

Abstracts

The objective of this study is to collect and analyze opinions on the essential qualities of and some background factors contributing to a good teacher from secondary school teachers, undergraduate students of the education discipline (hereafter called education undergraduates) and students of secondary schools.

This is a survey-based research project. Samples on teachers and students from secondary schools are extracted using the proportional stratified sampling technique from a total of eight schools including Chinese and English schools in the public and private sectors. The education undergraduates sample is obtained from the students of the Pre-service Bachelor Degree Course provided by the Faculty of Education of University of Macau. The total sample size is 725, comprising secondary teachers (250), education undergraduates (100), and secondary students (373). The valid questionnaires collected are 601 (82.9%).

The survey tool consists of three sets of identical questionnaire each for different sample groups. The questionnaire lists out 36 fine qualities and 3 background factors of a good teacher. The responses collected were processed and analyzed using these statistical processes: Mean, One-way ANOVA, Reliability Analysis, and Chi-square Test, with the following results:

1. The fine qualities of a good teacher and their categories

1.1 According to the entire sample, the different categories of fine qualities of a good teacher start with "teaching skills," followed by "relationship with students" and "personality." As regard the "knowledge" category, it was ranked lower as the respondents believed that it is important for the teacher to master the relevant knowledge of his own subject. Knowledge on other subjects is relatively less important.

1.2 The 36 kinds of quality presented are ranked by the entire sample in this order: "Adequate Knowledge on the Subject Taught," "Fairness and Impartiality," "Being Responsible," "Prepared and Organized for Classes," "Understands the Students," "Knows the Teaching Objectives of a Course," "Maintains Good Relationship with Students."

These results show that the various qualities of a good teacher are of different

nature and importance, and hence should not be regarded as equal. Hence, one should look at the common qualities that are considered important when making evaluation on a good teacher or self-assessment.

On the other hand, despite that some responses by the secondary teachers, education undergraduates, and secondary students are similar, they do differ from each other on several aspects due to the different positions and attitudes of the sample groups. Therefore, when appraising teachers, opinions from relevant people should be widely sought so as to evaluate from different angles to ensure objectivity and practicality.

2. Analysis of the background factors of a good teacher

2.1 Gender Factor

There is no significant preference among the secondary teachers, education undergraduates, and secondary students on the gender of a good teacher. They all believed that both the male and female teachers can be good teachers.

2.2 Age Factor

The three sample groups believed a good teacher should age between “31-40,” a class that occupied 42.6% of the total response. Those at “51 or above” are considered least likely to be good teachers (Only 4.3%). In general, the preference of the three sample groups increase initially with the teachers’ age but decline subsequently.

2.3 Professional Background Factor

All three sample groups regard graduates from teachers colleges or those with formal teacher training as the first choice. Post secondary or undergraduate students are second, and others the last.

Based on the survey results the following suggestions are proposed:

1. Teachers and education undergraduates shall make self-assessment with reference to the various important qualities as identified in this study.
2. Administrations of schools shall listen widely to different people before

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appraising teachers.

3. Provide opportunities for experienced teachers for further studies and establish a formal appraisal system for teachers.
4. When designing and re-organizing courses, training institutes for teachers could refer to the results of this study.
5. The government shall enhance training for teachers and implement a credit system.
6. The government should enforce the teacher evaluation scheme. This helps to promote the professional image of teachers and their commitment.
7. The government shall create conditions for the organization of 'good/outstanding' teacher awards to recognize and reward the teaching professionals with excellent performance.