

A Study on Teacher Role Expectations among Students at Different School Levels in Taiwan

LI-JUNG CHEN,¹

CHI-KAO CHANG², CHIN-MOU CHENG³

¹ Department of Industrial Technology Education, National Kaohsiung Normal University

² Department of Business Administration, Fortune Institute of Technology

³ College of Humanities and Management, Fooyin University

116, Ho Ping 1Rd., Kaohsiung ;1-10,Nong-Chang Rd.,Dah Liao, Kaohsiung; 151,
Chinhshueh Rd., Ta-liao, Kaohsiung TAIWAN, REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Abstract: - The success of education depends on the quality of teachers. How well the teachers play their roles is decisive to the success of education. The researchers referred to the literature at home and abroad, and used related questionnaires, and compiled a "Questionnaire on Teacher Role Expectations" to survey students from junior, senior and vocational high schools as well as colleges and universities in Taiwan. Based on the study results, conclusions and suggestions were proposed for the purpose of providing references for the educators and teacher education institutions. The following results are obtained: (1) Teacher role expectations focus more on the aspects of "a guide to students' life;" "a shaper of instructional environments;" "a mediator of students' knowledge;" and "a knowledge worker." (2) Compared to students from colleges or universities, students from junior, senior or vocational high schools have higher teacher role expectations in the "philosophical aspect;" "social aspect;" "psychological aspect;" and "contemporary need aspect." (3) Students from junior, senior or vocational high schools have higher teacher role expectations for "a guide to students' life;" "an inquirer of students' problems;" "a friend of students;" "a cultivator of students' democratic knowledge;" "an inspirer of students' rationality;" "a mediator of classic masterpieces;" and "a cultivator of social citizens." (4) In terms of the social aspect, compared to students from colleges and universities, students from junior, senior or vocational high schools have higher teacher role expectations for "a negotiator and coordinator;" "a shaper of instructional environments;" "a reformer for promoting schools;" "a communicator of social culture;" "a carer of social problems" and "a corrector of students' sub-culture." (5) In terms of the psychological aspect, students from junior, senior or vocational high schools have higher teacher role expectations for "a mediator of students' knowledge;" "a problem solver;" "an assistant for students to make choices;" "an adviser for students' research;" "a class leader;" "a provider of students' learning platforms;" "a counselor of students' behavior;" "an inspirer of students' learning;" "a student counselor;" "a diagnostician of students' problems;" and "a role model for students." (6) In terms of the contemporary need aspect, students from junior, senior, and vocational high schools have higher teacher role expectations for "a manager of students' emotions;" "a developer of educational research;" "a knowledge worker;" and "a knowledge manager." The following suggestions are proposed: (1) Teacher role expectations respond to students' needs, and can serve as references for educators and teacher education institutions. (2) For students at different school levels, educators should play teachers' roles more suitably in teaching students. (3) Teachers should apply the teachers' roles mainly based on the "psychological aspect" in order to guide and assist students. (4) Teachers should be strengthened in their trainings of diverse thinking in order to teach their students how to bravely face challenges.

Key-Words: teacher role expectations, students at different school levels, philosophical aspect, social aspect; psychological aspect, contemporary need aspect

1 Introduction

"Excellent," "sophisticated," and "high-quality" education has been the common goal that educational reformers in all countries try to pursue [3] [4]. The society in the new era is one with democratization, liberalization, high-technology, internationalization

and informationalization, all of which influence both school education and class organizations. The key to achieve the goal of educational reform lies in teachers, who are the center of education and the life of education. The success of education depends on the quality of teachers. How well the teachers play

their roles is decisive to the success of education [7] [8] [9] [10]. The school was characterized by an emphasis on high student expectations, school staff cohesiveness, engaging instruction, high parent involvement, and multicultural instruction integrated with curriculum[11].Increasingly, teacher educators ask new teachers to learn how to elicit and then use students' existing ideas as a basis for helping them construct new, more reasoned, more accurate or more disciplined understandings[29].Generally, students were satisfied with the course content and teaching methods. It was important that the teacher was encouraging and positive and challenged them to speak up in class[27].A variety of strategies is essential to increase teaching effectiveness and decrease stress for the busy preceptor who juggles the roles of teacher and clinician[14].The expectations of PBL teaching/learning strategy are that it will enable nurses to develop skills required for professional practice including: enquiry, reasoning, interpersonal and lifelong learning skills[4].Then, we consider the role of ethnic identity in self-exploration and vocational guidance with adolescents[23].

The researchers referred to the literature at home and abroad, and used related questionnaires, and compiled a "Questionnaire on Teacher Role Expectations" to survey the teacher role expectations among students from junior, senior and vocational high schools as well as colleges and universities in Taiwan, in terms of the psychological aspect, social aspect, philosophical aspect and contemporary need aspect[1] [2] [5] [6]. The differences existing in the four aspects of "teacher role expectations" among students at different levels were also described and investigated. Based on the study results, conclusions and suggestions were proposed for the purpose of providing references for educators and teacher education institutions.

2 Research Design

This study applies the theories of philosophy, psychology, society and contemporary needs to construct the concepts of teacher role expectations. The content of the questionnaire was drafted, and a pilot study was conducted. After the content of the questionnaire was revised, a formal survey was conducted. The basic structure of the study is constructed through the use of the "Questionnaire on Teacher Role Expectations," while the aim is to discuss different teacher role expectations among students from junior, senior and vocational high schools as well as colleges and universities.

2.1 Subject

Based on the principle of cluster sampling, subjects of the study were from 9 junior high schools, with 408 valid samples; 8 senior and vocational high schools, with 337 valid samples; 6 colleges and universities, with 357 valid samples. Subjects were sampled from all the grades in each school, serving as representatives.

2.2 Instrument

This study applies the "Questionnaire on Teacher Role Expectations," which is in accordance with the theoretical structures of philosophy, psychology, society and contemporary needs. The reliability and accuracy of the research instrument reach significant levels. The reliability coefficient in the questionnaire is as follows: the psychological aspect, .89; the social aspect, .88; the philosophical aspect, .87; and the contemporary need aspect, .85.

The expert meeting was convened, while those experts got the basis for the "content validity," and adopted the factor analysis to verify the construct validity of the questionnaire as well as to maintain the factors with characteristic values higher than 1. After the varimax rotation was applied, four factors were obtained, with a total variance of 52.19%.

2.3 Procedure

A total of 1,450 questionnaires were sent out, while 1,300 ones were returned, with an 89.66% return rate; the valid ones accounted for 1,102, with an 84.77% valid rate. In addition to calculating the means and standard deviations, the obtained data were tested with other statistical methods, including the t-test, F-test, ANOVA and Scheffe's post-hoc test. The obtained data were analyzed, while the findings of the statistical results were further analyzed by ANOVA in order to verify the differences in teacher role expectations among students with different educational backgrounds. When the F-value reached the significant level, the Scheffe post-hoc comparisons were made.

3 Results

There are 1,102 valid samples in this study. Among these samples, the ratio of the male to the female is 57.17:42.83; the junior high school students to senior and vocational high school students, and to college and university students; 37.02: 30.38: 32.40.

3.1 Philosophical Aspect of Teacher Role Expectations

In terms of the philosophical aspect, the teacher role expectations of sampled students for "a guide to students' life" ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 1.00$) reached the

highest value, while “a provider of students’ eternal values” ($M = 3.13$, $SD = .98$), the lowest. In other words, in the philosophical aspect, the students in Taiwan had the highest teacher role expectations for “a guide to students’ life,” which had the highest value, while the lowest, “a provider of students’ eternal values.”

“A guide to students’ life” reached the highest value, probably because of the diversified society, liberalized economy, democratized politics and localized care for the local geography and history as well as the ever-changing educational policies. So students need more guidance from teachers than ever before. In addition, the social values tend to be more diversified and open now. As a result, values have also become more diversified, while it becomes more difficult to obtain final conclusions of eternal values. This maybe is the reason why the teacher’s role as “a provider of students’ eternal values” had the lowest value [13] [15].

3.2 Social Aspect of Teacher Role Expectations

In terms of the social aspect, the teacher role expectations of sampled students for “a shaper of instructional environments” ($M = 3.25$, $SD = .92$) reached the highest value, while “a developer for assisting communities” ($M = 3.10$, $SD = .91$), the lowest. In other words, in terms of the social aspect, students in Taiwan had the highest teacher role expectations for “a shaper of instructional environments,” which had the highest value, while the lowest, “a developer for assisting communities.”

“A shaper of instructional environments” reached the highest value, because the students usually stay in school for more than eight hours a day. Good instructional environments can inspire students’ learning potentials, enhance their moral quality as well as noble thoughts and feelings, and strengthen their learning motivations. Students, as a result, eagerly hope that their teachers can play the role as a shaper of instructional environments. “A developer for assisting communities” scored the lowest, mainly because the current education stresses the development of intellect, and the knowledge has become narrowed. Students, as a result, are not only unfamiliar with, but also unenthusiastic about the development of communities. This shortcoming should be rectified.

3.3 Psychological Aspect of Teacher Role Expectations

In terms of the psychological aspect, the teacher role expectations of sampled students for “a mediator of students’ knowledge” ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.08$)

reached the highest value, while “a student counselor” ($M = 3.32$, $SD = .94$), the lowest. In other words, in the psychological aspect, the students had the highest teacher role expectations for “a mediator of student knowledge,” which had the highest value, while the lowest, “a student counselor.”

The results indicate that education in Taiwan is mainly designed for a higher education. What students attach importance to is the intellectual education focusing on knowledge. This also shows that both schools and teachers do not pay much attention to the guidance and assistance of students’ psychological aspect [20] [22].

3.4 Contemporary Need Aspect of Teacher Role Expectations

In terms of the contemporary need aspect, the teacher role expectations of sampled students for “a knowledge worker” ($M = 3.27$, $SD = .93$) reached the highest value, while “a reformer of social advancement” ($M = 3.02$, $SD = .93$), the lowest. In other words, in the contemporary need aspect, the students had the highest teacher role expectations for “a knowledge worker,” which had the highest value, while the lowest, “a reformer of social advancement.”

The contemporary society now has entered the era of knowledge management. Teachers can no longer only play roles of knowledge instructors, but knowledge workers themselves. The role as “a reformer of social advancement” scored the lowest, largely because the position of teachers now has become less significant. In addition, their thought no longer is more highly respected by people in the society as ever before. For students, as a result, teachers have become less capable in playing the role of a reformer of social advancement [26] [28].

3.5 Differences in Teacher Role Expectations among Students at Different School Levels

3.5.1 Differences in Teacher Role Expectations

The variable, “students at different school levels” in Taiwan, showed significance differences in “teacher role expectations.” The F-values in the four aspects, namely, the philosophical aspect, social aspect, psychological aspect, and contemporary need aspect; are 62.68, 2.28, 91.38 and 22.20, respectively, which all reach the significant levels.

After the post-hoc comparisons were made, students from junior, senior and vocational high schools attach more importance to teacher role expectations. Especially, since the mentality of students at junior or senior high schools is not fully

mature, teachers' words and needs have great influence on them, while they also have great expectations for teachers. The mentality of students at colleges or universities, on the other hand, is relatively mature. Also, they have higher autonomy, and as a result, have fewer expectations for teachers' roles [17] [18] [23] [24].

3.5.2 Differences in Teacher Role Expectations in the Philosophical Aspect

As to "a guide to students' life," the mean of sampled junior high school students is 3.66 (SD = .97); senior and vocational high school students, 3.65 (SD = .85); college and university students, 3.44 (SD = 1.00), all of which reach the statistical significance ($F = 58.15, p < .05$). After the Scheffe post-hoc test was conducted, it was found that the means among students from junior, senior and vocational high schools are significantly higher than that of college and university students. Thus, it can be referred that students from junior, senior and vocational high schools need more guidance in life from their teachers.

With regard to "a friend of students," the mean of sampled junior high school students is 3.55 (SD = 1.05); senior and vocational high school students, 3.47 (SD = .94); college and university students, 3.02 (SD = .93), which reach the statistical significance ($F = 31.73, p < .05$). After the Scheffe post-hoc test was conducted, it was found that the means among students from junior, senior and vocational high schools are significantly higher than that of college and university students. Thus, it can be referred that students from junior, senior and vocational high schools prefer to treat teachers as their friends.

With regard to "a provider of students' eternal values," the mean of sampled junior high school students is 3.18 (SD = 1.08); senior and vocational high school students, 3.21 (SD = .87); college and university students, 3.01 (SD = .95), which reach the statistical significance ($F = 4.50, p < .05$). After the Scheffe post-hoc test was conducted, it is found that the means among students from junior, senior and vocational high schools are significantly higher than that of college and university. Thus, it can be inferred that students from junior, senior and vocational high schools prefer to pursue eternal values.

3.5.3 Differences in Teacher Role Expectations in the Social Aspect

With regard to "a negotiator and coordinator," the mean of sampled junior high school students is 3.25 (SD = .96); senior and vocational high school students, 3.24 (SD = .79); college and university students, 3.02 (SD = .85), which reach the statistical significance ($F = 7.85, p < .05$). After the Scheffe

post-hoc test was conducted, it is found that the means among students from junior, and senior and vocational high schools are significantly higher than that of college and university students. Thus, it can be inferred that compared to college and university students, students from junior, senior and vocational high schools need more assistance from their teachers concerning negotiation and coordination.

Regarding "a shaper of instructional environments," the mean of sampled junior high school students is 3.40 (SD = .94); senior and vocational high school students, 3.33 (SD = .83); college and university students, 3.01 (SD = .93), which reach the statistical significance ($F = 19.73, p < .05$). After the Scheffe post-hoc test was conducted, it is found that the means among students from junior, senior and vocational high schools are significantly higher than that of college and university students. Thus, it can be inferred that compared to college and university students, junior, senior and vocational high school students attach more importance to the creation of instructional environments.

Regarding "a reformer for promoting schools," the mean of sampled junior high school students is 3.24 (SD = .99); senior and vocational high school students, 3.18 (SD = .85); college and university students, 2.99 (SD = .93), which reach the statistical significance ($F = 7.02, p < .05$). After the Scheffe post-hoc test was conducted, it is found that the means among students from junior, senior and vocational high schools are significantly higher than that of college and university students. Thus, it can be inferred that compared to college and university students, junior, senior and vocational high school students pay more attention to school innovation.

3.5.4 Differences in Teacher Role Expectations in the Psychological Aspect

With reference to "an assistant for students to make choices," the mean of sampled junior high school students is 3.51 (SD = 1.00); senior and vocational high school students, 3.65 (SD = .83); college and university students, 2.96 (SD = 1.02), which reach the statistical significance ($F = 52.01, p < .05$). After the Scheffe post-hoc test was conducted, it is found that the means among students from junior, and senior and vocational high schools are significantly higher than that of college and university students. Thus, it can be inferred that compared to college and university students, junior, senior and vocational high school students are more likely to regard their teachers as assistants whenever making choices.

With reference to "a mediator of students' knowledge," the mean of sampled junior high school students is 3.92 (SD = .91); senior and vocational

high school students, 3.87 (SD = .82); college and university students, 2.90 (SD = 1.17), which reach the statistical significance ($F = 25.39, p < .05$). After the Scheffe post-hoc test was conducted, it is found that the means among students from junior, and senior and vocational high schools are significantly higher than that of college and university students. Thus, it can be inferred that compared to college and university students, junior, senior and vocational high school students are more likely to regard their teachers as mediators of knowledge.

With regard to "a counselor of students' behavior," the mean of sampled junior high school students is 3.66 (SD = .94); senior and vocational high school students, 3.64 (SD = .82); college and university students, 3.00 (SD = .99), which reach the statistical significance ($F = 6.47, p < .05$). After the Scheffe post-hoc test was conducted, it is found that the means among students from junior, and senior and vocational high schools are significantly higher than that of college and university students. Thus, it can be inferred that compared to college and university students, junior, senior and vocational high school students are more likely to regard their teachers as counselors of their behaviors.

3.5.5 Differences in Teacher Role Expectations in the Contemporary Need Aspect

With reference to "a manager of students' emotions," the mean of sampled junior high school students is 3.29 (SD = 1.05); senior and vocational high school students, 3.39 (SD = .92); college and university students, 2.91 (SD = .91), which reach the statistical significance ($F = 24.27, p < .05$). Thus, it can be inferred that compared to college and university students, junior, senior and vocational high school students need their teachers more earnestly in teaching them emotional management.

With reference to "a developer of educational research," the mean of sampled junior high school students is 3.31 (SD = .96); senior and vocational high school students, 3.26 (SD = .83); college and university students, 2.98 (SD = .96), which reach the statistical significance ($F = 13.09, p < .05$). Thus, it can be inferred that compared to college and university students, junior, senior and vocational high school students have higher expectations for their teachers to play the role as developers of educational research.

With reference to "a knowledge manager," the mean of sampled junior high school students is 3.32 (SD = 1.01); senior and vocational high school students, 3.34 (SD = .88); college and university students, 2.94 (SD = .90), which reach the statistical significance ($F = 2.73, p < .05$). After the Scheffe post-hoc test was conducted, it is found that the

means among students from junior, senior and vocational high schools are significantly higher than that of college and university students. Thus, it can be inferred that compared to college and university students, junior, senior and vocational high school students have higher expectations for their teachers to play the roles as knowledge managers.

4 Conclusions and Suggestions

4.1 Conclusions

Students have higher expectations for teachers to play the following roles: "a guide to students' life," "a shaper of instructional environments," "a mediator of students' knowledge," and "a knowledge worker." Compared to college and university students, students from junior, senior and vocational high schools attach more importance to the teacher role expectations in the philosophical, social, psychological, and contemporary need aspects.

Compared to college and university students, students from junior, senior and vocational high schools have higher expectations for their teachers to play the following roles: "a guide to students' life," "an inquirer of students' problems," "a friend of students," "a developer of students' democratic knowledge," "an inspirer of students' rationality," "a mediator of classic masterpieces," and "a developer of social citizens," while in comparison with students in colleges and universities, senior and vocational high school students have higher expectations for their teachers to play the role as "providers of students' eternal values."

In terms of the social aspect, students in junior, senior and vocational high schools have higher expectations for their teachers to play the following roles: "a negotiator and coordinator," "a shaper of instructional environments," "a reformer for promoting schools," "a communicator of social culture," "a carer of social problems," and "a corrector of students' sub-culture."

In terms of the psychological aspect, students in junior, senior and vocational high schools have higher expectations for their teachers to play the following roles: "a mediator of students' knowledge," "a problem solver," "an assistant for students to make choices," "an adviser for students' research," "a class leader," "a provider of students' learning platforms," "a counselor of students' behavior," "an inspirer of students' learning," "a student counselor," "a diagnostician of students' problems," and "a role model for students."

In terms of the contemporary need aspect, students in junior, senior and vocational high schools

have higher expectations for their teachers to play the following roles: “a manager of students’ emotions,” “a developer of educational research,” “a knowledge worker,” and “a knowledge manager.”

4.2 Suggestions

After the development of scale, we will contribute toward overcoming the spiritual illness by promoting project of spiritual health. Teachers could cope with types of stressors, such as a serious student problem, a serious problem with an administrator or teacher; and typical problems with preparing for class, and etc. Then assessing the coping strategies of teachers is consistent with the coping theory [19]. This requires the development and evaluation of educational strategies that immerse students in web-based learning [25]. We would present an overview of an embedded teaching design that include classroom teaching and asynchronous threaded discussion in a teaching module in spiritual health promoting course for undergraduate students.

Teacher role expectations are in response to students’ needs; this can serve as references for educators and teacher education institutions.

The empirical results of this study show that with regard to teacher role expectations among students, the means in the four aspects-- philosophical, social, psychological and contemporary need,--are all above

Thus, it is clear that teacher role expectations respond to students’ needs; this can serve as references for educators and teacher education institutions [1] [29] [30] [31].

Educators should play more adequate roles to teach students when encountering students at different school levels.

This study indicates that the variable, “students at different school levels” in Taiwan, reaches significant levels of differences in all the four aspects, namely, the philosophical aspect, the social aspect, the psychological aspect and contemporary need aspect. Teachers, therefore, should play more adequate roles in instructing their students [1] [2] [33] [34].

Teachers should mainly apply the roles in the “psychological aspect” to guide and assist their students.

According to the research results, students have the highest expectations for teachers’ roles in the psychological aspect. With regard to the psychological aspect, all of the means among all the student groups in the study, including junior, senior and vocational high school as well as college and university students, scored very high. This shows that all of the students believe that teacher role expectations in the psychological aspect are very

important. Teachers, therefore, should mainly apply the roles in the psychological aspect to guide and assist their students [1] [35] [36] [37].

Teachers should be strengthened by the trainings in diverse thinking in order to teach their students how to bravely face challenges.

This study shows that students believe that teacher role expectations in the philosophical, social, psychological and contemporary need aspects have a great influence on them. Thus, it is clear that in the democratized, liberalized, open, technological, internationalized, informationalized and new-aged society, teachers need to play diverse roles, and should be strengthened by their own trainings in diverse thinking in order to equip their students with the ability to bravely face challenges in the future society [1] [2] [24] [38] [39].

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