The Good Student from the Students' Perspective: Investigation of the Views of Primary School, Junior High and Senior High School Students

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the views of students regarding the image they have formed of the characteristics of a good student. Initially, a theoretical approach to the subject is made, giving importance to the role of the student and, in particular, to the school, the social and personal parameters that contribute to the formation of students' views regarding the good student. Afterwards, the investigation methodology of the subject is described. The research, which meets all the methodological conditions of reliability and validity, was conducted with the participation of students from Primary schools, Junior High and Senior High schools of the city of Ioannina and Igoumenitsa. The findings are very interesting, especially those concerning the views of students on the social behavior of a good student and, more specifically, those related to cooperation, solidarity, respect for others, the absence of violence and rational communication.

Keywords: social interaction, student role, good student.

1. Introduction

We begin with the admission that the personal and social identity of each individual is the result of their interaction with the social and natural environment on the background of their special and exclusive genetic and hereditary traits that define and differentiate them from other individuals.

Every individual, within the context of their socio-cultural communication with the natural and social environment, has to deal with other people, objects, values, rules, circumstances, emotions and expectations. All these elements are organized and structured in such a way as to emphasize humans' interventions in their effort to survive, coexist, create and, more generally, to function as social entities. Within the limits of their social activities, the human-being and, in particular, the adult, as a parent or as a teacher, being charged with pedagogical responsibilities, constantly develops various strategic actions. In other words, procedures, methods, relationships, rules and attitudes, which aim primarily to give the minor the elements that will shape them into a social entity and will facilitate them in forming their personal and social identity, that is, their personality. These strategies were and continue to be implemented primarily in two basic institutions of the social system, family and school. These two institutions share a common element, which is the education and socialization of the minor, with the ultimate goal of their integration into the social system (Hobmair, 2016; Konstantinou & Konstantinou, 2021).

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The system, however, that determines relationships, rules, goals, behavior and expectations in the family and school environments, is subject to specific differentiations. In this sense, the child enters the school reality significantly influenced by the family environment, in which the interpersonal relationships and activities of family members are structured on a different normative basis and function based mostly on sentimentality and spontaneity. In the family environment the child may be the only minor person around whom education is focused. In the family the child "enjoys", as a rule, exclusive care, which mainly aims at satisfying their demands, interests and needs. Also, in this familiar context, the child may display spontaneity, egocentric tendencies, individual desires and pursuits, and may even break rules, without necessarily facing any relevant consequences, for example, punishment. A number of similar issues are permissible and self-evident for the child, during their socialization in the family environment (Konstantinou, 2015; Konstantinou, Tsatsouli & Logotheti, 2023).

However, the classroom and the school, in general, are designed and structured differently from the family. Thus, the average classroom includes about 25 students and the school has more than one classes. In the school environment the student is faced with different circumstances, situations, procedures, regulations, relationships and demands. This is because school procedures are characterized, in contrast to family procedures, by a normative logic characterized by discipline, control, emotional restraint and limited possibilities for personal and spontaneous expression. Of course, as a rule, these procedures take place in a stereotypical and standardized form. In particular, taking into account relevant research, the teacher organizes, as a priority, their pedagogical - teaching activities and, more generally, educational communication in the classroom, based on the current institutional specifications and not on the preferences and emotional state or the various cognitive and emotional characteristics of the student. These specifications concern the institutional organization and operation of the school, namely curriculum, books, school regulations for student behavior, discipline, performance etc. (Konstantinou, 2015; Konstantinou, Chatzisavva & Logotheti, 2022).

In other words, educational processes, namely education, teaching, learning, assessment and socialization and social life at school, in general, are linked to each other by special arrangements and special rules. In order to make the teaching of all subjects that are connected to the social reality more effective, for example, the learning contents are linked to specific life circumstances. These contents are organized and systematized in a binding manner for the student and the teacher, depending on the subjects, the age of the students, the school grades and the classes they are in. Communication and behavior take on a normative and standardized form. Priority is now given to issues related not to the experiences of the students, but to those that serve and promote formal organizational school and social purposes. These purposes are, primarily, attained through rules, assumptions and obligations, the implementation of which is demanded and imposed by the very operation of the institution (Chaniotakis, 2011; Konstantinou, 2015).

As a consequence, the student's relationship with others and their overall behavior are subject to rules that limit action, as well as their spontaneous, autonomous and active participation. In other words, the relationship between the student and the teacher takes on a more standardized character. For this purpose, explicit and implicit rules of behavior have been formed for all those who participate in the school reality, which rules are related to social values, perceptions and orientations that the school promotes through the teacher. Each school environment has its own framework of organization and operation and its own rationale depending, directly and indirectly, on the way in which the narrower and broader social reality to which it belongs is organized and operates.

2. Student role

Through the interaction of the individual with the family and school environment the role of the student is also shaped. Each individual, who lives and acts in a social system, learns one or more roles, according to the position they hold in this system. When we generally refer to the form of an individual's action in relation to another individual, group or institution, this action being subject to formal or informal regulation and presupposing the mutual classification of the interacting parties, we use the word "role". Within an organized social group, everyone expects a specific behavior from the role holder. But the position holder themselves, as a role carrier, also expects a specific behavior from others, as well as from themselves. These expectations, many times, function normatively for the role itself. That is, they oblige the carrier or role holder to harmonize their behavior within the context of the specific role and to act compliantly as an "executive body" or as a "representative", thus limiting any individual initiatives or activities (Hentig, 1973; Konstantinou, 2015; Konstantinou & Konstantinou, 2021).

The role, that is, as a social creation, is a complex, open and dynamic network of rules and expectations of behavior, which forces or guides the holder of a social position to decide how to implement their role in any given situation. Of course, even this formal structure of the various roles varies from role to role and does not remain stable, depending on the existing conditions (Hierdeis, 1983; Konstantinou, 2015).

As a role, then, we define here the set of rules and expectations of behavior that are to be implemented by the holder of a specific position in a social group or in society at large. Or, alternatively, it is the rights and obligations that arise from this position or, even, the form of an individual's action, when they act exclusively on the basis of the rules determining their rights and obligations as the holder of a specific social position. This means that the role of a student is determined, to a large extent, by the expectations of influential factors directly or indirectly related to the family and the school as a pedagogical and social institution, that is, primarily, by parents, siblings, teachers, classmates, school administration, public opinion, etc., as well as by the interpretation that the students themselves give to their role (Böhm, 1988; Konstantinou, 2015).

The school seeks to cultivate to the student the ability to learn, to make efforts to achieve their goals, to work, to develop interests, self-motivation, initiatives, to feel satisfaction from the achievement of their personal, professional and social goals and, at the same time, to strengthen their confidence in their abilities. However, the cultivation and development of this ability to perform well and progress in life is not an easy task, since it depends on many factors, such as the student's personal characteristics and talents, the existing family circumstances, their school and, more broadly, their social environment. Of course, the performance of an individual, as an activity or coordinated effort and as a result of the activity or effort according to specific criteria, is a social phenomenon, which is related to the pursuit of each individual to be distinguished, recognized and, ultimately, to be legitimized in his narrower and wider environment. We would argue that this pursuit of distinction and recognition in the social environment through performance is sought even by a small child and a sick person, with the latter wishing to appear useful even in the situation they are in. Consequently, there is no doubt that the individual's pursuit of performance contributes decisively to the achievement of both their individual goals, i.e. professional, research, scientific, family, etc., as well as their social goals, i.e. economic, political, cultural, etc. (Konstantinou & Konstantinou, 2017; Konstantinou, 2020).

Therefore, from this point onwards, concerns begin to arise regarding the definition and delimitation of both the performance as a concept and process and the excellence directly linked to it. Performance and, by extension, excellence, become a problem when the individual, social groups and, more generally, society itself are pressured or forced to demonstrate them, often "by blackmail", to a higher degree and when the pursuit of excellence is related to class, institutional and social differentiations and classifications. In other words, this happens when the

external requirement for performance takes the form of a catalytic and uncontrolled factor of influence, shaping selective practices or ultimately becoming an end in itself. This implies that in the name of the principle of performance, which dominates the socio-economic system and which is characterized by the orientation towards the production of work, competition and the choice of individuals, important principles and values related to equality, collective perception, teamwork and solidarity in institutional functions as well as interpersonal relationships are marginalized. At this point, it is indirectly, but clearly evident, that the issues of performance and excellence in school and the social system are directly related to the role they play in the structure, organization, purposes and functioning of society itself and, in particular, in various specific sectors of it, such as economy, education, science, politics and so on (Konstantinou & Konstantinou, 2017; Konstantinou, 2020).

The absolute adoption of this principle, as a basic element for individual and social advancement, can also lead to the subsequent "principle", according to which "everyone's worth is measured according to what they produce". This definition can then be associatively transformed into self-definition, which is translated as follows: "The one who does not produce is worth nothing". The psychological and pedagogical consequences of such self-definition can be clearly understood if one takes into account what happens in school reality, where the production of work is measured with numbers, that is, with grading scales (grades). Based, therefore, on the logic that applies to the principle of performance, the student who has low grades is, consequently, considered a failure and, therefore, useless to themselves, their family, society, and therefore a candidate for marginalization, psychoneurotic disorders or, even worse, for suicide (Konstantinou & Konstantinou, 2017; Konstantinou, 2020).

However, when this pursuit concerns the student, then it is pedagogically imperative for the school to take into account, in the organization of its educational processes, the students' individuality and sociability with their individual personal, cognitive, mental, emotional, family, cultural and other characteristics. Because the school, as an educational institution, must shape and promote practices and attitudes to life that are close to the interests, inclinations and needs of the student. The school, among other things, educates and socializes individuals who are in the stage of developing their personality. Consequently, any school process or form of behavior must have a pedagogical character and the negative effects on students' cognitive, mental, emotional and social level must be limited to a minimum or, if possible, to zero. Therefore, processes that cultivate excessive competition, rivalries between students and, in general, one-dimensional behaviors, are far from the pedagogical purposes of the school, which, as previously emphasized, aims primarily at cultivating and strengthening attitudes that favor creativity, efficiency, collectivity, solidarity and peaceful coexistence of future citizens of society (Konstantinou & Konstantinou, 2021; Liakopoulou, 2020; Matthes, 1991).

However, giving a first answer to these specific concerns, we express the view that the educational goal of the school, through its pedagogical processes and the education it offers, must be the cultivation of attitudes and ethics to the student, so that they understand and realize, first and foremost, that "good things are acquired through hard work" and, subsequently, that personal, professional and social recognition and distinction require continuous, persistent and painstaking effort. Institutions and societies do not "give" honor and glory to citizens without their having proved that they deserve them and without their having honored their role and mission from an educational, scientific, cultural, humanitarian and social perspective. Because the rise and occupation of a position through minor efforts and unworthy practices clearly indicate a decline in values and ethics in a society that wants to be considered law-abiding and democratic and which is based on humanitarian and universal values (Konstantinou & Konstantinou, 2017; Konstantinou, 2020).

On a rhetorical-theoretical basis, at least, of the subject, one would naturally expect the school's requirement for performance, as well as the assessment of performance, to take such

a form as to contribute to (Konstantinou & Konstantinou, 2017; Konstantinou, Tsatsouli & Logotheti, 2023):

✓ the creation of self-active, conscious and purposeful learning, i.e. the formation of work and learning capacity and, in general, behavior,

✓ the development of readiness for effort and control of behavior for performance, i.e. the formation of readiness and capacity for performance,

✓ the development of interest, creativity, self-activity, initiative, investigative ability and joy for learning,

✓ the formation of social sensitivity and perception,

✓ the strengthening of confidence in the abilities that the student has, etc.

The in-school and out-of-school reality, however, as it has been shaped by the influence of socio-economic and political factors, gives another picture of the school reality and, at the same time, provides points of reference determining the functions that the school performs today. In general, with regard to the way of organization and operation as well as the orientation of the Greek school, it is supported by research (Konstantinou, 2015; Kontoni, 1997; Rutter, Maugham, Mortimer & Ouston, 1980) that it is characterized by centralization, hierarchical organization and, overall, by a bureaucratic way of operating. That is, the Greek school carries out its mission more as a mechanism for providing stereotypical services with its dominant characteristics being its orientation towards the classicism of the curriculum (analytical and timetabled program), the abundance of the teaching material, the formalism and rigidity in the organization of school processes, the hierarchy and communication inadequacy in social relations, the didacticism and verbosity in learning processes and, more generally, the absence of pedagogical actions aimed at developing students' interest.

However, this specific "reproach" concerns less the Primary school and more the other two educational levels, namely the Junior High and the Senior High school. In particular, the Senior High school is identified as a place where the organization of educational communication is presented with obvious negative characteristics. Specifically, among others, strong phenomena of memorization, examination-centeredness, grade-centeredness and competition among students appear in it. These specific phenomena reflect, of course, the form of organization and operation of the curricula, school textbooks and, of course, the pedagogical and didactic purposes of the school, which are organized and implemented under the responsibility of the teacher (Konstantinou, 2015; Konstantinou & Konstantinou, 2017).

In conclusion, the purpose of our research is to determine whether all these experiences and practices in the family, school and wider environment have influenced how students perceive their role and, in particular, the role of the good student. We have also included students of the 6th grade of Primary school in the research in order to determine whether their perceptions of the good student have already begun being shaped at this specific, lower, level of education. We would like to emphasize that the adjective "good" from a sociolinguistic point of view constitutes a complex, general or even vague concept. However, both for technical reasons and reasons of understanding and ease of use, this concept will be used focusing on its qualitative and positive content, for which there is, undoubtedly, a common understanding and acceptance of interpretation. That is, by the concept of "good" student, as presently used, the completely positive and acceptable behavior of the student is defined, with regard to his role as a student. In another, more analytical formulation, by the concept of "good" student we refer to their positive and acceptable response to the rights, obligations, expectations, perceptions, feelings and practices, which derive from their role as a student, and which are related to the school, the teacher, their classmates, the educational and assessment procedures, the school rules and, more generally, their social and natural environment. As mentioned in the brief theoretical approach to

the subject, both the students' school perceptions and practices and their social behavior are closely linked to the way they were educated and socialized in their family, school and wider social environment.

3. Research purpose and methodology: Questionnaire

As mentioned in the previous paragraph of the theoretical part, with this specific research we intend to seek those school, social and personal parameters that have shaped students' opinions regarding the image of a good student.

This research was conducted at a local level and due to the particular characteristics of the sample, the generalization of the results is governed by some limitations. However, this does not mean that the research and pedagogical value of the findings is not calculable and recognizable, since, in any case, through its findings, a specific trend emerges regarding the purpose of the research. We point out that this specific research constitutes one of the first, if not the first, attempts to investigate students' opinions regarding the image they themselves have of the characteristics of a good student. The questionnaire consists of twenty-six (26) closed-ended questions on a four-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was distributed in printed form during the first ten days of November 2024 to students of Primary schools, Junior High and Senior High schools in the cities of Ioannina and Igoumenitsa with a random selection of schools. The questionnaire, after being pilot tested on students of these schools, was then, after corrections and adaptations, distributed to the selected sample for anonymous completion, which lasted approximately ten (10) minutes and was conducted in the presence of the researchers in order to clarify possible questions on the part of the students.

3.1 *Statistical testing: Validity and reliability of research*

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, we used the relevant theories that define the role of the student, having as reference points the experiences and practices in the family, school and wider environment, which have shaped the students' perceptions of the image of the "good student". Also, the pilot application of the questionnaire worked in this direction.

For the reliability of the questionnaire, its internal consistency was checked and it was examined whether the questions present a high level of coherence or correlation, both among themselves and with the subject of our research. The internal coherence and reliability of the parameters that were created were examined using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The Cronbach's alpha index was found to be greater than 0.7 in all questions and, specifically, its value is 0.858. Therefore, this high value of the index gives the questionnaire the safe methodological ability to be characterized by stability and consistency and, in any case, to be considered reliable and suitable for data analysis. Overall, the analysis and processing of the survey data were done with the SPSS system.

As an initial investigative step, we point out that the statistical test begins with a comparison of the opinions of the two sexes, in relation to the characteristics of a "good student". So, by coding the responses and applying the two-tailed t-test for independent samples, we examined whether there is a statistically significant difference between the responses of the two sexes (p-value < 0.05). From this test, we found out that there is a statistically significant difference between the opinions of girls and boys on the following eight (8) questions: "The one who reads-studies a lot", "The one who is patient and persistent in their efforts", "The one who helps their classmates who need assistance with classroom assignments", "The one who collaborates well with their classmates", "The one who never uses violence against their classmates", "The one who is polite to everyone", "The one who respects and does not offend",

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"The one who apologizes when making a mistake". This specific statistical test revealed, according to the average values of the t-test, that the opinions of female students on the above answers statistically outweigh those of male students. In other words, girls agree more with the specific eight (8) characteristics of a "good student" compared to boys.

As a second control step, we examined whether there is a statistically significant difference between the responses of Primary school, Junior High and Senior High school students. From this specific examination, we found that there is a statistically significant difference (p-value < 0.05) in the student opinions at the three school levels on the following twelve (12) questions: "The one who answers the lesson questions correctly", "The one who asks the right questions in the lesson", "The one who does the lesson assignments quickly in class", "The one who memorizes the lesson", "The one who gets high grades", "The one who collaborates with their teacher", "The one who participates in school activities (e.g. celebrations etc.)", "The one who never uses violence against their classmates", "The one who is consistent and completes everything on time", "The one who tells jokes", "The one who is good in company" and "Do you want to be a perfect student in everything at school?".

In particular, from the statistical control of the answers to these questions, statistically significant differences (p-value < 0.05) are found and, specifically, Primary school students agree more with the above characteristics of a "good student" compared to Junior High and Senior High school students. From the comparison of the opinions of Junior High and Senior High school students, statistically significant differences (p-value < 0.05) also emerged and, specifically, in the following questions: "The one who does the lesson assignments quickly in class", "The one who gets high grades", "The one who collaborates with their teacher", "The one who is consistent and completes everything on time" and "Do you want to be a perfect student in everything at school?". In the answers to the specific questions, Senior High school students statistically outweigh Junior High school ones, attributing greater significance to these features, which characterize the concept of a "good student".

Additionally, as a third control step, we examined whether there is a statistically significant difference (p-value < 0.05) between the responses of Junior High and Senior High school students comparing opinions with the criterion of their low or high score. Four (4) differences emerged from this statistical test. Students with a lower score (below 16) have a different opinion on the following three (3) questions: "The one who answers the lesson questions correctly", "The one who participates in school activities (e.g. celebrations etc.)" and "The one who is good in company". In other words, students with lower scores agree more with these three characteristics in the concept of a "good student". However, students with higher scores (above 16) differ in only one (1) answer and, to be more specific, they believe that the trait "Do you want to be a perfect student in everything at school?" constitutes more the quality of a "good student".

4. Overview of research findings

4.1 *Demographics*

The participation of students from Primary school, Junior High and Senior High school amounted to 246 with absolutely and coincidentally equal participation of boys and girls, i.e. 123 boys and 123 girls. Also, the percentage representation of the 1st grade of Senior High and 2nd grade of Junior High school was higher compared to the other grades (23.17 % and 21.95 % respectively).

Sex

School grade

- 6th Primary
- 1st Junior High
- 2nd Junior High
- 3rd Junior High
- 1st Senior High
- 2nd Senior High
- 3rd Senior High
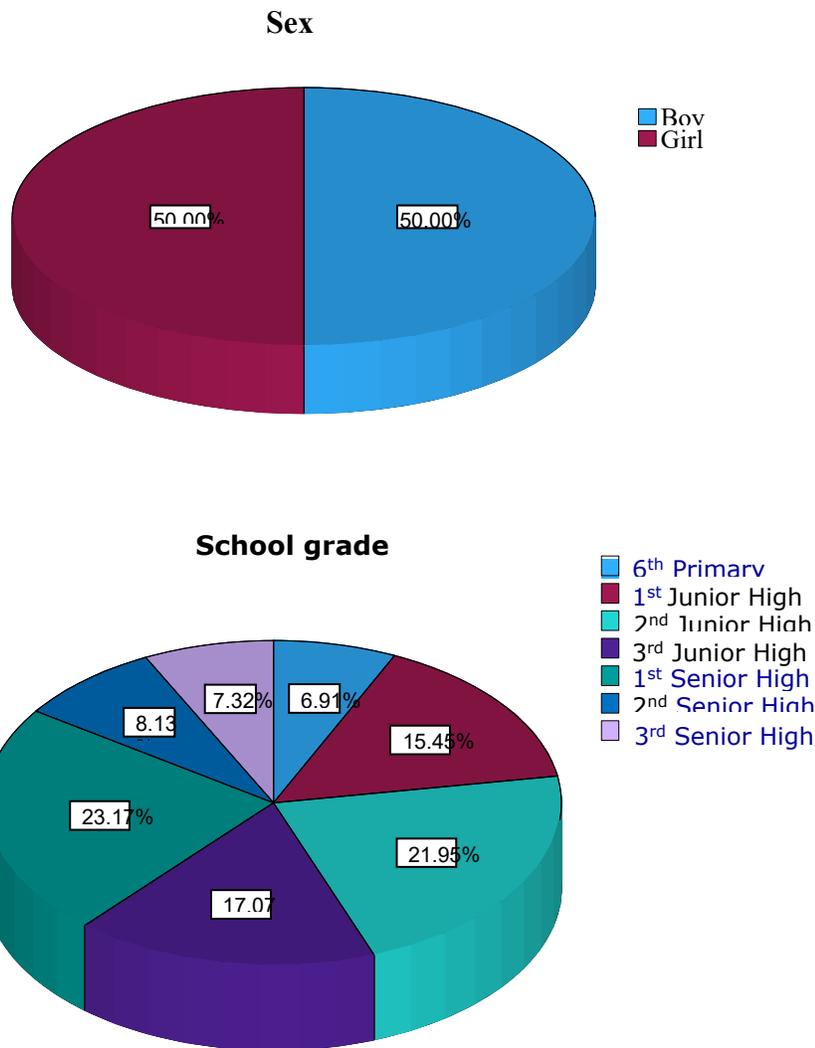
4.2 Students' views on the good student

In the presentation of the research findings, we will structure the subsections based on the twenty-six questions-parameters of the questionnaire. A good student is:

4.2.1 The one who reads-studies a lot

As can be seen from the graph, the students' opinions on this issue showcase clearly, at overwhelmingly positive percentages, the study factor as a very and important enough characteristic of a good student (59.76 % and 35.77 % respectively). The very small percentages in the ratings "a little" and "not at all" leave no room for questioning or different interpretation of the above findings.

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The one who reads-studies a lot
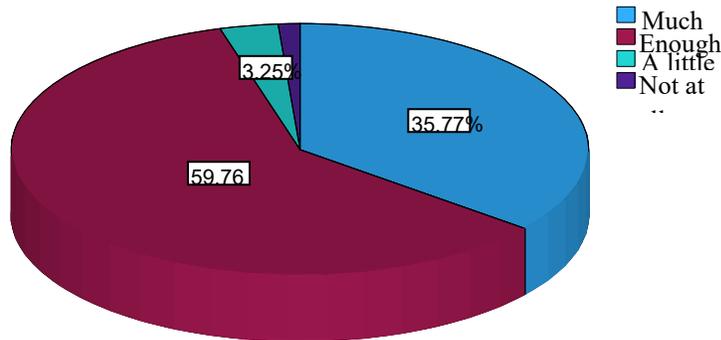
4.2.2 *The one who regularly participates in the lesson*

Similar percentages emerge on the issue of student participation in the lesson, and, specifically, students consider it, at clear and overwhelmingly positive percentages, a very (56.91 %) or fairly important characteristic (38.21 %) of a good student. Here too, the very small percentages in the ratings "a little" and "not at all" leave no room for questioning or different interpretation of the above findings.

The one who regularly participates in the lesson
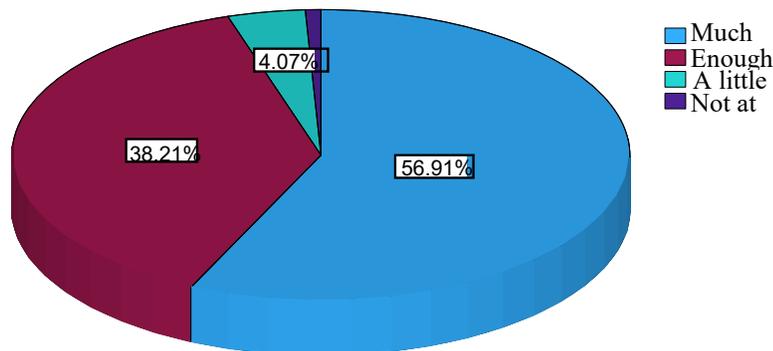
4.2.3 *The one who answers the lesson questions correctly*

On this issue, the students' opinions highlight the "enough" rating as the highest (50 %), followed by the "much" rating (24.8 %) and then the "a little" rating (21.54 %). Without a doubt, in this finding too, positive opinions prevail on the issue "correct answers to questions", as a characteristic of a good student, but with a noticeable decrease in percentages.

The one who answers the lesson questions
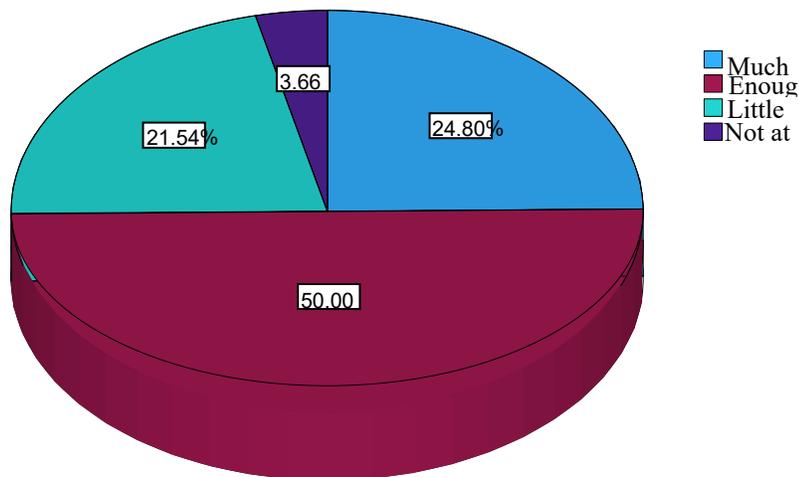
4.2.4 *The one who asks the right questions in the lesson*

Approximately the same percentages are found on this issue, which has a relevant content to the previous one, with a small but distinct differentiation. More specifically, the students' opinions also highlight the rating "enough" (44.31 %), but as a second rating, based on the percentages, appears the rating "a little" (25.61 %), followed by the rating "much" (19.11 %) and lastly the rating "not at all" (10.98 %). This means that the ratings "a little" and "not at all", according to their percentages (sum 36.6 %), make their presence felt on the issue of differentiation.

The one who asks the right questions in the lesson
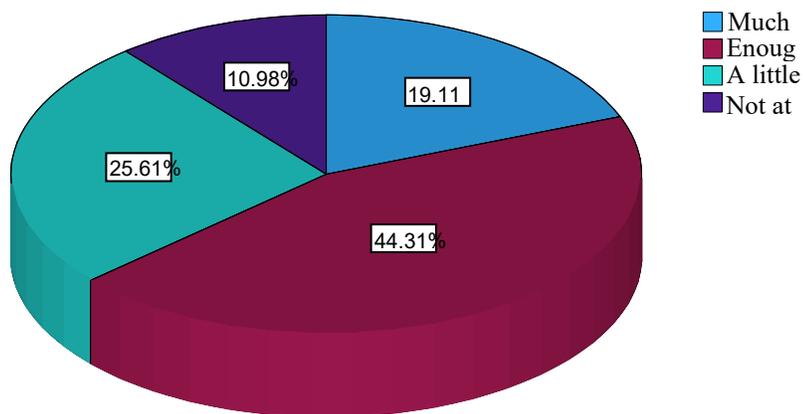
4.2.5 *The one who does the lesson assignments quickly in class*

On the issue of quick response to class assignments, we observe a reversal of the findings. Specifically, the rating "a little" (36.73 %) prevails in percentages, followed by the ratings "enough" (27.35 %), "not at all" (18.37 %) and finally the rating "much" (17.55 %). Therefore, students do not consider this characteristic to be very or quite important for a good student.

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The one who does the lesson assignments quickly in
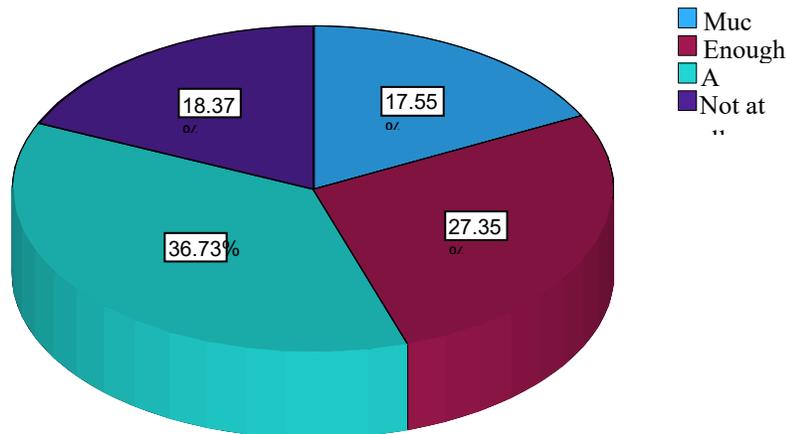
4.2.6 The one who does all the homework assigned by their teacher

On the issue of homework responsiveness, we return to the overwhelming percentages of the first findings. The students' opinions on this issue show very high percentages in the ratings "much" and "enough", which leave no room for different interpretations. Specifically, the students consider this feature to be very (57.32 %) and important enough (34.15 %).

The one who does all the homework assigned by their teacher
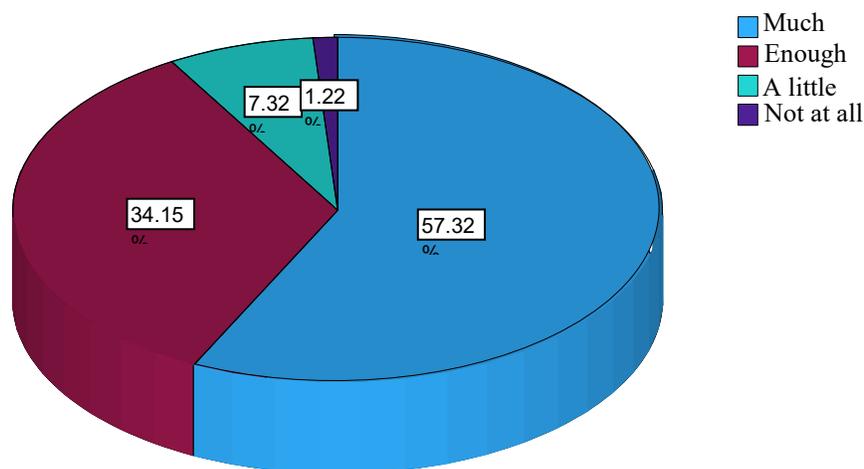
4.2.7 The one who memorizes the lesson

On the issue of memorization of the lesson, the opinions of the students converge, at very high percentages, in that it is an issue that holds true in the Greek school. In particular, the students, according to the ratings "enough" (44.31 %) and "much" (19.51 %) consider that memorization is considered a distinct characteristic of a good student. There is, of course, a non-negligible number of students, who consider that this characteristic is true a little (24.8 %) and not at all (11.38 %).

The one who memorizes the lesson
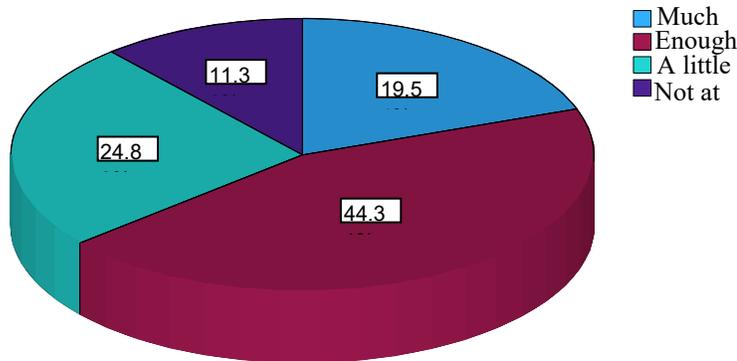
4.2.8 The one who is patient and persistent in their efforts

According to the overwhelming percentages of the finding, students state that patience and perseverance are very (63.82 %) and important enough (31.71 %) characteristics of a good student. These percentages are among the highest findings of the research and, in particular, the rating "much". Therefore, according to the students' opinions, these qualifications are considered necessary and important for a student to achieve their school goals more easily and to be in the category of the "good student".

The one who is patient and persistent in their efforts
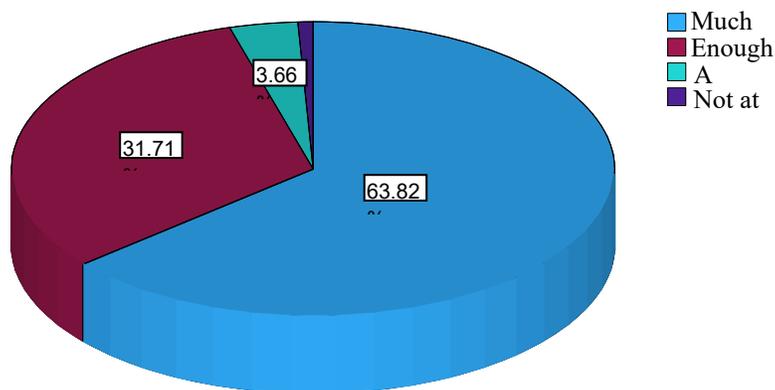
4.2.9 The one who has confidence in themselves

From the overwhelming percentages of the findings, it is demonstrated that students acknowledge that "confidence in ourselves" is considered a very (56.91 %) and necessary enough (33.33 %) distinct characteristic of a good student.

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The one who has confidence in themselves
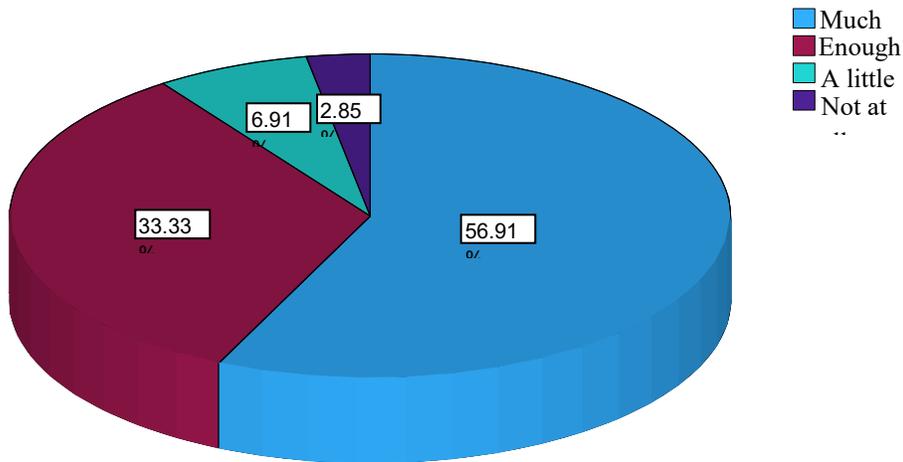
4.2.10 *The one who gets high grades*

In this finding, preferences are clearly focused on the ratings "much" (32.93 %) and "enough" (50.81 %). However, the rating "enough" takes precedence, while the rating "a little" (13.41 %) appears at a smaller but not negligible percentage. Therefore, the parameter "grade" seems to be established in the students' perceptions as an important characteristic of a good student.

The one who gets high grades
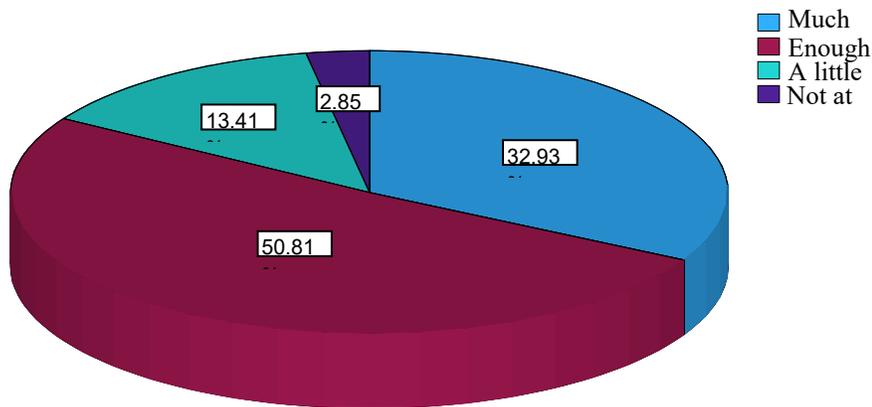
4.2.11 *The one who helps their classmates who need assistance with classroom assignments*

At this point we are introduced to the students' expectations regarding the behavior of a good student towards their classmates. This specific finding shows, at overwhelming percentages, that students would like the good student to help their classmates who need assistance with classroom assignments, much (43.9 %) and enough (39.43 %). There is, however, a small minority of students (13.41 %) who say they would like this to be a characteristic of a good student to a lesser extent.

The one who helps their classmates who need assistance with classroom assignments
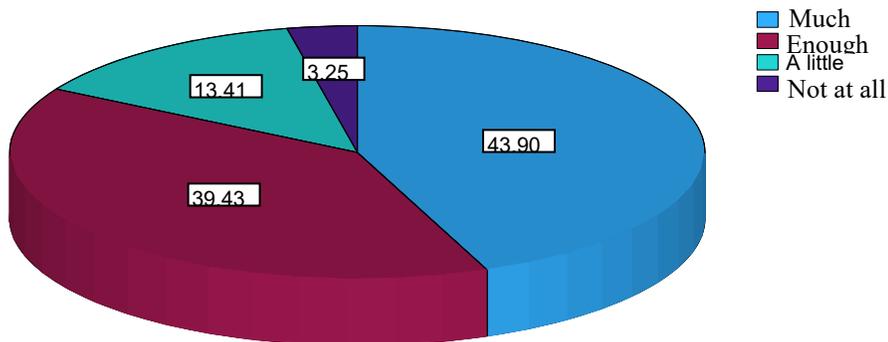
4.2.12 *The one who helps their classmates with school assignments outside of school*

In connection with the previous finding, students' opinions differ significantly when the help of a good student concerns assignments outside of school. Specifically, the students, at smaller but still significant percentages (28.46 % for much and 36.59 % for enough), consider this characteristic important for a good student. The percentage differentiation may be due either to the objectively unfeasible nature of providing extracurricular help or because, outside of school they rely on the help of other factors. This interpretation is further supported by the students' opinions on the "a little" rating (28.86 %).

The one who helps their classmates with school assignments outside of school
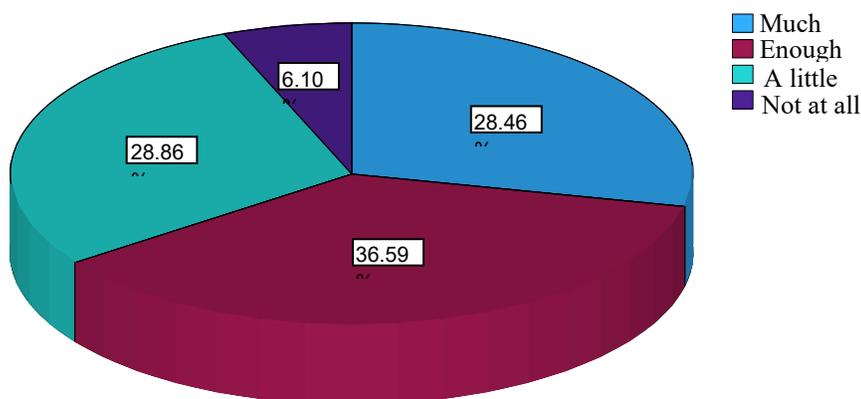
4.2.13 *The one who collaborates well with their classmates*

This finding, which also concerns the expected behavior of a good student towards their classmates, appears at overwhelmingly high percentages. Specifically, students express the opinion that proper collaboration with their classmates is a very (47.97 %) and important enough (40.65 %) characteristic of a good student. There is, of course, a small percentage of students who consider this characteristic to be a little important (10.16 %) for a good student.

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The one who collaborates well with their classmates
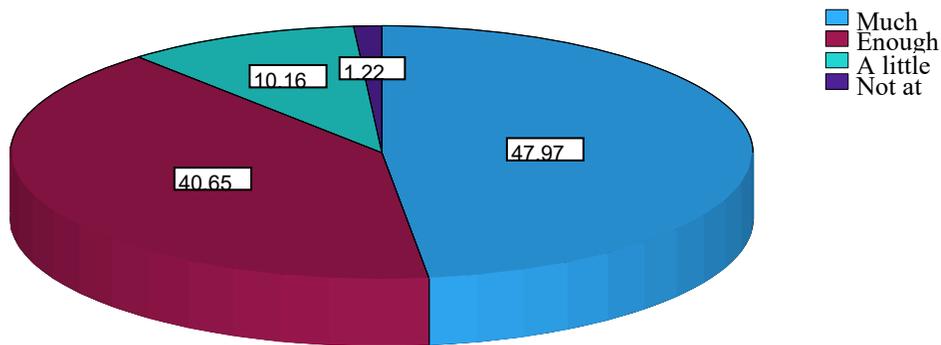
4.2.14 *The one who collaborates with their teacher*

In the parameter of "collaboration with the teacher", students state that it is an important characteristic of a good student, with percentages reaching 50 % for the "much" rating and 37.4 % for the "enough" rating. There is, of course, a small percentage of about 8.94 % who state that this parameter is a little important as a characteristic of a good student.

The one who collaborates with their teacher
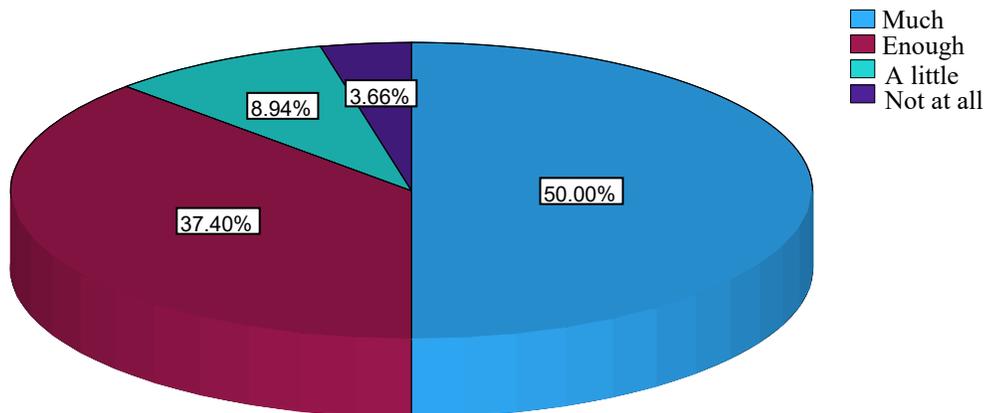
4.2.15 *The one who participates in school activities (e.g. celebrations etc.)*

From the dispersion of the percentages across the four ratings, one can conclude that students' opinions differ on the parameter of "participation in school activities". Specifically, the "enough" rating prevails with 39.84 %, followed by "a little" with 28.05 %, "much" with 18.7 %, and "not at all" with 13.41 %. In a more specific formulation, this parameter shows a slight cumulative prevalence of positive opinions over negative ones. That is, for the students, participation in school activities is considered a "slightly" important characteristic of a good student.

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The one who participates in school activities (e.g. celebrations etc.)
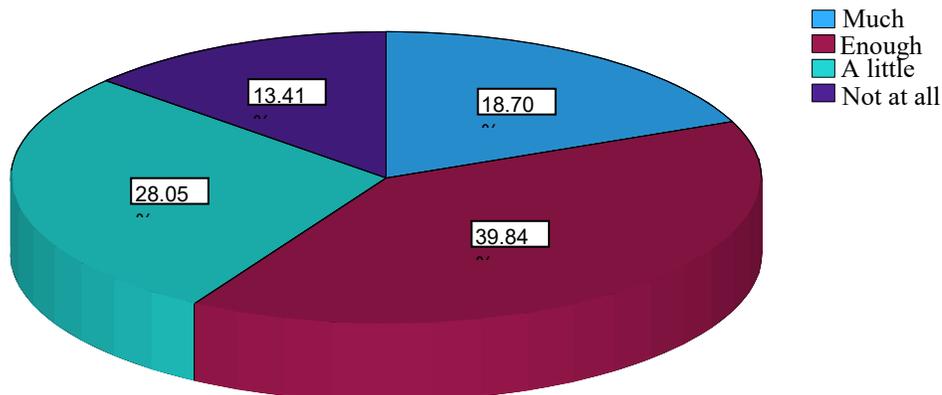
4.2.16 *The one who follows the school rules*

In the finding regarding the parameter of "application of rules" in school, students clearly show that they are in favor of discipline as an important characteristic of a good student, with the overwhelming percentage of much (55.69 %) and enough (30.89 %). This finding, in our opinion, constitutes a sort of surprise, considering that students, due to their physical needs at this age, "like" "freedom of movement" and fewer restrictions in their social behavior. Therefore, we interpret this preference as an indication that students are either already familiar with the process of discipline or that they view the application of rules as a process that ensures the conditions needed for them to perform their student role safely, more democratically, more equally, more peacefully, and ultimately, more effectively.

The one who follows the school rules
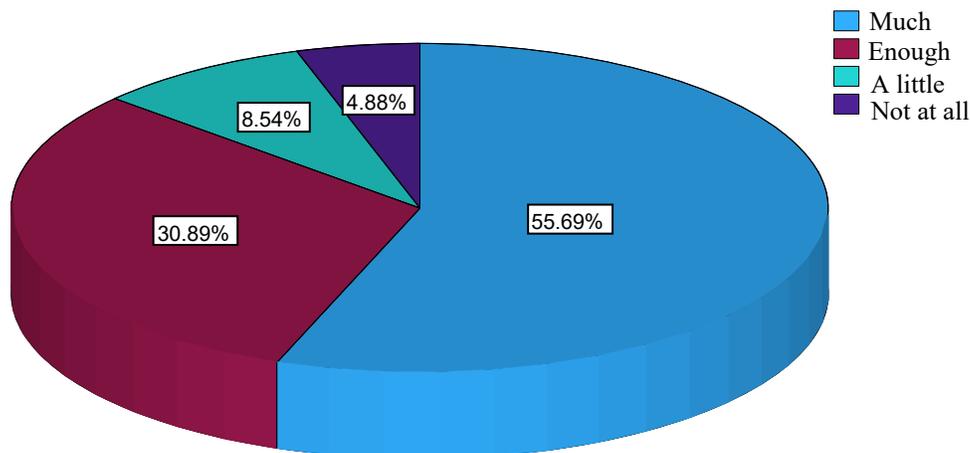
4.2.17 *The one who never uses violence against their classmates*

One of the most striking findings in our research, in terms of percentage representation, is the students' opinions on "not using violence against their classmates" as an important and necessary characteristic of a good student. The "much" rating holds the highest percentage here (74.8 %), followed by the "enough" rating (18.29 %). The students' opinions on

this issue carry particular weight, considering the frequent and increasing incidents of student violence against their classmates, both inside and outside the school environment, which have reached alarming levels and have recently drawn significant concern both from educators and all those directly and indirectly involved in the issue. Beyond this expressed personal perception, we assume that students may have been influenced either because they had a direct or indirect experience of a violent incident or because of the extensive media coverage of the issue on mass media and social networks.

The one who never uses violence against their classmates
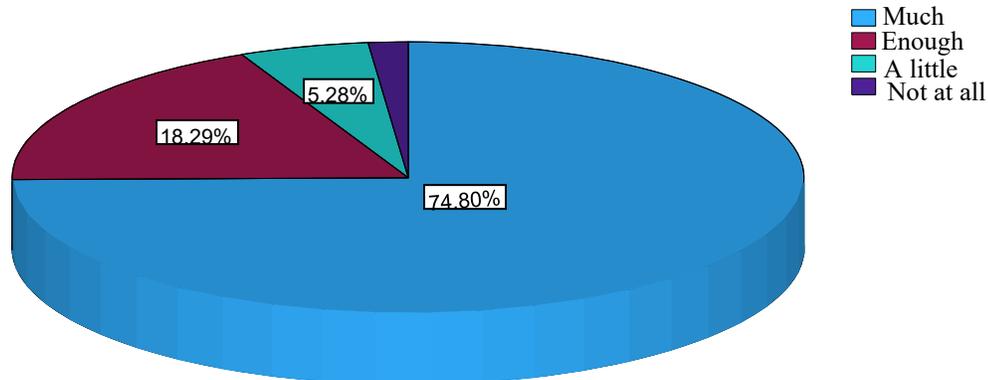
4.2.18 *The one who is consistent and completes everything on time*

Although not as proportionally significant as the previous finding, this finding regarding the parameter of "consistency in fulfilling one's duties" is still overwhelmingly high, with percentages of much (59.76 %) and enough (32.11 %). Therefore, students undoubtedly consider consistency to be an important trait of a good student.

The one who is consistent and completes everything on time
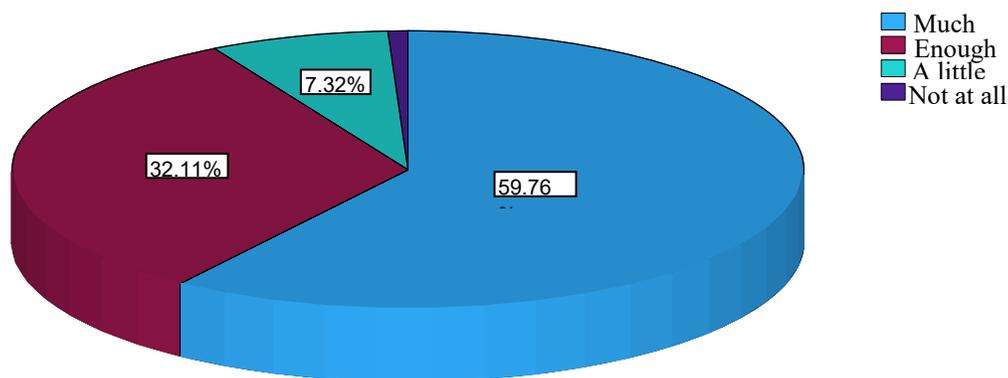

4.2.19 *The one who is polite to everyone*

Similar percentages to the previous finding are observed in this particular parameter, which concerns the politeness of a good student. Specifically, students believe that a good student should be very polite (58.94 %) and polite enough (33.74 %) towards their classmates. Therefore,

this finding is ranked among the highest and most impressive in terms of percentage representation and significance.

The one who is polite to everyone

4.88%
33.74%
58.94%

Legend: Much / Enough / A little / Not at all
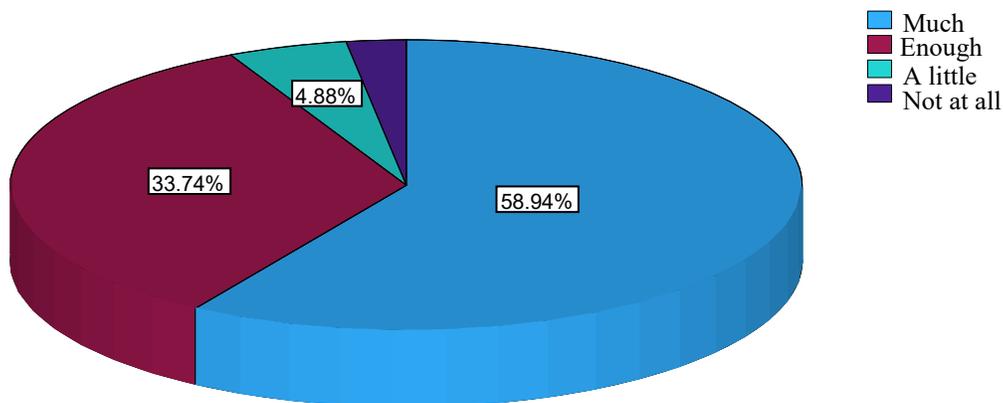
### 4.2.20 *The one who respects and does not offend*

In terms of cumulative percentage representation, we have the highest percentages for this particular parameter. Specifically, students believe that "respect and the absence of offense" are very (71.95 %) and important enough (24.39 %) traits of a good student. This is an impressive finding in terms of declared percentage representation, and we would argue, both pedagogically and socially, that it is essential not only for the good student but for all students to practice and demonstrate respect and not to offend their classmates and, generally, their interlocutors in their social interactions.

The one who respects and does not offend

2.85%
24.39%
71.95%

Legend: Much / Enough / A little / Not at all
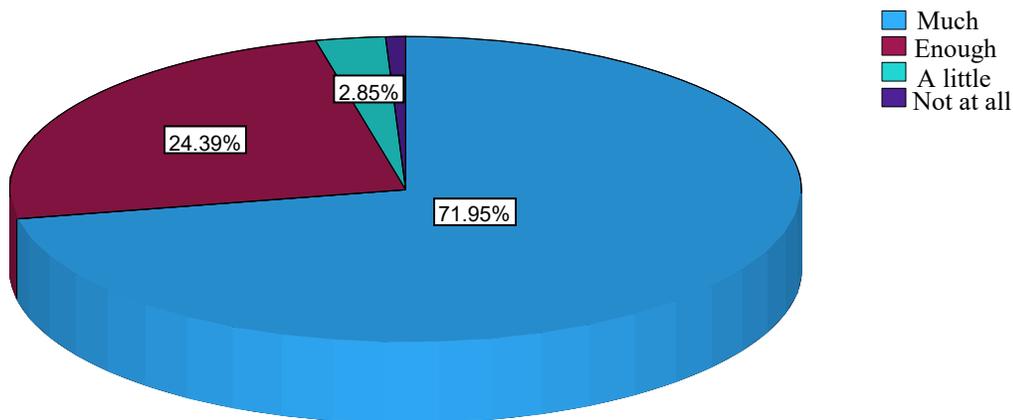
4.2.21 *The one who apologizes when making a mistake*

This finding also falls into the category of overwhelmingly high percentages, mainly represented by the ratings "much" (56.5 %) and "enough" (34.55 %), as well as the rating "a little" (7.72 %). This indicates that students consider it an important trait of a good student to "apologize" when making a mistake.

The one who apologizes when making a mistake
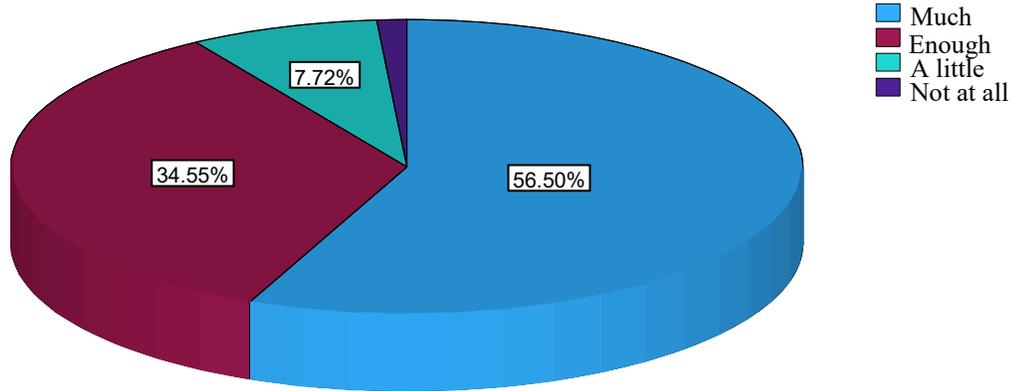
4.2.22 *The one who does not speak carelessly but uses valid arguments*

In this specific finding, we observe that the rating "enough" occupies the highest percentage (53.66 %), followed by the rating "much" (28.46 %), and lastly the rating "a little" with a non-negligible percentage of 15.04 %. Therefore, for the parameter "does not speak carelessly but uses valid arguments", students express the opinion that it is an important characteristic of a good student.
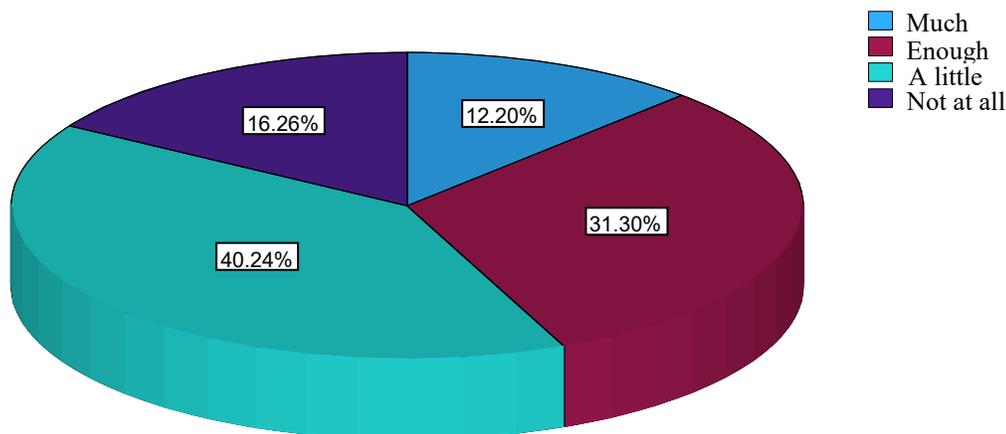
The one who does not speak carelessly but uses valid arguments
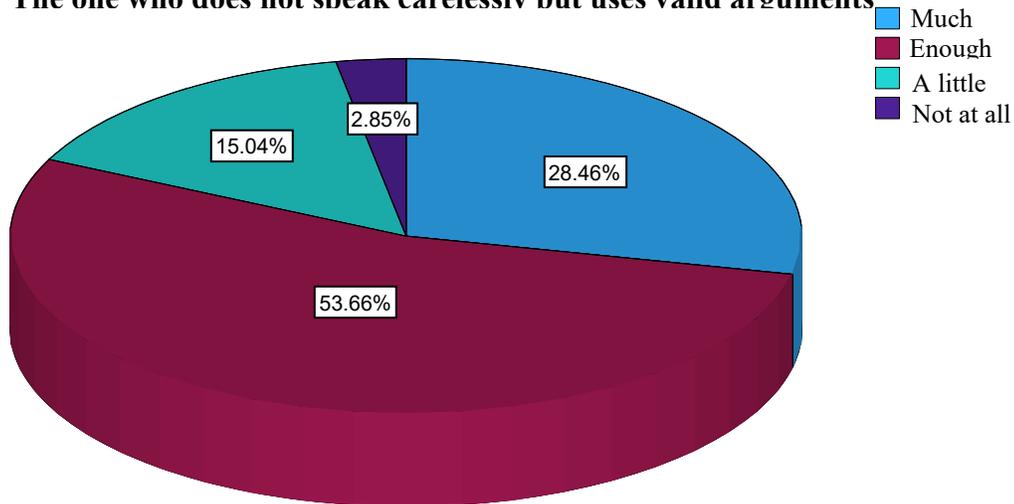
4.2.23 *The one who tells jokes*

From the percentages of this finding, we observe that for students, the use of "jokes" in communication is considered a little (40.24 %) important trait for a good student. Clearly, this rating prevails, followed by the ratings "enough" (31.3 %) and "much" (12.20 %).

The one who tells jokes

4.2.24 *The one who is good in company*

From this finding, we conclude that students consider it important enough (42.68 %) and very important (25.2 %) for a good student to be good in company. Therefore, at distinctly high percentages in these ratings, we observe that students seek a good student to be "approachable" and "pleasant" in their company. However, there are also the ratings "a little" (22.76 %) and "not at all" (9.35 %), which are not negligible as expressions of a negative opinion on this matter.

The one who is good in company
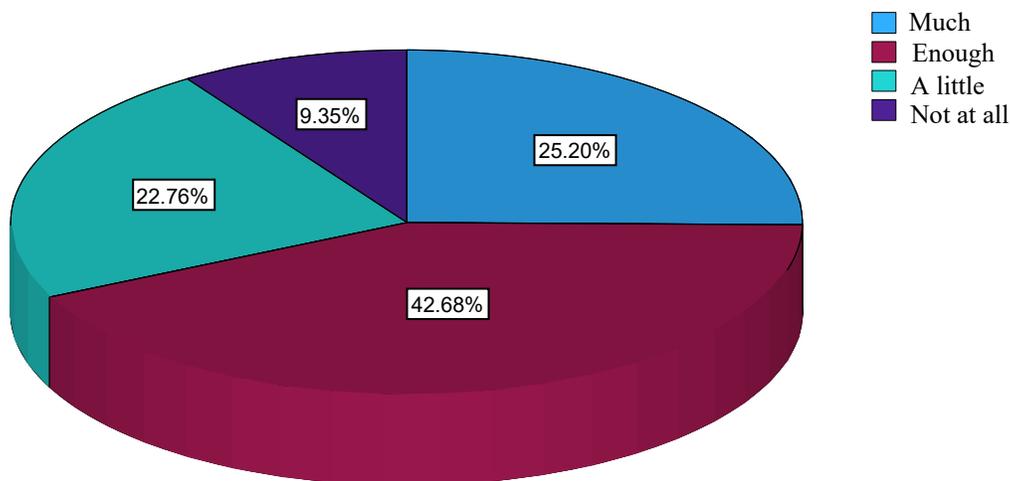
4.2.25 *The one who behaves properly towards others and not the one with high grades*

In the penultimate finding of the research, we observe that students believe enough (44.31 %) and much (40.65 %) that a good student is "the one who behaves properly and not the one with high grades". This is a clear preference, indicating that students place more importance on social behavior than on high academic performance for a good student. The rating "a little" is represented by a non-negligible percentage of 11.38 %, suggesting that there are students for whom grades still play "some" role.

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The one who behaves properly towards others and not the one with high grades
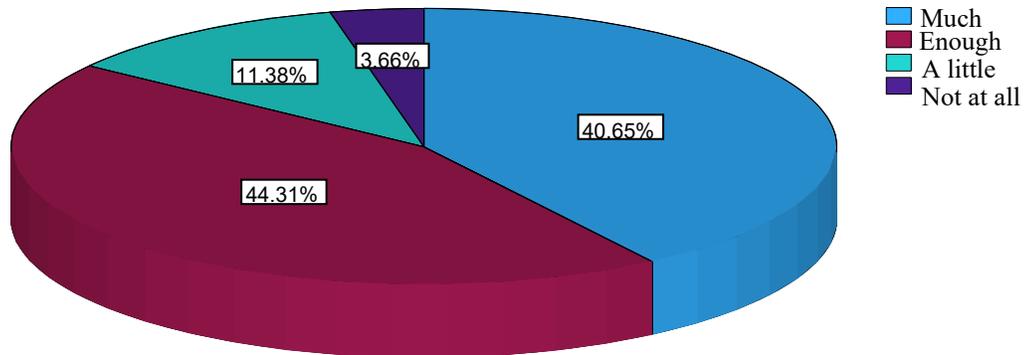
4.2.26 *Do you want to be a perfect student in everything at school?*

In the last finding we observe almost the same percentage representation of students' opinions as in the previous one. Specifically, students overwhelmingly express the view that they "want to be good students at everything at school" enough (43.5 %) and much (41.87 %). In other words, students seek to demonstrate a positive attitude towards fulfilling their school responsibilities, which can certainly be evaluated as a positive pedagogical behavior towards themselves and not just that. Of course, there is also a "non-negligible" percentage of 10.98 % who believe that this is only a minor goal for them.

Do you want to be a perfect student in everything at school?
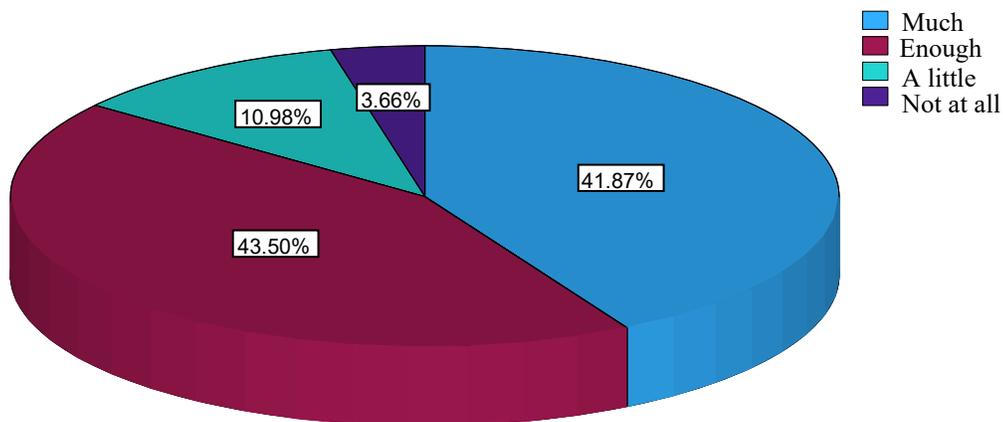
5. Interpretation of findings and final conclusions

The main objective of this research was to explore students' opinions regarding the image they have formed of the "good student".

Our first conclusions are drawn based on the data revealed by the statistical analysis of students' opinions. One initial finding that we must highlight is that, from the comparison of

the opinions of the two sexes, a statistically significant difference was found between them in relation to eight (8) questions. Specifically, in their responses to these questions, it appears that female students consider the specific characteristics related to the concept of the "good student" more important than male students do. These questions relate to the following traits: "The one who reads-studies a lot", "The one who is patient and persistent in their efforts", "The one who helps their classmates who need assistance with classroom assignments", "The one who collaborates well with their classmates", "The one who never uses violence against their classmates", "The one who is polite to everyone", "The one who respects and does not offend" and "The one who apologizes when making a mistake". In other words, it is observed that female students give greater importance to these particular traits of the "good student", placing, in this sense, greater emphasis or even showing more sensitivity on these matters. It is also worth mentioning that these specific personality traits constitute very important aspects of a person's social behavior and are necessary for the peaceful, polite, cooperative, and creative coexistence of the members of a society.

A second finding that we must also highlight regarding the comparison of students' opinions across the three school levels is the following. From the statistical analysis conducted, it was found that a difference in opinions is present in the following twelve (12) questions: "The one who answers the lesson questions correctly", "The one who asks the right questions in the lesson", "The one who does the lesson assignments quickly in class", "The one who memorizes the lesson", "The one who gets high grades", "The one who collaborates with their teacher", "The one who participates in school activities (e.g. celebrations etc.)", "The one who never uses violence against their classmates", "The one who is consistent and completes everything on time", "The one who tells jokes", "The one who is good in company" and "Do you want to be a perfect student in everything at school?"

Specifically, from the statistical analysis of the responses to these specific questions, statistically significant differences are observed. In particular, Primary school students agree more with the above characteristics of the "good student" compared to Secondary school students. In these specific comparisons, we particularly focus on two, and especially, on one that constitutes a "deviation", based on the prevailing standards in the Greek education system. That is, the question where Primary school students express the opinion that memorization is a more important characteristic of a "good student" compared to Senior High school students, considering that memorization is a necessary condition for preparing Senior High school students for their entry into higher education. In any case, this constitutes an "unexpected" finding, as it possibly indicates that memorization is cultivated already from the first school level.

From the comparison of the opinions of Junior High and Senior High school students, statistically significant differences also emerged, specially, in the following questions: "The one who does the lesson assignments quickly in class", "The one who gets high grades", "The one who collaborates with their teacher", "The one who is consistent and completes everything on time" and "Do you want to be a perfect student in everything at school?" In the responses to these questions, high school students statistically outnumber the others, assigning more importance to these characteristics that define the concept of the "good student". We particularly highlight the characteristic that shows students' focus on high grades in order to achieve more effectively their admission to higher education, which is undoubtedly a typical case that concerns high school students to a greater extent.

A third finding regarding the statistical analysis concerns the comparison of students' opinions based on their grades. This analysis revealed four (4) differences. Students with lower grades (below 16) have a different perception, as shown in their responses to three (3) questions: "The one who answers the lesson questions correctly", "The one who participates in school activities (e.g. celebrations etc.)" and "The one who is good in company". In other words, students with lower grades agree more with these three characteristics in the concept of the "good student".

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On the other hand, students with higher grades (above 16) differ in only one (1) response and, more specifically, consider that the trait "Do you want to be a perfect student in everything at school?" is more of a trait of the "good student". As can be observed, students with lower grades give more importance to social interaction, i.e., their interaction with their peers, while students with higher grades tend to want to be "perfect students" in all school aspects. Interpreting this last finding, we hypothesize that students with higher grades may feel greater pressure or have a stronger need for perfection in all areas of school, whereas students with lower grades may not feel this pressure or urgency for such priorities.

Taking into account all the above findings, we come to the following three significant conclusions.

First, that students place greater emphasis on the image of the "good student" that relates to social behavior towards their peers and, in particular, on traits, as clearly shown by very high preference percentages, such as avoidance of disrespect and respect for their classmates, non-use of violence towards peers, politeness towards them, collective spirit and solidarity, and, more generally, promotion of socially acceptable behavior towards them and the educator.

More specifically, the findings that constitute the overwhelmingly highest percentages in the study are primarily related to the social behavior of the "good student" towards their classmates, rather than academic performance. These findings concern the following parameters: "Never uses violence against their classmates" (much 74.8 % + enough 18.29 % = 93.09 %). This constitutes the highest and most impressive percentage of the study, represented by the "much" rating. In terms of percentage representation, there follow the findings: "Does not offend and respects their classmates" (much 71.95 % + enough 24.39 % = 96.34 %), a parameter which, when adding the "much" and "enough" ratings, constitutes the highest finding of the research, "Is polite to everyone" (much 58.9 % + enough 33.7 % = 92.6 %), "Apologizes when making a mistake" (much 56.5 % + enough 34.6 % = 91.1 %), "Collaborates with them" (much 48% + enough 40.7 % = 88.7 %) and "Helps classmates who need assistance with classroom assignments" (much 43.9% + enough 39.4 % = 83.3 %).

The findings that fall into the same category, that is, those where students place greater emphasis on the social behavior of the "good student" and more specifically, on solidarity and companionship towards their classmates, include the following, which, despite being somewhat lower in terms of their statistical significance, still stand out due to their very high percentages: "The one who helps their classmates with school assignments outside of school" (much 28.5 % + enough 36.6 % = 65.1 %) and "Is good company" (much 25.2% + enough 42.7 % = 67.9 %).

Among the findings with very high percentages that are worth mentioning and highlighting are those related to the behavior of the "good student" and concern the following characteristics: "The one who is perfect in everything at school" (much 41.9 % + enough 43.5 % = 85.4 %), "The one who behaves properly towards others and not the one with high grades" (much 40.7 % + enough 44.3 % = 85 %), and "The one who does not speak carelessly but uses valid arguments" (much 28.5 % + enough 53.7 % = 82.2 %). Especially the first cumulative finding (85.4 %) clearly emphasizes the strong motivation among students to combine high performance with socially acceptable behavior.

Commenting on the above findings, it is important to stress that the specific opinions derived from the findings highlight a clearly positive attitude among students towards issues related to the social behavior of the "good student" towards their peers. This is particularly important for today's social reality, which, according to related research, shows symptoms of decline and degradation of social and humanistic values. It is significant that students are inspired by life attitudes such as cooperation, solidarity, respect for others, the absence of violence, rational communication, giving, more generally, greater value on socially acceptable behavior rather than on high grades.

Second, the findings, which are represented by very high percentages, highlight an image of the "good student" that is directly linked to their performance in the subjects. Specifically, the finding with the highest percentages relates to the characteristic "The one who is patient and persistent in their efforts" (much 63.8 % + enough 31.7 % = 95.5 %). There follow the findings: "The one who is consistent and completes everything on time" (much 59.8 % + enough 32.1 % = 91.9 %), "The one who has confidence in themselves" (much 56.9 % + enough 33.3 % = 90.2 %), "The one who regularly participates in the lesson" (much 56.9 % + enough 38.2 % = 95.1 %), "The one who follows the school rules" (much 55.7 % + enough 30.9 % = 86.6 %),"The one who collaborates with their teacher" (much 50% + enough 37.4 % = 87.4 %), "The one who reads-studies a lot" (much 35.8 % + enough 59.8 % = 95.6 %), and of course, "The one who gets high grades" (much 32.9 % + enough 50 % = 83.7 %).

Third, a finding that is connected to the last one and highlights the cultural influences due to the way the educational system functions is the fact that many students consider a "good student" to be someone who memorizes the content of their lessons (much 19.5% + enough 44.3 % = 63.8 %). While this finding is relatively high, it is not among the highest percentages in the research. Nevertheless, it shows that a significant portion of students believes that memorization helps them achieve their educational goals "more easily".

There are, of course, findings with clearly high percentages that fall into the category of expected and logically interpreted "self-evident" answers, based on the theoretical framework presented earlier. These findings relate to characteristics of the "good student", such as the following: "The one who answers the lesson questions correctly" (much 24.8 % + enough 50 % = 74.8 %), "The one who asks the right questions in the lesson" (much 19.1 % + enough 44.3 % = 63.4 %), and "The one who participates in school activities (e.g. celebrations etc.)" (much 18.7 % + enough 39.8 % = 58.5 %).

The remaining few findings show a dispersion and, obviously, a difference in preferences among the students. Specifically, in two findings, the percentages indicate that the more negative or neutral opinions of the students on the relevant issues quantitatively outweigh the positive opinions. Specifically, the responses to "The one who tells jokes" (a little 40.2 % + not at all 16.3 % = 56.5 % and much 12.2 % + enough 31.3 % = 43.5 %) and "The one who does the lesson assignments quickly in class" (a little 37 % + not at all 18.3 % = 55.3 % and much 17.5 % + enough 27.2 % = 44.7 %) show that students place less importance on these particular traits when defining the "good student".

In summary, the interpretation of the research findings highlights three final conclusions, which are, in every case, supported by the theoretical analysis that preceded them. First, students emphasize the importance of positive and socially acceptable behaviors of the "good student" towards their classmates and teachers (collectivity, companionship, solidarity, politeness, respect for others, non-violence etc.). Second, the "good student" is expected to meet the demands and expectations of their role as a student (participation, completion of tasks, application of rules, consistency in responsibilities etc.). And third, the educational system has cultivated in students a specific attitude towards issues related to grading (pursuit of high achievements) and learning (e.g. memorization of course content).

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