

## VIEWS ON SUCCESS IN LIFE BASED ON GENDER

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### **Abstract**

*In order to study the characteristics of success in life we must consider the social construction of genders (male and female) manifested in the interaction between the sexes. Social interpretation of biological sex leads to the identification of a set of behaviors particular to each sex, both in society and subsequently in private life as well as in the public eye. The research aims to identify the opinions and beliefs on the matter of students from the Veterinary Medicine University of Bucharest, their views on success in life, in the work place, in their study environment and in society as a whole, the characteristics of each gender, equality between women and men. The research findings reveal a specific social pattern determined by gender and residential environment .*

**Key words:** rural family, reconstructing gender roles, socializing

### **INTRODUCTION**

Through secondary socialization the individual appropriates an own set of rules and regulations that ensures social development and cohesive insertion into society. [1] Along with the influence of family and the social environment (*habitus*) it is clearly highly important for representatives of both genders (male / female) to ensure a success model in their learning environment and in society. [5]

*Habitus* allows the individual to insert himself within the social world and to interpret it in a way which is on one hand his own, and on the other hand common among the members of the group he belongs to. [2] The primary socialization (childhood) and secondary (teen years) are a joint cumulation aquired through the years, leading to the formation of social capital and a " lifestyle " similar to those of the same social environment, thus possibly leading to the formation of a *class habitus* [3]

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The research aims to present the views of students from the University of Agronomic

Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Bucharest, on success characteristics in the learning environment and in society from a gender perspective. Results are obtained from a quantitative research representative of the population studied[4]. The sample is 375 students. The data collection timeframe was from the 1st of June until the 31st of July, 2014. Chosen research tool: written questionnaire, standardized pre-coded questions and answers. [9]

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

In order to comprehensively represent the perception of respondents about the most important features for a man / woman to succeed in their place of learning and society in general, we offered for evaluation the following terms and factors : good education, higher education, talent, a beautiful appearance, the desire to stand out among the crowd, good relations with others, working hard, having money and owning property, being lucky. [7]

Respondents' answers showed that for a man a good education (83.7 %), higher education

( 53.4 % ), sustained effort and work ( 39.47 %) and having good luck ( 39.20 % ) and good relations with others (36.27 %) are guarantees in achieving success at their place of learning and in society.(Table 1)

Table 1. Items of success for man

How important do you consider, in your own opinion, the following aspects so that a man to be successful in their learning environment as well as in society?	Male(%)				
	Very import.	Import.	Unimport	Totally unimport	DK/DA
good education	83,7	14,7	0,8	0,3	0,5
higher education	53,4	39,7	5	1,1	0,8
talent	29,06	50,4	16,8	2,4	1,34
beautiful appearance	20,27	46,13	27,47	4,80	1,33
desire to stand out	31,47	45,87	16,80	4,00	1,87
good relations with others	36,27	46,93	12,80	1,60	2,4
intense work	39,47	45,07	10,67	3,20	1,6
having money and property	24,80	30,13	32,80	10,40	1,87
being lucky	39,20	30,40	20,53	8,00	1,87

Table 2. Items of success for woman

How important do you consider, in your own opinion, the following aspects so that a woman to be successful in their learning environment as well as in society?	Female(%)				
	Very import.	Import.	Unimport	Totally unimport	DK/DA
good education	83,73	12,00	1,60	1,07	1,6
higher education	42,93	50,40	3,20	1,33	2,13
talent	27,73	53,07	14,40	1,60	3,2
beautiful appearance	34,67	44,27	16,53	2,67	1,87
desire to stand out	38,13	44,80	10,67	3,73	2,67
good relations with others	31,73	49,33	14,13	1,87	2,93
intense work	37,60	45,07	10,67	4,00	2,67
having money and property	24,00	34,67	30,93	6,93	3,47
being lucky	34,40	35,73	20,80	5,07	4

Women found that in reaching success at their place of learning and in society the main factors are: a good education ( 83.73 % ), higher education (42.93 %), the desire to stand out ( 38.13 % ), intense work (37. 60% ) and a beautiful appearance (34.67 %).(Table 2.)

As it appears in the data above, the successful model for a man to succeed in their place of learning and among his peers in society differs from that of a woman, even though the first two choices remain the same (good education and higher education), although higher education is perceived as less important by 10.47 percent from the girls' point of view. Talent and having money and estate values are characteristics viewed as less important by both female and male students.

Next for male students follow the expectation of working hard, catching a break (being lucky) and maintaining good relations with others. For female students aspects such as the desire to stand out, intense work and a pleasant exterior are highly valued. Notice the difference in the showcased successful models, rooted in traditional gender characteristics: to succeed, the male students need to work hard, be lucky and mingle, establish bonds, while female students must stand out, work hard and have a pleasant appearance . [8]

The same factors above we also analyzed from gender and residency perspectives. [6]

Regarding **good education** and **higher education** no significant differences appear in terms of gender perception of the respondents. However good education and higher education are slightly more important for female students than for male students ( + 0.2% ).

**Talent** is a feature judged as less important, however girls seem to need it more both in views of male students ( + 0.2 % ) and similarly by the female students ( + 0.1% ).

A **beautiful physical appearance** is a term rated as more important for girls than for boys as seen in the perception of male students ( + 0.13 % ) and female students ( + 0.12 %). We note the presence of a gender stereotype according to which for a woman to succeed in society and within her learning environment, a beautiful appearance is necessary.

The **desire to stand out** and emphasize their qualities is cited as a characteristic most important for girls both from female students (0.07 % ) and male students (+ 0.05 % ) points of view. Another gender stereotype is propagated according to which a girl must show off in order to succeed in the place of learning and in society.

**Good relations** are more important for boys both from female students perspective (+0.04 % ) as well as in the eyes of male students (+0.01 % ). Female students value a good relations atmosphere and behavior as more important for the male success model.

**Intense work** is seen as more important for boys equally by both genders of the student

body questioned ( 0.02 % ).

**Having money and owning property** is more important for girls from the male students view point (+0.07 % ).

**Being lucky** is more important for boys in the perception of female students (+ 0.04 %) and more important for girls in perception of male students ( 0.03 %). Attribution for success for the opposite gender is thus made considering terms such as luck, chance, opportunity and circumstance rather than personal qualities, in order to succeed in society and life per se.

We will continue our analysis of the items portrayed beforehand in terms of residency (location ).

**Good education** is cited as the most important feature, both by respondents in urban areas, as well as those in rural areas. But a good education is more important for boys than for girls, both for residents of urban areas ( 0.02 % ), as well as for those in rural areas ( 0.03 %).

**Higher education** is deemed important for both sexes , regardless of the residency of each respondent.

**Talent** is appreciated especially in girls, almost equally significant in the views of urban respondents ( 0.02 % ), as well as in those of respondents from rural communities (0.01 %).

A **beautiful physical and aesthetic appearance** is an important feature for girls, perception more common in rural than in urban areas ( +0.05 %). The stereotype of a pleasant look as a way for girls to succeed whether in their place of learning and in society is more frequent in residents with a rural background as a specific manifestation of traditionalism.

The **desire to stand out** is a trait appreciated higher in urban rather than in rural areas for both sexes ( 0.02 %).

**Good relations** are perceived as necessary especially for boys, more in the rural than in the urban environments ( 0.01 %). The formal and informal structure of relationships between family, kin, friends and so on, is valued especially in rural areas.

**Working hard** in order to reach success where they learn and in society is more

important for boys in rural areas than those in the urban ones ( 0.01 %).

**Having money and property** is a more important aspect in urban areas, especially for boys ( 0.07 % ) but also for girls ( 0.01 %).

Being lucky is especially important for boys in the urban areas and girls the rural ones (0.05 %).

## CONCLUSIONS

Respondents' answers showed that for a man a good education, higher education, sustained effort and work) and having good luck and good relations with others are guarantees in achieving success at their place of learning and in society.

Women found that in reaching success at their place of learning and in society the main factors are: a good education, higher education, the desire to stand out, intense work and a beautiful appearance.

The successful model for a man to succeed in their place of learning and among his peers in society differs from that of a woman, even though the first two choices remain the same (good education and higher education). Talent and having money and estate values are characteristics viewed as less important by both female and male students.

Next for male students follow the expectation of working hard, catching a break (being lucky) and maintaining good relations with others. For female students aspects such as the desire to stand out, intense work and a pleasant exterior are highly valued. Notice the difference in the showcased successful models, rooted in traditional gender characteristics: to succeed, the male students need to work hard, be lucky and mingle, establish bonds, while female students must stand out, work hard and have a pleasant appearance.

In conclusion, depending on gender and residency we have different strategies and guidelines in order to be successful in the place of learning and in society :

- For rural boys good relations and working hard are important;
- For boys in urban areas the important factors

are having money and property as well being lucky;

- For girls in rural areas it is important to have good luck and a nice appearance;

- For girls in urban areas talent and the desire to stand out are more significant.

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