocally at the centre of the educational process, can equip effective teaching approaches. It is important to recognised that the teacher’s teaching practices and approaches have a major impact, negative or positive, on the student learning (Kember, 1998).

Defining the effectiveness of a teaching practice is a difficult task and there is much controversy over this term since “effectiveness” is a measurable component and can vary considerably from institution to institution and from country to country.

A good learning environment is the product of an honest piece of communication. For this reason, it is important for faculty to create a communication environment based on respect, love, tolerance and trust in their classes. Therefore, they contribute to educating successful, happy, social, optimistic and creative individuals (Selimhocaoglu, 2004). According to Cullingford (1995) an effective teacher has to have five qualities embedded in his teaching practice; integrity, learning, organisation, communication and humour.

Many researchers define the effective teaching style as those actions, interactions, and communications of the teacher with his/her students that are associated with positive student achievement and effective outcomes. Anderson (1959), in his literature review, suggested that teaching styles are arranged on a continuum from authoritarian at one end to democratic to laissez faire at the other end and reported a direct correlation
between democratic teaching methods and cognitive and affective achievement.

It was hypothesized that teachers and students form a community of learners who engage in social dialog and produce shared knowledge. Teachers were seen as facilitators who guide and enrich student’s learning interests and activities, with students serving as co-contributors to the training process. Research indicates that caring and supporting faculty members who express concern for their students and act as mentors confidently can contribute to student’s capacity to beat personal vulnerabilities and environmental adversities (Wang, Haertel & Walberg, 1994). The methods to operationally define the theoretical construct of effective teaching styles haven’t been stable within the literature (see Bennett, 1976; Flanders, 1960, 1964, 1965, 1970 1970a; Good, Biddle & Brophy 1975; Haige & Schmidt, 1956; Medley, 1977, 1979; Rosenshine, 1970; Stalling 1976; Soar, 1968; Tuckman, 1970; Veldman & Brophy, 1974; Wispe, 1951).

Instruments have now been developed to find a good sort of learning environments, for all levels: elementary and secondary level, tertiary institutions, using the School and University Classroom Environment Inventory (CUCEI) (Fraser, Treagust & Dennis 1986); computer-assisted instruction classrooms (Teh & Fraser 1994) and teacher interpersonal behaviour within the classroom (Wubbels & Levy 1993; Fisher & Kent 1997; Rickards & Fisher 1998). Consequently, there is now a spread of well-tested and validated survey instruments available to teachers and researchers.

One of the advantages of the development in students’ learning environments can cause improved student performance within the classroom (Fraser 1995; Fraser, Giddings & McRobbie 1995). All higher education teachers should play an equally significant role through solid and positive relationships with the scholars also as modeling positive socialization skills. The teacher’s role in creating an environment and building relationships encouraging learning goes beyond the regular academic duties to incorporate the supply of additional support, help, and care. By developing positive interactions with their students, teachers can reduce the impact of certain fundamental factors that negatively impact a student’s academic achievement.

All of the previous research on how relationships are formed and what determines the quality of those relationships is highly relevant to intervention efforts. Of particular
concern are disruptive, aggressive, resistant students who present a particular challenge to many teachers. Teachers’ interactions with these students are sometimes critical and punitive in nature (Coie & Koeppl, 1990) and are often characterized by high conflict, poor communication, and low affection. (Itskowitz, Navon, & Strauss).

Marland (1992) pointed out the importance of “teacher knowledge” and cites the considerable number of researchers who have coined terms that represent teacher thinking. Throughout history, hundreds of studies have been conducted on the student-teacher relationship, which takes place during the teaching-learning experience, and how professional life is interpreted and acted upon from the student’s perspective. Teachers in Higher Education have both a direct and an indirect influence on students. Thus, they contribute to the learning environment of these students. For example, academics experience and knowledge, behaviors, teaching styles, and student perceptions of the learning environment have been studied and found to be related to student learning (Bennet, 1976; Brophy & Good, 1986; Fraser et al., 1991).

Specifically in Hospitality Management higher education the role of relationship between students and their lecturers should represent an important component of student’s education.

The purpose of this paper is to reveal the factors which leads to a good student-teacher relationship during the academic education in the field of Hotel, Tourism and/or Hospitality management, not only during holistic learning (presentations, assignments, discussions and projects) but also during the experiential education of the students, to increase their motivation, self-confidence and critical-thinking. “Without academic intervention and support, student awareness of employability and careers services facilities is unlikely to increase.” (A Handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, p.99)

The future of Higher education is not just to prepare the students in their jobs with new knowledge of the world of work; the responsibilities of teachers in higher education is to prepare “active, responsible and engaged citizens”. (The future of education and skills-Education 2030, p.3)
Overview of Higher Tourism Education in Cyprus

The Island Cyprus is not only based on tourism business but represents a popular destination for Tertiary Education among international students. Nowadays Cyprus has the world’s highest number of graduates’ students per capita, and this creates a norm competition for all jobs in public and private sector.

The Tertiary Education in Cyprus is committed in developing and maintaining higher international standards for all levels: BA, MA and PhD. Special emphasis is placed on research and innovation. Cyprus offers many fields of study and research to all students, encourages young talents by giving them the opportunity to develop scientifically -practically and theoretically. Both private and public institutions and the study programs are recognized not only in EU but also internationally, have made Cyprus a real attractions for a large number of students.

Higher Education Institutions in Cyprus are represented from Public and Private Universities, Private Colleges and Private Institutions of Higher Education. The Department of Tertiary Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture offers great importance to Quality Assurance for Higher Education Institutions in Cyprus.

Nowadays, 43 private Institutions of Tertiary Education are registered in Cyprus, with the Ministry of Education and Culture. These Institutions offer academic and vocational programmes of study at all levels- from undergraduate to postgraduate levels and all programmes are accredited by the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education. The private Colleges in Cyprus have been established to meet the demand for higher education especially for the young generation who have financial limitations and do not have the opportunity to study abroad.

These Colleges teach in Greek and/ or English and are flourishing and gaining profit. The majority of all students of these five Colleges are mainly from abroad (90% from all registered students); India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Russia, China, and only 10% from Cyprus.
Research methodology

Research Approach and Sample

In this study a qualitative approach was employed, whereby face-to-face interviews were conducted with the targeted sample. Five private different Colleges from Cyprus participated in this research: College of Tourism and Hotel Management, Nicosia, “KES” College Nicosia, “Larnaca College” in Larnaca city, “InterNapa College, Sotera, and “Atlantis” College” the Newest College in Liopetri village.

At the beginning 120 participants have been contacted as they gave the researchers initial approval to participate in this study. The participants involved to this research were from Hotel and Tourism Management, Hospitality Management, Culinary Arts and Business Administration Management (BA and MA). A qualitative approach was chosen, whereby face-to-face interviews were conducted with the target sample via semi-structured interviews. In this study, the students had the opportunity for critical reflection, recall of events and comparisons with feelings then and now – all of which further contributed to the shaping of their own ideas, theories and views of the relationship with their teachers. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, only 100 interviews (N = 100) were completed. This was done over a period of two months and yielded a sample of 100 research participants (see table 1).

Each interview was in two main parts; the first part related to general information, this included questions related to demographic data such as interviewee place, level of the student education, gender diversity of students (male or female), and students’ age groups (see Table 2 for additional details).

The second part of the interview comprised study questions. This part mainly covered four groups which were sought to identify the qualities of a good teacher, positive relationship with a teacher, characteristics of caring academic demonstrate and attributes of a good professor/lecturer.

The interviews were conducted personally by the researchers; the interview schedule was developed based on some previous studies and reports (Dewhurst et al., 2007;
Boada et al., 2012; Kadiresan et al., 2015; Paudyal, 2019). Moreover, the interview schedule was also updated after discussions with some experts in the area.

**Table 1: Distribution of categories over colleges**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of College</th>
<th>InterNapa</th>
<th>KES</th>
<th>Atlantis</th>
<th>Larnaca College’</th>
<th>COTHM, Nicosia</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Participants</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instrument Analysis Research**

Before discussing students’ expectations, a clear point of reference for what high and low expectations look like is needed. Studies of students who have higher expectations show the following patterns: a warm positive attitude toward teachers, the provision more difficult coursework, frequent opportunities for students to respond, and positive feedback with their teachers. Students with lowered expectations frequently exhibit differentiated behaviors towards perceived “low achievers” such as less class participation/time for answers, giving incorrect answers, giving overly critical feedback, and less effort to study. Research question one deals with the aspect of developing or acquiring an instrument that could measure oral communication. It is capable of measuring oral communication skills needed to be ascertained.

**Data interpretation and presentation**

To analyse qualitative data, a textual and thematic analysis technique was utilized to handle and screen the data, then conduct a comprehensive analysis (Al-Weshah, 2019b). Also, a cross-interview analysis technique was used to develop different themes based on the interviews (Al-Weshah, 2018). The results were handled qualitatively using previously determined fields for discussion. The interpretation of the interpersonal relationship quality between teachers and students is discussed in depth to raise different issues that could measure oral communication skills needed to be ascertained.
In presenting the findings, great care has been taken to ensure that where a quotation is used, this is done to illustrate the main thrust of the analysis and bring clarity to the concepts being represented. On the few occasions where a quotation represents an atypical or idiosyncratic view, this is made clear. When presenting quotes, the interview number is shown at the top of each quote. The participants’ own words are presented verbatim, using direct quote marks. However, there is some clarification to ensure normal speech. This is not considered to have any detrimental effect.

Interview format

The instrument used to collect student perceptions of teachers’ interpersonal teaching behaviors was the semi-structured interview based on teachers’ interaction and co-operation with the students. The researchers explained to students the goal of the interview is to determine the relationship between teacher and student, and the ability of a teacher to effectively communicate to his/her students in the classroom. Respondents were also informed that the data would be used to promote and improve professional education. Each interview covers same questions.

In the first phase, the researchers explained and clarified to all students that their answers are very important and helpful to develop the relationship with the faculty members. This represents all the essential characteristic in the real actions of the students, as it is essential to understand their opinion about what they think to be fundamental in a good teacher. The interview format also includes a list with the attributes of interpersonal teacher behaviour, important to characterize the teacher cooperation with the students.

It was very important to explain and clarify to all participants that the main objectives of this research are:

- to improve the interrelationship and the communication between the students and their lecturers,
- how important is the influence of trusting relationships in higher education
between student and lecturer,
• and how the positive relationship can enhance student’s engagement in their learning and education process.

The interview was administered to every regular student, during class time, in exactly the same manner, during their normal 150-minute block schedule. There was no time limit as there was usually no time limit in writing. Prior to each data collection event, all students were informed that their responses were confidential and would not affect their grades. They were further assured that their teachers would never see any of their responses or individual scores.

Findings

Demographic data of interviewees

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data. The following table provides a representation of the interviewees’ demographic data. As shown in table 2, 60% of the interviewees (60 participants) were male, while 40% of them were females (40 participants). In terms of the education level 70% of the total samples were BA degree students (70) and only 30% were MA degree students (30). In terms of students’ courses, hotel and tourism management courses came first with 40%; other courses were equally represented 20% for each.

**Table 2: Interviewees / Sample characteristics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An Investigation about the Interrelationship of Student-Teacher in Higher Hospitality Management and Tourism Education in Cyprus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>(BA or MA)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>(BA and MA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel and Tourism Management</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality Management</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Business</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration Management</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analytical framework

The interviewees were asked the same questions. Based on data screening and thematic analysis, the study came up with four main themes specifically sought to identify the qualities of a good teacher, positive relationship with a teacher, demonstrate characteristics of a caring academic, and attributes of a good professor/lecturer. These themes are analysed in detail using a cross-interview analysis approach (Al-Weshah, 2019a; Al-Weshah, 2019b).

Sought to identify the qualities of a good teacher.

The interviewees were asked to identify the qualities of a good teacher; their answers are shown in the following table.

Table 3: identify the qualities of a good teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identify the qualities of a good teacher.</th>
<th>Interviewee Nos.</th>
<th>Total number of interviewees who mentioned this need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As seen in Table 3, more than 50% of interviewees feel that competent teachers can better control the class and students listen to them, that they have a better relationship with the students, and that they succeed in motivating the students to study independently. From the students’ point of view teacher’s competence refers to a difficult student’s need to feel capable of academic work. For example, interviewee No. 22 stated that:

“I need more time to understand the idea, he/she [teacher] explain very well, simple phrases that I catch the meaning.”

On the second place, the students choose that a friendly teacher is defined as a good teacher. According to student’s comments, when there is easy and friendly relationship between teachers and students, students may go to the teachers with any of their academic issue. Student’s learning can be free from disinterest. They feel comfortable to discuss with their teachers any lesson about how to do well in exams and assignments work. Students need and like it when their teachers will also feel energized to assist their students—their new friends. For example, interviewees’ No. 11 and 42 respectively stated that:
“I’m very pleased to study at our college. I think he is best teacher and he is my friend.”
“I really enjoyed my stay in my college, I always met well-prepared teachers and nice and friendly.”

According to the student’s answers, the researchers can conclude that for an effective dialogue between teachers and students is necessary that the teachers must be competitive, having the capacity to “arrange” his/her ideas and thoughts in a clearly way, in order to demonstrate pedagogical professionalism. In case that the teachers can’t communicate clearly with their students they are considered as being uncooperative, unhelpful, uncaring, or impatient, they are demonstrating incompetence.

Completed the answers with a note: the faculty members with more experience, (longer profession experience, research and consultancy, author) are more competent and their presentation, much be clearly and attractive. For example, interviewees’ No. 16 stated that:

“\textit{I think his experience is excellent! Because [the lecturer] always has excellent examples he very rarely has to resort to translation – very impressive}.”

According with student’s answers the researchers can deduce the following conclusion: faculty-members need to use appropriate key concepts in their teaching, in such a way to promote communication and facilitate student’s conceptual development.

These findings are supported by Marland (1992), as the author pointed out that the importance of “teacher knowledge” and cites the considerable number of researchers who have coined terms that represent teacher thinking. Throughout history, hundreds of studies have been conducted on the student-teacher relationship, which takes place during the teaching-learning experience, and how professional life is interpreted and acted upon from the student’s perspective.
Motivates positive relationship with a teacher

The interviewees were asked to explain motivates positive relationship with their teachers, their answers is shown in the following table.

**Table 4: Motivates positive relationship with a teacher**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivates positive relationship with the students’ teachers</th>
<th>Interviewee Nos.</th>
<th>Total number of interviewees who mentioned this need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tactful</td>
<td>1, 4, 5, 6, 11, 13, 14, 17, 20, 22, 23, 24, 27, 31,33,20,22,27,34,41</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solidarity</td>
<td>1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 26, 27, 30, 32, 33, 35, 60,77</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>11, 13, 14, 15, 16,17, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 38, 40, 42, 43, 45, 50, 52, 54, 55, 57, 58,60,64,67,71,77,80,87,96</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public encourage</td>
<td>8, 11, 14, 19, 22, 31, 35, 41, 45, 48, 53</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>3, 5, 8, 10, 12, 15, 16, 21, 28,40</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>6, 10, 14, 15, 16, 26, 28,30,35</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate jokes</td>
<td>2,4,5,7,60,71,83,91</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the second research were to determine and help the researchers further understand the complex nature of teacher motivation. The students’ responses give the researchers a few ideas of what the elements for a positive relationship with their teacher are? The student’s answers present different opinions, but the most significant is the element of trust (with 30%). The trust is associated with the feeling of friendship with the lecture. As stated by the interview No. 14:

“... my teacher believes in me and empowers me for higher standards...”
Trust is a condition that often requires the work of both individuals in the interpersonal relationship, student and teacher. This was explained by the interview No. 45:

“... After one semester I understood that she [the teacher] wants to help me, I trust in her work “.

The rustle also indicted that the good relationship students-teacher is relating to the students’ perceptions of their teachers as following:

Firstly, students who believed that their teachers are tactful in their communication are more satisfied with their relationship with the teacher. Second, the answer indicated that students, who perceived that their teachers showed solidarity with them, are more motivated and which affect the course and satisfy with their teacher. Public encourage of the student, or teachers that occur in front of individuals to appreciate the good work and their effort, or otherwise make the student feel comfortable. Interviews No. 13 and 28 saying that:

“He [the teacher] is always very positive and encouraging me. Good teacher!”
“I feel very comfortable to ask her many questions - she [the teacher] always encouraged my effort.”

Patience, or teachers that appear to be patient, respond to e-mail in a timely manner, or treat students as an individual with specific concerns rather a number. Interview No. 40 expand that:

“... He [the teacher] never lose his patience with me, even when I had a bad day or was angry at myself for low marks”

Cooperation, or to cooperate with students’ needs and specific circumstances. As stated in interview No 28:

“My teacher has the ability to effectively cooperate with me, especially when I’m slow”.

Appropriate jokes, or have fun with the students, especially when students find the jokes to be funny or in good taste. Interview No. 5 stated that:
“She [the teacher], is intelligent and personal, we worked hard as well as has fun. I felt very comfortable and enjoyed her lessons. I couldn’t have asked for a better teacher”.

The results of the second indicated that there are differences in the student’s opinions according to the positive relationship with the teachers based on the types of communication they perceived by their teachers. The results would suggest that lecturer/teachers who build positive relationship with their students may enjoy the following benefits: Increase the level of students interested in and enjoyment of the class. Student’s attendance and their interest for study or course, and increase the level of students’ academic achievement.

These findings are supported by the work of (Bligh, 1971; Sass, 1989) as they stated that many factors affect a given student’s motivation to work and to learn interest in the subject matter, perception of its usefulness, general desire to achieve, self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as patience and persistence. Moreover, Scheidecker and Freeman (1999) observed that “Motivation is, without question, the most complex and challenging issue facing teachers today” (p.116).

Identifying Colleges student’s perceptions of their teachers, teacher’s behavior that conveys caring.

The interviewees were asked to identify perceptions of their, teacher’s behaviour that conveys caring. Their answers are shown in the following table.

**Table 5: Perceptions generated about teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identifying Colleges student’s perceptions of their teachers</th>
<th>Interviewee Nos.</th>
<th>Total number of interviewees who mentioned this need</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Caring teachers may motivate all of students differently, although this should also be reflected in their effort: classroom attentiveness, homework papers, activities outside from College. Those opportunities and connections may be more attractive if students perceive that the teachers trust them, offer more possibilities, involve them in different activities and give them responsibilities.

According to the findings (38%) of the students indicated that providing general support: academic and personal are essential. College’ students view their teacher’s candid concern and direct actions to improve failing marks as characteristic of a caring teacher. This belief is reflected in the following comments. Interviews No. 14 and 24:

“Offers me the chance to pass the semester with case studies and assignments”

“….not all teachers, but two believe in me, they give me courage to continue. I want to show my colleagues that I can pass with good results this semester.”

The comments suggested that the students place on interpersonal relationships and more importantly, illustrate another aspect of caring teachers. Students who have grades lower as C or are at risk of withdraw the semester may experience more a caring teacher and attain higher grades if they feel that teachers care about them, and believe in their capacities. These students may perceive teacher behavior that supports access to instruction as caring, especially if they have difficulties with learning or they are at risk of fail and withdraw courses, even all the semester. The characteristics of a caring teacher may assume different qualities depending on the academic position of students, as suggested by the strong and significant positive
interaction terms for students’ perceptions that teachers care and teachers’ assessments that students are at risk of withdraw the semester or not to pass specific courses. Student’s participation will be higher if they find teachers responsive to their efforts. The students’ reported about their teachers emphasize the teachers’ genuine concern for student progress. As stated in interviews No. 34 and 41:

“... My teacher cares about me and expects me to succeed in my life”
“When I work hard, my teacher praises my effort”.

The academic behavior of students may be more influenced by their perceptions of teachers’ commitment for several reasons. Students may be more sensitive of teachers’ opinions if they are on the margin of passing. For this category of students the teachers care may be an action of access to learning. The third characteristic refers to the time afforded by the teacher to the student. To further illustrate similar viewpoints students expressed. Interview No. 5:

“Helps me always when I need her [the teacher]”

Listening, a fourth characteristic, is demonstrated when a lecturer’s interactions convey a sincere interest in what the student has to say. What are the student’s expressions that the researchers as faculty member should listen? Points of view, opinions, ideas, suggestions, worries and concerns are obvious examples, some of which will relate directly to learning and to teaching. Especially in a Higher Education institution with multi-cultural students, paying attention to the students, represent a form of caring, because the teacher communicates with them, pay attention what they have to say. Some students commented that: Interviews No 11, 31 and 66.

“Listens to me [the teacher] when I have a problem”
“...asks for our opinions [the teacher]”.
“He [the teacher] appreciates my opinion for this course and what I want to change”

The statements reflect the importance of the student perceptions place on being listened to as young adults and not only as college’s students, to prepare them not only
for academic but at the same time as persons that in the future they will represent with proud the educational institution from Cyprus. These represents exact what Plato transmitted to his students:

"From me [Plato] the student will learn and will proper care of his personal affairs, so that he may best manage his own household, and also of the State’s affairs, so as to become a real power in the city, both as speaker and man of action’ (Protagoras, 319a).

Attributes of a good Professor/Lecturer.

The interviewees were asked to identify proposed training methods; their answers are shown in the following table.

Table 6: Identifying the qualities of a good teacher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes of a good Professor/Lecturer.</th>
<th>Interviewee Nos.</th>
<th>Total number of interviewees who mentioned this need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership behaviour,</td>
<td>11, 13, 14, 15, 16,17,18,19,20,22,23,24,25,30,33,34,38,40,42</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful and friendly behaviour,</td>
<td>1, 4, 5, 6,8,11,13,14,17,20,22,23,24,27,31,33,34,35,37,39,41,43,44,45,46,50,54,55,66,67,72,73,75,77,100</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding behaviour,</td>
<td>4, 5, 6, 8,26,78,80,82,91,100</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerant behaviour/giving students freedom and encourage them to research new ways and domains</td>
<td>8, 11, 14, 19, 22, 31, 35, 41, 45, 48, 53,66</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain behavior,</td>
<td>43, 45, 50, 52, 54, 55, 57, 58,60,64,67,71,.96</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied behavior admonishing behavior</td>
<td>4,8,30,66,94</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strict behaviour</td>
<td>1,5,91,94,96,</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in Table 6, and as stated by 35 interviewees (35%) participants’ view in this study stated that important as characteristic of teacher’s behavior represent friendly and helpful behavior. For example, interviewee No. 5 claimed that:

“My teachers are friendly and seemed to have respect for the students. I think that helps us to have a friendly relationship”.

Students want friends and want to have a sense of worth, of belonging and of binding with teachers. That accounts for the importance of a friendly atmosphere inside or outside of the classroom. In line with the previous interviewee, interviewer No. 66 said that:

“...we (students) have a lot to say about the course topic. The environment of our class is very active; everyone wants to speak out in her class”.

From student’s comments the researchers also can present the “image “of the leadership-teachers, that students prefer to have: teachers as mentors, team leaders, designers of new teaching and assessment processes, with new ways of doing things, and help others to solve problems. For example, interviewee No. 22 claimed that:

“She [the teacher] is a leadership in my college; she meets regularly with the students, lead us to discover during the class”.

These findings are supported by Wubbels and Levy (1993); there are two types of best teachers. These include Cooperative Best Teachers, and Dominant Best Teachers. Wubbels and Levy (1993) also identified three distinct types of worst teachers. These include teachers identified by their students as Repressive, Uncertain- Tolerant and Uncertain-Aggressive.

Conclusions and practical implications

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the interrelationship of student-teacher in the private Tourism Higher Education in Cyprus. The researchers of the
current study formulated four main themes, especially sought to identify the qualities of a good teacher, positive relationship with a teacher, characteristics of caring academic demonstrate, and attributes of a good Professor/Lecturer. To achieve this end, a qualitative approach was employed, whereby face-to-face interviews were conducted with a number of students in Tourism Higher Education in Cyprus. Also, a textual and thematic analysis technique was utilized to handle and screen the data collected, then conduct a comprehensive analysis.

The first objective was to identify the qualities of a good teacher; the study found that modern teachers should enhance their general knowledge with historical, literature, geographical and social knowledge. Therefore, the study recommends that a certain historical texts in educational thought can help to develop a richer appreciation of the educator’s communication with the students, and might help educators better understand student learning and the types of experiences which will promote learning. The proverb “As long as a man lives, he learns” has a special importance in the vocation as a teacher. In higher education a good teacher is constantly concerned with his/her/their own improvement, finding in himself infinite resources of will to evolve. The result also suggested that teachers today should be friendly and have a good relationship with the students; know how to explain the contents well; to demonstrate competence (to know very well the content), and to know about the students’ individual characteristics and be able to deal with. Factors such as teacher’s efficacy and competency should also be included in teacher skills today.

The result of this study also found that competent teachers can better control the class and students listen to them, that they have a better relationship with the students, and that they succeed in motivating the students to study independently. From the students’ point of view teacher’s competence refers to a difficult student’s need to feel capable of academic work. According with the student’s answers the study concluded that for an effective dialogue between teachers and students is a necessary first in the practice that teachers must be competitive, having the capacity to “arrange” his/her ideas and thoughts in a clearly way, in order to demonstrate pedagogical professionalism. In case that the teachers can’t communicate clearly with their students they are considered as being uncooperative, unhelpful, uncaring, or impatient,
they are demonstrating incompetence.

The second objective was to investigate the positive relationship between teacher and student. The result presented different opinions, but the most significant was the element of trust. The trust is associated with the feeling of friendship with the lecture. Trust is a condition that often requires the work of both individuals in the interpersonal relationship of student and teacher. The result offered the image that trust is associated with more motivated and higher performance students (according with Student’s Grade Report) clearly show that student-teacher interaction is important variable in predicting motivation and as such teachers and counselors contribute to student positive teaching and learning environment by putting in place structures that help in providing an optimal learning environment for students.

The third objective was to identify the teacher’s characteristics of caring academic demonstrate. The rustle of this study found significant primary characteristics, those were: provide general support, academic and personal; responsive to their effort; teacher’s availability; listening to student’s opinion and building trust in students. Caring teachers may motivate all of students differently, although this should also can be reflected in their effort: classroom attentiveness, homework papers, activities outside from the College. Those opportunities and connections may be more attractive if students perceive that the teachers trust them, offer more possibilities, involve them in different activities and give them responsibilities.

The fourth objective was to find the attributes of a good professor/lecturer. The purpose of the objective was to establish whether there were significant differences in the perceptions of students. As identified by Wubbels and Levy (1993), there are two types of best teachers. These include cooperative best teachers, and dominant best teachers. Wubbels and Levy (1993) also identified three distinct types of worst teachers. These include teachers identified by their students as repressive, uncertain- tolerant and uncertain-aggressive. The result of this study recommended that leadership behaviour, helpful and friendly behaviour, understanding behavior, tolerant behavior/giving students freedom and encourages them to research new ways and domains were the most variables found to describe the best teacher.
Practical implications

This study was designed to improve the skills and behavior of faculty members. The main benefit of this study is that the faculty members can develop an effective student-teacher interaction process. Trust and understanding, cooperative discussions and dialogues with students can assist students in attaining and retaining knowledge as a result of their active participation in interaction with their teachers.

Positive academic relationships are fundamental to success. When students feel supported, they develop a love of learning that will benefit them for their entire lives. Predict better knowledge, and have better academic outcomes. These students will be more engaged as skilled and critical thinkers, innovators, respectful, and so to become socially responsible citizens of tomorrow.

The result of this study shall increase students’ interest for the college’s community, and most students will discover that research, while extremely challenging is exciting. Specifically, some of the more important benefits include the opportunity to: become an emerging participant on the building of a specific area of cooperation and involvement, experience the excitement of observing and learning with new methods, (behaviour change, dialogues, manages behavioral technique), and become a more sophisticated participant and consumer of research.

Moreover, the direction of this research will increase the faculty member’s familiarity with the students and other faculty’s members, and the new applied experimentation can improve the professor’s teaching effectiveness. This research suggest that teachers can motivate and improve their students’ cognitive and affective outcomes through more positive and encouraging their behaviours which have been identified as those of leadership, understanding and helping teacher behaviours.

The result of this study administers that teachers can readily use to reflect on their interaction with their students as well as to monitor their students’ perceptions of their class learning environment. The knowledge gained from this study can offer a basis for guiding systematic attempts to improve classroom management when working with various teaching strategies and international students.

To conclude, the goal of this study was to investigate the interaction students-teachers.
in five specific colleges in Cyprus, it was for the need to encourage students with supportive, healthy communities, then most likely such study could benefit by measuring not just the memories of those who made it to college, but also those who did believe that old methods could be helpful and valid currently in the higher education. Not to forget that our mission, satisfaction and honor as teachers is to prepare the today’s generations for tomorrow’s better world, as Plato said 2,500 years before: “A nation will prosper to the degree that it honors it’s teachers”.

Limitations and future research

The most significant limitation of this study is that the possible lack of generalizability of the findings, since the study is limited to only to higher tourism education in Cyprus. Thus, comprehensive future research is required on higher education in different countries with different students’ cultural background. Another recommendation in this study is that since the qualitative approach was employed with semi-structured interviews in this research, therefore, future studies could adopt a quantitative analysis and hypotheses testing approach that might further increase the understanding and assessment of the interaction between students and teachers. Also, using focus groups and questionnaires as data collection methods in future studies could be fruitful.

Notes

No notes.

References


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Author

Roxana Michaelides
Researcher of Hospitality and Education - College of Tourism and Hotel Management, Cyprus
Corresponding author roxmichaelides@gmail.com
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0374-8279

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