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## PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL TRAITS OF A PROFESSOR: A STUDY ON FILIPINO STUDENTS' PREFERENCES

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Received: July 2022

Accepted: August 2022

Published: March 2023

### ABSTRACT

*Schools have resumed receiving students after more than two years of closing doors to learners. College students. Students have built preferences on their professors even before the pandemic began. Using the epistemological lens in conducting research, the purpose of the study is to know the expectations of Filipino college students about the professional and personal qualities of their professors. The study utilized snowball or chain sampling to gather pertinent information in relation to the researched topic. Then, the data gathered were treated through descriptive analysis of quantitative information and thematic analysis on the most recurring themes (qualitative data) among the responses of the subjects. Since it did not use a standardized evaluation tool, the study only aimed to know the expectations at the learners' level. The results showed that Filipino learners value the professional trait of a professor as to being competent and possesses effective communication skills, and in terms of personal qualities, Filipino student lean towards having a good character in general such as friendliness and humorous.*

**Keywords:** professional quality, personal quality, professor, higher education, mixed method

### Suggested citation:

Nuñez, J. L. & Gula, L. P. (2023). Professional and Personal Traits of a Professor: A Study on Filipino Students' Preferences. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 2(1), 38-46. <https://www.ujer.org/vol2no1/article125>

## INTRODUCTION

Colleges and universities play a crucial role in figuring out a country's future in terms of workforce. The learner's perceptions of their immediate connections to the institution affect how they could perform in the future; thus, instructors and professors could be a part of a learner's success or demise in their college life (Hoffmann & Oreopoulos, 2009). Many institutions employ their own evaluation methods to see the feelings of the learners about them, but these records are confidential or just kept for the personal and professional development of the person involved (Fay & Hardin, 2000).

Professors also can make or break students and their future (Lucey, 2018). Their roles are as significant as the captain of the ship that would help the learners navigate through their journey to achieving their goals. With all responsibilities given to a professor, school management and administration must carefully select who would fit each position to teach a particular course. Hence, varied selection criteria and rigorous processes must be taken by an applicant before being considered for a position.

The key element in evaluating proper organizational performance is to name and understand the organization and its management techniques. Organizations should develop an evaluation center to manage a complex and dynamic system. Following the construction of the assessment center, performance evaluation criteria and principles should be developed to show the organization.

1. As a formal framework, performance assessment is a system for measuring, assessing, and deciding an individual's traits, behaviors, and career gains, degree of interest, and current performance level. These efforts will lead to the identification of a person's degree of benefit and the prospect of continued successful, even more effective performance in the future, so that the individual, organization, and community may benefit.
2. Performance assessment as "investigating strengths and weaknesses associated to an organization's individual or group performance."
3. Abbaspour, Rahimian, Mehregan, & Ahmadnia, (2018) describes performance evaluation as "the process of detecting, assessing, and evaluating performance." human performance in companies is being observed, measured, and improved

A performance evaluation system is a collection of performance indicators. measures (i.e., to determine performance efficiency and effectiveness) which offers vital information regarding efficacy). It helps with management, control, monitoring, and adjusting organizational processes (Laei, Abdi, Karamaerouz, & Shirkhani, 2014)

These evaluation instruments contain reflection as to how professors conduct themselves and how students perceive them, thus qualities are one of the major considerations and determinants on the development of the students' personal choices.

Five factors are linked to student achievement like teacher experience (measured by years of teaching), teacher's professional knowledge (measured by education and self-reported preparation to teach mathematics), and teacher provision of learning opportunities – measured by time on mathematics and content coverage (Burroughs, Gardner, Lee, Guo, Touitou, Jansen, and Schmidt, 2019). There are identified twelve crucial traits of the most memorable instructors, including being prepared, having a sense of humor, having a good attitude, inventiveness, impartiality, compassion, and so on. The study looked at high school students' perceptions of instructors' personal and professional traits (Walker, 2008). Teenagers value a variety of attributes in instructors, including calmness, tolerance, a sense of humor, friendliness, and a well-prepared teacher (Lupascu, Pânisoară, & Pânisoară, 2014). Effective instructors could inspire pupils to realize their maximum potential in learning by using their professional and personal talents (Rubio, 2009). According to study, a good teacher's most enviable qualities are topic knowledge, passion, and communication abilities. There were no differences in perspectives depending on cultural background, gender, or discipline (Alrubail, 2016).

When it comes to personality traits and ability attributes, personality can be defined as inborn features in the perceptual sphere, whereas ability can be defined as cognitive features in the application of theory to real-world situations (Raymond, 2008). The origins of the teacher personality construct may be

traced back to Skinner's behavioral theory, which is relevant to teaching. It focuses on teacher actions that determine whether they are effective or ineffective. The basis, interrelation, and relevance of aims are all part of behavior and help as a set of interrelated behaviors necessary for effective teaching (Shulman, 2004). The interactions between instructors and students are crucial in furthering our understanding of successful teaching based on teacher qualities or personality features. Understanding, self-confidence, consideration for others, empathy, fair play, appreciation, flexibility, objectivity, interest, friendliness, maturity, credibility, trustworthiness, humor, polished delivery, and capacity to interact are all human attributes that help good instructors to impact pupils (Beishuzen, Hof, van Putten, Bouwmeester, & Asscher, 2001). This capacity to affect pupils is critical since learning and successful teaching are intertwined.

The educational system of the twenty-first century differs from that of earlier decades. Chance always plays a significant role in adopting a newer and better set of teaching tactics and ideas in the present curriculum, which will again put instructors to the test in terms of their teaching traits and talents. Teachers are more than simply teachers. The qualities that distinguish a teacher are numerous and diverse (Bullock, 2016). Furthermore, Ilaltdinova, Frolova, and Lebedeva (2018) ranked the traits of a successful teacher and allowed them to point out numerous qualities that instructors possess, which they labeled as universal. Education is a powerful incentive as well as a sound investment. Policymakers are reshaping teacher assessment by putting more weight on student test scores and observation-based teacher performance indicators, but they have little understanding of why they differ so widely (Harris, Ingle, & Rutledge, 2014).

However, the outcomes will not determine a student's future; reality will sharpen their talents, and students' integration into society will have a considerable influence on their overall growth. One of the major challenges facing teacher educators is educating a population of varied learners, which leads to instructors doubting their abilities to increase learning for various groups (Chu, 2011). Academicians, administrators, and other influential figures have employed a variety of methods to quantify some of the most important teaching tactics and methodologies during the last few decades of practice and invention. Instructor observations have become a nationwide education event, required by national legislation, and sponsored by benefactors. They are crucial elements of teacher assessment systems that frequently have substantial risks for teachers and school systems but have spurred minor change (Gargani, and Strong, 2014).

Research also discovered that grading mechanisms such as disposition surveys, clinical practice observation, scores, and portfolio valuation each evaluate a single underlying factor rather than the various paradigms that they were supposed to examine (Henry, Thompson, Campbell, Patriarca, Luterbach, Lys, and Covington, 2013). Professional educators have a collaborative mindset, unwavering tenacity, a true love of learning, and unwavering pride in their students (Dueñas, Klash, & Bowden, 2019). Positive and negative interactions (teacher-student) were associated with a student's school involvement in a medium to large way, but links with a student's school accomplishment were modest to medium (Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, & Oort, 2011). Teachers who are effective with English students are also effective with non-English students, and vice versa. There is also evidence that certain teachers are more effective with English students than with non-English students. The teacher's proficiency in the pupils' native language, as well as whether he or she holds a bilingual teaching credential, enhanced efficacy as expected (Loeb, Soland, & Fox, 2014).

Yuan and Hu (2018) revealed that excellent teacher educators are seen to be "fountains of knowledge". Low, Hui, and Cai (2017) also emphasize the significance of teacher educators demonstrating the pedagogical techniques that they hope to instill in their pre-service classes. According to Baric and Burusic (2014), instructors with diverse professional status-related personal traits have similar opinions, expectations, and satisfaction. They found it intriguing to see the link between school-based Catholic religious education and parish-based catechesis, where the current relationship represents a limited source of pleasure for religious education teachers.

Local authors also contribute some essential and eye-opening works. According to research, there is a link between a teacher's soft skills and the school's performance, with the greater the skills competence, the better the school's success. Espina (2011) discovered that instructors who utilize learner-centered

smethods use their self-efficacy to be effective in the classroom, but that effectiveness does not always translate to excellent teaching performance ratings. The ideal teacher has the "ability to contribute relevant information and experiences to clarify the concept," as well as "expertise in the subject subjects taught," which is the most common descriptor of the rated instructor. Similarly, the teachers were effective in delivering lessons and fostering learning, with a focus on the humane treatment of students (Espina, 2013). Finally, identified clusters of teacher roles that demonstrate caring behavior, implying that acts of teaching can transform into acts of caring depending on how teachers, the efficient cause of education, carry out their ordinary tasks in extraordinary ways. The kids, interestingly, sensed and experienced the teacher's loving behavior, which positively impacted their orientations as they cared for humans (De Guzman, Uy, Siy, Torres, Tancioco, & Hernandez, 2008).

Emotional intelligence is a vital component of good teaching since it encompasses relationship management, leadership, and decision-making. Self-awareness and self-management Teachers can use these qualities to mentor, motivate, regulate, and advise pupils. However, this personality-based approach to teaching is insufficient to discriminate between good and terrible instruction (Goleman, 2002).

With the assumption that teaching efficacy is based on knowledge, conduct, abilities, and experiences, teacher behavior was linked to student performance. The cognitive theory of Bandura, which stresses the intellectual progress of pupils and believes the formation of meaning to be crucial, was used to develop ability characteristics (McBer, 2000). Good instructors are goal achievers. Goals were set by them or pre-made for them, and they were tied to student learning. Teachers' abilities to set meaningful goals, create a positive classroom climate and identify student behaviors that are favorable to teaching and learning were all rated as successful. Since student results are quantifiable, this process-product approach is contentious. Teacher procedures, on the other hand, are not quantifiable. These realizations sparked the cognitive movement, in which Bandura improved the ability perspectives by incorporating teacher knowledge into teacher effectiveness (Anderson, 2004). According to Saafin (2005), certain teacher attitudes and attributes, such as respect for students, deep topic knowledge, and strong presenting abilities, motivate and instruct pupils. Borich (2000) confirms that good organizing abilities and well-structured presentations help teachers be more effective.

When considering teaching, these two classifications of successful teaching, based on personality traits and competence, make sense. In this study, the features serve as the foundation for determining teaching quality. Previous study has revealed the multifaceted nature of teaching as well as the presence of nine distinct qualities. (The viewpoint based on personality and ability constructions reveals that the nine dimensions of personality and ability are contained in these two constructs, justifying their use as the research's foundation. When students can manage inquiries and draw their own conclusions, teacher facilitation becomes critical. This elevates the process above the product, leading to the conclusion that, regardless of the other factors used to define excellent teaching, research on the cumulative component of successful teaching shows indicators of personality as well as ability traits in a good teacher (Ibad, 2018).

Furthermore, in a study conducted in West Visayas State University in the Philippines by Laru-an and Aurora (2014) cites that their students prefer their professor to have more emphasis on teaching and learning process and be able to build rapport with them while in the classroom or outside school premises. This is aligned with the same study conducted among Chinese university students by Kim and Olson (2016). The authors mentioned that Chinese students value their professors that caring, entertaining, and experts on their fields. This is along with professional qualities that would aid them achieve higher student learning and be able to provide quality feedback on their schoolwork.

To summarize, both Skinner's behavioral theory and Bandura's cognitive theory include caring, communicativeness, cooperativeness, friendliness, accessibility, ability to motivate, and having a positive attitude as favorable qualities of successful instructors (Ibad, & Sharjeel, 2017). This work then looks at teaching via the lens of these two constructs, which is a departure from other methodologies used by this researcher in previous studies. With these, the goal of the study is to know the preferences of Filipino

college students about their professors through qualitative lens using thematic analysis and quantitative descriptive analysis of most prevailing traits they prefer from their professors.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

Using Microsoft forms, the researchers used snowball or chain sampling (Simkus, 2022) to gather enough data needed for the study. The researchers sent the online form to former students and relatives who are at the college level and have active group chats online. The snowball sampling generated 71 responses from different colleges and universities on the given amount of time during the study. Moreover, the sampling population gave the researcher an outlook on participants' expectations about their professors.

The researchers utilized descriptive statistics (Hayes, 2022) to summarize the gathered data to understand the views of the learners and phenomenological thematic analysis of the responses of the participants to puzzle out the recurring themes about the data being sought by the researchers (Mortensen, 2021; Núñez, 2021). A thematic analysis strives to identify patterns of themes in the interview data while descriptive statistics help readers to apprehend the collective properties of the elements in the set of samples (Hayes, 2022).

As shown in table 1, participants are currently at the college at different year levels. The respondents come from various parts of the country and the average age of college students is 19 years. The researchers used an open-ended questionnaire with only two research questions:

1. What are the top five professional qualities do you look for in a professor? and
2. What are the top five personal qualities do you look for in a professor?

Through snowball or chain sampling, the gathered data from the participants helped the researchers to know what college students look on the professional and personal qualities of their professors. Each quality is presented as the main theme then the related words are categorized into the codes related to each theme (quality).

Table 1. Brief profile of the participants

Year Level	Frequency	Percentage
1	23	32.40%
2	14	19.72%
3	31	43.66%
4	3	4.23%

### Limitation

The study was merely conducted to know the opinion of college or university students in the Philippines about the qualities of a professor they want to have inside the classroom. Questions asked are random and do not represent a standard measurement or evaluation procedure.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The respondents were asked to rank the top five professional qualities that they look at from their college professors. Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents and the most recurring theme from the responses. 60.6% or 43 of the responses dominated the theme "effective communication" quality of a professor. While the second most recurring response was about competence. The third being considerate in class, the fourth and fifth emerging qualities are being passionate and professional.

Table 2. Top 5 professional qualities gathered from the respondents

Top 5 Professional Quality (Themes)	Codes	Percentage
Communication	articulate, good at presentation, persuasive, good listener, confident	60.6 %

Competent	knowledgeable on the subject matter, proficiency in the course being taught, skillful in computer and applications, good in analysis, quality explanation, classroom management	33.8%
Considerate	emphatic to slow learners, fair in classroom judgment, democratic, patient	31.0%
Goal Driven	optimistic in the class, dedicated to class, passionate	25.4%
Professional	punctual in class, does not humiliate students, consistent, strong work ethics	19.7%

When asked about personal qualities, 83% or 59 of all responses fall on the quality of being friendly to the professors. The second was being kind with 57.7% or 41 responses. While being confident emerged as the third quality the respondents were looking for their professors with 53.5% or 35 respondents. The fourth and fifth that emerged as the quality college students are looking for their professors are being motivators and respectful with both below the 50% mark among the participants.

Table 3. Top 5 personal qualities gathered from the respondents

Top 5 Professional Quality (Themes)	Codes	Percentage
Friendly	happy, fun, easy to have a good relationship with, humorous, joker, smiling	83.1%
Good character	empathetic, loving, caring, kind	57.7%
Confident	hygienic, neat, dressed-well	53.5%
Motivator	inspirational, pushes student to strive more	42.2%
Respect	respects diversity and belief, respects other opinions, no favoritism	26.8%

There were two categories in which the respondents were asked what they are looking at by a professor which are professional and personal. In the open-ended question part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked why they chose those qualities of a professor they are looking for. In the professional qualities, some responses are:

*“As nursing student, I am expecting that my professor will look neat and very confident because we deal with the health of our patients...”*

*“I am only in my sophomore year, and I always look forward to a professor with exceptionally good presentation and computer skills since I am studying information technology as my degree. I do not want a professor with low knowledge of the subject matter especially with computers and current trends.”*

*“I graduated from a catholic high school where punctuality is always observed in our daily endeavor. I hate being late in class and I feel frustrated if professors are late in class. Why do state universities do this?”*

Many of the respondents also highlighted in their responses that they want their professors to have upright character or friendliness (Laru-an, & Aurora, 2014), they say:

*“It kills me to have a boring class, I do not want a professor who speaks like an adobe reader and has no personality in the classroom. A lively professor would make so much difference, especially in an after-lunch class.”*

*“Being the only Muslim in the class, I want to feel included and respected in terms of what I believe in. I have experienced before that my professor was subtly-but-indirectly saying something about my religion. I just kept quiet that time.”*

*“There are some professors who do not seem to care, but just to deliver their lessons, it would be lovely if a professor encourages us students to do better at school because sometimes, we may lose our ways and drop from school.”*

After reviewing and rereading the responses from the participants, the researchers were able to grasp the shared meanings of the participants using Giorgi and Giorgi's (2003) descriptive phenomenological analysis. The results were then shown and reviewed by professors to verify the themes in the study. From the themes that appeared, the researchers were able to show the codes which shared meaning with the themes.

During the conduct of the study in the transition from covid to post-covid, the questionnaire was created and floated using the snowball technique. The researchers were able to gather enough data to process to see the results. Using the combination of descriptive statics and thematic analysis of the responses, the results show that Filipino students expect their professors to have effective communication skills, competent, goal driven, and professional when dealing with class. While the same set respondents noted that in terms of personal qualities, they want their professors to be friendly, possessing good character, confident, motivated, and respectful of diversity inside the classroom (Alrubail, 2016).

Though the survey was not sanctioned by the authorities, the researchers did it especially now that students have resumed their face-to-face studies in their respective schools. It is evident that Filipino learners value more in terms of personal qualities the cordiality of their professors as it reflects to Filipino characteristics which are happiness, cordial, and positive (Saito, Imamura, & Miyagi, 2010). While in the professional qualities, Filipino students mostly preferred professors who have good presentation and communication skills (Laru-an, & Aurora, 2014). They do not want their professor who lifts or reads everything from the book, instead, they want to have a more practical and real-life example that would make the presentation of the lesson more interesting (McDonald, 2010). That can be true as the students got used to listening to professors prior to and during the covid-19 pandemic and they may have wanted to get the skills that many think are difficult to develop (Hunkins, 2015).

More to that, qualitative responses were also collected by the researchers to know the reasons the respondents chose those qualities for their professors. Because the respondents responded in dual language, researchers collated and ranked them according to theme using thematic analysis of the traits that are prevalent among the respondents. Surprisingly, their past experiences with their previous professors helped them curate what an ideal professor they want to have inside their classroom. Some also pointed out that they feel disconnected from the personality of their professors, leaving them disappointed or less attentive in their classes. Furthermore, the increasing diversity in the Filipino classroom also was raised by one of the respondents who is Muslim. This goes to show that Filipino students are getting more culturally and religiously tolerant (Montemayor, 2019), so they also want this sensitivity to manifest among their professors.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summarizing the data and information above, it can be concluded that Filipino students still look up to their professors as role models and where they can learn inside the classroom. With all the qualitative information collected, they want their professors to be at their best without sacrificing ethics, cultural and religious sensibilities, and professionalism. So much so that they also want their professors to be competent to the subject matter they are teaching them. Moreover, being considerate and democratic inside the class were an expectation among the students especially because of what is happening.

Understanding the students' expectations of their professors will help administrators and managers to identify their prospect educational front liners, after all the professors have always direct contact to their students. Thus, the study can be used by professors for personal and professional development as basis of their reflection or research. Having said that, the results of the research can be expounded to a larger number of samples.

These preferences of the students presented may be limited because of their experiences, but it surely speaks something that professors should not take for granted as students now have many ways of pulling the legs of their professors or even "cancel" them if they do not meet their expectations (Lippmann,

Bulanda, & Wagenaar, 2009). Thus, it is also worth noting that students' perceptions about their professors could affect how they learn inside the classroom (Laru-an, & Aurora, 2014).

Lastly, the researchers concluded that Filipino students would prefer more a professor with expertise on the subject matter along with personal qualities that would allow students to build rapport and add individualized touch with the relationship with their professors, of course without taking for granted the limitation of the student-teacher relationship.

For more extensive research, this research can be used as reference to gain more background about the future topic researchers will engage into. This research is also an additional literature to the vast studies on the researched topic.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND FUNDING

The authors declare no conflict of interest during the entire conduct of the study. No funding has been received from any individual or organization to do this study.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors could not be more grateful to all who participated in this undertaking. Without your knowledge, it would not have been possible.

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