

Possible Qualities of a Good Teacher: How to Excel in the Teaching Career?

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Abstract

Teachers play an essential and impactful role in shaping the lives of their students, both within academic institutions and beyond. They lay the foundation for students' futures, contributing to the development of a better, more successful society. Moreover, teachers serve as role models, influencing not just academic performance, but also personal development. They are not only facilitators of knowledge in the classroom but also mentors, guides, and life-shapers in the long term. This raises an important question: What are the key qualities of a good teacher? To explore this, the researchers distributed a questionnaire to twenty students at the Preparatory Studies Centre (PSC) at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences in Oman. The results were revealing: nearly all students expressed a preference for teachers who are understanding, caring, friendly, and cooperative. This article will discuss the findings in detail, offering insights and recommendations for improving teaching practices.

Keywords: classroom dynamics, caring teachers, engagement teacher-student relationship, effective teaching, mentorship in education, teacher influence, student teacher influence, teacher qualities

(Received: 18 September 2024; Revised: 03 October 2024; Accepted: 22 November 2024; Published: 31 December 2024)

Introduction

Teachers are the architects of future generations; taking on the responsibility of shaping and reshaping lives. World leaders — presidents, prime ministers, and others — have all been influenced by teachers. Teachers play multiple, diverse roles to ensure that their students not only receive academic knowledge, but also develop core values and behaviors. Sometimes teachers act as facilitators, working hard to instill desirable behaviors and values while serving as a source of inspiration and guidance, especially for students. In the field of education, the influence of a good teacher extends far beyond the classroom, leaving a lasting impact on students' personal and academic growth.

This paper highlights the key qualities of an effective teacher, examining how these traits enable success in the classroom and what students think about their teachers' performance, both academically and personally.

Statement of the Problem

The teaching profession carries immense responsibility that extends far beyond the delivery of curriculum content in classrooms. Teachers are expected to play a significant role not only in their students' academic success, but also in their personal and social development. This dual responsibility requires teachers to exhibit a broad range of qualities that foster positive relationships and support the overall well-being of their students.

However, despite the pivotal role teachers play in shaping future generations, there is often a lack of clarity regarding the specific qualities that contribute to effective teaching. What makes a teacher successful in meeting both the academic and emotional needs of students? How do these qualities influence the overall learning experience and outcomes? Furthermore, given the increasing complexity of modern educational environments, how can teachers manage their diverse roles both inside and outside the classroom?

This study seeks to address these questions by identifying the key characteristics that contribute to effective teaching and examining how these qualities impact students' academic progress, emotional well-being, and overall development. The research aims to underscore the fact that teachers' roles are not confined to the classroom; they act as social workers, advisors, mentors, and even parental figures to their students. Despite the challenges they face—whether in managing diverse classrooms, dealing with external societal pressures, or navigating the complexities of the educational system—teachers remain the central figures in promoting students' holistic growth and preparing them to become responsible members of society.

Objectives of the Study

This study pursues the following two-fold purpose:

1. To identify the qualities that characterize effective teachers.
2. To examine how these qualities impact students' academic performance, well-being, and overall development.

Literature Review

Teachers are not, and should not be treated as mere figures in classrooms; they are life-shapers and creators, paving the way for future generations within society. They spend the majority of their time educating, helping, and facilitating matters for students in particular, and for society as a whole. “Teachers are essential members of our society. They are pillars of knowledge, shaping the future of our kids — they are educators, mentors, guides, and inspirations” (Teachers of Tomorrow, 2024, Para. 1). Having the title of "Teacher" means a great deal; it requires being well-prepared before starting each lesson by defining appropriate objectives that align with students' levels, and using strategies that facilitate learning. “When getting ready for class, align your lessons with the established curriculum, define lesson objectives, and incorporate diverse and engaging teaching strategies to cater to various learning styles” (Teachers of Tomorrow, 2024, Para. 7). One of the essential qualities of a good teacher is the recognition that their career is an ongoing process of continuous development in response to societal changes, especially technological advancements and their integration into teaching.

It is generally known that the teaching profession is one of the most directly impacted by social, economic, and technological changes. Consequently, an educator must regard their career as a continuing learning process in order to keep up with this ever-changing world. This means that an instructor consistently has room for improvement since there is always some skill to sharpen or some didactic issue to solve. (Teacher Academy, 2021, Para.3).

A teacher's job does not end with the school day; they carry the responsibility home, marking assignments and devising strategies to maximize their students' success. Teachers play a critical role in shaping their students' academic growth, particularly in areas such as teamwork, communication skills, time management, and classroom management. “Effective teachers are critical to the development and academic success of their students and have many skills in the areas of communication, teamwork, time management, problem solving and organization” (Birt, 2024, Para. 2). Some hardworking and dedicated teachers become role models for their students, even taking on parental-like roles. This is a reflection of the teaching methods and approaches they employ. “Watching a model makes a big difference to teacher practice” (Fletcher-Wood, 2023, Para.11). All what teachers encounter in teaching is a heavy responsibility that should be taken as seriously as possible. Everything that teachers encounter in their profession carries a weight of responsibility, which must be taken as seriously as possible. Cultivating individuals, particularly students, is demanding and requires considerable effort to achieve. “On top of the competition, teachers are solely responsible for a student's development, growth indicators, and disciplinary factors; these factors put a lot of pressure on a teacher's shoulders” (Check, (n.d), Para. 21). Teachers work sincerely and honestly, adhering to established policies and utilizing their knowledge to guide students so that they can navigate the world after graduation.

Long-lasting Impact and Legacy: The impact of a great teacher extends far beyond a student's school years. Teachers can leave a lasting legacy by equipping their students

with the tools and knowledge to navigate the world successfully. The lessons, values, and inspiration they impart can shape a student's life trajectory (Moore, 2023, Para.9).

Good teachers care deeply about their students, spreading positive values and behaviors among them. They are influential figures in society who leave a lasting impression.

For context, a role model is someone who serves as an example, and whose behavior do others emulate. In other words, a role model is also someone who exemplifies desirable behaviors and values, serving as a source of inspiration and guidance for others. In the context of education, teachers embody this definition perfectly, influencing the attitudes, values, and behaviors of their students. For students, teachers often become these influential figures, whose actions, attitudes, and words leave lasting imprints. (Kareem, June 2024, Para. 2).

Teachers who model the same behaviors they ask from their students are more likely to help students cultivate desirable habits and behaviors. Students observe and learn how to communicate, act, and treat others and other developmental behaviors. Modeling behaviors of patience, understanding, empathy and communication can encourage students to develop these same skills (Birt, 2024, Para. 8).

Good teachers are those who spread positive impact and encouragement among their students and tell them that they are capable of doing and achieving their aims. Good teachers give support to their students who might encounter some negative messages upon joining school.

Teachers can also aim to convey high expectations and provide adequate supports for all students, sending the message that they are capable. This is especially important for students who have received mixed or discouraging messages about their ability from adults in the past, whether due to explicit or implicit biases (Flook, 2019, Para.11).

Effective teachers encourage their students. The following is an example about a student who was encouraged by his / her teacher and became successful in and out of school.

When I started school, I was an average person with just enough enthusiasm as everyone else on the block, but after the fourth grade, I was full of energy. Ms. Johnson want[s] you to succeed and supported [supports] you, as an individual person to be the best you would be. I remember the very first week of the school year. It is so vivid in my mind (Esty, (n.d), Para. 1).

Enthusiastic teachers are passionate, caring, and creative—deeply committed to their profession.

Teachers who are enthusiastic about their subject matter and the process of teaching itself can inspire students to develop a love for learning. Passionate teachers are often

more engaging, creative, and committed to finding ways to make learning meaningful and enjoyable for their students. (Kareem, June 2024, Para. 5).

In today's world, the need for highly qualified and innovative teachers is greater than ever. It requires pioneers who create knowledge, not just physical presences in the classroom. This is the era of space invasion, inventions, and artificial intelligence (AI). "We need as many as possible as highly educated as possible because our future wellbeing depends on our heads rather than hands, though top crafts remain very important, too" (Wansbrough, 2015, Para. 3). Good teachers are fond of creating assignments and worksheets for their students. They do care about guiding students to be independent. When all caring teachers participate in creating useful materials that will be an important asset for the in-house library.

Teachers create assignments and invite students to complete them on the site. Teachers can write their own assignments and set the format (essay or short answer), along with the rubric, the sources or texts, the questions, and submission guidelines. A searchable library, populated with lessons from other teachers, is available as well (Noonoo, 2024, Para. 21).

New teachers should be well guided and supported. They are eager to learn teaching strategies, particularly those involving technology. Veteran teachers and school administrators should assist them. "New teachers are still trying to figure out when it is and isn't appropriate to use technology and even what kind of tool to use" (Klein, 2023, Para. 7). Smart teachers give the proper and essential feedback to their students, which, in turn, develops self-trust and responsibility. "By setting high expectations, providing constructive feedback, and promoting a positive classroom environment, teachers help students develop self-confidence, self-discipline, and a strong sense of identity" (Moore, 2023, Para.6).

There are some conditions to take into consideration upon recruiting teachers; outstanding and high-caliber staff should have the priority in the teaching field. "When schools embrace the strategy of using outstanding teachers to influence the practice of their peers, adequate planning and communication are essential. Otherwise, the strategies that teacher leaders model might be regarded as little more than suggestions" (Reeves, 2009, Para.9). Teaching is a continuous process that always requires growth. Teachers must regularly update their pedagogy to remain relevant to the evolving needs of students and societal changes. Attending courses and local or international workshops will greatly benefit both teachers and their students.

Consequently, due to the fast changes in technology and society, an educator must brush up on their pedagogy to stay relevant. Those changes greatly affect the way students learn and the way teachers teach, so there is always room for pedagogical improvement. As a result, learning "how to teach" and "how students learn" become priorities in a teacher's journey towards significant growth. (Teacher Academy, 2021, Para.10).

Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research design using a survey method to gather data on students' perceptions of good teacher qualities. The use of surveys is appropriate for collecting standardized, comparable data across a sample of students, allowing for statistical analysis of their responses.

Participants

The participants included (20) Foundation Year students, 10 males and 10 females, aged (18) to (20). They were selected through convenience sampling from the University of Technology and Applied Sciences in Oman. All participants are native Arabic speakers and recent high school graduates, which could influence their perceptions of teacher qualities due to their educational and cultural background.

Sampling Strategy

Due to logistical constraints, the sample size was limited to (20) participants. A convenience sampling method was employed, as the students were readily available to the researchers at the time of the study. However, the small sample size limits the generalizability of the results and is considered a limitation of the study.

Research Instrument

A researcher-designed questionnaire consisting of (10) items was employed to gather data. The questionnaire included both closed-ended questions (Yes/No, Agree/Disagree) and Likert scale items (1-5) to measure students' perceptions of key teacher qualities, including empathy, fairness, and communication skills. The instrument was validated through a pilot test with five students to ensure clarity and reliability, with minor adjustments made to wording based on their feedback.

Data Collection Procedure

Surveys were distributed to participants during their regular class time at the University. Before participation, students were briefed on the purpose of the study, informed of their right to withdraw at any time, and assured of their anonymity. Participants provided written consent, and surveys were completed within (20) minutes during a scheduled session.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical standards of research. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and they were assured that their responses would remain anonymous.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Table1

1. Good teachers are friendly, cooperative, caring and sharing.	Yes	No
	20	-
	100%	100%

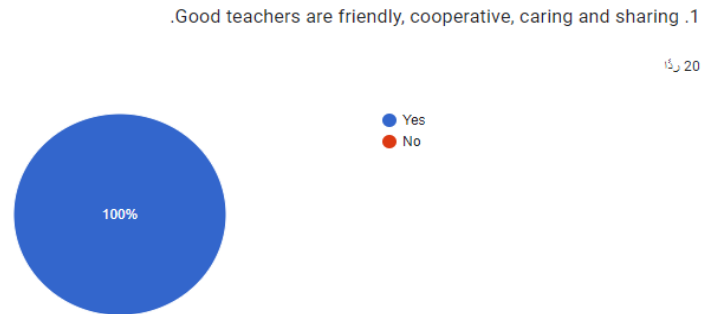
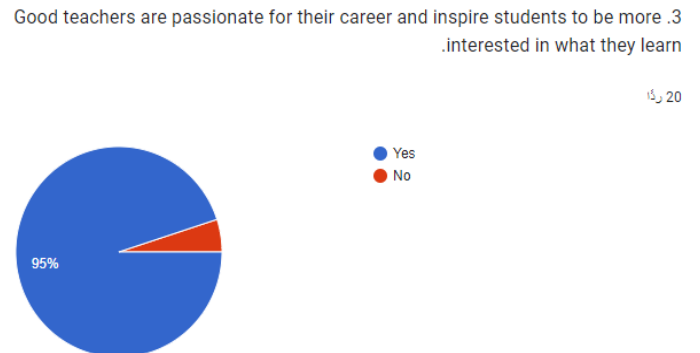


Table 1 shows that the participants (100%) believe that good teachers are friendly, cooperative, caring and sharing. This is a good measure of the participants' perception that teachers who try to get close to their students may help them develop a feeling of intimacy and commitment to the academic institution, which can provide the foundation and basis for future academic success.

Table2

3. Good teachers are passionate for their career and inspire students to be more interested in what they learn.	Yes	No
	19	1
	95%	5%



The findings indicate that most participants; about (95%) believe that good teachers are passionate for their career and inspire students to be more interested in what they learn. Thus, effective teachers are keen to spread positivity and enjoy teaching and engaging with students.

Table 3

8. Good teachers should always set clear and achievable goals with deep strategies that directly address behavioral challenges.	Agree	Disagree
	19	1
	95%	5%

Good teachers should always set clear and achievable goals with deep strategies that .8 directly address behavioral challenges

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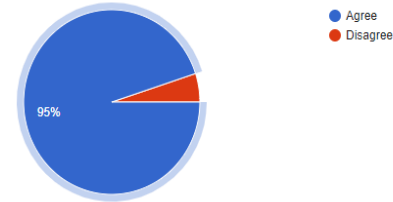


Table 3 illustrates that 95% of participants agreed that good teachers should always set clear and achievable goals with deep strategies that directly address behavioral challenges.

Table 4

9. Good teachers should create personal relationships with students and always follow them up even after school. This shows empathy and more understanding that makes students valued and respected.	Agree	Disagree
	10	10
	50%	50%

Good teachers should create personal relationships with students and always follow .9 them up even after school. This shows empathy and more understanding that makes .students valued and respected

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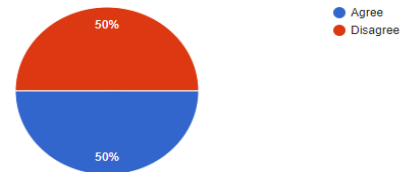


Table 4 shows that (50%) of the participants agree that good teachers should create personal relationships with students and always follow them up even after school. This shows empathy and more understanding that makes students valued and respected.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that effective teachers possess a blend of personal and professional qualities that significantly contribute to their students' academic success and emotional well-being. A good teacher is not merely a dispenser of knowledge but a guide, mentor, and role model whose influence extends far beyond the confines of the classroom. Teachers who demonstrate qualities such as empathy, fairness, enthusiasm, and professionalism not only foster academic growth but also cultivate a positive learning environment where students feel supported and valued. This study underscores the importance of these qualities in promoting

students' holistic development, particularly their emotional resilience and capacity for critical thinking.

Moreover, the findings highlight the long-lasting impact teachers have on their students' personal and professional trajectories. A teacher's ability to inspire and nurture their students has enduring effects that often manifest years after formal education has ended. In an ever-evolving educational landscape, teachers must also remain adaptable, continuously enhancing their skills and knowledge to meet the challenges posed by technological advancements and changing societal expectations.

Finally, it is imperative that teachers prioritize their professional development through courses, workshops, and self-reflection, as this contributes to their growth and, by extension, the success of their students. The role of the teacher is not static; it requires a commitment to lifelong learning and a willingness to evolve alongside the educational needs of students. By doing so, teachers can not only improve their own practice but also leave an indelible mark on the next generation, shaping them into responsible, informed, and capable citizens.

Recommendations

- Teachers should engage in continuous professional development by attending courses and workshops that enhance their subject knowledge, communication, and pedagogical skills.
- Insights gained from professional development must be applied to improve students' overall well-being both in and out of the classroom.
- Teachers should organize and participate in local conferences at their institutions to exchange ideas and share experiences with colleagues.
- To earn students' respect and trust, teachers must consistently act with integrity in their professional conduct.
- Enthusiastic and passionate teachers inspire a love for learning and foster a motivating environment that nurtures students' curiosity.
- Effective communication is essential in teaching; teachers should actively listen to students and provide constructive feedback, fostering strong relationships.
- Fair and transparent evaluation practices should be followed when assessing students' work, including assignments, homework, reports, and presentations.
- Teachers should extend their influence beyond the classroom by engaging with students' families and the local community, offering guidance and support where needed.
- Teachers play a key role in promoting students' emotional and ethical development, fostering a lifelong passion for learning while encouraging them to pursue their goals with purpose and responsibility.

Acknowledgement

The researchers would like to express their gratitude to all participants whose involvement was essential for the accomplishment of this study.

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