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Original Paper

The assessment of students' achievements from the subject Basics of Accounting in the study program Accounting at FEM SUA in Nitra

Iveta Košovská^{1*}, Miriam Pietriková², Ivana Váryová³

^{1, 3} Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, Faculty of Economics and Management, Department of Accountancy, Nitra, Slovak Republic

² Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, Faculty of Economics and Management, Department of Statistics and Operations Research, Nitra, Slovak Republic

ABSTRACT

The Faculty of Economics and Management is providing quality economic and managerial education within the accredited study programs. We analyzed the obtained students' results of study program Accounting in the subject of Basics of Accounting. The analysis subject was the students' success in the before mentioned subject and changes in the final assessment. We assessed reached results of 318 students for 4 academic years, this subject was obligatory for these students. The final assessment was analyzed as a whole, as well as the manner these students achieved. We were interested whether the student met the conditions in an ordinary term. According to our opinion the analysis considered the necessary factor, the type of graduated secondary school. The average grade in individual terms was calculated by the arithmetic mean from all grades "A - FX", the total average grade was similarly calculated as the arithmetic mean of the final assessment recorded in the reports. In the analysis, the structure of students was also described through the mode, which is defined as the most common value of a statistical feature. We found out that the graduates of business academy prevail in the study program Accounting. We assumed that the graduates of business academies reach the best results in comparison with other students. However, the aggregated results of assessments did not confirm the existence of such an advantage. The worst average assessment is characteristic for the first corrective term, on the contrary, the best average grade is given in the second corrective term.

KEYWORDS: accounting, average grade, Basics of Accounting, education, teaching

JEL CLASSIFICATION: A 22, C 10, I 21, I 23

* Corresponding author: Iveta Košovská, Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, Faculty of Economics and Management, Department of Accountancy, Tr. A. Hlinku 2, 949 76 Nitra, Slovak Republic
E-mail: iveta.kosovska@uniag.sk

INTRODUCTION

The modern society of the 21st century has brought with it the trend of learning society due to globalization. The system of education has been changing all over the world, this is caused by numerous social and political factors, situation in the labor market and technical progress [7]. The conditions of education, management of education process as well as motivation regarding new information options have been changed to new society requirements, globalization processes and value liberalization [10]. The working career of every person is conditioned by the level of education and acquired specialized competences [9]. The university teachers currently organize learning environments which involve their students through appropriate strategies and activities [5]. As noted by Horská et al. [3], universities search for possibilities to attract students, to offer them an education of a high quality and to bring value added and differentiation to the university education.

Current increasing competition of universities and a fight to obtain the interest of applicants for a study force schools to differentiate mainly by a quality and quality education. Not only the results but also the whole education process is significant at school and therefore it is indispensable to consider a quality as a main feature of our universities [14]. According to [11] in general a term education quality is a required (optimal) level of function and production which might be set by certain requirements (e.g. education standards). Based on them it can be objectively measured and assessed. The quality education is a condition for the securing of permanent innovations in education [15].

Universities and colleges enroll students from different types of secondary schools and therefore their level of secondary school knowledge is different [2]. Accounting is a subject educated not only at business academies where the scope education is the largest but as well as at other secondary schools, e.g. hotel academies, business schools, agricultural secondary schools, secondary vocational schools and others. Except for secondary schools several universities and high schools with an economic focus educate the accounting [13]. Accounting education at secondary school is simple as regards its substance and connection to practice. A teacher cannot be limited to the use of the same education methods in different classes or groups during the accounting education. Education methods should be adequately chosen, changed, alternated and combined. Modern activating methods of education significantly influence the education results and are attractive for students [4].

In recent years the content and scope of education has been changed, the criteria for admitting students to secondary or high schools have been constantly changing, and therefore, in connection with these changes, it is necessary to innovate also the forms of education and methods of assessment. The adaptation phase of students to a high school study is limited by the student's entry to a high school and the end of second – third semester. A beginner at a high school needs to adapt to increasing requirements for independent and responsible action, changed (usually increased) demand for a study [1], [12].

Current trends in education include the application of e-learning methods that are used in online teaching, provide support in self-study and also enable the assessment of students' knowledge. In the individual study, it is possible to use tools for the evaluation of tasks and assignments, which students elaborate at home, and the obtained point evaluation is a part of the final grade on the exam [8]. Feedback is an important part of an educational process because the analysis of the study outcomes enables teachers to evaluate its quality [6].

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The Faculty of Economics and Management is providing quality economic and managerial education within the accredited study programs in all three study levels. The Bachelor study provides the study program Accounting. This study program is the most coveted study program focused on the acquiring the skills in the bookkeeping of business entities, preparing and analysis of financial statements also by means of computer-assisted techniques, the area of cost accounting, taxes of natural persons and other subjects.

In connection to upcoming accreditation of high schools and universities, we analyzed the obtained students' results of study program Accounting in the subject of Basics of Accounting. The students' success in the before mentioned subject and changes in the final assessment was the subject of the analysis. We assessed reached results of 318 students for 4 academic years, this subject was obligatory for these students. The final assessment was analyzed as a whole, as well as the manner these students achieved. We were interested whether the student met the conditions in an ordinary term. According to our opinion the analysis considered the necessary factor, the type of graduated secondary school. Descriptive characteristics were utilized in order to describe the analyzed phenomena.

The average grade in individual terms was calculated by the arithmetic mean from all grades "A-FX", the total average grade was similarly calculated as the arithmetic mean of the final assessment recorded in the reports.

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^k x_i n_i}{\sum_{i=1}^k n_i}$$

In the analysis, the structure of students was also described through the mode, which is defined as the most common value of a statistical feature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The accounting information system is the part of company information system. The basic of all accounting is presented by the valid legal norms which must be understood and applied in practice. The education subject Basics of Accounting belongs to more challenging economic subjects. It requires to understand the theory, practice and to know the mutual relations, to follow the legislative amendments and to apply the knowledge in practice.

Initially, accounting was combined with mathematics. According to an English proverb: If the result does not depend on the method of solution, it is mathematics, if it depends, it is accounting. The connection of accounting and mathematics presented the enemy for most students, the electronic bookkeeping breaks this barrier for them. Despite of this the accounting is the subject which is challenging for students for several reasons. The accounting is combined with the economic environment in which the students are not able to orientate as it links several professional economic concepts. They have not yet been adapted by them, the accounting is mapping the processes which are relatively abstract and follow several principles which must be understood and applied by the students.

The knowledge and skills which students obtain during the study in this subject very closely connect to the whole group of other subjects. During its education it is indispensable to respect the mutual intrasubject relations. The subject leads the students to acquire the

theoretical knowledge and skills in the double entry bookkeeping, to handle the methodology, accounting procedures and double entry bookkeeping and to be able to analyze the financial situation of accounting entities based on the data from accounting.

The methods, forms and means of accounting education must simulate the development of students' cognitive abilities, to support their purposefulness, autonomy and creativity. The form of interpretation, controlled conversation, problem teaching is used during the education. We prefer the work with textbooks, workbooks and means of computing. The students are motivated by the examples from practice. Different accounting professional magazines are recommended. In our opinion it is indispensable to stimulate the students' cognitive abilities, to apply the proportional representation and linking of practical and theoretical knowledge.

The study program Accounting belongs to the most attractive study program in FEM since its inception. Currently as regards the ongoing demographic process, the slight decrease in the students' number was recorded in comparison with the prior periods (Table 1).

Table 1 Students' structure according to years and graduated secondary school

School year	Type of graduated secondary school				Total
	Grammar school	Hotel academy	Business academy	Other sec. school	
2016/17	7	2	68	12	89
2017/18	10	10	44	10	74
2018/19	8	5	46	17	76
2019/20	8	8	48	15	79
Total	33	25	206	52	318

This study program is dominated by students – graduates of business academies, who make up almost two thirds of students (64.78%) studying in this study program. Currently the graduates of grammar school present in average 10.51% (7.87% - 13.51%) students' portion in the study program Accounting (Figure 1).

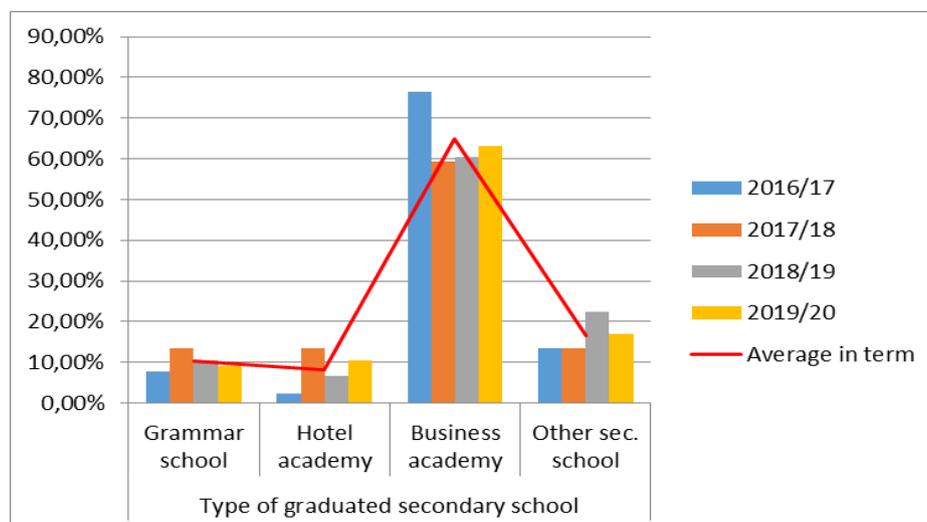


Figure 1 Students' structure according to years and graduated secondary school

It was stated in the methodology that the final assessments were at disposal, i.e. the grades from students' exams which served as the research base. In fact, data were available for only 285 respondents, as 33 students who graduated the subject did not take the exam at any term. Students who did not take the exam were presented by the graduates of business academy (Figure 2), who formed more than the half of these students (17.52%).

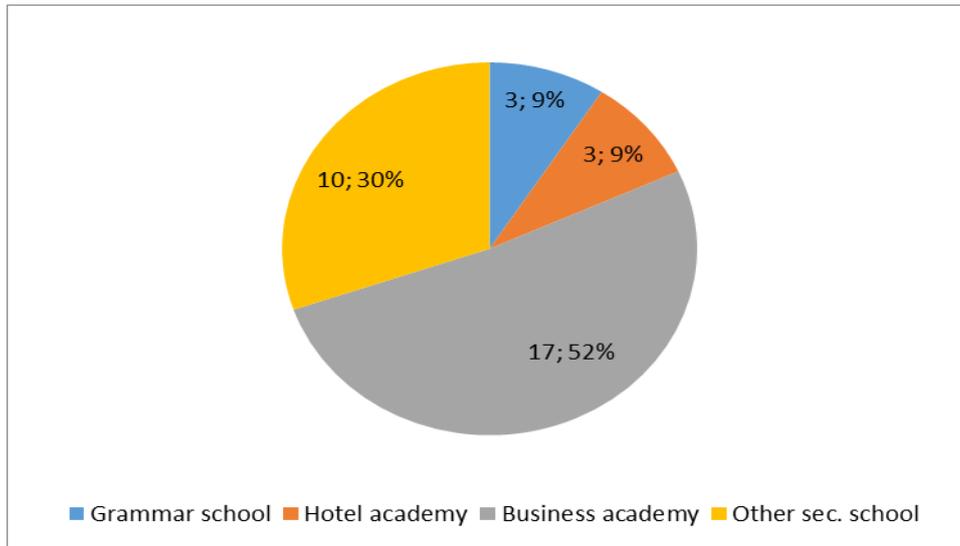


Figure 2 Students' structure who did not take the exam, according to the type of graduated secondary school

Students who took at least one exam term (285) presented the number 189 students (64.78%) who graduated business academy, i.e. these students were already aware of theoretical as well as practical side and the subject Basics of Accounting graduated at FEM should confirm their knowledge. The type of graduated secondary school should be a comparative advantage for them in comparison with the students from other types of secondary schools, mainly grammar school. The aggregated results of assessment did not confirm the existence of such an advantage (Table 2; Figure 3). The best average grade was achieved by the students of hotel academy. Graduates of secondary vocational schools and business academies performed approximately "equally" well. The worst average grade was obtained by grammar school graduates, but its value differs only slightly from the others.

Table 2 Average assessment of students according to term and graduated secondary school

Exam term	Type of graduated secondary school				Average in term
	Grammar school	Hotel academy	Business academy	Other sec. school	
ordinary	3.155	2.639	3.042	3.275	3.062
1 st corrective	3.000	2.750	3.177	3.018	3.105
2 nd corrective	2.750	2.500	2.870	3.000	2.867
total	2.823	2.660	2.765	2.755	2.761

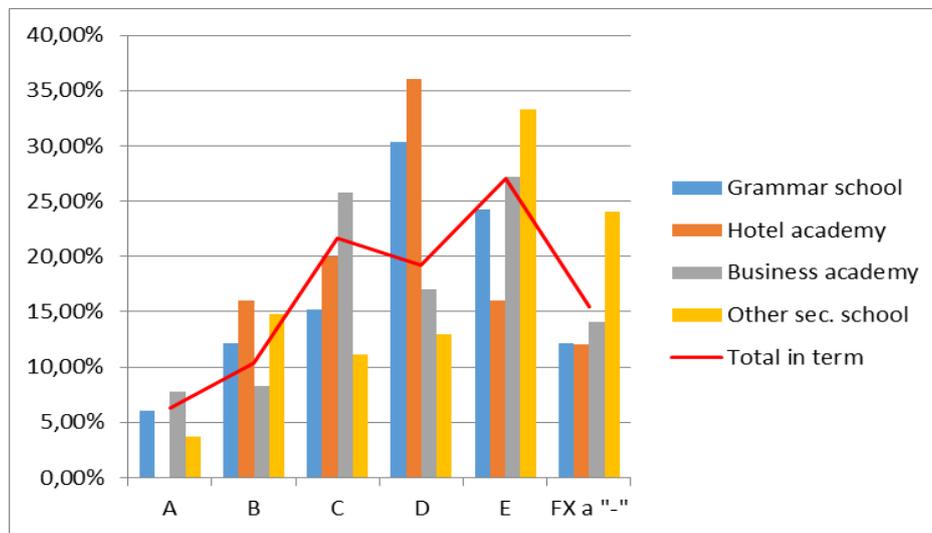


Figure 3 Students' structure according to graduated secondary school and total assessment (regardless the term)

If we assess the success of students in the exam from the subject Basics of Accounting, it is necessary to consider also a term in which students performed the exam. Table 2 presents that the worst average assessment is characterized for the 1st corrective term, vice versa the best one was granted in the 2nd corrective term.

Almost 53.38% of all students do not meet the exam conditions in an ordinary term and therefore they obtain the grade "FX" (Table 3). Insufficient knowledge occurs most frequently in an ordinary term among graduates of other secondary schools (65.00%) vice versa the students of hotel academy have the best success in an ordinary term even none of them obtained the grade "A". The assessment "insufficient" is given only to 27.78% of tested students.

Table 3 Portion of achieved final students' assessment in an ordinary term

Assessment	Type of graduated secondary school				Total in term
	Grammar school	Hotel academy	Business academy	Other sec. school	
A	3.448%	0.000%	7.263%	2.500%	5.639%
B	6.897%	22.222%	7.821%	15.000%	9.774%
C	17.241%	16.667%	18.994%	7.500%	16.917%
D	10.345%	27.778%	7.263%	5.000%	8.647%
E	6.897%	5.556%	5.587%	5.000%	5.639%
FX	55.172%	27.778%	53.073%	65.000%	53.383%
Total	100.000%	100.000%	100.000%	100.000%	100.000%

CONCLUSIONS

The task of educated subject Basics of Accounting is to provide students with knowledge, skills and competences in the area of double entry bookkeeping. Students should be able to manage the methodology and accounting procedures, to absorb the theoretical knowledge, to form the logical thinking and to develop skills and key competences utilized also in further education, within practice and civilian life.

We found out that the graduates of business academy prevail in the study program Accounting, they form almost two thirds of students (64.78%). The final assessments i.e. exam grades of 318 students were at disposal. The surprising finding was that the 33 students who passed the course did not take the exam at any time. More than the half of them was presented by the graduates of business academies (17.52%). We assumed that the graduates of business academies reach the best results in comparison with other students, mainly of grammar school. However, the aggregated results of assessments did not confirm the existence of such an advantage. The best average grade was obtained by the graduates of hotel academy. It is also interesting to note that up to 53.38% of all students do not pass the conditions of the exam in due time. The worst average assessment is characteristic for the 1st corrective term, on the contrary, the best average grade is given in the 2nd corrective term. And students of hotel academies have the best success in an ordinary term, even though none of them received an "A".

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