ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was to evaluate the degree of achievement motivation in pupils and their attitudes towards selected subjects (namely mathematics, German, English, and physics), and thereafter to compare the results with the views of their teachers. 860 pupils from German secondary schools and 1131 from Czech secondary schools have completed questionnaires for this purpose, with a comparison and evaluation of the results between the two countries carried out.

The data which has been collected via the aforesaid questionnaires has been interpreted using statistical methods. The results highlight certain gender differences with respect to pupils’ achievement motivation and attitudes towards school subjects. For example, in Germany, boys tend to achieve better grades than girls in mathematics, whereas in the Czech Republic, the opposite is the case.

The majority of pupils of each gender in both countries agree that mathematics is important or very important.

The results also show that teachers are not always able to accurately evaluate the achievement motivation or the attitudes of pupils towards the subject which they teach. In particular, the results show that teachers of mathematics are frequently unaware of the degree to which the fear of failure motivates their pupils. Furthermore, in general, teachers of physics fail to accurately judge the popularity, difficulty and importance of their subject in the views of their pupils.

As a general observation, Czech teachers are slightly better than German teachers in judging their pupils across all the surveyed subjects.

In both countries, five pupil types were identified using factor analysis. The pupil types identified in each country are generally similar but nonetheless evidence some specific differences of note.

KEY WORDS

Achievement motivation, attitude towards subjects, subject popularity, subject importance, subject difficulty, fear of failure, teachers’ judgment, pupil types, Autodiagnostic, Individual Feedback for teachers.