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Original article

Attitudes valued by working adult students in teachers of a public university in Chile

Actitudes valoradas por
estudiantes adultos
trabajadores en docentes de
una universidad pública en
Chile

Atitudes valorizadas por
estudantes adultos
trabalhadores em professores
de uma universidade pública no
Chile

Irving Osmán Cadamuro Inostroza ¹



<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7609-0506>

Manuel Velásquez Díaz ¹



<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9225-0493>

Maritza Soledad Vergara Monardez ¹



<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2872-4479>

¹ Arturo Prat University, Faculty of
Business Sciences. Santiago, Chile.



icadamur@unap.cl; manvelas@unap.cl
; mvergara@unap.cl

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ABSTRACT

The study explored the attitudes that working adult students of the Business Administration Engineering program value in their professors, during the 2022 academic program. A methodology with a qualitative, exploratory approach was applied, with a phenomenological design and a case perspective. A convenience sample was used and a total of 100 students of the 2022 cohort were considered. The main results showed that the attitudes that students value in their teachers are the creation of a climate of work and participation, in addition to motivating interest in their learning process. It was concluded that working adult students not only value in their teachers' attitudes related to technical aspects of how to conduct a class, but also those that point to the impact on the subjective aspect of the individual.

Keywords: attitude; adult; andragogy; student; assessment.

RESUMEN

El estudio exploró las actitudes que valoran los estudiantes adultos trabajadores de la carrera de Ingeniería en Administración de Empresas en sus profesores, durante el programa académico del año 2022. Se aplicó una metodología con un enfoque cualitativo, exploratorio, con un diseño fenomenológico y una perspectiva de caso. Se utilizó una muestra por conveniencia y se consideró un total de 100 estudiantes de la cohorte 2022. Los principales resultados mostraron que las actitudes que valoran los estudiantes en sus profesores son la creación de un clima de trabajo y participación, además de motivar el interés por su proceso de aprendizaje. Se concluyó que los estudiantes adultos trabajadores no solo valoran en sus profesores actitudes relacionadas a aspectos técnicos de cómo realizar una clase, sino que también aquellas que apuntan al impacto en lo subjetivo del individuo.

Palabras clave: actitud; adulto; andragogía; estudiante; valoración.

RESUMO

O estudo explorou as atitudes que os estudantes adultos trabalhadores da carreira de Engenharia em Administração valorizam em seus professores, durante o programa acadêmico do ano de 2022. Aplicou-se uma metodologia com abordagem qualitativa, exploratória, com desenho fenomenológico e perspectiva de caso. Foi utilizada uma amostra de conveniência e foram considerados um total de 100 alunos da coorte de 2022. Os principais resultados mostraram que as atitudes que os alunos valorizam nos seus professores são a criação de um clima de trabalho e participação, além de motivar o interesse pela sua aprendizagem processo. Concluiu-se que os alunos adultos trabalhadores não valorizam apenas em seus professores atitudes relacionadas aos aspectos técnicos de como conduzir uma aula, mas também aquelas que apontam para o impacto nos aspectos subjetivos do indivíduo.

Palavras-chave: atitude; adulto; andragogia; estudante; avaliação.

management, technology development, among other subjects. Most of them hold operational and strategic positions in the companies they work for. They are used to meeting objectives and obtaining concrete results. Their daily activities move from meeting to meeting, seeking efficiency in the use of resources.

As teachers, inside the classroom, they teach how they learned in their original careers. They do not have studies in the area of education, much fewer teaching strategies, evaluation and curricular topics. They develop their classes from a traditional and mechanical paradigm, privileging teaching over learning (Montanares and Junod, 2018).

Educating a working adult student in a continuing education program in business science subjects, such as Business Administration, is a complex task. The direction of the program has absolute clarity about the experience and disciplinary competencies of each academic. However, there is still a lack of research on the assessment of teachers' attitudes, by students, towards the educational process.

This article adopts the theoretical guidelines of López's (2014) research regarding the attitudes valued in a Higher Education teacher. The study considers that attitudes are a "psychological construct in which beliefs and emotions are combined and that predispose teachers to respond to other people, objects and institutions in a positive or negative way, guiding and directing their actions" (p. 260). In this sense, attitudes are framed in the relationship with different individuals, things, motivation, commitment, treatment of others and adaptation to change.

Consist her *et al.* (2022), in a comparative study carried out on 828 students from different educational institutions in Chile, concluded that educational innovation, represented by respect, disposition, commitment and vocation, are attitudes

INTRODUCTION

Research background

The research is carried out at the Teaching and Linking Center of the "Arturo Prat" University in Santiago de Chile, in a weekend study continuity program for working adult students, of the Business Administration Engineering career of the Faculty of Business Sciences.

The academics who teach classes in the program are expert professionals in different areas of business administration, economics, finance, accounting, project evaluation, microeconomics, people

highly valued by students in relation to their teachers. It is highlighted in this research that women show greater appreciation for interpersonal relationships with their teachers.

Regarding attitudes, from the point of view of the educational model adopted by the university professor, Cateriano *et al.* (2021) state that their study showed greater concern towards one focused on learning, rather than oriented towards teaching. They also highlight that instructional planning and management skills prevail over interaction and evaluation skills.

Inclusion is another perspective to address the attitude of the university professor. Falla *et al.* (2022) highlight the importance of having academics committed to inclusion and supporting students with different educational needs. Their research concluded that women value this type of attitude on the part of the teacher more than men.

Sánchez and Aranda (2022) propose that the innovative attitudes of teachers encourage creativity in their students, demonstrating interest in the creative strategies addressed in classes, mainly towards flexible methodologies. They also generate great expectations and enthusiasm in them, verifying that they are obtaining high-level results in the different activities proposed by their academics.

Andragogical attitudes are another aspect of the matter. Viteri (2022) emphasizes that the horizontality between teachers and students, added to their participation in different activities, benefits their subjective perspective, who value the academic's work even more. It is not viable to continue teaching university students under the gaze of pedagogy.

The objective of the study is to explore the attitudes that working adult students of the Engineering in Business Administration career value in their teachers, during the 2022 academic program.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research was approached under a qualitative approach and was based on an interpretive paradigm. The object of study was exploratory in nature, with a case perspective. The research was based on a phenomenological design.

The study sample, equivalent to 100 male and female students, was generated through convenience sampling of students of the Business Administration Engineering program at the Teaching and Liaison Center of the "Arturo Prat" University, in Santiago, Chile. The data was obtained through an unstructured interview sent to the students, through Google Forms. The analysis of the information is interpretive in nature and was processed using double-entry tables and basic mathematical calculations.

Keywords extracted from the UNESCO Thesaurus were considered as inclusion criteria. As exclusion criteria, the professors considered for the study were those who taught classes during the year 2022. The research did not consider students who graduated or had degrees in Business Administration Engineering.

The research presented limitations in terms of students' refusal to support research that is not part of their normal study program and outside of class hours. Another drawback that the students expressed was related to the anonymity of the interview responses. As they stated, they did not want to have problems of any kind with the future academics of the race. A third difficulty that arose was the degree of complication that certain students had in answering the questionnaire via Google Forms. Some indicated that they were not familiar with certain technological platforms and others did not have a computer or notebook.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents, in descending order and by sex, the attitudes valued by students regarding teachers.

Table 1- Attitudes rated in a teacher by 100 working adult students

Actitudes	Total Hombres	Total Mujeres	%
Creación de un clima de trabajo y participación	47	52	99%
Estímulo al alumnado para que se interese por su proceso de aprendizaje	56	34	90%
Interés por la asignatura por parte del docente	42	38	80%
Respeto hacia el alumnado	41	29	70%
Actitud receptiva en su relación con el alumnado	40	23	63%
Promoción de una comunicación fluida y espontánea	21	22	43%
Atención ante las dificultades de aprendizaje de sus estudiantes	5	3	8%

DISCUSSION

The findings found, in relation to the first most valued attitude, weight it with 99%. Working adult students are people who have been away from a formal study system for a long time and have lost the practice of what it means to work and participate in academic processes together with other human beings. The academic, through the application of activities that involve debate, forums, workshops and round tables, collaborates to develop teamwork and in a participatory manner. Students value this attitude in their teachers, since they see the interrelationship with others reinforced and they learn at the same time from those who have better skills (González *et al.*, 2021).

The study by Rodríguez *et al.* (2021) is in line with this research, as it suggests that working collaboratively is what is most valued by university students, with the greatest relationship occurring when working on problem solving and research.

Correa (2022) raises an interesting line when he points out in his research that, as students advance in age, they show greater motivation towards collaborative work, highlighting greater participation among men than women. This point differs from what was obtained in the results of this study, since 52% of women value a

teacher's attitude more in terms of creating a climate of work and participation, versus men who value 47%.

Regarding the second valued attitude, which mentions interest in the learning process, it represents 90%. As a result of advancing age, accumulated fatigue, and loss of practice in academic subjects, students begin to lose attention and focus when the professor gives his lecture. The latter must make a great effort to maintain motivation and spirit when learning a subject. The temper and attitude of the teacher, his experience and the use of multiple applied resources, collaborate so that the student becomes interested in the topics to be discussed.

The research of the authors Arias *et al.* (2018) reaffirms that a university student values that a 21st century teacher promotes creative thinking in his students, combining practice with the theory delivered in the classroom at all times. This behavior is further reinforced with a study carried out by the author Izarra (2019), regarding the attitudes appreciated in postgraduate teachers in education. The importance of meaningful learning is raised, whenever content is taught and applied directly to the student's reality through a practical example.

For its part, the third attitude, valued at 80%, is related to the teacher's interest in the subject. It is known that working adult students have many family and work responsibilities, but have very little time allocated to their academic subjects. In this sense, they value the teacher's clarity in the delivery of content and that, as far as possible, they use didactic strategies appropriate to an andragogical context that promote the organization of information, understanding, collaborative work and those that contribute to the development of skills such as simulation, projects, problem-based learning and webquest, among others.

An experiment carried out by Alonso (2019) concluded that, considering the

professional qualities of a teacher, what students value most is the teaching methodology and the use of strategies in work and learning. The characteristics of the explanations, the use of materials, appropriate resources and evaluations of the expected results also appear as the valued attitudes.

However, below 80% there appears a series of valued attitudes such as: respect towards the student, receptive attitude and promotion of fluid and spontaneous communication. These aspects are interesting to discuss, since the group of students, considered as the unit of analysis, are adults. The fact of being an adult, regardless of age and sex, implies being treated as such in any context. Attending to their physical, cognitive, social, emotional, experiential, personal and work-related differences must be considered when planning the educational process. In an andragogical scenario, the horizontality between teacher and student is important, more than the conductor-type verticality characteristic of obsolete and traditional teaching paradigms of the last century.

A study carried out by Martín (2019) indicates that the profile of a good university teacher, among other characteristics, must be aimed at being a good communicator with listening skills and empathy. In turn, Duarte (2020) concludes in his research work that an adult is a being that has already evolved, unlike a child who is in the process of evolution. For this reason, their human motivations and incentives must be covered under the auspices of an andragogical methodology and not from a pedagogical perspective. Strictly speaking, an adult is an individual who made the decision to learn in order to evolve and reach the rank of an integral being.

The project generated some lines of interest:

- Teaching attitudes that facilitate the learning of working adult students at the "Arturo Prat" University.
- Teaching attitudes that do not facilitate the learning of adult working students at the "Arturo Prat" University.
- Teaching attitudes and their relationship with the dropout of working adult students from the "Arturo Prat" University.

In conclusion, the adult working students of the Business Administration Engineering program, from a study continuity plan, expressed what attitudes they valued with respect to their teachers, highlighting among them a good work environment, support for the student in its educational process and interest in the subject on the part of the teacher.

The results are an example that attitudes can be valued from different points of view, from inclusion, innovation, ethics, andragogy and diversity, among others. It is suggested in the future to carry out other studies in order to deepen new aspects that could be valued by students, regarding the teacher's work within the classroom.

The existing literature showed that the topic of teacher attitudes and their assessment by the student has been widely investigated in traditional undergraduate career formats, but not in working adult students of continuity of study plans. It is recommended to conduct more research with this type of students.

It is relevant that the University's academics have training in the educational area, but not only from the objective perspective that implies complying with the planning of the program through the curriculum, didactics or the construction of an instrument to evaluate a learning result. On the contrary, the subjective also acquires relevance as a psychological construct. Listening to the student with

respect, empathizing with their reality, communicating correctly and treating them as an adult and with horizontality, are attitudes highly valued by the working adult students who were part of this research, as they allow them to achieve better development from an academic perspective. and human.

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The authors participated in the design and writing of the article, in the search and analysis of the information contained in the consulted bibliography.

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