

Eldar, E & Talmor, R. (2006). Characteristics of outstanding student teachers, *Sport, Education and Society*, 11 (1), 55-72

This paper describes the characteristics of student teachers who were evaluated as outstanding during their teacher education studies. Outstanding students were selected after 2 years of field experiences based on their teaching abilities and academic achievements. Data were collected at three points of time: before they commenced their studies at the college, during the first 2 years of their studies and 4 years after completion of their studies. The study was conducted in two stages. The first compared three groups: (1) outstanding student teachers (22); (2) students with average achievements (55); (3) students who experienced difficulties (24). The comparison comprised the national psychometric test scores, high school matriculation examination grades, the written results of the acceptance interview and the evaluations of student teachers' supervisors kept in each student's personal file. In the second stage, 4 years later, telephone interviews were conducted with 19 of the 22 students in the outstanding group and with 25 students from the same graduating class, who were chosen from a random sample of 75 students. Data analysis included descriptive statistics of means and standard deviations and one-way ANOVAs, to identify differences between the groups, and content analysis of the telephone interviews. Significant differences were found between the groups in their matriculation grades and in three parameters from the entrance committees' reports: appearance, thinking and comments. Similarly, significant differences were found in the evaluations written by the supervisors in three categories: teaching ability, behaviour and social functioning. Four years later the prominent difference between the outstanding and the comparative groups was in the larger number of students from the outstanding group that continued with graduate studies towards a master's degree. All of the graduates in the outstanding group and most of the graduates in the comparative group performed additional tasks in school and had other employment outside school.