

# The Desired Attributes of Teachers for Effective Learning: Retrospection of Private Universities of Bangladesh

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**Abstract:** The role of a teacher is believed to be of paramount importance, in the primary and secondary level of education. In a controlled environment, with specific syllabus, these teachers enjoy limited freedom in deciding teaching method, mode of examination, assessment process etc. But they generally exercise adequate control over the students in terms of discipline and class management. Often, the students at these levels are greatly influenced by the qualities of their teachers and view them as role models. On the other hand, university teachers at tertiary level generally enjoy more flexibility in deciding the syllabus, mode of examination, assessment process, method of teaching etc. They deal with more matured students, where teachers are less accountable for students' academic results, character traits or discipline. As such, role of university teachers, on the lives of students are not that evident. It has not been studied much - how the students at tertiary level view their teachers. What they expect from their teachers? What attributes of their teachers are valued more than the others? This study tries to identify the desired attributes of university teachers from their students' perspective. Data has been collected from 377 students and 40 teachers from different private universities in Bangladesh by using Stratified sampling technique. Results show that the most important attributes of a teacher are Mastery on the Subject Matter, Acquaintance with principles of Psychology, Communication and Presentation Skills, Examination and Assessment Skills, Leadership for Students' Development, Ethics & Professional Behavior. This study suggests that if the teachers' possess the above-mentioned qualities adequately, it will significantly enhance the effectiveness of learning-behavior of the private university students in Bangladesh.

**Key words:** Quality, Teaching-learning process, Learning behavior etc.



## 1. Introduction

Today we live in a rapidly changing and shrinking world. It calls for teachers with a broad, deep and thorough understanding of life should impress their pupils by enhancing their knowledge and interaction with technological change. The importance of good teachers is no secret. More than two decades of research findings are unequivocal about the connection between teacher quality and student learning. Teachers not only instruct, they also influence character and communicate attitudes. For aiming to this, teacher should be aware of the behavior of his students both inside and outside the classroom. Who is an effective teacher? How do I become that one? How long does it take? These are the questions which are asked and faced many times by every teacher of any institution. The answers or coping with these questions lead to the effective teaching learning process. Observations show that the learning behaviors of the students of private universities of Bangladesh are hardly effective. The reasons might be attributed by the poor

educational background of the students and the poor academic support facilities. Before the inception of private university in Bangladesh in 1992, there was a severe competition for the admission into the universities. But after the opening up of private sector university education, a number of private universities were established in Bangladesh which is now ninety-two in number. The students who are not supposed to get university education due to lack of seats in the limited number of public universities, they are encouraged to study in the private universities of Bangladesh. As a result, students with different backgrounds, get chance to study in the private universities of the country. Under these circumstances, experts viewed that a teacher's quality and efficiency can play vital roles on the effective learning for these students. Therefore, this study tries to identify the important attributes of a teacher, for effective learning.

## **2. Literature Review**

Literature review shows that the students learning behavior is primarily influenced by the class room teaching and in other learning process of the university. The student-teachers at the University of Ilorin seem to have positive attitude comparable to that of student-teachers in other countries. This positive attitude is an important indicator of willingness and first step in effective ICT integration in curriculum (Mudasiru O., & Yusuf Modupe, R., 2008). Mohammad A. Ashraf and Yusnidah Ibrahim (2009) studied students' evaluation on private university education in Bangladesh with emphasis to the quality and cost of education and found 'Faculty credentials' was one of seven factors. As such, 'Teachers Desired Attributes' was not in focus. Maria Liakopoulou (2011) Studied the qualities, attitudes, skills and knowledge contribute to a teacher's effectiveness. The study was conducted on secondary level of teachers, in Greece.

Incompetence in the teaching profession is a problem of major importance to publicly supported elementary and secondary schools. Public school parents express serious concerns about the quality of teaching in their local schools. (Bridges, D. and Gumport, P. 1984). The study also shows that the parental expectations and encouragement in the use of computers and the Internet at home helps supplement their child's education with or without the support of the school (Paul G. Paris, 2005). Most of the students, research scholars and teaching staff are impacted by information technology in their information seeking and gathering behavior. Electronic resources have changed the information seeking and retrieval method of the students. Internet and telecommunication are most important and useful medium for retrieval of information from the vast information available in the world. It is also found that training program offered by the institution is much utilized by the research scholars of the universities than others (G. Manikandan, S. Mohamed Esmail, M. Nagarajan, 2013). If higher education institutions are to accomplish their mission of preparing students for success in today's world, then they must address the growing demand for ICT literacy (Arif Sari, 2012). Madar's study confirms that in order to foster individuals' intention to use an e-learning, positive perception on e-learning use is crucial. One of the most important occurrences is that both perception and intention to use have significant effect on actual e-learning use. While attitudes have influence on intention, the actual e-learning use has significant effect on students' academic performance at the university level

(Oye, N. D., A.Iahad, N., Madar, 2012). Ideas and knowledge are interconnected and networked in the learner's mind, hence there is a need to integrate and link knowledge in the learner. Learning must be meaningful if it is to be effective. (Cohen, L, 1996). Literature review also shows that the most important teaching aids in the classroom are the teacher and the blackboard (Ha Thi Huong. 2013). Becoming an effective teacher, teaching, although is complex task, not an ease, should be effective (Naveed, 2005). Some practices are used by the teacher effectively that relates to the positive outcomes in learners. Activities such as objective lesson planning, teaching strategies, classroom management and control, provide a rich and comprehensive picture of the effective teacher. An effective teacher is amongst the foremost factors contributing to educational improvement.

### **3. Objectives of the study**

The objective of this study is to identify the important factors related to the quality of a teacher at tertiary level concerning the learning behavior of the private university students in Bangladesh. The specific objectives are outlined below:

- To measure the importance of the attributes of teachers on effective learning from students' perspective.
- To study the difference in perceptions of students and teachers on essential attributes of teachers.
- To put forward suggestions that may help teachers to become more efficient.

### **4. Methodology**

The study is descriptive as well as exploratory in nature and based on primary data. The sample population for this study is composed of 377 students and 40 teachers from different private universities in Bangladesh. A Stratified sampling technique was used to collect primary data from students and convenience sampling technique was used to collect primary data from teachers by means of a survey, using self-administrated questionnaires the respondents. Appropriate statistical analyses were used to satisfy the major objectives of the study such as Radar diagram, Bar diagram, weighted average, mean score, standard deviation and coefficient of variation, bar diagram etc with the help of standard statistical applications such as SPSS and MS Excel.

### **5. Data Analysis and Findings**

Yet a growing body of research shows why current education policies emphasize teaching and why it's important for the country to rise to this challenge. These studies not only provide insight into the characteristics of good teachers, they reveal how these contribute to student learning and closing achievement gaps. Here the desired attributes were studied both from teacher's perspective and from student's perspective considering student's perception as desired and teacher's perception as reality.

### 5.1 List of Attributes

Here is the list of 16 desired attributes of a private university teachers and their description:

| Attributes              | Description  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Classroom Environment   | Provide safe classroom environment                   |
| Knowledge on Subject    | Mastery on the Subject Matter                        |
| Leadership              | Leadership for Students' Development                 |
| Punctuality & Sincerity | Remains punctual and sincere in all activities       |
| Assessment Skill        | Unbiased assessment and judgment skill               |
| Question Setting Skill  | Sets questions relevant to lesson and syllabus       |
| Student Psychology      | Acquaintance with principles of Psychology           |
| Open Communication      | Maintains open door policy                           |
| Attribute               | Description  |
| Class Participation     | Encourage students' participation in class           |
| Communication Skill     | Make difficult topics easily understandable          |
| Update Knowledge        | Awareness of the latest developments and researches  |
| Pedagogic Knowledge     | Professional and pedagogic knowledge                 |
| Presentation Skill      | Good Presentation Skill                              |
| Students Level          | Give adequate information considering students level |
| Class Management        | Have command and control in classroom management     |
| Ethical Behaviour       | Maintain Ethical and professional standards          |

### 5.2 Mean Scores on Desirable Attributes

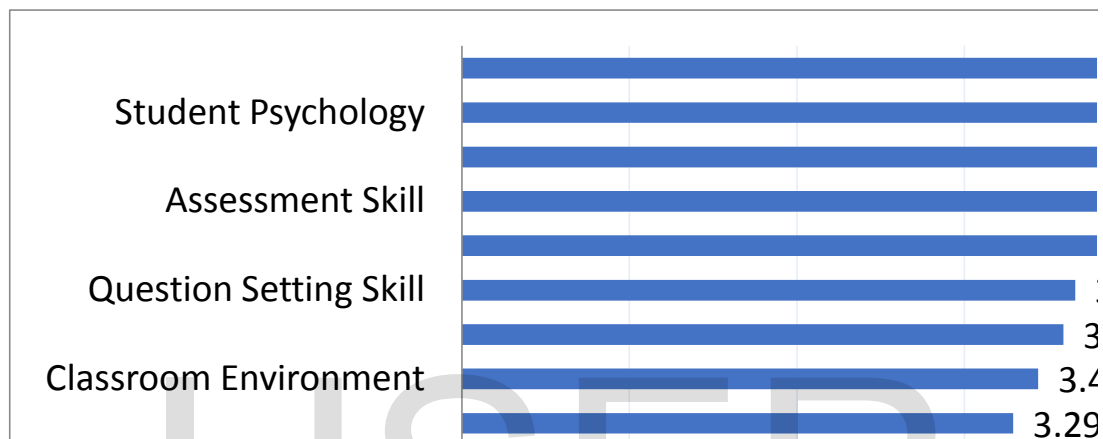
To project the importance of factors concerning teachers' quality a structured questionnaire was administered with the following 5 point Likert scale: 1 = not important, 2 =less important , 3 = moderately important , 4 = very important, 5=most important. After collecting data weighted average was taken for each of the attributes from students' perspective and from teachers perspective and the following result has been found:

Table-2: Weighted average from students' perspective and from teachers' perspective

| Attribute               | Students | Teachers |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|
| Classroom Environment   | 3.59     | 4.50     |
| Knowledge on Subject    | 3.26     | 4.50     |
| Leadership              | 3.12     | 4.40     |
| Punctuality & Sincerity | 3.12     | 4.30     |
| Assessment Skill        | 3.29     | 4.20     |
| Question Setting Skill  | 4.26     | 4.10     |
| Student Psychology      | 3.24     | 4.00     |
| Open Communication      | 3.19     | 4.00     |
| Class Participation     | 3.00     | 3.80     |
| Communication Skill     | 3.26     | 3.70     |
| Update Knowledge        | 3.44     | 3.50     |

| Attribute           | Students | Teachers |
|---------------------|----------|----------|
| Pedagogic Knowledge | 3.90     | 3.50     |
| Presentation Skill  | 4.13     | 3.50     |
| Students Level      | 4.21     | 3.50     |
| Class Management    | 4.16     | 3.20     |
| Ethical Behaviour   | 3.66     | 3.00     |

From table-2 we can find the top-10 attributes from Students’ perspective and teachers’ perspective and it can be graphically shown below through bar diagram:



**Fig 1- Top-10 Attributes from Students’ Perspective**



**Fig 2- Top-10 Attributes from Teachers Perspective**

### 5.3 Test of Hypothesis

Paired sample t-test has been done to find whether there is significant differences between students’ perception and teachers’ perception and found the test as insignificant at 5% level of significance.

| Paired Sample t-Test | Paired Differences |                |                 | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|---|----|-----------------|
|                      | Mean               | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |   |    |                 |
|                      |                    |                |                 |   |    |                 |

|        |                      |         |        |        |          |    |      |
|--------|----------------------|---------|--------|--------|----------|----|------|
| Pair 1 | Students<br>Teachers | -.26897 | .61330 | .11389 | -1.89839 | 15 | .025 |
|--------|----------------------|---------|--------|--------|----------|----|------|

Notes:

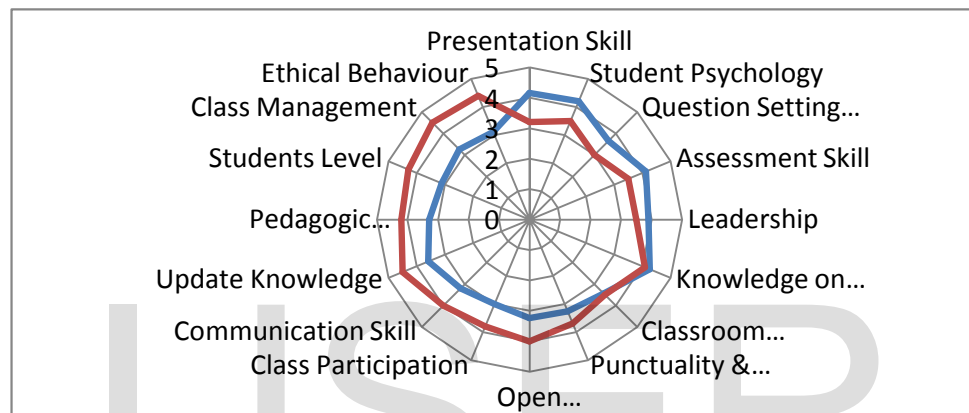
The *t*-value is -1.89839.

The *p*-value is .067302.

The result is *not* significant at  $p < .05$ .

The Hypothesis may be rejected at 5% level of significance.

Though from the above t-test it is found that the differences between students' perception and teachers' perception, if we have a closer look we can find some differences from the following diagram:



**Fig 3: Difference between students' perception and teachers' perception**

Figure 3 describes that there are agreements between students' perception and teachers' perception in classroom environment and knowledge on subject. Most of the cases there exist some disagreements. However, from the aggregated average of students' perception and from teachers' perception we can finally get the following top-5 attributes:

**Table-3: Aggregated Average - Top-5 Attributes**

| Attribute            | Students' Score | Teachers' Score | Average Score |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Knowledge on Subject | 4.26            | 4.10            | 4.18          |
| Update Knowledge     | 3.59            | 4.50            | 4.05          |
| Class Management     | 3.26            | 4.50            | 3.88          |
| Student Psychology   | 4.21            | 3.50            | 3.86          |
| Assessment Skill     | 4.13            | 3.50            | 3.82          |

Result (table-3) shows that the most important factor concerning the quality of a teacher is the Knowledge on subject. That subject matter is an essential component of teacher's knowledge that is neither a new nor a controversial assertion. After all, if teaching entails helping others learn, then understanding what is to be taught is a central requirement of teaching. The myriad tasks of teaching, such as selecting worthwhile learning activities, giving helpful explanations, asking productive questions, and evaluating students' learning, all depend on the teacher's understanding of what it is that students are to learn. Teacher's knowledge must be updated through awareness of the latest developments and researches.

Student psychology is also a very important factor concerning the quality of a teacher. Classroom management is the process by which teachers and institutions create and maintain appropriate behavior of students in classroom settings. Psychology is an intrinsic part of education and teachers must receive sufficient preparation in psychology.

Research recommends that Class management skill has an immense importance on learning behavior. The art of communication involves listening and speaking as well as reading and writing. Teachers need to be highly skilled in all these areas to excel in their profession. Proficient communicators receive information, understand and synthesize it and express themselves at a high level. They make excellent teachers because they are able to transmit knowledge, skills and values at the same time they communicate their caring for the students entrusted to their care.

Teaching requires a complex set of measurement and assessment skills. These skills include the administration and interpretation of standardized tests, the ability to make rapid in-classroom assessment of student understanding and progress, the measurement of student achievement, assignment of grades, and the ability to explain assessment results to parents.

#### **6. Recommendations:**

- Teachers should update themselves to expand and deepen their understanding.
- They must adapt fresh pedagogical techniques, student learning theories, and technological advances.
- Teachers should go through the psychology of each and every student.

#### **7. Conclusion:**

The act of teaching is fundamentally concerned with passing ideas, skills and attitude from the teacher to the learner. Dynamic teaching is not possible without a dynamic teacher. An effective teacher is known through his effective and qualitative teaching. So it can be concluded that quality of instruction in the classroom leads to the quality of education. A teacher is considered as the most important factor in implementing all educational reforms at the grass-root level. As a nation builder of tomorrow his performance is the most crucial input in the field of education. Good teachers are made up of a combination of hundreds of qualities that allow them do their job effectively. There is no denying that all teachers have their own unique blend of these qualities. Study found that important attributes from the students' perspective are; knowledge, deliverability, communication and presentation skills, audible voice, self-discipline, lively, positive gesture, assessment skill, classroom management, counseling skills, mentoring and motivating ability, punctuality, sincerity, emotional intelligence and so on. Among all the attributes six were considered as the most important attributes. The factors are Knowledge on Subject, Students' Psychology, Communication Skills, Assessment Skills, Leadership for Students' Development, Ethics & Professional Behavior. Teachers, like other professionals, should have a hungering need to update themselves, to engage in professional growth, to expand and deepen their understanding. They must be attentive to fresh pedagogical techniques, student



learning theories, and technological advances. Even the best teachers must continue learning in order to be the best. To become effective a teacher must try to achieve the all desired qualities. This will help them imparting knowledge more effectively and efficiently. This will also help in earn respect from the students and make him a role model in the eyes of the students.

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