Teaching Excellence: Cracking the DNA Code of 'The Good Teacher'

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Abstract

This paper describes how undergraduate students in their junior and senior year seeking a bachelor's degree at a regionally accredited university perceive their professors' instructional attributes and behaviors. The examination concentrated on two critical zones of discernment concerning professors' instructional practices. Participants were asked what teaching attributes contributed to their academic success, and teaching attributes did not contribute to their academic success. The paper is derived from a study that sought to identify any obstacles faced by the participating undergraduate students and their faculty as indicators of how to mitigate such obstacles.

The study included a review of an extensive collection of research on student perspectives and how those perspectives may reflect on the evaluation of the adequacy of various teaching techniques and academic practices. The study found that the instructional attributes that participating students reported that they value include: agreeableness (concern and regard for students), accommodation (accessibility), and receptiveness to others' conclusions (support of class inquiries and exchange), yet all instructors do not exhibit each of these attributes.

The study identified the positive teaching characteristics of professors in one setting and how these professors interact with their students in a manner that captures students' attention and promotes teaching and learning in the classroom. It also suggests attributes that professors in this setting and discipline may wish to elevate to better connect with students in the classroom.

Keywords

Teaching excellence

Hospitality teaching

Quality teaching

Student perception

Introduction

In a perfect world, faculty would exhibit outstanding teaching attributes regardless of topic of instruction or student population. In reality, educators differ starting with one instructive foundation then on to the next. For instance, some universities and many colleges require that faculty have acquired the minimum of a master's degree in their subject area, while others may require a terminal degree, such as doctoral degree. This typically changes as indicated by accreditation requirements. In more profession-driven higher education programs, there might also be some industry-specific stipulations. For instance, faculty may need at least 10 years of industry experience in addition to meeting degree requirements. While faculty qualifications are vetted, there are no guarantees that credentialed faculty are good teachers with instructional attributes and behaviors that resonate with students.

In view of research on college instruction and learning led by Chickering and Gamson (1987), a good teacher:

> (1) empowers contacts amongst undergraduate students and personnel; (2) creates correspondence and collaboration amongst undergraduate students; (3) utilizes dynamic learning procedures; (4) gives relevant criticism; (5) utilizes class time efficiently; (6) imparts elevated requirements; and (7) regards assorted abilities and methods for learning. (p. 43)

Suggestions of good educational approaches include: freshman courses on imperative subjects educated by senior faculty; learning gatherings of five to seven undergraduate students who meet routinely amid class to tackle issues set forth by the teacher; faculty knowledge, understanding,

and utilization of organized activities, exchanges, group tasks, and autonomous investigation; and computer-aided approaches. Faculty in higher education may have broad teaching knowledge but may still lack high quality teaching skills depending on where, when, and how they were trained to teach, if they even were.

A "good teacher" is characterized as one that can hold undergraduate students' attention and convey the course material in a fascinating and connecting way, while meeting all course goals and objectives. In his article "A Good Teacher," Drazen (2006) stated that he was lucky to have good teachers in secondary school, as well as in college and beyond. "In school, the moving figure was a teacher of an electrical building, who showed me to utilize my thinking capacity to take care of issues and how to utilize the answers for enhancing our comprehension of physical procedures" (Drazen, 2006, p. 13). This is an example of what a student saw as powerful and fundamental for their learning, and what the student could potentially take away from a class with a good educator. Further:

> I discovered that on the off chance that I didn't comprehend the issue, I couldn't locate a genuine answer for it. In medicinal school, I was sufficiently fortunate to examine with a teacher of physiology who showed me that the scan for truth implied amassing an understanding that would let one reason from perceptions to main drivers. Every one of these instructors was supporting in that they requested the best from us and would not make due with less; they had the blessing to propel their undergraduate students. (Drazen, 2006, p. 1374)

Drazen (2006) made a strong case of how great instructors can impact their students. The way that Drazen (2006) made the association between inspiration and powerful instructing is noteworthy for this examination as is divulged in the conclusion.

As indicated by Sowell (2002):

> A “great” educator is characterized as an instructor whose students take in more. A “decent” educator is somebody who represents the predominant authoritative opinions of the instructive foundation. The overall population most likely considers great instructors as individuals like Marva Collins or Jaime Escalante, whose minority undergraduate students met and surpassed national models. Be that as it may, such primary concern criteria have since a long time ago vanished from most government-funded schools. (p. 9)

Sowell’s (2002) selection of words, “winning creeds of the instructive foundation” (p. 9) means that good educators align with their institutional objectives.

Walsh and Maffei (1994) studied undergraduate students at Miami University of Ohio with 46 items scored on a seven-point Likert-type scale. The scale ran from whether a specific teaching behavior “incredibly improved” instruction to whether a specific teaching behavior “extraordinarily degraded” instruction. Staff responses included: “Gives singular regard for undergraduate students experiencing issues,” “Applies a similar assessment criteria to all undergraduate students,” “Is dubious about desires of undergraduate students,” “Has a tendency to be equivocal in reacting to questions,” and “Clarifies evaluating criteria” (Walsh & Maffei, 1994, p. 67-68). Note that the educators tended to stress the mechanics of the courses they teach, while students tend to stress relational aspects of instruction when evaluating instructors. In a related study, Rallis (1994) assembled data on undergraduate students’ impressions of educators’ teaching propensities by requesting that students record them anonymously on a listed card. This procedure permitted the entire professoriate to see and benefit from the results of the overview without singling out any single faculty member with criticism or praise. This study of hospitality management teaching practices took a similar approach.

Methods

Effective teaching practices tested by research has included estimations of students' inclinations for classroom atmosphere and encounters, as well as student objectives, inspiration, confidence, and efficacy. Some research has focused on educator experience, yet not many have considered instructional adequacy entirely from the students' viewpoint. Springer, Morganfield, and Diffily (2007) researched the constructivist teaching practices of 11 instructors in Texas given the education models created by the Texas State Board of Educator Certification and 254 post-secondary students that belonged to one classroom of each of the 11 instructors. Researchers used a 2 x 2 ANOVA to investigate three inquiries: 1) What likenesses existed between students' and instructors' inclinations for classroom atmospheres given state-characterized instructor guidelines? 2) How extraordinary are the inclinations in classroom situations amongst students and educators? 3) How are students' inclinations and classroom encounters affected by the level of study, sexual orientation, and financial status? The outcomes showed that the educators and students varied extensively as far as adherence to state measures: 1) students and instructors both felt that the teaching practice did not intersect their aspirations and inclinations, 2) female students exhibited an inclination toward compelling teaching practices more than male students, and 3) older male students aspired for higher grades than the female students.

These discoveries bring up the contrasts amongst instructors and student observations and also a distinction in inclinations amongst male and female students. Male and female students often have contradicting perspectives of their confidence and self-esteem. Male students tend to overstate their capacities, while females tend to think little of their scholarly abilities, which can

impact test scores and other measures of achievement (Brooks, 1982). Contrast in students' views of teaching are not restricted to gender. Students hailing from differing ethnic backgrounds and socioeconomic status have different convictions and assumptions about learning and their involvement in the classroom.

Garcia, Agbemakplido, Abdela, Lopez, and Registe (2006) presented the stories of post-secondary school students registered in a social equity course. The students were requested to contemplate their school encounters with educators and portray what they believed were the crucial characteristics of instructors. The assignment given students was based on the framework of the motivation behind instruction regarding history, social equity, research, and community organization and included an investigation into No Child Left Behind, an audit of education-related literature, an examination of the students' own particular learning encounters, and comprehension of their school's criteria and aspirations for instructors. The reactions of students demonstrated that being a qualified educator did not imply that instructors were educated in an exceptionally skilled way.

To develop a better understanding of social contrasts that a diverse student body brings to the classroom, additional supporting detail can be found in an investigation portraying the after effects of the *Pathways to Student Success* (Engstrom & Tinto, 2009) project undertaken in 10 Boston post-secondary colleges. Students expressed their thoughts on the best way to enhance instruction in their programs by offering proposals about successful educator practices. According to the students, teachers ought to be composed, tolerant, bear sound knowledge of their subject, and be enthusiastic about it. Further, instructors ought to be firm, yet at the same time, exude regard for their students (Engstrom & Tinto, 2009).

Another study reinforces these findings in its examination of African American students' views of their learning environment. Howard (2002) directed a subjective contextual analysis of African American students in urban colleges looking for their understanding of practical teaching. According to Howard, African American students indicated that educators did not think about their scholarly achievement and exhibited disregard towards them in the classroom. Moreover, he recommended that the state of mind of the educator influences the way that students see their learning encounters. The investigation concentrated on five schools with a sample of 30 post-secondary students. In spite of the fact that the sample was small, students' interviews shed light on how African American students characterize effective instruction. Howard (2002) identified "culturally connected caring," (p. 33) as an effective practice. Howard (2002) recommended students develop relationships with educators and meet the outside of the classroom. Students uncovered that they were more encouraged to learn when their educators found relatable methods of communication outside of class.

Worrell and Kuterbach (2001) noticed that another sample of students had been disregarded in the measurement of instructor adequacy: talented students in college-based summer programs. Two groups of post-secondary students were requested to rate their six-week summer program concerning their teacher, course, and program quality. Discoveries demonstrated that students gave legitimate evaluations of teachers and that the utilization of student evaluations could be a useful device to provide input to educators.

Glover and Law (2004) analyzed student evaluations to find a connection between learning background and school environment using student perception of instruction and factored in students' sexual orientation, age, area of study, and national educational policies. Findings regarding student learning experience were gathered into five classifications: physical condition

of the school, a test of instructor's expectations, learning background and teaching techniques, nature of connections amongst educators and students, and student comprehension of educational modules. Leading institutions were found to be those whose administration systems and leaders share decision-making with faculty and where they all help develop procedures, strategies, and an environment that promotes comprehension of instructional techniques. However, Datnow, Hubbard, and Conchas (2001) critiqued the investigation for the absence of focus on student views of instructional practices and techniques, taking note that teachers and researchers were "hesitant to ask the students what they think" (p. 200).

Good and Weinstein (1986) discussed student commitment to classroom work, recommending that more thought and attention be paid to the inclinations of students. Good (1981) expressed that post-secondary school students are ignorant of their capacity to influence change in the classroom, and still today, students may not give opinion, particularly if the classroom environment is not conducive to considering alternatives for improvement of instruction. Recently, scholars are starting to incorporate the student voice in the assessment of educators and schools.

In 2004, Den Brok, Brekelmans, and Wubbels analyzed students' view of their instructors' interpersonal practices through reviews of physics and English as a foreign language courses. They found four arguments for the utilization of student evaluations: students have an emotional reaction to instructors based on what an educator does in the classroom; student opinions can be gathered efficiently; students have many encounters with instructors and can give information in light of more than one perception, that is, students can offer an interesting perspective on the classroom as they have been exposed to a wide range of circumstances and settings; and student opinions collected as an average value over time are not susceptible to the

feelings that may emerge and be reported on any single given day, eliminating the impact of chance.

Instructors are in a position to encourage a feeling of belonging in the classroom, which is likely to help achieve more positive learning results for their students. Students demonstrated improved effort in the classroom and enthusiastically seek help. An important result of these positive changes in student practices is the students' capacity to see how learning is pertinent to their future. The significance of course content is specifically tied to students' motivation to learn. As substantiated by Hubbard (2013), students are most influenced by instructor techniques in the classroom, yet few studies focus on the students' perspective of their learning environment.

As stated by Ladson-Billings (2009):

> Part of being highly qualified as a teacher is that you actually understand kids, you understand community, you understand context—so that you go into a setting and you're able to understand enough about the setting, enough about yourself, to be able to be effective. (p. 164)

Educational reforms have been addressed at federal, state, and local levels throughout the history of this nation and that is no less true today. At the district level, school leaders work with district leaders, department heads, specialized curriculum development staff, and support staff, to screen student progress and modify educational programs and scheduling, improvising as issues emerge. In bringing reform, unfortunately, they have neglected to perceive the estimation of the most crucial partner in training—the student, as important in k-12 as in higher education. This current study analyzed student impressions of teaching to determine the practices, techniques,

and characteristics of teachers that encourage student learning and involvement in post-secondary education.

Regardless of whether society is necessarily good or intrinsically imperfect, it can and should progress and improve. Literate adults can and should play a part in such improvement, particularly teachers, including the educators that teach in higher education institutions. For people, and society, to succeed, learning must continue throughout life. People who intend to learn throughout their lives profit from their educators' teaching qualities, and in turn, excellent instructors promote lifelong learning. Adult learners have a readiness to learn and ought to be treated with respect and positive regard. Adult learners ought to be taught uniquely in contrast to children. This is critical in the domain of educational techniques for adult learners and should be second nature for good instructors. Great instructors that have solid teaching skills impart quality education for adult learners and this positively impact the society as a whole.

Results

While discussing the philosophies of and reasons for adult education, Beder (1989) focused on five core principles as the foundation of the field: improvement of society; lifelong learning; encouraging students to prosper in various areas of life; dignity and respect for students and instructors; quality instruction and student engagement. Similarly, characteristics of a good teacher can also be categorized under five common themes as derived from this research study: relationship skills, emotional state, generativity, self-awareness, and competence. Among these, the first four characteristics are non-cognitive, whereas the last one is cognitive (see Table 5).

Research on the characteristics of a good teacher is needed for the educational system and may play a large role in improving a system. Such research may permit educators become

familiar with the characteristics that can make them better teachers and help improve student learning. Based on the five characteristics of a good teacher, the researcher developed the following graphic organizer to show the five characteristics of a good teacher (see Figure 2). Good teachers fall into these five categories according to the findings from this study, and the categories all relate to quality teaching attributes as identified by the researcher according to the findings from the sample.

According to Drazen (2006), students see ideal teachers in three ways: the way they handle scholarship, students, and expertise in academics; the way they deliver the lectures and make everything clear to students; and the way they interact with students. According to Musgrove and Taylor (2012), students see ideal teachers in five different ways: having a fitting personality, being able to maintain discipline, having effective teaching techniques, employing good behavior in the classroom, and being able to maintain order in the classroom. Blishen (1969) described the quality of a good teacher as a person who gives his full attention to the students, is modest and polite, participates fully in classroom activities, has a good relationship with students, conducts lectures on time, views the student as an important and valuable member of the education system, does not impose extreme burdens on students, and understands that the students are not always ready to study.

Students do not categorize the ideal characteristics of their teachers in a one-dimensional way. Rather, they divide them into two essential categories: professional knowledge and personality traits. Professional knowledge includes both disciplinary as well as didactic knowledge. For students, an ideal teacher is one who possesses both of these characteristics. This finding is supported in the literature by Fraser and Walberg (2005). The researcher identified and developed five characteristics of a good teacher as illustrated in Table 5. Next, the researcher

categorized the positive student responses in correlation with the five characteristics of a good teacher. This is where the data meets the outcome. The outcome is the development of the five characteristics of a good teacher, and Table 6 lists positive responses collected from the student participants in this study organized by the five teaching characteristics developed by the researcher.

Author's Quality Teaching Attributes (QTA) Model

The researcher created the five categories based on the outcome from the data with the exception of one category: Generativity. Generativity is a term coined by psychologist Erik Erikson in 1950 and has to do with transferability of knowledge and experience to the next generation. According to McLeod (2013):

> During middle adulthood (ages 40 to 65), we establish our careers, settle down within a relationship, begin our own families and develop a sense of being a part of the bigger picture. We give back to society through raising our children, being productive at work, and becoming involved in community activities and organizations. By failing to achieve these objectives, we become stagnant and feel unproductive. Success in this stage will lead to the virtue of care. (p. 4)

The researcher created Figure 3 to illustrate the quality teaching attributes of good professors in accordance to the student perceptions in this study. The researcher coded the categories of the quality teaching in the following manner: (R) Relationship Skills, (E) Emotional State, (G) Generativity (Erikson, 1950), (S) Self-awareness, (C) Competence.

The study can be applied to various educational sectors and may be useful for improving broader higher education functions and practices. Students are able to learn more efficiently

when their teachers fulfill their expectations, and teachers will also feel more satisfied upon seeing their students working hard and being dedicated to their learning. This will have an overall positive impact on students and teachers in a variety of disciplines across higher education. It may also influence other institutions to carry out similar research.

When it comes to making of students what people desire, or in fact, what the student him or herself desires, the method of educating plays, by far, the most influential role. The analogy that comes to mind is that of setting a metal. When extrusion or cold forging is not a solution, the advised method is melting and casting. It allows the metal to decide for itself where to go before hardening. So is the nature of students. When forced into a method of learning unsuitable to the student, the molding of the student is not achievable. This brings forth the need to define a certain ideal environment, where students are open to being shaped, and the pivot of this environment, the primary focal point, is the educator. Thus, the educator should have certain qualities that foster student achievement. Who better to determine these characteristics than the student?

This research was carried out as a mean to identify student expectations and needs of their professors. The questions asked in this study were open-ended in order to achieve honest and accurate results. The results, though obtained from a small sample, are transferable to the broader population. Previous research has demonstrated that students recognize almost immediately whether their instructor qualifies for their attention, has the capacity to be in charge of and engage the class, motivate them to study, and in the end, be a role model for those who would like to become educators or future industry professionals. The qualities identified from earlier research speak of classroom and behavioral control in certain situations and the abilities to: clarify different perspective to enhance student comprehension, inspire the best residing

within each student, captivate students and encourage freedom of thought and discussion, and finally, help students bridge the gap between theoretical material and real-world application. Students seek out high quality, that is effective and "good" instructors when they are able to, given they are not simply assigned certain courses in their academic programs, which sometimes they are. The teacher is given a chance to deliver. If the high-performance delivery does not occur in the classroom, students' attitude toward that teacher will change. This may also influence student behavior in the classroom, as students may develop less serious behavior toward the subject as well as toward the instructor.

Analysis

Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, Rockoff, and Wyckoff (2008) discovered that the student success gaps in New York City schools narrowed when teachers with more distinctive certifications were assigned and taught in poverty-stricken schools. That such gaps can be mitigated by effective educational techniques is upheld by the research of Good and Brophy (1994), Goldhaber and Brewer (2000), and Darling-Hammond (2000).

Compelling educators are efficient regarding their content delivery and set high expectations for their students as well as themselves (Demmon-Berger, 1986). Successful educators can set acquirable objectives and delivery course materials in a way that enlightens students (Good & Brophy, 1994) while simultaneously developing solid student relationships in a considerate and encouraging classroom atmosphere (Cotton, 1995; Levy, Wubbels, Brekelmans, & Morganfield, 1997). In an overview on influential instructing, competitive instructors were distinguished as the individuals who knew the art of challenging and supporting their students and exuding eagerness for the subject. The educators were ready to attempt new

educational strategies and build connections between the subject and the students' lives. According to Ladson-Billings (2009):

> Part of being highly qualified as a teacher is that you understand students, you understand the community, you understand context—so that you go into a setting and you're able to understand enough about the setting, enough about yourself, to be able to be effective.... If the students aren't learning anything, how can you be highly qualified? That has got to be an ultimate goal of the enterprise—that students come out able to solve problems, able to make decisions, able to critically analyze their environments. Highly qualified teaching is intimately tied to results, but I'm not talking about results as standardized tests. (p. 161)

Research conducted concerning teacher assessment started during the late 1800s. Ladson-Billings (2009) illustrated that it was anything but difficult to deduce that "all who learned could instruct" (p. 162). Research regarding instructor viability began decisively in the mid-1920s with a focus on the perspective of educational administration directors (Dunkin & Biddle, 1974; Remmers, Gage, & Rummel, 1965). Analysis undertaken in the 1930s and 1940s pivoted toward looking for the connection between educator viability and student achievement, classroom exercises, and teaching techniques. These investigations added to the knowledge base of effective teaching methodologies (Campbell, Muijs, Robinson, & Kyriakides, 2003; Dunkin & Biddle, 1974) and prompted the examinations in the 1960s that focused on educators' convictions about student learning. It was brought to light by Medley and Mitzel (1963) that a fundamental aspect of student knowledge is the educator. This has been bolstered by studies by Darling-Hammond (2000), Devore, Logsdon, Williams, and Ferguson (1991), Hammond and Collins (1991), Haycock (1998), and Sanders and Horn (1998).

Studies concerning the association between instruction and learning continue to be a focus of research and innovative practice, and assessment as the measure of quality of instruction is popular in contemporary educational research. For example, the characterization of "value-added" instruction is dependent on incremental measures of student learning based on regular standardized assessments (Carter, 2008). Dr. William Sanders created the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System in the 1980s. It is a model utilized that attempts to demonstrate that viable educators are essential for increasing student achievement. Sanders, Wright, and Horn (1997) undertook a three-year analysis that shows that fifth grade students who were paired with very effective educators over long periods of time had scores in the 96th percentile on state science tests in Tennessee. Contrarily, students who were put in classrooms for the same time span with comparatively less effective educators ended up with scores in the 44th percentile on the same assessment. A later report directed by Nye, Hedges, and Konstantopoulos (2000) upheld the discoveries of the Sanders et al. (1997) investigation. It was observed that significant contrasts were exhibited in educators' inclination to deliver improvement in students' achievement on standardized tests as a measure of student learning. Mendro (1998) also studied effective teaching and student achievement in Dallas Independent Schools, finding that students assigned to effective instructors for one year saw improvements; however, students assigned to less effective educators lagged behind and required approximately three years to catch up academically with their peers. If we consider that instructors reserve the ability to boost or diminish student achievement, an examination of impactful instructional techniques should follow suit.

As a result of analysis of data from the National Educational Longitudinal Studies (NELS) of 1988, it was brought to focus that post-secondary students' endeavors in math and

science subjects were impacted by instructors with accreditation in their discipline (including educators with a degree in their subject) (Kaufman & Rasinski, 1991). That was not the case for educators without such accreditation (Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000). Research by Goldhaber and Brewer (2000) is bolstered by the prior work of Ferguson and Womack (1993) who verified that the measure and quality of instructor training coursework improved execution of new skills by more than four times more than the standards required of substantive learning. Still, disciplinary knowledge equips instructors with content to convey in lessons; however, it does not ensure that instructors are effective in conveyance of the content.

The Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Project (Kane & Cantrell, 2010), financed by the Bill and Melissa Gates Foundation, examined educator efficacy of effective teaching techniques in science and English of students in grades 4-8. The project revealed four findings. First, successful value-added educators predicted student achievement. Second, the value-added advantage furthered comprehension of ideas. Third, instructors affected math achievement more than English Language Arts on state assessments. Fourth, students' impressions of educators' qualities, including shortcomings, were accurate—students could recognize an instructor's capacity to be in charge of their classes and to assign thorough, stimulating work. Kane and Cantrell (2010), also shared students' assessments of their instructors as a way to give those instructors some feedback. Similarly, in the Tripod Project for Student Improvement (Tripod Education Partners, 2014), established by Ronald Ferguson of Harvard University, data were collected from students in 2,519 classrooms utilizing a 5-point scale to score their instructors on seven constructs: care, control, clarify, challenge, captivate, confer, and consolidate. For each inquiry, means were computed statistical analyses were performed to measure instructors as rated by students in various sections of the same course. The general relationship over the

majority of the constructs was .67; the correlations for all seven constructs ran from .58 to .68. This study demonstrated that students' perspectives of instruction might help principals when assessing instructors, in addition to classroom observations and student test scores.

Discussion

Research conducted by Stronge, Ward, Tucker, and Hindman (2007) of dynamic teaching practices and instructor behaviors in relation to student learning, examined four levels of viability (high to low) within four areas: guideline, student appraisal, classroom administration, and individual attributes. Data from 1,936 students in 85 classrooms were used to survey improvements in student achievement. Actual achievement was compared with expected achievement utilizing ordinary least squares and hierarchical linear modeling. Stronge et al. (2007) found that compelling educators who had more prominent authoritative abilities, held higher expectation of students, higher regard and decency for students, and asked more complicated questions were asked. Further, nuisance behaviors by students were insignificant in contrast with less effective teachers' classrooms.

The advantage of Stronge et al.'s (2007) analysis is identification of instructional attributes and practices that were associated with improvements in student learning. They found that successful educators are aware that a single approach does not foster effective student learning. Thus, it is believed that effective educators, while considering students' accomplishments, have a set of qualities that result in deep and strong teacher-student connections and, as a result, student performance. Research by Sanders et al. (1997), Mendro (1998), Darling-Hammond (2000), Nye et al. (2000), and Stronge et al. (2007) support these findings.

Analysis of instructor efficacy has also incorporated the investigation of educators' convictions about education and learning. Work by Tomlinson et al. (2003) found that educators' demeanor affected their enthusiasm to undergo professional growth and execute new concepts learned through professional development opportunities. The convictions instructors have about learning are frequently hard to alter; many enter education with assumptions about what is, and is not, a successful teaching technique. Earlier, Tobin and Fraser (1990) found that instructor demeanor significantly affected the techniques used to actualize educational modules, in turn affecting student learning including the motivation to learn and participation in classroom activities.

Effective and influential educators are those ready to consider new concepts and techniques that are likely to enhance their experience. Gentry, Steenbergen-Hu, and Choi (2011) directed an investigation to recognize top quality instructors based on student evaluations of teaching. Utilizing two tools, My Class Activities (MCA) (Gentry, Rizza, & Gable, 2001) and Student Perceptions of Classroom Quality (SPOCQ) (Gentry & Owen, 2004), the researchers included 49 schools from urban, suburban, and rural areas with varying student demographics. Information from the MCA was acquired from 23 schools and included 3,744 students from seven states. There were 7,411 students' reports from the SPOCQ test, also including students from seven states. Information gathered from the students was spread over a vast range of instructors, not only those distinguished as effective. The students were given MCA and the SPOCQ. The SPOCQ surveyed students' knowledge in light of challenge, decision, progress, seriousness, and self-adequacy. Students' scores were ranked according to their scores to recognize instructors in the top 5-10% of the sample. Scores that showed standard deviations of

over .75 were utilized to assign rank and for some instructors, this was 1.04 standard deviations higher than for other educators. Four findings emerged:

1. These educators know and demonstrate an individual enthusiasm for their students.
2. These instructors set elevated standards for themselves and their students.
3. These educators make content learning significant and pertinent to the future regarding students' decisions.
4. These instructors reserve reasonable energy for their students, teaching, and for their subject. (Gentry & Owen, 2004, pp. 147-148)

This examination provided proof of how educators can identify with their students and construct more strengthened teacher-student connections. The students in the study perceived quality via instructional techniques and educators' enthusiasm and devotion to teaching. A critical finding in this examination worthy of future study is that "not the greater part of the administrators accepted or remembered them as commendable instructors" (Gentry & Owen, 2004, p. 150). Two essential issues that hiring and training administrators should consider is how to identify characteristics of effective educators in order to improve skills of all instructors and in what ways could administrators recognize educators who are enthusiastic and dedicated in order to retain them.

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Table 5

The Five Characteristics of a Good Teacher

Number	Theme	Skill
1	Relationship skills	A good teacher must possess the property to recognize the student-teacher relationship as an essential tool. The learning process is a bidirectional exchange.
2	Emotional state	A good teacher must be able to excite his or her students and boost their enthusiasm toward the learning process.
3	Generativity (Erikson, 1950)	A good teacher must be generous in the passing on of their skills and knowledge to their students.
4	Self-awareness	A good teacher is a reflection of their teaching skills and is aware of the potential of elevating those skills.
5	Competence	A good teacher should be an expert in the subject matter or professiona and must know how to teach effectively.

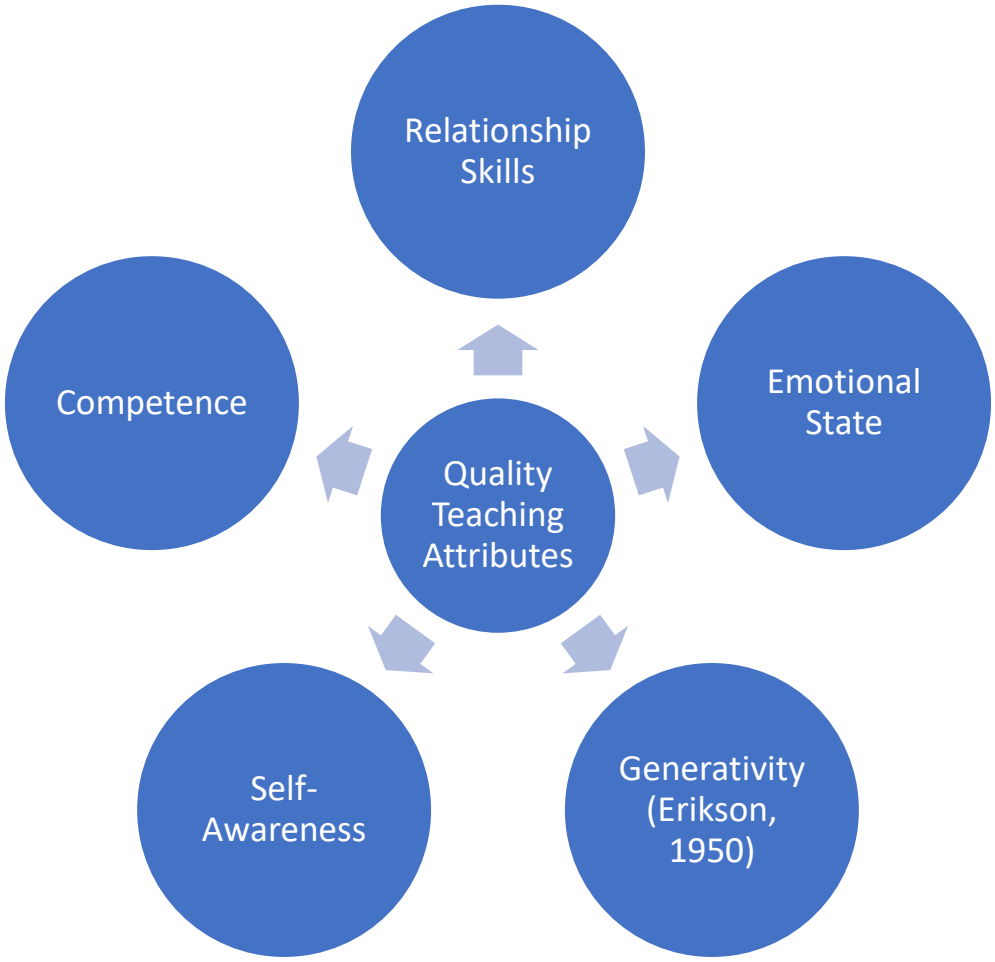


Figure 2. Quality teaching attributes.

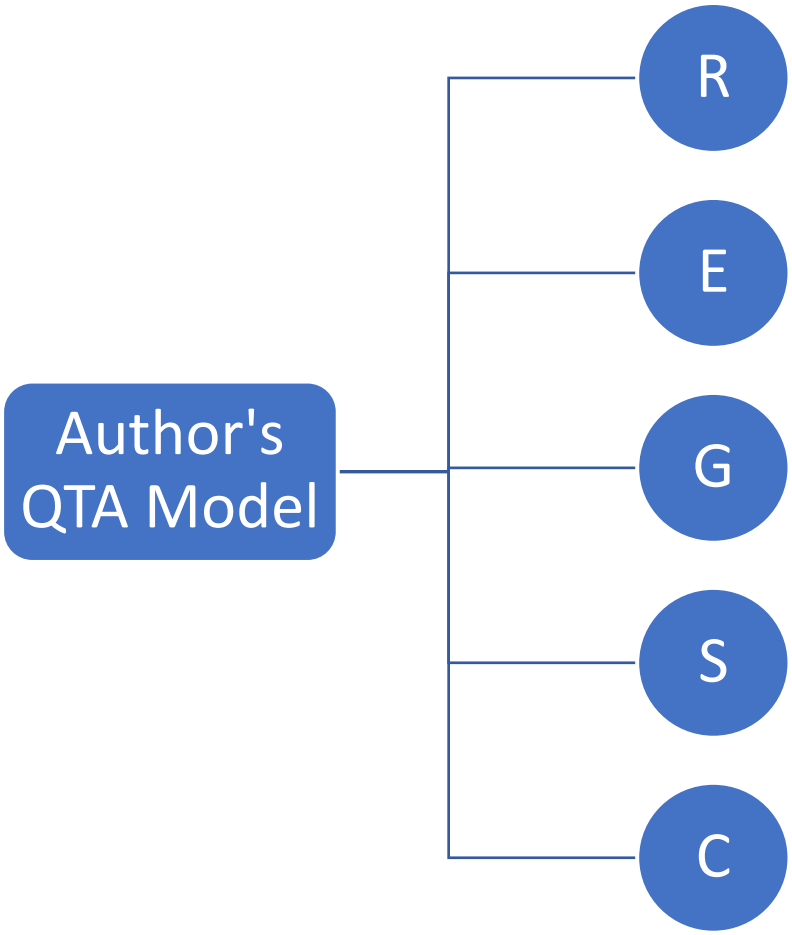


Figure 3. Author's quality teaching attributes (QTA) model.

The research materials and the methodology were IRB approved. Any research materials, data, and other research aids will be resealed by the author of this manuscript upon request.