



Qualities of Good College teacher as Perceived by College Students: The case of Medicine & Health Sciences Campus, Hawassa University, Ethiopia

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ABSTRACT

Background: The teaching-learning process of a given academic institution can be affected by numerous factors with Students' perception towards the key players.

Objective: To explore perception of College students towards qualities of GOOD college teacher in Medicine & Health science campus.

Method: A cross-sectional study which involved qualitative method employing 06 Focus Group Discussions & 08 in-depth interviews (IIs) was conducted using semi-structured guides and audiotape recorder.

Results: The students consider to judge a given teacher as "good" were, Course Delivery method & materials used (take attendance, apply day-one, class-one & use LCD projectors), Student assessment & grading pattern (use Continuous assessment, Implement pre-determined assessment modality and Construct all items of tests in exam) & the teacher's personality & social relationship (unbiased, friendly to students and encourage high scorer students).

Conclusion & Recommendation: Misconception & misunderstandings about implementation of Continuous assessment & Day-one, class-one need to be addressed with re-enforcement.

KEYWORDS : Continuous assessment, Teaching learning process

Introduction

College of Medicine & Health Sciences was initially established in 1996 at Dilla College of Teachers' Education & Health sciences. It was then transferred to Hawassa University in 2003 and organized as a separate college. It has its own teaching hospital which was previously owned by the Regional Health Bureau(1).

College of Medicine & Health Sciences currently has three schools & one department with a total of seven undergraduate & two graduate training programs hosting 1712 & 60 students respectively. It has 197 academic staff, 308 health professionals & 255 administrative staff (The 2010 profile). The Clinical Services & Students' Practical Training Director, which is directly accountable to the college head, coordinates the hospital's clinical services & practical trainings of the students in the college. The college has significant number of links and still has high potential to attract partners & donors in the area of capacity building, community services and research(1).

These academic schools/departments are School of Medicine, School of Nursing & Midwifery, School of Public & Environmental Health and Department of Medical Laboratory Science. The schools are different from departments in that there are two or more training programs in schools. Each school/department constitutes module teams or units. Module teams or units consist of related modules or courses and are staffed by relevant instructors(1).

The teaching-learning process of a given academic institution can be affected by numerous factors: Factors related to teachers, students, curricula, facilities & academic & administrative management(2).

Among other factors, however, students' perception towards the above key players of better teaching-learning process contributes significantly. Exploring this perception, hence, could be a good input for any Teaching-learning ENHANCEMENT programs at all levels(2).

As to our knowledge, there are very few literatures in this area and no such studies at Hawassa University, if not other universities and this justifies the need for this study.

Significance of the study

This study will be useful for the college in providing highly valid information on the actual perception of students towards qualities of GOOD college teacher qualitatively So that subsequent Education & administrative intervention programs can be undertaken based on

evidences for Promotion of better teaching-learning environment to ensure Quality education.

The study can also serve as a base line data for those professionals who want to undertake further large scale employing quantitative approach on the issue.

Objectives of the study

General objective

To explore perception of College students towards qualities of GOOD college teacher in Medicine & Health science campus.

Specific objectives

To explore college students' perception towards good qualities that college teachers should possess in college of medicine & Health Sciences

To explore college students' perception towards poor qualities that college teachers shouldn't possess in college of medicine & Health Science

Methods and Materials

Study design

A cross-sectional study design involving qualitative approach was conducted.

Area & Period

The Study was conducted in College of Medicine & Health Sciences, Hawassa University, from June/2014 up to August/2014.

Population

Source population

All Students of the college.

Study population

Purposely selected students of the college.

Sampling Techniques & sample

Purposive sampling technique (a combination of convenient and maximum variation sampling technique) was employed.

The sample size was 06(six) FGDs containing 6-8 participants' homogeneous Groups (Male & female groups from Medicine & Health Science Students) and 8 in-depth interviews on Key informants (students' Council Leader, medical students association chairperson, Student Services Team Leader, Senior College instructors).

Data collection tools and techniques

Data was collected using FGD and in – depth interview guides by 06 trained data collectors. The FGD and the in-depth interview are audio – taped (recorded). The data was collected using guides which are translated to Amharic language & pre-tested. An audio-tape recorder was also used throughout the data collection process for subsequent transcription of responses.

Data analysis

Manual analysis of the data was made after a thematic framework was developed using responses, which were transcribed, coded & compiled in a logbook.

Quality Assurance

The quality of the data was assured by using translated & pre tested guides , training data collectors, making close supervision, providing data collectors and supervisors with field guide, using audio- tape recorder throughout the data collection period, and finally the data analysis process was done supported by the already transcribed data.

Ethical Issues

There is no serious ethical concern (harm or risk) associated with this study. The names or any other personal identifiers of the respondents were not being documented in Guide and confidentiality of responses provided by the respondents was kept strictly maintained. Participation in the study was fully on voluntary basis with verbal consent prior to data collection. Besides, officially written **ethical clearance** was obtained from Institutional Review Board of College of Medicine & Health Sciences, Hawassa University.

Results

findings from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

A total of six (6) FGDs were conducted and each FGD involved 5-6 participants from two population sub-group (strata) Consisting Male College students & female College Students in private settings each session lasting for 30 minutes on average.

The three most common categories of parameters, that students consider to judge a given teacher as "good", were Course Delivery method & materials used, Student assessment & grading pattern & the teacher's personality & social relationship

(table-1 Table-1: Thematic framework analysis of Perception of FGD discussants on Qualities of good college teacher, CMHS,

S/No	Themes	Male College students			Female College Students			Category coding	Rate		Rank(+)
		FGD-1	FGD-2	FGD-3	FGD-1	FGD-2	FGD-3		Male S(+)	Female S(+)	
1	Course Delivery & materials used	-D1, C1 -Attend LCD	-D1, C1 +Attend -LCD	-D1, C1 -Attend +LCD	+D1, C1 +Attend +LCD	+D1, C1 -Attend +LCD	+D1, C1 -Attend +LCD	1=D1, C1 2=Attendance 3=LCD projector	2,3	1,3	First- 3 Second-1,2
2	Student Assessment & Grading Performances	+Cont Asst +Planned asst +All items exam	+Cont Asst +Planned asst +All items exam	+Cont Asst +Planned asst +All items exam	+Cont Asst +Planned asst +All items exam	Cont Asst +Planned asst +All items exam	Cont Asst +Planned asst +All items exam	1=Cont Asst 2=Planned Asst 3=All items Exam	1,2,3,	1,2,3,	First-1,2,3
3	Personality & Social Interaction	+unbiased +Friendly +High Scorers	+unbiased +Friendly +High Scorers	+unbiased +Friendly +High Scorers	+unbiased +Friendly +High Scorers	+unbiased +Friendly +High Scorers	+unbiased +Friendly +High Scorers	1=Unbiased 2=Friendly 3=High scorers	1,2	1,2	First- 1, 2 Second-3

When course delivery method & materials used is taken into account, college students, in most FGD sessions, are found to perceive those teachers who regularly use LCD projectors, apply day-one, class-one & take attendance as good teachers;(table-1). However, discussants reflected that the LCD projector need to be supplemented by other materials, the first day class shouldn't extend beyond introduction & the attendance shouldn't be used for assessment purpose but for input for final decision

A C-II medical student reflecting his opinion on one FGD session about dependency of teachers on LCD projector, said: "Good to employ the technology. However, teachers shouldn't abuse LCD: they use it to make teaching simple to themselves; making learning complex to students. Sometimes, when light turn off, the talk also turn off; class to be postponed for next session!"

Other good quality perception indicators, in this parameter, include maintaining Punctuality, providing course outline & handout and preparation of the day session. The issue of "taking attendance" was a DEBATABLE in some of the FGD sessions.

A 2nd year medical laboratory science student reflecting his opinion on one FGD session about the importance of punctuality of teachers,

said: "Punctuality, I feel, is a best quality of good college teacher. Unfortunately, it is the least practiced by teachers of this college; in my 02 years of experience, I can name may be 03 of such teachers!"

When Student assessment & grading pattern is taken into account, college students, in most FGD sessions, are found to perceive those teachers who regularly use Continuous assessment, Implement pre-determined assessment modality and Construct all items of tests in exam as good teachers;(table-1). However, discussants reflected that the Continuous assessment should be reinforced by feedback, and the exams questions shouldn't be internate-based but curriculum based.

A 3rd year Public Health student reflecting her opinion on one FGD session about the importance feedback & implication of subjectivity in assessment, said: "----Especially teachers who assumed higher administrative positions seem busy that they rarely give feedbacks. I even doubt that they really correct exams (laughing). You know the issue of PAPER in the bed (A) and PAPER in the floor(C) rumor?!"

Other good quality perception indicators, in this parameter, include piratical skill assessment and early communication of test schedules. The issue of "Fixed grading" was a DEBATABLE in some of the FGD sessions

When teacher's personality & social relationship is taken into account, college students, in most FGD sessions, are found to perceive those teachers who are unbiased, friendly to students and encourage high scorer students as good teachers;(table-1). However, discussants reflected that bias is an avoidable, the friendly approach should be with caution and the encouragement of high scorers shouldn't be to the extent of discouraging slow learners (or pressurize even the high scorer).

4.2- Findings from In-depth interviews (IDIs)

A total of 08 key informants' interviews were undertaken and each interview lasted 30 minutes on average and conducted in private settings. The key informants involved were male college students, female college students, college teachers & Students' Council/ association leaders and student service team members.

The three most common categories of parameters, that students instructors consider to judge a given teacher as "good", were Course Delivery method & materials used, Student assessment & grading pattern & the teacher's personality & social relationship (table -2)

Table-2: Thematic framework analysis of Perception of IDI key informants on Qualities of good college teacher, CMHS,

S/ No	Themes	Male College Students		Female College Students		College Teachers			Students' Service Team	Category coding	Rate			Rank(+)
		IDI-1	IDI-2	IDI-1	IDI-2	IDI-1	IDI-2	IDI-3			Male S(+)	Female S(+)	Teachers	
1	Course Delivery & materials used	+D1, C1 + Attend +LCD	+D1, C1 +/- Attend ++LCD	+D1, C1 -Attend -LCD	-D1, C1 -Attend -LCD	-D1, C1 +/- Attend +/-LCD	+D1, C1 + Attend +LCD	-D1, C1 -Attend -LCD	+D1, C1 +Attend -LCD	1=D1, C1 2=Attendance 3=LCD projector	1,2	1	2,3	First-2 2 nd -1 3 rd -3
2	Student Assessment & Grading Performances	+Cont Asst +Planned asst -All items exam	+Cont Asst +Planned asst -All items exam	+Cont Asst +Planned asst -All items exam	-Cont Asst +Planned asst +All items exam	+Cont Asst +Planned asst +All items exam	+Cont Asst +Planned asst +All items exam	+Cont Asst +Planned asst +All items exam	+Cont Asst +Planned asst +All items exam	1=Cont Asst 2=Planned Asst 3=All items Exam	1,2	2,3	1,2,3	First-1 2 nd -2 3 rd -3
3	Personality & Social Interaction	+unbiased +Friendly +High Scorers	+unbiased -Friendly -High Scorers	+unbiased -Friendly -High Scorers	+unbiased +Friendly +High Scorers	+unbiased +Friendly +/- High Scorers	+unbiased -Friendly +High Scorers	+unbiased +Friendly +High Scorers	+unbiased -Friendly +High Scorers	1=Unbiased 2=Friendly 3=High scorers	1,2	1	1,3	First-1 2 nd -2,3

When course delivery method & materials used is taken into account, college students & instructors, in most IDI sessions, are found to perceive those teachers who regularly take attendance, apply day-one, class-one & use LCD projectors as good teachers(table-2). However, informants reflected that the attendance shouldn't be used for assessment purpose but for input for final decision, the first day class shouldn't extend beyond introduction & the LCD projector need to be supplemented by other materials.

Other good quality perception indicators, in this parameter, include maintaining Punctuality, providing course outline & handout and preparation of the day session.

When Student assessment & grading pattern is taken into account, college students & instructors, in most IDI sessions, are found to perceive those teachers who regularly use Continuous assessment, Implement pre-determined assessment

modality and Construct all items of tests in exam as good teachers;(table-2). However, informants reflected that the Continuous assessment should be reinforced by feedback, and the exams questions shouldn't be internate-based but curriculum based.

Other good quality perception indicators, in this parameter, include practical skill assessment and fixed type of grading system but consistently above the set limit (not fluctuating type of rating/intervals).

An instructor in the department of Medical laboratory science reflecting his opinion on one IDI session about the issue of fixed type of grading system, said: "—what is preferable is a "flexible" type of grading; this is because there peculiar features that make one instructor different from another instructor: the material we give to the students differ, conditions of students also differ, the curriculum itself differ. Therefore, in conditions where the competence of teachers vary and the notes we provide to our students are different, even when the standard of exam is not maintained, using fixed grading wouldn't be good"

When teacher's personality & social relationship is taken into account, college students, in most IDI sessions, are found to perceive those teachers who are unbiased, friendly to students and encourage high scorer students;(table-2). However, informants reflected that bias is an avoidable, the friendly approach should be with caution and the encouragement of high scorers shouldn't be to the extent of discouraging slow learners (or pressurize even the high scorer).

Conclusion & Recommendations

The three most common categories of parameters, that students & instructors consider to judge a given teacher as "good", were Course Delivery method & materials used (**take attendance, apply day-one, class-one & use LCD projectors**), Student assessment & grading pattern(**use Continuous assessment, Implement pre-determined assessment modality and Construct all items of tests in exam**) & the teacher's personality & social relationship(**unbiased, friendly to students and encourage high scorer students**).

The ideas explored from college students both from the Focus Group Discussion & in-depth interview are almost similar. However, what college students perceive and college teachers judge the good qualities of college teachers, in some issues, doesn't seem compatible.

It is recommended that the misconception & misunderstandings in relation to implementation of Continuous assessment & Day-one, class-one, among students & some instructors, need to be addressed better re-enforcement of the regulation. It is also recommended that large scale QUANTITATIVE study is indicated to investigate the association of some important variables for better conclusion.

REFERENCES

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