Effective and Ineffective University Teaching from the Students’ and Faculty’s Perspectives: Matched or Mismatched Expectations?

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

EFFECTIVE AND INEFFECTIVE UNIVERSITY TEACHING FROM THE STUDENTS’ AND FACULTY’S PERSPECTIVES: MATCHED OR MISMATCHED EXPECTATIONS?

SYLVIE MARGUERITE RAYMOND

This paper reports on the findings from an investigation conducted in the Arab Gulf region into student and faculty perceptions of effective and ineffective teaching practices at the university level. Samples were drawn from both genders in two dissimilar academic programs: the university preparatory intensive English program (IEP) and the mainstream science program. Specifically, this study focuses on the characteristics of effective and ineffective teaching from the point of view of four population groups: English students, English faculty, science students and science faculty. The method of enquiry made use of both interviews and a questionnaire. Means, ranking, and standard deviation followed by other analyses indicated that there was a high degree of similarity between students and faculty with respect to the perceived attributes of effective and ineffective teaching. It appears that the effective teacher is the mirror image of the ineffective by being imbued with a generous dose of personality traits in addition to skills. Both faculty and students in this research conducted in the Gulf depicted the excellent university professor as someone who: (1) is respectful, (2) makes classes interesting, (3) is fair in evaluating, (4) cares about students’ success, (5) shows a love for their subject, (6) is friendly, (7) encourages questions and discussion, (8) is always well prepared and organized, and (9) makes difficult subjects easy to learn. Findings of students’ and faculty’s perspectives suggest that effective teaching is the blending of both personality and ability factors. The key factor, however, remains the teacher’s personality.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title page</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of tables</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Reasons for undertaking this study</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Why another study on teaching effectiveness?</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Statement of the problem</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Definition of terms</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Contribution of this study</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Contextualization of the study</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Summary</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Introduction to the literature review</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Conceptual framework – two research constructs</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1 The personality view</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2 The ability view</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 General literature on teacher/teaching effectiveness</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 Introduction</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 In-class attributes – competence</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.3 In-class attributes – performance</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.4 In-class attributes – strategies</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.5 Teacher characteristics</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Teacher Development</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 Introduction</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2 Critical reflection</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.3 Mentoring</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.4 Professional development</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Introduction to the empirical studies</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.1 A synthesis of North American studies reflecting similarities in student and faculty perspectives of effective teachers/teaching</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.5.2 An analysis of studies from around the globe reflecting similarities in student and faculty perspectives of effective teachers/teaching 52

2.5.3 An analysis of studies reflecting differences in student only perspectives of effective teachers/teaching 55

2.5.4 A general portrait of Arab students 56

2.5.4 An analysis of studies reflecting Arab EFL student perspectives of effective teachers/teaching 59

2.6 Summary 61

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY 64

3.1 Introduction 64

3.2 How the empirical studies informed/influenced the research design 64

3.2.1 A summary of the studies on the excellent teacher 68

3.3 The study hypothesis 72

3.4 Design of the study – an overview 73

3.5 Student and faculty demographic data 77

3.6 Research questions 81

3.7 Deciding upon appropriate instrumentation 82

3.7.1 An overview 82

3.7.2 The research design 83

3.8 Data collection procedures 83

3.8.1 Interviews 84

3.8.2 Pilot testing 85

3.8.3 Consent 88

3.8.4 Distribution of questionnaire and data collection 89

3.9 Data analysis procedures 90

3.9.1 Interviews 90

3.9.2 Questionnaire 92

3.9.3 Questionnaire qualitative data analysis (Part C) 94

3.10 Limitations and assumptions 96

3.10.1 Limitations 96

3.10.2 Questionnaire design 97

3.10.3 No assurance 97

3.10.4 Small scale 98

3.10.5 Assumptions 99
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction 100

4.1 Research question 1: What are the predominant characteristics used by the study participants to describe excellent teaching? 100

4.1.1 Personality 100

4.1.1.1 Are respectful of their students 102

4.1.1.2 Make classes interesting/fun 104

4.1.1.3 Are fair in grading and evaluating student work 105

4.1.1.4 Care about students succeeding in their course 106

4.1.1.5 Show that they really like their subject 107

4.1.1.6 Are friendly to students 108

4.1.2 Ability 110

4.1.2.1 Encourage students’ questions and discussion 111

4.1.2.2 Are always well prepared and organized 112

4.1.2.3 Make difficult subjects easy to learn 113

4.2 Research question 2: To what extent are student perceptions of effective teaching similar to those of faculty? 115

4.2.1 Matches 115

4.2.2 Mismatches 116

4.2.3 Personality 118

4.2.3.1 English students compared to English teachers 119

4.2.3.2 Science students compared to science faculty 121

4.2.4 Ability 122

4.2.4.1 English students compared to English teachers 123

4.2.4.2 Science students compared to science faculty 125

4.3 Research question 3: To what extent are student perceptions of ineffective teaching similar to those of faculty? 126

4.3.1 Is disrespectful of students 128

4.3.2 Does not care 129

4.3.3 Is boring 131

4.3.4 Cannot explain well 132

4.3.5 Is unprepared for class 133

4.3.6 Is unfair in grading 134

4.4 Research question 4: Are the descriptors used to describe effective teaching amongst the four population groups focused more on the ability or on the personality view? 136
4.4.1 Questionnaire
4.4.2 Transcribed interviews
4.4.3 Open-ended question
4.4.4 Literature review

4.5 Research question 5: To what extent do mediating factors such as academic discipline and participants’ gender have an effect on the portrait of the excellent teacher?

4.5.1 Personality as a mediating factor
4.5.2 Ability as a mediating factor
4.5.3 Gender as a mediating factor

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction
5.2 Summary of the findings
5.2.1 Findings related to the literature
5.2.2 Findings related to the research questions
5.2.3 Findings related to the study hypotheses
5.2.4 Summary of the findings
5.3 Recommendations
5.3.1 Teaching implications
5.3.2 Administrative and teacher training program implications
5.3.3 Future research implications
5.4 Problematizing the study
5.5 Personal reflections

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Characteristics of Excellent Teaching Meta-themes
Appendix 2: Data Collecting Instrument
  – Stage One – Student
Appendix 3: Data Collecting Instrument
  – Stage One – Faculty
Appendix 4: Transcriptions of Stage One
- Taped Interviews - Samples From Each of the Four Population Groups 172

Appendix 5: Effective Teaching Verb Referent Categories Extracted from Interviews: Summed, Categorized and Ranked 176

Appendix 6: Ineffective Teaching Verb Referent Categories Extracted from Interviews: Summed, Categorized and Ranked 177

Appendix 7: Teaching Excellence Questionnaire - Draft (Student Questionnaire) 178

Appendix 8: Teaching Excellence Questionnaire - Draft (Faculty Questionnaire) 180

Appendix 9: Teaching Excellence Questionnaire - Final (Student Questionnaire) 182

Appendix 10: Teaching Excellence Questionnaire - Final (Faculty Questionnaire) 184

Appendix 11: Part B of Questionnaire – Personality and Ability Traits Differentiated 186

Appendix 12: Sample Consent Form for Human Subjects 187

Appendix 13: Exeter University Research Participant Consent Form 188

Appendix 14: Cover Letter to Faculty Respondents 189

Appendix 15: Part C - Characteristics of Effective and Ineffective Teachers Extracted From Open-ended Question and Ranked 190

Appendix 16: Part C Findings Ranked and Compared Against Appendix 1 Meta-themes 192

Appendix 17: Demographic Sample Distribution 193

Appendix 18: Demographic Sample – Frequency and Percentile Distribution 194

Appendix 19: Questionnaire Personality and Ability Measures – Means and Ranks from Overall Study Sample 195

Appendix 20: Questionnaire Personality Measures – A comparison of English Students’ and Science Students’ Means, Ranks and Differences 196

Appendix 21: Questionnaire Personality Measures – A comparison of English Faculty’s and Science Faculty’s Means, Ranks and Differences 197
Appendix 22: Questionnaire Personality Measures
   – A comparison of English Students’ and English Faculty’s Means, Ranks and Differences 198

Appendix 23: Questionnaire Personality Measures
   A comparison of Science Students’ and Science Faculty’s Means, Ranks and Differences 199

Appendix 24: Questionnaire Personality Measures
   – A comparison of Students’ and Faculty’s Means, Ranks and Differences 200

Appendix 25: Questionnaire Ability Measures
   A comparison of English Students’ and Science Students’ Means, Ranks and Differences 201

Appendix 26: Questionnaire Ability Measures
   A comparison of English Faculty’s and Science Faculty’s Means, Ranks and Differences 202

Appendix 27: Questionnaire Ability Measures – A comparison of English Students’ and English Faculty’s Means, Ranks and Differences 203

Appendix 28: Questionnaire Ability Measures – A comparison of Science Students’ and Science Faculty’s Means, Ranks and Differences 204

Appendix 29: Questionnaire Ability Measures – A comparison of Students’ and Faculty’s Means, Ranks and Differences 205

Appendix 30: Chi Square Analysis – Independent Variable Association With Personality Measure (Dependent Variables) 206

Appendix 31: Chi Square Analysis – Independent Variable Association With Ability Measure (Dependent Variables) 207

REFERENCES 208
# LIST OF TABLES

2. 1 Classification of excellent teacher characteristics  

3.1 Characteristics of the excellent teacher extracted from the empirical studies – rank ordered  

3.2 Student demographic data (N = 69)  

3.3. Student demographic data – Nationality (N = 69)  

3.4 Faculty demographic data (N = 64)  

3.5 Faculty demographic data – Nationality (N = 64)  

3.5 Demographic coding  

4.1 Descriptive statistics of the personality traits measure of effective teaching by entire sample (α=0.05)  

4.2 Part C – Characteristics of effective teachers extracted from open-ended questions and rank ordered  

4.3 Descriptive statistics used to compare student and faculty perspectives on the importance of personality characteristics of excellent teachers  

4.4 Descriptive statistics of the ability traits measure of effective teaching by entire sample (α=0.05)  

4.5 Descriptive statistics used to compare student and faculty perspectives on the importance of ability characteristics of excellent teachers – open-ended question  

4.6 Major matches between faculty and students in descriptors used to describe effective teaching  

4.7 Major mismatches between faculty and students in descriptors used to describe effective teaching  

4.8 Student and faculty overall ratings of personality characteristics of effective teaching  

4.9 Student and faculty overall ratings of ability characteristics of effective teaching
4.10 Student and faculty ratings of ineffective teaching extracted from interviews (I) and open-ended question (O) 127

4.11 A comparison of effective and ineffective teaching characteristics 128

4.12 A comparison of the six highest-ranked characteristics of effective teaching across four sources 138

4.13 Counts of authors who mentioned a specific ability or personality trait in the literature review (Extracted from Appendix 1) 140

4.14 Chi-square test for association between the academic discipline and importance at significant level ($\alpha=0.05$) on the personality characteristics measure 142

4.15 Chi-square test for association between the academic discipline and importance at significant level ($\alpha=0.05$) on the ability characteristics measure 144

4.16 Chi-square test for association between the respondent gender and importance at significant level ($\alpha=0.05$) on the personality characteristics measure 148