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Characteristics of a Successful University Student

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Abstract: Many university students never graduate. Others may earn their diploma yet they cannot be labeled successful graduates. They are not able to seize the opportunities offered by their university education or prepare for an entry into the labor market. Who can be considered a successful student? How do such students behave and what do they do? The survey conducted herein looked for answers to these questions. The goal of the survey was to define and categorize the most important characteristics of successful students. The research was conducted among 972 students of five faculties at a university in the Czech Republic. The respondents perceived a successful student in a similar way regardless of which faculty they attended, their gender or their level of study program. The main features of a successful university student include motivation, intelligence, industriousness, proactivity, fulfilling the school tasks, good grades and out-of-school activities.

Keywords: Successful Student, University, Characteristics

Introduction

A professional university study can raise students' chances to achieve their personal and professional goals. However, Donohue and Wong (1997 according to VanZile-Flamson 2001) say 40% to 50% of all students never complete their programs of study. In the Czech Republic approximately 15% of students terminate their university studies before graduation, most students terminate their studies in the second year (Kleňhová and Vojtěch 2011, 7). A range of factors influence the possible completion of studies; among them family background, peers and friends, teachers' attitudes, life values (see, e.g., Nelson and Johnson 2011; Hogan et al. 2010; Mbuva 2011). One of the important factors is student practical intelligence.

The study deals with initial steps in a project which final aim was to create a tool for evaluation of practical intelligence of university students. The created tool could be used in predictions of academic success in order to identify talent students or to offer an early helping hand in the adaptation to university environment.

At the start of the project some questions which needed to be answered first were found out. The questions were the following: What does a successful study mean? Is it limited to having good grades? Who is a successful student? How do such students behave? How do they think? The logical follow-up was a survey of who is considered to be a successful student.

Although the survey was realized in the Czech Republic, the findings could be interesting also for experts from other countries, at least as a base for comparison or an inspiration. The study was based on students' opinions and evaluates the stated characteristics of a successful student according to the faculty at which respondents studied, according to respondents' gender and their level of study program (bachelor or master one).

The first part of the paper summarizes the knowledge from the secondary sources. The following part introduces primary research methodology and its results.

Theoretical Framework

Literary sources claim that student success can be evaluated according to the grades (Rubešová 2009; Yazedjian et al. 2008), number of exam retakes, finding out whether the study has been successfully completed and whether it was completed in a standard time frame (Rubešová 2009).

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It can be also evaluated according to the subsequent employment or based on the student's personality development (Ryška 2009; Yazedjian et al. 2008). There is no definite tool and unequivocal approach.

Literature abounds on some personality traits that tend to be mentioned in connection with the successful students:

- motivation (Fryjaufová 2006; Nonis et al. 2005; Schweinle and Helmig 2011);
- life goal idea (Eby, Butts, and Lockwood 2003; Plaminck 2010; Pevatt et al. 2011);
- attitudes (Nelson and Johnson 2011; Schweinle and Helmig 2011) – among others, student must be willing to learn (Insch, McIntyre, and Dawley 2008; Leonard and Insch 2005; Plaminck 2010; Wise, Freund, and Baltes 2002) and positive attitude towards uncertainty is also welcome (Tschannen-Moran and Nestor-Baker 2004);
- traits of character – e.g. adaptability (Hogan et al. 2010; Nonis et al. 2005), ambitiousness (Nonis et al. 2005), proactivity (Eby, Butts, and Lockwood 2003; Nonis et al. 2005), optimism and engagement (Nonis et al. 2005), industriousness (Fryjaufová 2006; Nonis et al. 2005), persistence (Leonard and Insch 2005; Nonis et al. 2005; Simpson and Altman 2000), independence (Fryjaufová 2006; Lane and Gibbons 2007), conscientiousness (Hassan 2013; Judge et al. 1999), self-confidence (Fryjaufová 2006; Lane and Gibbons 2007; Pevatt et al. 2011; Rasdi et al. 2009; Tschannen-Moran and Nestor-Baker 2004), considerateness (Lane and Gibbons 2007), inquisitiveness (Tschannen-Moran and Nestor-Baker 2004);
- abilities – e.g. ability to concentrate (Nonis et al. 2005; Pevatt et al. 2011), reflective ability and ability to react to changes and mistakes (Nonis et al. 2005), talent for the field studied (Fryjaufová 2006), intelligence (Bozomelos 2004; Lane and Gibbons 2007; Nabi 1999) and the ability to learn (Šustrová and Černý, n.d.);
- skills – e.g. study skills (Fryjaufová 2006; Nonis et al. 2005; Pevatt et al. 2011; Šustrová and Černý, n.d.; Tschannen-Moran and Nestor-Baker 2004); organizational and self-regulatory skills (Fryjaufová 2006; Hogan et al. 2010; Insch, McIntyre, and Dawley 2008; Leonard and Insch 2005; Mbuva 2011; Pevatt et al. 2011; Šustrová and Černý, n.d.); interpersonal skills (Fryjaufová 2006; Hogan et al. 2010; Insch, McIntyre, and Dawley 2008); problem-solving skills (Mbuva 2011; Nonis et al. 2005; Wise, Freund, and Baltes 2002).

Literature sources also mention advice on how students should perform to be successful. The suggestions and recommendations can be categorized into following groups:

- study organization – this is related to arranging schedule of classes, e.g. having the schedule arranged to be able to share classes with friends (Leonard and Insch 2005), choosing teachers who grade favorably (Somech and Bogler 1999), arranging the schedule so that courses are well linked (Fryjaufová 2006);
- tasks and duties – e.g. finishing tasks on time (Insch, McIntyre, and Dawley 2008; Leonard and Insch 2005; Sternberg, Wagner, and Okagaki 1993), regular school attendance (Insch, McIntyre, and Dawley 2008; Yazedjian et al. 2008) getting to school on time (Leonard and Insch 2005; Sternberg, Wagner, and Okagaki 1993), fulfilling one's tasks and obligations (Leonard and Insch 2005), volunteering in students' organizations (Leonard and Insch 2005);
- preparation for classes and for learning – this involves regular learning (Insch, McIntyre, and Dawley 2008; Leonard and Insch 2005; Somech and Bogler 1999; Yazedjian et al. 2008), consultations with teachers (Insch, McIntyre, and Dawley 2008; Leonard and Insch 2005; Somech and Bogler 1999; Sternberg, Wagner, and

Okazaki 1993; Yazefjian et al. 2008), discussing the expectations and course requirements with older students (Insch, McIntyre, and Dawley 2008; Leonard and Insch 2005; Somech and Bogler 1999), using personal learning aids such as graphs, diagrams, text notes, highlighting, underlining (Fryjaufová 2006; Prevatt et al. 2011);

- classes – active participation in classes (Insch, McIntyre, and Dawley 2008; Leonard and Insch 2005; Somech and Bogler 1999), note-taking during classes (Fryjaufová 2006; Sternberg, Wagner, and Okazaki 1993);
- environment – getting to know the university library and its services (Leonard and Insch 2005; Somech and Bogler 1999), getting to know the ICT study support (Leonard and Insch 2005; Somech and Bogler 1999), communication with the administrative staff – assistants, librarians, IT workers (Somech and Bogler 1999), getting to know other students (Leonard and Insch 2005), forming relationships offering social support as well as professional challenge and stimulation (Eby, Butts, and Lockwood 2005; Nabi 1999; Tschannen-Moran and Nestor-Baker 2004);
- self-management – looking for feedback (Tschannen-Moran and Nestor-Baker 2004), using a variety of organizational tools – planners, calendars, task lists, files, folders, organizers (Prevatt et al. 2011), profiling in a specific area (Tschannen-Moran and Nestor-Baker 2004).

Some expert studies (e.g. Insch, McIntyre, & Dawley, 2008; N. Leonard & Insch, 2005; Somech & Bogler, 1999) highlight that one of the determinants that can have an impact on academic success is the adaptation to the school environment and acquiring certain relevant expert knowledge – so-called academic tacit knowledge.

Knowledge can be defined as understanding acquired by experience or study (Křibálek 2008). Bureš (2007) defines knowledge as information which is organized and analyzed to become understandable and usable in problem solving or decision-making.

The origin of the word "tacit" is in the Latin word *tacitus* derived from the verb *tacere*, to stay silent. This adjective has a meaning of "silent, unspoken, inadvertent, and hidden". Tacit knowledge is thus knowledge which is harder to describe. It derives from personal experience of every individual, not from common memorizing of information. That means tacit knowledge formation is a process derived from experience, skills, habits, imagination, history, values and opinions. It is often acquired without direct help from other subjects (Tschannen-Moran and Nestor-Baker 2004). Its owners frequently do not realize they have this knowledge and that it helps them reach their goals. People use tacit knowledge spontaneously without realizing its contents (Gourlay 2002).

Sternberg (1997) and Wagner (1985) claim that tacit knowledge enables individuals to reach goals which they personally value. That is why Sternberg and Wagner (in Fox 1997) as well as Colonia-Wilher (1999) or Armstrong (2001) consider acquiring and usage of tacit knowledge as an important aspect of being successful. According to Sternberg (1995) tacit knowledge helps people adapt to their environment – understand how the system works and manage it so that it works also to their benefit. Baunard (1996) holds an opinion that tacit knowledge plays a critical role in understanding ambiguous situations. Organizations or people developing specific skills in manipulation with tacit knowledge show higher effectivity in solving such situations.

The word "academic" in "academic tacit knowledge" means that this knowledge is linked to university environment. It helps students to better manage the situations they are exposed to and thus to reach their goals. Academic tacit knowledge is linked mainly to coping with study requirements, learning, interactions with other students and teachers but also with preparation for the future employment (Matošková et al. 2013).

According to Wagner (1985) the ability to form tacit knowledge is a sign of practical intelligence. Sternberg et al. (1993) and Insch et al. (2008) state that academic tacit knowledge is essential for succeeding in school.

If we were able to measure the amount of tacit knowledge which an individual have, we could probably better predict the academic success of students. Such information could be useful in identifying of talent students or in checking students' levels of adaptation to the university environment. The adaptation to the university environment can be important among others for student retention.

Due to the characteristics of tacit knowledge to measure tacit knowledge directly seems impossible. The methods of tacit knowledge measurement which are used try to distinguish individuals with a larger or smaller amount of tacit knowledge and are based on a self-evaluation of behavior (Somech and Bogler 1999; Leonard and Insch 2005) or on situational judgement tests (Sternberg and Wagner 1992; Colonia-Wilher 1999). In the case of a self-evaluation inventory respondents evaluate on a Likert-type scale how often they behave in the way which the given items describe. The situational questionnaire provides certain situational scenarios and strategies of actions in those situations. The respondent then evaluates on a scale the appropriateness of using the described acting strategy in a given situation.

Because tacit knowledge is context specific, it is not possible to take over a test which was developed in a different environment. That is also a reason why the first step in developing such a tool for tacit knowledge measurement is to clarify what success in the given environment means and what a successful individual is.

Some previous researches showed that academic success can be influenced by gender (Nonis et al. 2005); other studies look at a gender influence on the career success (Supanango 2011; Seibert and Kraimer 2001; Heslin 2003). That was a reason why an attention was given to the fact if there will be a difference in statements about characteristics of successful students between respondents with different genders.

The fact that tacit knowledge is context specific (Zhang and Han 2009; Sternberg 1995) gave a birth of a question if there will be a consensus among students from different faculties about characteristics of a successful student or not.

Tacit knowledge is gained and formed on the base of experience (Zhang and Han 2009; Sternberg, Wagner, and Okazaki 1993). It means that the more experience connected with a setting individuals have the more tacit knowledge they could have or their tacit knowledge could change due to such experience. That was a reason why characteristics described to successful students were also test according to the level of a study program. It means a difference in stated characteristics of a successful student between bachelor students and master students was expected.

Methodology

A questionnaire survey was conducted to find out what characteristics are attributed to successful students and consequently who can be considered a successful student. The questionnaire survey also enabled testing a hypothesis of whether differences arise between the perceived characteristics of successful students according to gender of respondents, faculty respondents study at and the level of respondents' study program (the Bachelor and Master programs).

The questionnaire contained four open questions, one semi-open question and one closed question to be answered by Likert scale. The seventh question was aimed at identification of the respondent. This paper focuses on evaluation of the first two questions which were aimed at finding out the characteristics of a university student. The first question asked the respondents to characterize a university student who studies effectively; to state how such a student behaves, what they do and what is typical for them. The second question asked the respondents to name

three examples of successful students from their surroundings and state what the named students have in common with the other students and in what they differ.

The questionnaire was aimed at the first-year bachelor and first-year master degree programs at the five faculties of the home university. It was distributed via personal contact in the seminars and lectures at the following faculties of the home university: Faculty of Management and Economics (FakME), Faculty of Multimedia Communications (FMK), Faculty of Technology (FT), Faculty of Applied Informatics (FAI) and Faculty of Humanities (FHS).

Filling the questionnaire took the students 10-15 minutes.

The acquired questionnaires were transferred into electronic versions. Coding and subsequent categorization of codes were used to evaluate the data obtained from the questionnaires. Semantic units (sections of the transcribed texts) were identified as bearers of information. Assigning of codes (the key words) to the semantic units followed next. The given codes marked the core of the information (the topic) and were used as a categorization tool of the semantic units. A list of codes was created which was later systematically categorized, i.e. codes were grouped according to their similarity into more general subcategories and the subcategories were grouped into general categories. To ensure data validity the semantic units were identified and coding was performed independently by three team members. Afterwards, several team discussions took place about the subcategories and categories into which the final grouping was performed.

The above-mentioned two questions were evaluated through team work. Some data were evaluated using descriptive statistics.

The research took place in February 2013 and coding was finished in 2014.

The questions under investigation (No. 1 and 2 in the questionnaire) were answered by 972 respondents out of which 407 were men, 559 women and 6 had no stated gender. The average age of the respondents was 21.27 years. The distribution of the respondents among the faculties is shown in Table 1. Students of the Faculty of Management and Economics were in majority as they were most approachable from the point of view of the research perspective. The representation of the other faculties was balanced.

Table 1.: Representation of the Faculties among the Respondents to Question 1 and 2

Faculty	No. of respondents
FAME - Faculty of Management and Economics	358
FAI - Faculty of Applied Informatics	149
FT - Faculty of Technology	184
FHS - Faculty of Humanities	144
FMK - Faculty of Multimedia Communications	137
Sum total	972

Table 2 shows the representation of the year of study among the respondents who answered at least one of the two above-mentioned questions. The representation shows that the goal of focusing on the first year Bachelor and first year Master degree students was reached.

Table 2.: Representation of the Year of Study among Respondents

Year of study	No. of respondents
1st year Bachelor study	594
2nd year Bachelor study	13
3rd year Bachelor study	1
1st year Master study	310
2nd year Master study	50
No statement	4
Sum total	972

Results

The statements of the respondents were divided into the following categories and subcategories based on the discussion within the research team and the theoretical knowledge:

- Skills: this category includes the statements pointing predominantly to the fact that the respondent can do something, e.g., "can learn", "can schedule time", and statements not necessarily containing the word "can" but referring to skills (e.g. by adjectives such as "assertive", "orderly"). The skills were divided into the following subcategories:
 - organizational skills,
 - self-management,
 - social skills,
 - study skills and
 - technical skills.
- Behavior: this category includes the statements referring to the fact that a successful student does something or behaves in a certain way, e.g. "searches for novelties", "attends lectures". The subcategories were chosen as follows:
 - goal attitude,
 - activity attitude,
 - information attitude,
 - attitude towards people,
 - attitude towards oneself and
 - events/situations attitude.
- Circumstances: in some cases the respondents mentioned the external influence having effect on the study success, e.g. "they were luckier", "they had more money". These statements were included in the "circumstances" category with the following subcategories:
 - family background,
 - events and
 - initial conditions.
- Traits of character: this category includes the statements describing how successful a student is, i.e., what their characteristics and dispositions are (e.g. "tenacious", "active"), or what their motivation is (e.g. "interested in studies", "interested in the field") and what their innate predispositions and abilities are (e.g. "intelligent"). The subcategories are similar to the category of behavior:
 - goals of the activity,
 - goal attitude,
 - activity attitude,
 - information attitude,
 - attitude towards people,
 - attitude towards oneself,
 - events/situations attitude, and
 - abilities.
- Results: this category includes the statements referring to potential criteria evaluating success that can be objectively verified. The chosen subcategories are:
 - evaluation by others,
 - contacts,
 - property,
 - amount of free time,
 - number of interests,
 - study results.

- success,
- health,
- experience and
- knowledge.

Most frequently, the statements were categorized as Behavior (44.58 %) and Traits of character (40.84 %). The least frequent characterization of a successful student came in statements categorized in Circumstances (0.57 %).

The Skills category is represented by 5.41 % in the complete set of responses. Most frequently mentioned by the respondents are the Organizational skills (1.75 %) and Self-management (1.36 %). Both skills are also mentioned by other authors (e. g. Frytařová 2006; Prevařt et al. 2011).

The Behavior category is represented by 44.58 % in the complete set. The most frequently represented subcategory is Activity attitude (35.34 %). Other subcategories are significantly less represented. The second subcategory in line is Attitude towards people (3.58 %). The link between behavior and success has been pointed out by theories and the findings of other authors (e. g. Insch, McIntyre, and Dawley 2008; Leonard and Insch 2005; Somech and Bogler 1999; Sternberg, Wagner, and Okagaki 1993; Yazedjian et al. 2008).

The Traits of character category is represented by 40.84 % in the complete set. The most frequently represented subcategory is Activity attitude (21.13 %). The other subcategories have a significantly lower representation. The second subcategory in line is Goal attitude (6.8 %). Traits of character as features of a successful student have been mentioned by theories, (e.g. see Hogan et al. 2010; Nonis et al. 2005)

The Results category is represented by 7.78 % in the complete set. This category's most frequently mentioned subcategory is Study results (2.48 %) and Knowledge (2.16 %). The usability of these criteria as indicators of success is also mentioned in the theoretical part (Rubeřová 2009; Yazedjian et al. 2008).

Categories by Faculties

The comparison of relative frequencies of the basic categories in the faculties indicates that Skills have been most frequently mentioned by the students of the Faculty of Multimedia Communications - FMK (7.11 %) and least frequently by the students of the Faculty of Humanities - FHS. Behavior of the successful students has been most frequently described by the students of FaME (49.19 %) and least frequently by the students of FAI (40.44 %). Circumstances were most frequently mentioned by the students of the Faculty of Technology - FT (1.35 %) and least frequently by the students of FMK (0.20 %). The Traits of character category has been most frequently included by FHS students (44.06 %) and least frequently by the Faculty of Management and Economics - FaME (37.61 %). The Results category contains most statements from the FMK students (8.53 %) and fewest statements from the FHS students (6.98 %).

Table 3: Relative Frequency of Basic Codes Categories in the Respondents' Statements

Category/ Faculty	FAI	FaME	FHS	FMK	FT	Sum total
Skills	6.78%	5.09%	3.06%	7.11%	5.09%	5.41%
Behavior	40.44%	49.19%	44.53%	40.91%	43.04%	44.58%
No difference	1.45%	0.27%	1.10%	0.61%	1.35%	0.83%
Circumstances	0.85%	0.38%	0.24%	0.20%	1.35%	0.57%
Traits of character	42.13%	37.61%	44.06%	42.64%	41.37%	40.84%
Results	8.53%	7.47%	6.98%	8.53%	7.80%	7.78%
Sum total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Based on Chi-square test on the independence of two categorical variables the testing took place to reveal whether statistically significant link exists between the mentioned basic categories and the faculty where the respondents study:

H₀: The basic category of codes into which respondent's characteristics of a successful student belong and the faculty at which the respondent studies are not mutually dependent.

The value of the tested criterion was 79.1952 and the p value was 3.709e-08, which is a lower value than the value of alpha significance 0.05. One can thus reject the null hypothesis on the independence of the mentioned basic categories and the faculty the respondents study at. According to Pearson's coefficient of dependence intensity (0.1160) it can be deduced that the dependence is weak.

The layout of the correspondence map (Figure 1) indicates that the highest number of basic categories prevails with the FaME students. These students most frequently defined a successful student by statements belonging to various categories.

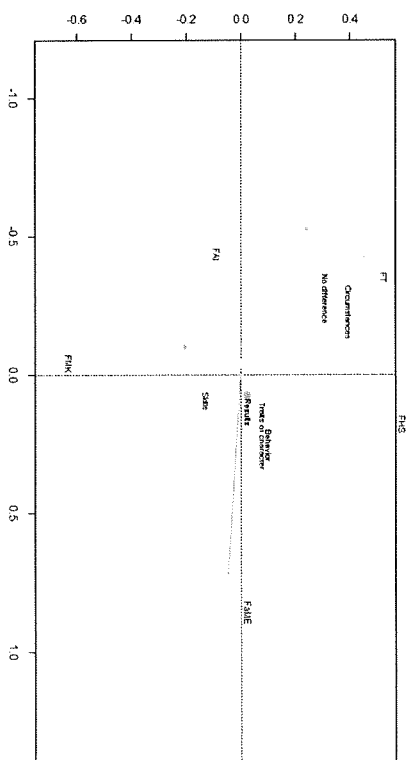


Figure 1: Correspondence map
Source: Own processing

Categories by Gender

The research set of responses contained 37.35 % of statements by men and 62.65 % by women. Men most frequently supplied a statement belonging to the Traits of character (42.69 %) and Behavior (40.97 %) categories – see Table 4. Women most frequently stated characteristics in the categories of Behavior (46.85 %) followed by Traits of character (39.68 %) in the second position. Further results indicate that Skills as a defining category was much more frequently used by men (7.50 %) than women (4.08 %).

Table 4: Relative Frequency of Basic Codes Categories According to Respondents' Gender

Category/ Gender	Man	Woman	Sum total
Skills	7.50%	4.08%	5.36%
Behavior	40.97%	46.85%	44.65%
No difference	0.99%	0.74%	0.83%
Circumstances	0.69%	0.47%	0.55%
Traits of character	42.69%	39.68%	40.81%
Results	7.16%	8.18%	7.80%
Sum total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Based on Chi-square test on the independence of two categorical variables the testing took place to reveal whether statistically significant link exists between the basic codes categories into which the respondents' characteristics of a successful student belonged; and the respondent's gender.

H₀: The basic category of codes into which the respondent's characteristics of a successful student belong and the respondent's gender are not mutually dependent.

Based on the test the hypothesis on the independence (p value = 0.000; the value of the tested criterion 44.163) is rejected. Pearson's coefficient of dependence intensity is 0.1. It can be deduced that the dependence is very weak. The most significant contribution towards rejecting the hypothesis is in the Skills category with men and women (17.361 and 10.391 respectively).

Category by the Level of Study Program (Bachelor or Master)

The research set contains statements by students of Bachelor study programs in 61.25 % and the Master study program in 38.75 %. The most frequent category in both Bachelor and Master programs (45.36 % and 43.39 % respectively) is Behavior – see Table 5; The second most important category in both Bachelor and Master programs (40.46 % and 41.34 % respectively) is Traits of character. No significant differences were identified among the Bachelor and Master students.

Table 5: Relative Frequency of Basic Codes Categories According to the Level of Study Program

Category/Level of study program	Bachelor	Master
Skills	5.54%	5.19%
Behavior	45.36%	43.39%
No difference	0.99%	0.57%
Circumstances	0.81%	0.19%
Traits of character	40.46%	41.34%
Results	6.83%	9.32%
Sum total	100.00%	100.00%

Based on Chi-square test on the independence of two categorical variables the testing took place to reveal whether statistically significant link exists between the basic codes categories and the respondent's study program (Bachelor – Master).

H₀: The basic category of codes into which the respondent's characteristics of a successful student belong and the level of study program of the respondent (Bachelor – Master) are not mutually dependent.

Based on the test the hypothesis on the independence (p value = 0.000281; the value of the tested criterion 23.4151) is rejected. Pearson's coefficient of dependence intensity is 0.065. It can be deduced that the dependence is very weak. The most significant contribution towards rejecting the null hypothesis is in the Circumstances and Results categories. The Master degree students describe a successful student by their results more frequently. The Bachelor degree students mention the influence of circumstances more frequently.

Analysis of Code Use

Overall 292 different codes were used. The most significant difference in connection with the frequency of use compared to all the other codes is in "Motivated" and "Prepares for classes".

Table 6: 20 Most Frequently Used Codes

Order	Key words	Absolute frequency	Order	Key words	Absolute frequency
1.	Motivated	465	11.	Fulfills tasks/duties	152
2.	Prepares for classes	343	12.	Active	148
3.	Knows what he/she wants	260	13.	Intelligent	136
4.	Attends lectures	253	14.	Engages in self-study	134
5.	Works continuously	219	15.	Searches for information	112
6.	Studies	212	16.	Keeps attendance	111
7.	Conscientious	183	17.	Follows his/her goal	102
8.	Interested in the study	171	18.	Attends voluntary activities	102
9.	Industrious	168	19.	Attends seminars	99
10.	Interested in the field	153	20.	Good grades	94

Table 6 shows the first twenty most frequently used codes among which belong "Knows what he/she wants", "Attends lectures", "Works continuously", "Studies", etc.

Table 7: 10 Most Frequently Used Codes by Faculties

Order	Faculty				
	FAI	FAM/E	FHS	FVK	FT
1.	Motivated	Prepares for classes	Motivated	Motivated	Motivated
2.	Prepares for classes	Motivated	Engages in self-study	Knows what he/she wants	Prepares for classes
3.	Knows what he/she wants	Works continuously	Prepares for classes	Industrious	Attends lectures
4.	Interested in the study	Attends lectures	Studies	Interested in the field	Studies
5.	Studies	Knows what he/she wants	Active	Works along studies	Conscientious
6.	Attends lectures	Studies	Works continuously	Engages in self-study	Fulfills tasks/duties
7.	Intelligent	Conscientious	Knows what he/she wants	Attends voluntary activities	Works continuously
8.	Conscientious	Interested in the study	Attends lectures	Searches for information	Knows what he/she wants
9.	Industrious	Fulfills tasks/duties	Conscientious	Creative	Industrious
10.	Fulfills tasks/duties	Active	Interested in the field	Active	Interested in the field

Table 7 contains the most frequently used codes by faculties at which respondents studied. Each code has an own color in the table 7. The differences among faculties are minimal. The only observable difference is in the Faculty of Multimedia Communications being more focused on the extra-curricular activities and creativity which is credited to the focus of the faculty itself. Table 8 indicates the first ten most frequently used codes with men and women. It is clear that the gender difference is minimal. The first ten codes (by frequency) differ only in three cases (these are indicated in color in the chart).

Table 8: 10 Most Frequently Used Codes by Respondents' Gender

Order	Men	Women
1.	Motivated	Motivated
2.	Prepares for classes	Prepares for classes
3.	Knows what he/she wants	Attends lectures
4.	Industrious	Knows what he/she wants
5.	Studies	Works continuously
6.	Conscientious	Studies
7.	Interested in the study	Conscientious
8.	Attends lectures	Interested in the field
9.	Works continuously	Engages in self-study
10.	Intelligent	Fulfills tasks/duties

Table 9 contains first ten most frequently used codes in the Bachelor and Master programs. The differences are again minimal and the frequency of their use differs in only three cases (marked in color in the chart).

Table 9: 10 Most Frequently Used Codes by the Level of Study Programs

Order	Bachelor	Master
1.	Motivated	Motivated
2.	Prepares for classes	Knows what he/she wants
3.	Attends lectures	Prepares for classes
4.	Works continuously	Attends lectures
5.	Knows what he/she wants	Active
6.	Studies	Conscientious
7.	Conscientious	Intelligent
8.	Interested in the study	Studies
9.	Interested in the field	Industrious
10.	Industrious	Works along studies

Discussion

The respondents of the questionnaire survey came from one university. However, several faculties were included. The findings indicate that there is very little difference in how a successful student is characterized by male and female students as well as by bachelor students or master students. A very little difference was also in how a successful student is characterized by students from different faculties.

The findings show a successful student is most frequently described on the base of their behavior, especially in the sense of their behavior towards the goal, activity, information, people, oneself, events and situations; and on their personal traits of character.

Who is then a successful student? Primarily the successful student is strongly motivated (is interested in the study and the study field). This result is in agreement with many other authors (Fryjaufová 2006; Nonis et al. 2005; Schweine and Helmig 2011). Appropriate motivation leads to students' understanding of what they want and what they aim to achieve. That is further linked to the students' attending lectures, conscientious preparing for classes – studying and continuously fulfilling given tasks and duties. Such students are industrious, active and intelligent. Apart from fulfilling their study duties with good results such students get involved in

extra activities (e.g. participated in voluntary events) and develop their knowledge, skills and abilities and cultivate their traits of character and behavior. Such basic characteristics were provided by students regardless of their gender, the level of study program or the faculty they study at. The only exception is the Faculty of Multimedia Communications where creativity and active search for information is added to the profile of a successful student.

It seems that the study will be marked as successful not only the grades average is important (even though the grades were mentioned). Successfulness of university study is also judged by using the university study to develop one's knowledge, experience, interests and contacts under the presupposition that there is no negative effect on one's health.

There are several practical implications of the findings. Firstly, the study showed that it is important students know what they want to achieve, what their life goals are. Maybe the universities can help in such realization – to add in some subjects exercises focused on identification of students' strengths and the development of such strengths, to offer consultations with a career coach, to offer debates and lectures with successful people, etc. Of course, a lot of institutions do so and they can see it is really useful.

Secondly, motivation was mentioned very often among the characteristics of a successful student. Maybe it would be useful to concentrate on university student motivation already at the entrance exams and not to look only at results from the previous studying, at expert knowledge or at general abilities and skills for studying. Also there could be done periodically surveys concentrating on factors of university environment which decrease motivation of students and the university could try to eliminate such factors.

Finally, because participation in voluntary activities and part-time jobs appeared among characteristics of a successful student, it would be great if universities offer opportunities for such activities or at least conditions for involving in such activities. It means among others to keep this fact in mind when a schedule of subjects for students is prepared – to let students enough free time to they would be able to involve in voluntary activities.

Conclusion

When trying to evaluate continuous study success or to predict academic success (e.g. for identifying talented students or for offering an early helping hand to decrease a risk that a student terminates one's studies before graduation) it seems to be appropriate not to judge solely the study average but also to employ other tools and criteria. One of the tools might be an inventory for practical intelligence measurement.

The study was a first step in the development of an inventory for measurement of university student practical intelligence. From this point of view the fact that a successful student was often characterized on the basis of their behavior seems positive. Both basic methods used for tacit knowledge measurement work with student behavior, because tacit knowledge (and practical intelligence) manifests in behavior. The behavior characteristics which respondents mention could be used in defining the items of the prepared tool.

The basic behavior characteristics of a successful student that were mentioned in the survey included the following: continuous preparation to school (studying, fulfillment of study tasks and duties), attendance at lectures, active searching for information, participation at voluntary activities and getting practical experience (part-time jobs). The mentioned behavior characteristics might be considered to be marks of practical intelligence (or owning of tacit knowledge), at least in the given environment (at a university in the Czech Republic), because they can help to achieve success and at least partly they are gained on the base of experience and understanding the environment.

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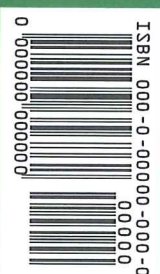
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