

Survey the Concept of “Successful Professor” from the Viewpoints of Academic Staff Members at University of Guilan, Iran

Abbas Sadeghi

(Corresponding Author)

Associate Professor, Educational Sciences Department
Faculty of Humanities, University of Guilan
P.O. Box 3988, Rasht, Guilan Province, Iran
E-mail: asadeghi_2003@yahoo.com

Fatemeh Hoseini

Lecturer, Educational Sciences Department
Faculty of Humanities, University of Guilan
P.O. Box 3988, Rasht, Guilan Province, Iran
E-mail: fhosseiny@yahoo.com

Atefeh Sadeghi

M.A. Teaching Language Student, English Language Department
Faculty of Humanities, University of Guilan
P.O. Box 3988, Rasht, Guilan Province, Iran
E-mail: atefeh_sadeghi7@yahoo.com

Hossein Vahed Chookadeh

M.A. Educational Management, Educational Sciences Department
Faculty of Humanities, University of Guilan
P.O. Box 3988, Rasht, Guilan Province, Iran
E-mail: hosein_vahed2012@yahoo.com

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Abstract

The main aim of the paper was survey Academic Staff Members' viewpoints about “successful professor” which concentrated on characteristics of a “successful professor” with regard to group and the major in which they teach. The method was done in this way that from a sample of 150 persons of different major professors at university of Guilan was asked to select 3 main characteristics from 15 traits related to “successful professor of university”. These professors most had attention to professor ability to create and stimulus of faculty growth. They put the methodology in the second grade and little attention was given to traits related to scientific status and professor personality .Furthermore, among existing professors at Faculties of University of Guilan, there was an agreement about the type of regard to a “successful professor”. They selected those traits which were focused on speech and course material.

Keywords: Success, Professor, Teaching, Learning.

Introduction

University course classes include students that we don't expect them just to be literate, but we hope that they know their surrounding world and to be responsible about it and at the same time reinforce self- flourishes and feeling of being. Higher Education is known as the main social engine of the 21th century in world. If we want to witness the evolution of the Higher Education and if we want to have universities with favorable quality, we must take axial learner as the evolutionary and as the creative role in education and society (vaezi, 2013).

Neller (1971) believes that objectives of higher education is introduced in several forms which include providing the maximum of opportunity for students to learn past inheritance, gaining information and creative methods for solving the problems of society and proper decision making and improving knowledge scope. (Ahmadi, 2000).

Objectives of Higher Education System are classified as follow:

- A) Keeping scientific traditions (through making the mind free from influence of limitative factors, creating scientific motivation and making the science valuable).
- B) Training experts
- C) General training
- D) Developing cultural heritage
- E) Establishing research institutions
- F) Solving the society problems
- G) Teacher training (Ahmadi, 2000).

Above objectives as the main objectives of higher education are main topics of discussion about "teaching" at universities.

Teaching is always a series if regular, ordered, purposeful and pre-designed activities and its purpose are to provide a favorable condition for learning (Shaabani, 2003). Teaching includes variant decision – making about content, methods and organizing the learning. Teachers in addition to help the learners for gaining information, opinions, skills, values and way of thinking, in fact teach them how to learn. Bruce Juice (1992) mentioned that the most important result of long-time training is that extra abilities of easy and effective learning of future which they gain through knowledge, skill and having capability about learning processes. Teaching activity is a kind of interaction among teacher and lecturer and learning of learners.

In fact, we can never present a special stereotype frame for teaching. Because its frame should be define on the basis of special situation in each course. Regarding below cases is effective and creating favorable condition for learning:

1. Creating a balance between course content and teaching process: Designers and experts of course programs for achieving to this purpose, pose this question that "what they expect from their learners to understand or to do what skills , and do they can select necessary materials with identifying important issues and problems? " (Shaabani, 2003).

2. Creating balance between method of lecture and mutual act: Teacher can create balance between his lecture and mutual act of learners through using different methods of encouraging and discussion and asking and enchanting think.

Unfortunately most teachers don't have necessary skills for proper using of discussion method and exchanging think as training device and also they haven't had any training in this case.

So, the whole truly attempts of him for engaging learners may have counter result and cause to reinforce even inactive state in learners. For stimulating recognition and behavior growth of learners, active forms of presenting materials are more effective than giving lecture. (Meyers, quoting from Shaabani, 2003).

3. Organization and designing course class environment: Designing the course class for creating an environment for balance is very difficult but its possible, regarding these reinforcement points facilitates it in such an environment:

- Starting each session with posing a question or a discussable subject.
- Using a method of creating silence for encouraging learners to more thinking.
- Designing physical atmosphere like setting the chairs in a way that make the discussion and exchange of information possible.
- Using the maximum opportunity of class.
- Establishing a favorable environment.

Therefore, as Dewi (1916) says "the main factor of teaching process is creating a condition or environment which student could reach to balance. (Juice, 1992).

One of the most important challenges of these days and even at universal level in higher education is qualitative growth of board of education at universities. Today as a result of rapid change and evolutions, knowledge explosion, increasing number of students with variant experience and expectations at different levels of universities, the needs of board of education to playing variant roles, technology changes will highlight the necessity of useful innovations in methodology.

As Hosseini (1996) emphasized "importance of this case can be emphasized from this viewpoint that board of education members are the most valuable and main resources of each university, so taking action for increasing scientific quality and their ability is the best criterion for recognizing the attention of higher education to this quality."

University as one of the basis of Educational system needs motivated professors in order to affect students' educations. In fact, sometimes the demands of the Board of Science in making the motivation are useful for predicting and interpreting of their behaviors and these are the necessities they should not be ignored; because motivation is the basic factor in development of activities (Dadashzade Asl et al, 2013).

A professor is the most important factor to provide favorable successful in gaining educational goals and knowing the features of a good professor by professors themselves increase the quality of education. In fact, the function and the features of professors cause gaining educational goals and learning. As a result, the features of an effective professor are considered by many researchers around the world (Asghari et al, 2010). For instance, Hokmabadi & Fallah (2013) came to a conclusion that the most important features of a good professor are his dominance on the subject, lucidity of speech, communication ability and flexibility. According to Mazloomi Mahmoudabad et al, students of the University of Said Sedoughi in Yazd consider the capability of being criticized as an important feature (Mazloomi et al, 2010). According to Sayamian et al (2012) it is also mentioned that the most important features of a good professor are respectively: art of speech, considering instructional skills, age, his/her dominance on the subject, interest in instructing, capacity of being criticized, and utilizing IT. Besides, Gashmard et al (2011) express that the professor's dominance on the subject, his/her honesty in speech and behavior, giving new and up to date

information and having a specified syllabus are of the most important features of a professor that could facilitate the process of education and those should be under special consideration. Baldwin (1985) says that authority of university or college is its board of education members and giving ability and knowledge of board of education members is increase of quality at Universities. (Hosseini, 1996).

Since the purpose of the Higher Education is training expert and skilled human resources, it is needed that the Board of Science be high ranked, accountable and committed to Work ethics (Gashmard et al, 2011). It is stated in Taheri's researches that being respected and being cared about time are the features of an authoritative professor (Taheri et al, 2012). Moreover Vally et al (2014) mentions that from the professors view, the features of an authoritative professor in every angles of research particularly Teaching Methodology, Pedagogical Rules, Self-characteristics, and Communication are of important factors to increase the Higher Education system and quality of education (Valley et al, 2014). The results of Vahabi's (2014) also show that the theoretical knowledge of the professor is one of the important features of a good professor which could increase the quality of education besides the background of instructing; hence universities must utilize high ranked professors who are familiar with communication methods and good behavior.

In addition, not only professors could be of the pedagogical experts but a model and guidance for learners who can be big helpers for the issues (Gashmard et al, 2011). As well as Rad et al from the Medical Sciences University of Sabzevaar consider professional competence and well behavior as the most important features of a clinical professor (Rad et al, 2011).

A professor is one of the basic factors in order to make a successful atmosphere for gaining educational goals that could provide a proper condition for learning better by controlling different variables (Dargahi et al, 2010). Sheykhzade & Samari's research in this area showed that codification of lesson planning is one the basic activities that prepare an instructor to present good and effective education (Sheykhzade & Samari, 2010). In addition, the results of Shavsavani et al (2014) stated that scholarship, commitment, electronic skills and teaching methodology are affecting to build a successful professor. (Hosseini, 1996). So the essence of quality of quality of higher educationist somehow dependent on extent of knowledge, science, ability, professional capabilities, commitment and real motivation of board of education and its applying for educational progress of students.

Many studies such as Eckert and Williams (2002), Bayer (1993), Cross (1997) Centre (1980) beliefs and board of education viewpoints toward students and teaching as the main and significant satisfactory resource. Most of them know themselves as effective professors, but at the same time they want to improve their effectiveness and capabilities. It is in such a case that maybe the most important result of long – term training is that extra abilities of easy and effective learning in the future which they achieve them for the sake of knowledge and skill and capabilities in learning process. (Juice, 1992)

In education case in addition to information and experience, way of teaching has comprehensive effect on learners' abilities. Successful teachers are not those who in presenting special materials are satisfactory and superior, but those are successful that in addition to transferring recognition and social materials, learn their effective way of using. Successful lecturers teach their students to save information and depending toward them, while successful learners are those who in addition to gaining information, opinions and wisdom from their teachers, they also learn the way of using learning resources. So, the main role of teaching is training of good learners.

It is so that we can evaluate effects of different patterns of teaching through the way of reaching to specific objectives and director such as social skills, information, ideas , creativity and flourishes itself and also by increasing learning ability.

Learners especially university students will change with increase of their learning strategies reserves and they can do more for conscious selecting of teaching methods, learning activities and also setting the course designees necessary, A teacher should consider following points:

- 1- What are the existing teaching methods?
- 2- What are the weak and strong points of these methods?
- 3- How can we put these methods into practice? (petty, 2006)

In selecting the teaching methods we cannot know old methods completely outdated and use new methods. As Norouzi (1996) mentions that teaching methods are always changing and these developments continue with other developments of teaching world of course we should consider that in result of scientific researches and with regards to time and place changes, what method or part of it is applicable and acceptable for a developed society. The results indicate that academics found student feedback to be a valuable indicator of the quality of their teaching and the curriculum. Recommendations arising from the findings were provided for academics.

Limited research has focused on student feedback although ample anecdotal evidence exists suggesting that student feedback does contribute to improved teaching approaches by academics and a better understanding of student needs (Jhalukpreya Surujlal, 2014).

Selecting a teaching method is based on the purpose the only determiner for learning but definitely it is one of the important factor on the other side using teaching method with average effectiveness which 80% percent of attention and concentration of learners is allocated to itself is better than an applicable method which only 10% percent of attention and concentration of them is allocated to itself. (Petty, 2006).

Research Purposes

The purpose of this research is answering to this question that what is the main idea of university professors about “a successful professor at university “? What are the good characteristics? this research deals with board of education members viewpoints about the characteristics of a “ successful professor “ with regard to the major in which they teach our hypothesis is that teachers who teach in different groups , hare different and variant characteristics about the concept of “ successful professor “. It is clear that being in a specific standard related to a specific scientific major and a professional specific aiming can influence on approaches and teachers expectations about the concept of “ successful professor “.

Research Questions

- 1- What is the important trait of a successful professor from university professor?

Research Method

Sample

Research sample in this study include 150 professors with different positions from different colleges of Human Science, Basic Science, Agriculture Science, Physical Education, Engineering and Technical, architect and natural science which are selected from classical sampling.

Research Instruments

There is a list from 15 traits about “successful professor” as the research device. Before doing this research it has been asked from teachers to mention one or few characteristics of a “successful university professor”. According to these cases, four traits were more regarded:

- 1- Scholarship: Like research ability in professor.
- 2- Presenting materials: Like preparation and organizing the courses, interesting presenting of materials, creation and development of motivation in university-student.
- 3- Guiding the university-student: like balance between student and teacher, willingness to help, friendly relationship.
- 4- Private characteristics of teacher: like sense of humor, having good appearance and rhetoric Speaking.

Table 1: Distribution of options reacted to characteristics of successful university Professor by group

| Rank | Characteristic | Agriculture Science Number:32 | Human Science Number:35 | Technical and Engineer Number:33 | Basic Science Number:30 | Physical Education Number:10 | Architect Number:10 | Total Number 150 |
|------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Ability to stimulate the curiosity | 20/1 | 18/6 | 20/2 | 15/5 | 15/3 | 13/8 | 17/25 |
| 2 | Developing thinking process | 14/5 | 16/2 | 14/2 | 16 | 10/3 | 14/9 | 14/35 |
| 3 | Preparation and organizing courses | 11/5 | 9/3 | 13/5 | 14/3 | 10/9 | 6/3 | 10/96 |
| 4 | Attention to student feedback | 12 | 12/3 | 10/1 | 10/5 | 14 | 18/3 | 12/87 |
| 5 | Creating motivation | 11/1 | 9/6 | 7/9 | 15/1 | 13/5 | 18/1 | 12/55 |
| 6 | Ability to research | 3/2 | 1/7 | 8/5 | 6/3 | 7/1 | 3/2 | 4/25 |
| 7 | Having knowledge about course materials | 5/1 | 2/2 | 4/3 | | 7/1 | 3/2 | 4/25 |
| 8 | Interesting presentation of materials | 2/3 | 8 | 4/3 | 6/2 | 3/4 | 7/1 | 7/91 |
| 9 | Clear and obvious expression of ideas | 10/1 | 7/3 | 4/2 | 1 | 3/5 | 8 | 5/68 |
| 10 | Friendly behavior with students | 3/2 | 3/5 | 3/6 | 1 | 4/6 | 1/1 | 2/83 |
| 11 | Willingness to help students | 1/8 | 2 | 2 | 1/3 | 2/6 | 3/1 | 2/31 |
| 12 | Language rhetoric | 1/9 | 2/5 | 1/5 | 3 | 4/1 | 1/1 | 2/35 |
| 13 | Sense of hummer | 2 | 2/5 | 3/4 | 3/5 | 3 | 1 | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| | | | | | | | | 2/67 |
| 14 | Flexibility | 0/1 | 2 | 0/5 | 1 | 3 | 0/5 | 1/18 |
| 15 | Appearance of teacher | 1/2 | 2 | 1/8 | 1/7 | 0/4 | 0/3 | 1/23 |

Natural Resource Faculty is considered as a part of Agriculture College.

Results

What is the understanding of professors from a “successful university professor”? Selecting of teachers in three cases as the most important characteristics of a “successful university professor” has been mentioned in this table. Numbers in table show the willingness of some professors for more attention to traits related to education goals. Two traits which obtained the most selection are: (1) Ability to stimulate thought curiosity which has been 14/35 percentage. In fact a “successful university professor” first of all is a person who awake thought curiosity and stimulate the thought. Another trait which is less regarded is preparation and organization of courses which has been 10/96 percentage and is relative to teaching method and its presentation. Regarding to student feedback shows that professors to specific extent expect that to have an interaction with students in class situations. Characteristics of this professor which is agreement with scientific states like research ability is selected through quantitative frequency. Only a few numbers of people have mentioned to private characteristics of professor such as intimacy and sense of humor, and it is interesting that flexibility and professor appearance as necessary cases for good and successful teaching is not regarded. Therefore , with attention to these findings in table shows that with regard to selection of characteristics which is important in a “successful university professor”, selections of professor at Human Science Faculty are as follow: (1) Ability to stimulate curiosity, (2) expansion of thinking process in student, (3) attention to student feedback . Professors at Basic Faculty have selected these cases with rather more frequency: (1) expansion of thought in student, (2) Ability to stimulate thought curiosity and (3) creating motivation in students.

At Humanities Faculty a “successful university professor” is a person who a wakes thought curiosity, has thought expansion and interact a with students professors at basic science Faculty think about a “successful university professors” as a person who stimulate the thought, have ability to stimulate thought curiosity and discuss in course preparation. Professors at Agricultural Faculty emphasize on : (1) Ability to stimulate thought curiosity (2) expansion of thought process (3) preparation and course organization , while professors at technical and engineering Faculty emphasized on: (1) Ability to stimulate thought curiosity(2) expansion of thought processes (3) preparation and course organization. In fact at agricultural college “a successful professor” is a person who works on thought curiosity in answering to thought expansion and more attention to preparation and preparing in teaching. And professors at technical and Engineering Faculty were agree with them and emphasized on ability to awake thought curiosity and expansion if thought processes and course organization. Professors at physical education Faculty emphasized on (1) ability to stimulate thought curiosity (2) regarding to student feedback (3) creating motivation in students. While Architect Faculty emphasized on (1) creating motivation (2) expansion of thought processes (3) ability to stimulate thought curiosity.

From professors’ viewpoint at Physical Education Faculty, “a successful professor” is a person who stimulates thought curiosity of students. But professors at Architect College gave priority to creating motivation and after that they regarded to though curiosity. In addition, with disregarding to type of college, professors didn’t give so high score to friendly behavior

with students, willingness to help students, language rhetoric, and sense of humor, flexibility, and teacher appearance.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this research professors of Guilan University know “successful university professor” a person who can expand thought processes as a professional person and stimulate thought curiosity in them through interaction with students. In this research, students know “a successful university professor” a person who can present the materials in a fun and organized way .so there are differences between professors understanding from “successful professor” students understanding that this issue should be considered in determining the standards for evaluating teaching quality. In determining the standards for evaluating teaching quality, in this research professors and students have agreed in one case: private characteristics of professor as a necessary case for playing their capable and mighty role is not considered by teachers while students’ emphasis on it. In this research there is an agreement between professors viewpoint in different colleges about a “good professor”.

Therefore, in this part, characteristic related to having enough information about content of materials is place in low rank, while skill and dominance on knowledge for “successful university education” is placed in high rank. It seems that experience and reliable background is necessary for a “successful teaching”. Pragmatism and certainty maybe considered evident and obvious and so they’re placed in middle range. Our findings are not his research; board of education members generally have less regard to thought curiosity and students improvement. Although this issue has been researched in board of education members of a university, we should deal with extraordinary caution. University effective teaching for different people and at different level with superior education has different implication which is needed to be considered at different levels of colleges.

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