

## TEACHER MODELS AT THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION

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### Abstract

This paper describes partial results of the research implemented by the support of the SGS-2016-063 project – Studying at the Faculty of Education as a place for forming future teacher's professional identity. It focuses on university teachers who work at the faculty of education. Their role is specific, because they also mediate the socializing function of the model for their students, future teachers. The study focuses on student assessment of personality traits and the competencies of university educators, in terms of expectation and fulfilment of this expectation. From a methodological point of view, this is a mixed research.

**Keywords:** Personality Traits, University Teacher, Model of the Teacher, Professional Identity.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The role of professors teaching at faculties of education is specific, since they function as a socializing role as a teaching model for their students, future teachers. "To be a teacher – to become a bearer of educational ideas and an ideal of erudition – means, firstly, to be a personality. And strictly speaking this is something which cannot be trained or learnt. Only a person who educates oneself, is not afraid to experience problems of human existence in its entirety, is able to study oneself and question their own abilities, can become a trustworthy teacher." (Kořa in Vališová, Kasíková, 2007, p. 16).

Development of a teacher's personality is not an easy issue. It is a complex and long-term process. Nelešovská (2005) describes three dimensions of socio-professional teacher training. These are: a theoretical (knowledge), a practical (ability), and a personality dimension (value). Only their interconnection can develop a fully-fledged, professionally prepared teacher.

During their undergraduate preparation students need to clarify their professional motivation and vision of their future connected to this profession. They should be convinced in their future competencies to become successful teachers, and formulate the fundamental outlines of their personal "pedagogical philosophy". During this process of professional identity development, students are being influenced by their teachers at the faculty of education.

The presented paper aims to find the role of teachers at faculties of education in this trend. It deals with the question of what character traits, specific abilities and skills, values and attitudes a university professor should adhere to, and how they should act in accordance to their students' expectations and wishes.

Whether student's expectations are met while interacting with their teachers and if that may have a fundamental impact for the development of professional identity as future educators.

## **2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

Expectations for fulfilling a quality teaching role are high. Václav Holeček (2014, p. 9) reminds: "When NASA employees were looking for a profession that would require similar personality traits as a top-level pilot, the computer determined a teacher to be the closest from hundreds of 'professiograms'." One may then say that educating at schools is as demanding as to fly a space shuttle, and perhaps even more difficult and dangerous.

Göbelová and Seberová (2012) describe an effective pedagogue as a professional who is not focused only on their field, but also focused on a positive climate of the group; one who is able to put managerial methods into practice which leads to students' cooperation and involvement into the learning process; they use a wider spectrum of evaluation methods, and they expect high performance while establishing requirements in an adequate way – in such a way that leads to achievement of students' best possible results. Factors which are also equally important are teacher's positive approach and enthusiasm for their study field.

Researches dealing with the profile of university teachers from students' point of view show that the expected qualities of professors are mainly: communicative competencies, fair assessment, ability to connect with students and to enrich them with the knowledge they have, and to respect the ethic of their profession in general (Savescu, Crista, 2014). The ideal teacher is well-trained, empathetic, creative, and communicative (Eftimie, 2015), they should have clear discourse, be informed, and competent. A person who has an authoritarian attitude is considered the worst university teacher (Muñoz et al., 2000).

Based on the results of this study it seems, students mostly appreciate professional competencies of their professors, on one side, and ability to develop a positive social climate, ability to be empathetic, and ability to fairly assess, on the other side.

## **3. PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH**

The subject matter is a university professor at a faculty of education as an educational model. Therefore, fundamental aims were set: to find what personal traits and other characteristics are crucial for a teaching profession and students expect from their teachers; to detect if students' expectations are met when they interact with teachers; and formulate how students are influenced by real situations in terms of their future teacher profession.

Two research questions were specified:

- What characteristics (personal traits, knowledge, abilities, competencies, values) are most expected from a university teacher at a faculty of education?
- To what extent are these expectations fulfilled in a real-life situation? (How often do students encounter them?)

From the methodological point of view, this is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods.

The objective of the qualitative analysis was to develop a questionnaire for a follow-up quantitative measurement. During this part of the research interviews with 8 students of surveyed study fields were realised. An open question was asked: "How would you define an ideal university teacher?" This probe generated 20 descriptive categories: positive, intelligent, empathetic (humane), fair, self-confident, inspiring, helpful (co-operative), friendly (kind), consistent, has authority, active, creates a positive climate, motivates students, respects students, able to admit a mistake, interested in their field, an expert in their field, links theory with practice, capable didactic.

20 questionnaire items were formulated from these statements. Subsequently, they were provided with two five-point differential scale: a scale of needs and a scale of fulfilment. The scale of needs represents the importance of each mentioned teacher's personal characteristic; the scale of fulfilment represents how often students encounter this type of teacher during their studies.

The target group was represented by 130 students of Faculty of Education. Respondents of all teaching specializations at this faculty were included – 67 study a two-year graduate program for secondary education, in a full-time program, or in a distance program (teachers who are studying to gain supplemental qualification); 63 study a five-year graduate program for pre-primary, or primary education. The age dispersion of participants was from 20 to 58 years old.

#### 4. RESULTS

The complete results of the survey are shown by the following tables. Table 1 indicates a descriptive summary in the scale of need, and it answers the first research question: What characteristics (personal traits, knowledge, abilities, competencies, values) are most expected from a university teacher at FE?

**Table 1. Scale of needs characteristics**

<i>I expect that a university professor will be...</i>	<b>NEED</b>		<i>I expect that a university professor will...</i>	<b>NEED</b>	
	<b>A</b>	<b>SD</b>		<b>A</b>	<b>SD</b>
<i>Positive</i>	4,05	0,80	<i>have authority</i>	3,99	0,83
<i>intelligent</i>	4,52	0,67	<i>be active</i>	3,79	0,92
<i>empathetic, humane</i>	4,45	0,67	<i>create a positive climate</i>	4,08	0,75
<i>Fair</i>	4,65	0,58	<i>motivate students</i>	4,41	0,65
<i>self-confident</i>	3,46	0,83	<i>respect students</i>	4,43	0,69
<i>Inspiring</i>	4,02	0,72	<i>be able to admit a mistake</i>	4,42	0,75
<i>helpful, co-operative</i>	4,13	0,64	<i>be interested in their field</i>	4,45	0,63
<i>friendly, kind</i>	3,79	0,77	<i>be an expert in their field</i>	4,08	0,86
<i>able to encourage</i>	4,00	0,74	<i>link theory with practice</i>	4,59	0,64
<i>Consistent</i>	4,01	0,72	<i>be a capable didactic</i>	4,26	0,75

Table 1 demonstrates the highest average score of 3 categories. Based on the word formulation at the differential scale those three characteristics of a university teacher seem to be almost indispensable. Students primarily expect fairness from their teachers. This is also the statement with the lowest standard deviation. Furthermore, a trait that is also highly regarded is intelligence of an educator – students strongly agree on this as well. A crucial factor is the ability to transform theory into practice, however, this result is not as definite as the previous two. The scale of needs indicates differences between individual study fields. Whereas the group of future pre-primary and primary teachers requires their teachers to be “empathetic, humane (average 4,56), the second group, future secondary teachers, wishes educators to be “respectful towards students” (average 4,51). These results greatly correspond to the research conclusions of Savescu, Crista (2014).

Table 2 indicates the fulfilment of students’ previous expectations, and answers the second research question: To what extent are these expectations fulfilled in a real-life situation? (How often do students encounter them?).

**Table 2. Scale of needs characteristics**

<i>I expect that a university professor will be...</i>	<b>FULFILMENT</b>		<i>I expect that a university professor will...</i>	<i>I expect that a university professor will be...</i>	
	<b>A</b>	<b>SD</b>		<b>A</b>	<b>SD</b>
<i>Positive</i>	3,31	0,70	<i>have authority</i>	3,45	0,68
<i>intelligent</i>	3,88	0,66	<i>be active</i>	3,23	0,81
<i>empathetic, humane</i>	3,18	0,77	<i>create a positive climate</i>	3,09	0,68
<i>Fair</i>	3,42	0,73	<i>motivate students</i>	2,82	0,74
<i>self-confident</i>	3,68	0,78	<i>respect students</i>	3,15	0,78
<i>Inspiring</i>	2,94	0,72	<i>be able to admit a mistake</i>	2,97	0,85
<i>helpful, co-operative</i>	3,35	0,69	<i>be interested in their field</i>	3,94	0,77
<i>friendly, kind</i>	3,15	0,78	<i>be an expert in their field</i>	3,85	0,79
<i>able to encourage</i>	2,90	0,72	<i>link theory with practice</i>	3,10	0,90
<i>Consistent</i>	3,38	0,80	<i>be a capable didactic</i>	3,20	0,82

Students often recognize teachers' personal interest in the study field, intelligence, and professionalism. Respondents basically agree on these items. From the point of view of other preferred characteristics, which are fairness and practicality of lectures, this is the medium frequency contact.

Not as often in comparison to their expectations, students meet teachers who can motivate them, are able to encourage them, are inspiring and charismatic, and can acknowledge a mistake.

The highest correlation between the level of expectation and the level of fulfilment was reached by the statement: "I expect a university professor to be a capable didactic", concretely with the group of students studying programs for secondary education. However, this correlation is negative which means teachers are evaluated negatively in this area.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Students' opinion barely differs in regards to what most crucial characteristics of teachers employed at faculties of education are to be: fairness, ability to connect theory with practice, and intelligence. They also agree with the fact that they meet with intelligent professor "more than often", contrary to fairness – they encounter it significantly less: "less then often"; and they meet ability to transfer theory to practice even "more seldom".

Students are also demonstrably aware of other important personal characteristics and abilities which primarily include character traits, characteristics based on social role and social status of a teacher, and didactic skills.

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