

The evaluation of university professors: a look from the students*

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Abstract

The main objective of this article is to analyze the perception that students have of the professor evaluation system in their universities. Although in most universities in the Dominican Republic the evaluation is done by coordinators, professors and students, in this study the situation is investigated based on the results analyzed in the opinions of 347 students from different disciplines of the Education career of seven higher education institutions in this country. Thus, a questionnaire of open ended and closed ended questions is applied, which makes it possible to verify the level of satisfaction that these actors have in the professor evaluation process. The participating population is selected by means of a non-probabilistic, incidental casual method, directly choosing the participants of the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth semesters. The results indicate that students consider it of great value to be taken into account in the evaluation process of their professors, who appreciate the level of reliability of the application of the evaluation instrument; but that the evaluation could be improved by taking into account other components that do not appear in it and integrating open-ended questions, which allow them to express their opinions more accurately. The results are relevant for the design of a new professor evaluation system.

Keywords

Educational evaluation – Professor performance evaluation – Evaluation system – Higher education.

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Introduction

Do students have relevant criteria when it comes to evaluate the work done by professors or does the empathy they feel for the professor, or the results of their grades prevail in their decisions? Concerns such as these have arisen when judging the opinions of students on the evaluations they make of the performance of their professors. Whether or not the way in which university students evaluate professors is subjective, the truth is that they are relevant actors in this process, since they are the main recipients of the training service provided to them; therefore, they are key in the evaluation processes.

This article describes the appreciation that students of the Education career have about the evaluation system used by higher education institutions to evaluate their professors. Therefore, students are questioned about elements of the system that could determine their level of acceptance or not of this protocol such as: actions based on the results, obstacles presented, agreements or disagreements with the system, modifications or inclusions that they would consider pertinent.

Evaluation being an imminently subjective process, it could be considered that giving a lot of weight to the opinion of students could be counterproductive. However, students may be able to identify behaviors in professors that have to do with their learning style and that contribute to increasing their interest in what they are taught and their performance (MORENO OLIVOS, 2018). Likewise, Villa Sánchez (1985) points out that students can have a reliable assessment when evaluating professors, although they should not be the only subjects involved in the evaluation of professors' performance.

On the other hand, education students have a different view, at the time of evaluation, due to the fact that they will be future professors and are given greater criteria of consideration when seeing methodological teaching processes that they would have to put into practice in the future. Hence, it is relevant that these actors in the evaluation process be assigned equal hierarchy, since the feedback they can provide makes it possible to establish policies and guidelines aimed at quality (VÁSQUEZ RIZO; GABALÁN COELLO, 2006).

In the Dominican Republic, managers, coordinators, professor and university students are involved in the process of evaluating the performance of professors. However, this article focuses its attention on how students perceive this process. All this is done within the framework of the *Normativa de Formación de Docente de Calidad*, enacted by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA, 2015), in which the need for a review and update of professor training programs for the implementation of a competency approach. Despite the existence of this document regulating the training programs of the Education careers, it has not affected the way of evaluating university professors, maintaining the same estimation procedure in disarticulation with said regulations.

Trainers of trainers are expected to develop competencies in their students, but they also need to have the skills and abilities to achieve that end. Therefore, assessing how your competencies are evaluated can offer important clues as to which strengths can be maintained and which should be redirected. Students are given their voice as key informants to estimate how their trainers are evaluated. That is why, from this study,

it is considered necessary to analyze the perception that students have of the professor evaluation system in their universities.

Evaluation of faculty members training professors

The pedagogical profession is an exercise that is reconstructed every day. That is why it is necessary to have an evaluation system that makes it possible to deepen the needs of improving the skills and abilities of professors, in order to offer opportunities for continuous review and transformation of the exercise from its results.

Mas Torelló (2011) states that to talk about valuing the work of university professors it is important to be clear about the competency profile of this professional. To do this, it starts from three contexts of professional performance: the classroom-seminar-laboratory micro-context, the general context (socio-professional, cultural environment, etc.) and the institutional context (department, faculty, university). These aspects proposed by this author are considered a contribution to determine how to evaluate university professors.

Zabalza (2016), Cámara, López and De León (2014), also present the professional dimension, articulated with the professional work carried out by the professor. They also describe a personal dimension, which leads to a personal commitment, and a work dimension linked to contractual situations, selection and promotion procedures, benefits and work scenarios. While Casero-Martínez (2016) visualizes the profile of university professors from the representation of two extensive identities: one formal and one non-formal. This author also raises some variables that are not directly related to the professional career, but play a primary role in their work journey. Although this aspect is given little relevance, it is considered that this affects students when they are going to estimate the performance of their professors.

The component related to the emotional is evidenced in university teaching from the interpersonal links that the professional institutes with the students and their colleagues (CASERO-MARTÍNEZ, 2016; GALLARDO, 2018; HURTADO; SERNA; MADUEÑO, 2015). And it is possible that students, when evaluating their professors, do not focus only on academic aspects, but take into account their interpersonal links with them.

It is important to assess what the students of the Education career say about professor evaluation, since they can be reflected in the work of their trainer. Since the faculty members who are involved in the training processes of future professors not only transfer content in relation to a specific disciplinary field, but also a professional profile linked to it.

On the other hand, by giving students the opportunity to value the evaluation of their professors, spaces are provided so that they can reflect on their practice and improvements can be made, since many times most professors are experts who have mastery of their discipline, but who did not necessarily learn how to teach it (MONTENEGRO; FUENTEALBA 2010).

Seeing these different approaches, it can be inferred that the profile that is defined of the university teaching staff will affect the way in which it should be evaluated. In addition, it is inferred that this profile is determined in articulation with the interventions that must be developed in their teaching work and that they cover the domain of the

planning of their teachings, strategies in the classroom, their actions and values, the work with others: peers and students.

University professor evaluation system

This study recognizes the importance of evaluating university faculty. Seen from the very need of an organization, Dias Sobrinho (2010) conceives it as a fundamental tool of an institution that requires educational transformations. This implies that its own application would bring with it changes in the curriculum, methodology, training culture, transformations in management and in the power structure.

These aspects pointed out by Dias Sobrinho coincide with those raised by Tejedor (2016) when he emphasizes that the evaluation of the professor is a procedure that must be guided mainly to the assessment of the level of quality of the teaching processes in order to gradually favor their improvement. While Moreno Olivos (2018) defines it as the procedure of detailing and qualifying the qualities and estimation of professors based on their abilities, skills, attitudes and the effects of their teaching practice.

So, the evaluation of the performance of professors should be a procedure in which sources of information with strict particularities are used in what their scaffolding has to do with the context and reliable and certified instruments from which formal estimates are obtained. When an evaluation is organized taking into account what has been stated above, it would be stopped, according to Colina and other authors (2008), that the data come from rumors, judgments or unreliable opinions, which could expose confusing or misguided judgments and incite unfair decisions, reluctance or dissatisfaction in professors.

Dias Sobrinho (2010) also highlights that the evaluation of university professors has to do with the desired transformations not only for higher education itself, but for society in general of the present and the future.

The estimation of the performance of professors is one of the main activities to guarantee the quality of the training processes in a higher education institution. That is why any professor assessment system must have a weighted category of approval for it to be carried out, since the importance of the professor's own views on their own assessment to plan and execute it is evident (ESCUADERO, 2016).

A system that seeks to assess the performance of the professor must have a series of components that make it possible to analyze the level at which individuals achieve the standards that are required for the position they are going to perform in the institution; this professional practice must be articulated with the purposes and mission of the institution (WEAVER; GARCÍA, VALCÁRCEL, 2010).

For Embiruçu, Fontes and Almeida, (2010), an assessment of the performance of professors in a university similar to the estimation of the performance of any other professional is of great relevance for the professional development of professors and for institutional progression, contributing to the guarantee that the qualitative and quantitative goals expected in society are achieved.

On the other hand, Matuichuk and Silva (2013) emphasize that an evaluation procedure requires the establishment of background or knowledge that already exists

and an interaction of these new data in a process in which this information from the evaluation is articulated.

Regarding this evaluation system, Embiruçu, Fontes, and Almeida (2010) argue that, although it is only one of the components of an evaluation system, the evaluation of the performance of the different aspects of this procedure is a relevant prerequisite for an optimal evaluation system. They claim that it is not possible to properly assess or follow up on what cannot be properly assessed or inferred. Hence the need to have adequate instruments for this valuation process.

In regard to the evaluation system of universities, Macedo (2001) points out that higher education institutions use standardized evaluations; without taking into account the context in which the procedures of that evaluation were designed, who participated in that programming and execution of the system and the usefulness that gave those results with a corrective function.

About the procedure to evaluate university professors, Valdés (2020) points out that there is no single model and that reaching an agreement on how to make this assessment does not necessarily imply having a consensus on what it is to be a good professor. However, the author emphasizes that it is relevant to know what others do to achieve the design of an assessment exercise that pays attention to the requirements of each university, having a sense that contributes to enrich the actions of the teaching staff and the promotion of a quality practice.

Valdés continues (2020) highlighting that evaluating, just for the sake of evaluating, regardless of the criterion or point of view that is used, without entailing a subsequent reflection and planning for further improvement, becomes a system to label the professor. For this reason, this author points out that it is necessary to take into account that the professor's training does not end at the end of his higher education; but the professor continues to build himself, developing and transforming himself every day through the experience and interaction with his peers and students, and evaluation provides relevant inputs in this construction (VALDÉS, 2020).

The author concludes that each of the evaluation models provides types, evaluation objectives of the professor, proposals of the subjects that should take part in these, criteria and competences; aspects that can be taken into account when proposing a system of evaluation of professors in higher education institutions.

Need to evaluate professors

There is no doubt that evaluating is a relevant action, being considered a practice that must be daily in the various areas of higher education. According to Macedo (2001), professors have generally suffered from the absence of professional and academic training in the context of evaluation; therefore, these authors consider that rather than being critical in the evaluation processes, they are rather consumers.

On the other hand, for Andriola and other authors (2012), in the current scope more and more evidence of the quality of the work of the university professor is required; however, there remains a general conviction that the quality of professional actions is

rarely assessed in a comprehensive manner. The evaluation of the university professor raises new questions and discussions about his actions; but also, of his articulated work with other colleagues (ANDRIOLA, *et al.*, 2012).

Likewise, emphasizing the need for evaluation, Macedo (2001) emphasizes that the higher education professor, an individual with the capacity to criticize the execution of his own performance, should take into consideration the evaluation of his teaching practice as a natural action, an integral aspect of the teaching procedure itself. Through a process of reflection, professors must take into consideration the results of their assessment to plan, replan and / or reconsider their pedagogical actions.

As the university professor experiences a significant evaluation procedure for his own professional development, he will be discovering the most appropriate way to offer teaching to students and therefore will evaluate it in the most appropriate way, trying to improve themselves as future professors and as human beings (MACEDO, 2001).

When students evaluate their professors, they certainly expect that in their actions, these professors will offer them references for the reconstruction of the behaviors linked to performance that they would have to evaluate (POULCHERIA *et al.*, 2015). On the other hand, Vlad and Ciascai (2014) point out that, professors participate in the development process by showing those skills, knowledge and personality to their students.

Escudero (2016) assures that the professional activity of individuals, and of course that of the teaching staff, can be seen from two points of view: the first has to do with their capabilities and skills and the second with the bifurcations in the workplace. It also highlights that the qualities and attitudes of professors are some of the mandatory aspects in their evaluation since not only the way in which they train other professionals is valued, without aspects that have an impact on their job promotion.

Based on the contributions of authors such as Buendía *et al.* (2017), Ruiz-Corbella and Aguilar-Feijoo (2017), Veras and González-Ledesma (2018) and Triado and collaborators (2014), it is considered relevant to be clear about the profile of the professor that is required in the institution to be able to design a performance evaluation according to their mission and vision. Therefore, having an evaluation proposal where students objectively assess the performance of professors would be a pertinent way to outline a quality process of the university.

The faculty valued by students

When assessing the evaluations that are made to professors, students are able to consider the profile that a good professor should exhibit. In this sense, Alonso Martín (2019) highlights that a good professor must perfectly master the scientific contents that he plans to teach, but, in addition, he must protect the students in the inquiry and analysis of the information to achieve a participatory and autonomous student in their same teaching and learning process.

Future professors in their training processes will build a professor model that they will transfer when they are professionals (ALONSO MARTÍN, 2019). These informants place great value, not only on the academic and professional qualities of their trainers,

but also on personal ones. But it is not only the students who shape that profile of the university professor. It is proposed that the system of evaluation of the performance of the teaching staff makes it possible to conceive a professor profile that is more coherent with the institutional educational model, in such a way that it is a guide for the improvement of the pedagogical work (VÁSQUEZ RIZO; GABALÁN COELLO, 2006).

The need to give weight to what students say about the evaluation of university professors is more validated, when data from research such as that done by Alonso Martín (2019) are found, in which it is evident that students appreciate empathy, pleasant, tolerant character and listening skills, accompaniment in the learning process and being treated with respect and consideration, that is, they estimate a pleasant bond between professor and student.

Students are also able to identify, in the evaluation instruments, what aspects should be incorporated into them to better evaluate their professors. Students may not possess a well-developed knowledge of teaching processes; however, they could be able to identify if the instrument does not have relevant content that in their opinion may be indicators of good teaching (MORENO OLIVOS, 2018).

In summary, it is not considered possible to move towards quality university teaching, without taking the students into account, as the main actors to whom the training process is directed. Therefore, they must be taken in consideration, not only for the application of the evaluations, but to validate the procedure of carrying it out and participate in the design of any system of evaluation of university teaching performance.

Methodology

The design of this study is quantitative – qualitative. Through this research, quantitative information is presented that allows the understanding, in a statistical way, of the percentages of the processes of professors' performance evaluation in the universities seen from the students' points of view. From the qualitative scope, evaluative information is offered on the procedures, analysis and interpretation of these evaluations. With these two perspectives, the triangulation of information is more favored, with a view to the results contributing to rethink the proposal for a system of evaluation of teaching performance more in line with the needs of students and focused on the development of competences.

Research subjects

The sample population is selected by means of a non-probabilistic, incidental casual method, directly choosing the participants of the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth semesters of the career. This choice takes into account that in these semesters the students have greater expertise in the processes of evaluation of the teaching staff.

The data presented in this document are made from the contributions made by 347 students of the Education career of seven universities in the Dominican Republic. These higher education institutions (HEIs) are located in urban and rural areas including rural

areas away from the country. In addition, some of them have been teaching education for five years or less and others have been teaching for more than twenty years. The seven universities are private; however, the education programs they own are subsidized by the state and students access them through full-coverage scholarships.

It is relevant to note that the instruments used by these universities to evaluate the performance of university professors are not standardized, each one has different questionnaires; however, the dimensions they evaluate are similar, the most relevant being the Pedagogical, Professional and Management.

Table 1- Sample involved

Universities	Gender	Quantity	Students
7	Male	79	22.8%
	Female	268	77.2 %
	Total	347	100%

Source: Prepared by the authors.

It can be seen in the sample that the majority are female, due to the fact that in the education career there is a greater enrollment of women.

The bachelor’s degrees that these students were pursuing are broken down below:

Table 2- Qualification of students

Bachelor’s Degrees	Quantity	Percentage
Natural sciences	100	28.8 %
Primary Education First Cycle	86	24.8%
Educational guidance	52	15%
Mathematics	24	6.9%
Initial Education (Early childhood)	11	3.2%
Spanish and Literature	9	2.6 %
Social sciences	4	1.2%
Total	347	100%

Source: Prepared by the authors.

One of the essential questions in the instrument and that has served for this study has been to know the number of times that students have evaluated their professors, since this makes it possible to know the level of experience they have with this process and obtain more relevant answers linked to their expertise.

Table 3- Frequency of evaluations carried out by students

Number of times they have evaluated	N° of students	Percentage
More than 6 times	80	23.1 %
Between 4 – 6 times	59	17%
Between 2- 4 times	84	24.5%
Less than twice	124	35.4 %
Total	347	100%

Source: Prepared by the authors.

In the previous table, it is observed that much more than half of the students in the sample had participated more than twice in evaluation processes of their professors, which implies an experience in this type of task.

Techniques, instruments and procedures used

A questionnaire is designed with selection items and open-ended questions so that students can estimate the evaluation process of the teaching staff that is applied in their universities. The indicators address aspects of their satisfaction with the format, results and obstacles of the evaluation system. This instrument consists of 20 questions, of which 16 are closed question, multiple-choice and 4 are open-ended.

The questionnaire was previously validated by ten experts in evaluation design, who made observations and suggestions that were taken into account. Then it was piloted in a group of 44 students of the bachelor's degree in Initial Education, First Cycle Primary Education and Second Cycle Primary Education, from another university not included in the definitive sample of this study. Through this piloting it was confirmed that the items and questions were relevant to the investigation of the study. As a way to analyze the degree of reliability of this instrument, the SPSS tool was used in its version 23. This degree of reliability reached 0.817, which evidences a significant degree of reliability of the instrument.

Taking into account the number of students per career, informants were randomly selected. The universities were visited, and the groups were verified. The application is made in the classroom in a group way in the corresponding class period.

In order to ensure anonymity, the only demographic data requested from students were age, time at university and career. Students were provided with a google form link to complete the online questionnaire via their mobile phones or at the university's computer center. Data collection was carried out during the months of September and October 2018.

In this study, a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data is carried out. The quantitative one allowed to establish in a statistical way the percentages in the evaluations on the adequacy, knowledge of the results, obstacles and satisfaction in the evaluation system of their universities; while with the qualitative one it was possible to appreciate more open opinions about the degree of satisfaction they have with the evaluation system

of the teaching staff used by the institutions. The answers to the open-ended questions of the 347 students were placed in a database in a textual way and codes as well as categories and subcategories were obtained.

To examine the qualitative information of this data collection procedure, some items of open-ended questions that could provide a more qualitative answer to the process were outlined in the same instrument. In order to inspect these data, the categorization of the variables contained in these questions has been invoked.

Through categorization, a category procedure can be outlined to establish existing concepts in the information analyzed. A priori categories have been used in this procedure, since they are established by the objectives of the study. In the following table we outline the categories, subcategories and indicators that were defined to analyze the information provided by the students about their vision about the evaluation of professors.

Table 4- Category system

CATEGORIES	SUBCATEGORIES	INDICATORS
Level of satisfaction	Delight Displeasure Intermediate	I like the evaluation Complacency Positive rating (how good it is) Negative rating (how unpleasant it is) Strengths and weaknesses of the process
Aspects that please you	Benefits Facilities	Compliance or not with expectations Proper use
Changes to the existing Evaluation System	Modification Improvement Inclusion	Transformation suggestions Contributions for improvement Inclusion of new elements

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Table 4 shows the categories proposed for the qualitative analysis of the data. Articulation is established between the aspects that they like and dislike, as well as the changes they will make to the professor evaluation system to determine the level of student satisfaction with this assessment process.

Quantitative results

To analyze the view that students give to the evaluation of the teaching staff carried out in their universities, they are questioned about the level of satisfaction and the obstacles that are presented to them to carry it out. In this regard, 68% of the students consulted say that they have never been presented with obstacles to complete the evaluations, 30.3% indicate that sometimes and 1.7% say that it is always the case. These responses show that the procedures with which the students of these institutions evaluate their professors do not entail limitations. In this sense, satisfaction in this aspect of the evaluation is considered as high.

The results of the assessments are one of the most relevant aspects for students. 69.2% of students emphasize that they have never known the results of these evaluations. The high percentage of students who do not know the results of the evaluation that they apply to the teaching staff contrasts with the 13.5% of students who say that they do know these results.

While in relation to what the university does with these results, 45% consider that training processes are designed taking into account the reflected needs and a 6.1% say those who get low grades are penalized. This second answer offered by the students contradicts the previous one, observing that a large majority say that training processes are offered, an aspect that reveals that students assume what the university does, even if they do not have information about what is done with these results.

Table 5- Knowledge of assessment results

Answers	Percentage	Quantity
Never	69.2%	240
Sometimes	17.3 %	60
Always	13.5%	47
Total	100%	347

Source: Prepared by the authors.

According to Table 6 and the information above, it can be seen how it takes on a relevant value for students to know the results of the evaluations of the teaching staff. The fact that a high percentage never receives information about the results of the evaluations can affect the degree of satisfaction that these students have with the system.

Regarding the level of satisfaction that students have with the evaluation system, 51.3% feel quite satisfied with the evaluation system of the teaching staff of their university, with the exception that it should be improved, while 7.5% feel dissatisfied.

Table 6- Student satisfaction levels

Answers	Percentage	Quantity
Quite satisfied	40.1%	139
I'm satisfied, but it should improve more	51.3%	178
Not very satisfied	7.5%	26
Does not like the evaluation system	1.2%	4
Total	100%	347

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Table 6 shows the large percentage of students who feel satisfied with the professor evaluation system in their universities. However, this level of satisfaction is not total, since they have selected the answer of satisfied, but that should be improved. This is an indication that this level of satisfaction could be partially considered.

Qualitative results

From the aforementioned categories, we describe below the results of these qualitative elements.

Assessment of the evaluation instrument

To know the level of pleasure or displeasure that students have in relation to the instrument of evaluation of the teaching staff, they are questioned about their considerations about whether this system accurately evaluates all the competences that a university professor should have and the reasons why. In this regard, the responses of the students vary being able to appreciate that some accept with delight, others intermediately and others with total displeasure of this evaluation system.

Those who valued this instrument positively, emphasize that the evaluation forms meet all the requirements to evaluate directly and without harming the student. They also point out that with this process professors self-evaluate and improve their skills. In this same order, they point out:

I think so, because through these evaluations the way of teaching is improved, they also help professional and personal growth". (E, 127³).

The instrument used to evaluate professors is very well formulated because it complies with everything that the professor does to transmit his knowledge. (E,142).

The above answers contrast with those proposed by other students by pointing out that, although these instruments contribute to the evaluation of professors, some competencies that should be evaluated for professors to advance would be missing.

I don't like this instrument because most of its questions are irrelevant and repetitive, plus the answers should be open-ended and not selection. (E, 50).

Assessment of the evaluation system

To know the way in which the students see the evaluation system of the teaching staff of their university, it is also considered essential to know what they like most about this system. When questioned about it, some students offer favorable answers by pointing out that with the evaluation they have the option of making known if a professor is not

3- E, stands for Student. The student questionnaires were numbered, which means that E,127 corresponds to student questionnaire 127.

working well, which they like because they can evaluate professors who are excellent and can manifest it in that way.

The liking for this system is notoriously evidenced in the words of some of these students:

What pleases me most is that like them, we students can also evaluate them and this helps them to perform better. (E, 40).

Through this evaluation I can grasp the guidelines to be a good professor, since this instrument in addition to the higher level, fits the secondary level. (E, 130).

I like that I can say what I think is right and what can be improved. It's like feeling that what you say is important. (E, 173).

In this line, on what is satisfactory in the evaluation system, an element that appeared in a large number of responses was the one referring to anonymity. In relation to this, some students express that they like how confidential the evaluation can be, a condition that allows them to express themselves without any problem. An example of this can be found in the following answers:

The evaluation is carried out anonymously, that is, without placing the name of the participants. This is a very discreet way without having to point to any person. (E, 234).

I like that evaluations are anonymous, because it gives you the freedom to express yourself without fear that this may upset someone if your comments were not to the liking of the person evaluated. (E, 247).

Proposal of changes suggested by students

The acceptance or not of an evaluation system can be analyzed by the manner in which the users of this propose changes, improvement and inclusions of new elements. In this sense, the students present opinions on the transformations that the evaluation processes of their universities could have and that have been grouped into the following lines:

Communication of results: decisions based on results

In this context, some students point out that the communication of the results must be taken into account in this process, making them participants in the extent to which these professors comply with the competences presented in these evaluations. They affirm that if they are going to take into account the opinion of the students by having them fill out surveys to evaluate the professors, they should also take them into account to present the results and to inform them about the actions that would be taken with the professors who do not meet the established criteria.

In the textual words of the students, we can find the following expressions:

That we can know the results, that we know at least what they are used for or what is the reason for doing them, because professors are evaluated, they use us as students and then nothing. (E, 165).

I think what should be improved is that these evaluations are really taken into account and if a professor does not meet the qualities then remove him. (E, 206).

As for the time in which the evaluation is carried out, the students emphasize that it should be applied from the first partial that is programmed in the calendar. They also point out that they would change the rigor with the time of application, because this system is only implemented in some semesters and the ideal would be that it was always at the end of the cycle. These ideas coincide with another that affirms that the evaluation should occur every two months to see how satisfactory the professor's performance has been.

Types of questions

In relation to the types of questions, the way in which the students request that the instruments contain more open-ended items, in which they can express their opinions more, is notorious. In relation to this, most prefer that they are not checklists, but open-ended questions in which students express their opinions freely.

Here are some student opinions regarding the types of questions:

I would like the evaluation to have open questions that allow me to express myself better. (E, 144).

I would like it to be a conversation and thus fix what is wrong and improve where it needs to be improved. (E, 149).

I would change the type of questions, in my opinion they should be more open-ended, so that students can express themselves more freely. (E, 348).

In this data collection, many brief opinions of students about the evaluation system of universities could be observed, but there were others with a high level of detail, such as the text expressed by a student that is presented below:

University assessments: 1st. They should be through a virtual platform; It would facilitate the assessment without the need to interrupt the class session. 2°. Disclose the results of these tests to all students, so that the validity of these tests is known. 3-°. Take into account the observations of the students, since some professors at the beginning and during the teaching-learning process use almost obsolete strategies, obstructing the learning of the students who in turn must repeat and pay for a subject twice because of the methodology of the professor. (E, 140).

Format and application methodology

About the formats and methodology of application, some students say that they would change the physical method to the digital one and that they would modify the rating scale. They also suggest that the application be less monotonous.

Although some students point out different aspects that they would like to change of the evaluation system, also, although in the minority, there is a group that prefers not to make any changes.

Aspects to be evaluated in professor performance

Finally, it was essential to know the aspects of professors' performance that students want to evaluate and what elements they do not observe are contemplated in the evaluation they carry out. On this, the students respond that they want to evaluate the didactics when teaching, the different ways that professors have to express themselves with their students, their creativity, how they master the topics to be treated and how they plan their class, their professional ethics and morals, the evaluation of competencies according to the updated Dominican curriculum, among others.

In this same line some students express that they would like it to be evaluated:

The integration of professors in the activities organized by both the administration of the University and those organized by the students. (E, 140).

Respect for the development of their classes according to what is established in the program introduced on the first day of school. (E, 186).

In the information offered by the students in the open questions of the instrument, it can be observed that, although they emphasize that they agree with the formats, and they like the confidentiality nature of the evaluations, they make different proposals for changes that are related to the communication of the results, the time of application, the types of questions and suggest other elements that could be in the evaluations. These data show that students take into consideration other elements that should be included in the evaluation system, which implies that they do not fully accept how it is designed.

Results and discussion

After analyzing the information offered by students about the evaluation of university professors in seven universities in the Dominican Republic, it can be observed that a large majority of them consider the instruments used to evaluate teaching performance to be adequate, which implies a high level of acceptance with the instruments that are used for these purposes. Similarly, a high percentage of students emphasize that they have never been taken into account to present the results

of those evaluations or what decisions are made with those results. This coincides with the results of Moreno Olivos' research (2018) in which students emphasize that they do not know what is done with the results of the evaluations.

The grade of satisfaction that students have with the evaluation can be considered by factors related to the facilities and obstacles, at the time of completing the instrument. On the other hand, knowing the open opinions of the students made it possible to have a broader vision of their points of view. This allows us to see that those who approve the evaluation form are based on ideas about the change that can be generated in professors with the evaluation of their competences. Their emphasis on the confidential nature of the evaluation was notorious, as the part they liked most about the system. They also value the fact of making him a participant in the process. This also confirms that the level of confidentiality is an element to assess in the evaluations of professors and that it would be an element that is not recommended to eliminate, since it is linked to the level of satisfaction they have with this system.

In Moreno Olivos' (2018) study on students' views on professor evaluation, students criticize evaluations based on closed questions, as it limits them to respond more broadly. These ideas coincide with what was raised by the students of this study, who indicate that they prefer open questions in which they can express their opinions in more depth. Likewise, Lukas and other authors (2014) reiterate it when they advise that it should be agreed that the questionnaire should have some open items in which students have the possibility of expressing their opinion on the teaching of professors.

The didactics when teaching, creativity, flexibility, methods and techniques that the professor implements are aspects that students point out should be valued. These ideas are consistent with what Fernandes, Sotolongo and Martínez (2016) point out when they highlight that the competence they consider the most important to evaluate according to the students and professors is the pedagogical – didactic, linked to the facilitation of learning.

Alonso Martín (2019) indicates that students attach as much relevance to personal qualities as they do professionally, thus giving great importance to the human value of the figure of the teaching staff. This is also evident in this study, when students point out aspects that do not appear in the instrument such as empathy, integration into university activities, punctuality, among others.

In short, if you want to have an evaluation with greater acceptance of the students, it would be convenient to take a deep look at the evaluation instruments that these actors use, giving students the opportunity to have more open opinions about the educational service they receive from professors.

It is important to emphasize that professors in training can have a more qualified vision when evaluating their professors, since as future professionals of this discipline they are reflected in the actions of their trainers and are building that ideal teaching profile.

Solano and other authors (2016) highlight that, in an evaluation of university professors, consulting students is essential because they are key informants of what happens in the classroom. With the results of this study, it is evident that the information

that students offer allows to make decisions for the improvement of the instruments, review of the actions carried out by professors in their classrooms, times in which evaluations should be applied and therefore contribute, in a general sense, in the contributions of suggestions that could make the evaluation system of their universities an increasingly efficient tool. Possibly university students of Education do not have so many experiences in teaching processes; however, they could have skills to identify relevant elements or not in an evaluation instrument.

It can be noted that the students consulted are able to make positive or negative evaluations of the professor evaluation system, who can express their level of satisfaction with this system based on the limitations, obstacles and facilities they have to carry out these evaluations. Similarly, this degree of satisfaction can be observed by the suggested changes to the system ranging from modifications to the inclusion of new elements.

Due to the autonomy and abilities that university students already possess, they can participate in the validation process of any professor evaluation system that could be implemented by a higher education institution.

Limitations of this study could be noted as the small sample size. Since only the students of the Education major of the universities were selected, thus, for future inquiries other careers could be included giving the opportunity to acquire opinions from different disciplines.

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