Main Characteristics of a Good Teacher. The Voice of the Students of Colegio Universitario Antonio Rendic.

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Article History	Abstract
  	This study aims to identify and analyse the key characteristics of a good teacher as valued by senior students at Colegio Universitario Antonio Rendic (CUAR). Using a quantitative descriptive research design, data were collected through a semi-structured survey administered to 32 students in their final year. The research focuses on the traits students most appreciate in teachers, how these traits vary when considered from the perspectives of peers and the school, and the attributes that students reject the most. Results indicate that patience, respect, empathy, and kindness are the most frequently valued qualities, while disrespect, impatience, and lack of interest are the most rejected. Statistical analysis showed all attributes scored highly, with significant differences among certain traits. These findings provide insight into student perceptions of effective teaching, which can inform teacher training and professional development initiatives. **Keywords**: *Adaptability, empathy, ethics, motivation, and teaching.*

INTRODUCTION

Our research is based on information gathered from professors at Colegio Universitario Antonio Rendic (CUAR), located in Antofagasta, Chile. CUAR was founded on October 22, 1996, and recognised as a cooperating institution of the State's educational system by Exempt Resolution No. 0795 of November 11th, 1997. It boasts modern infrastructure and is located in Antofagasta, in the southern part of the city, facing the Pacific Ocean. Its name is in honour of the illustrious immigrant Antonio Rendic Ivanovic, a renowned philanthropist of Croatian origin, a doctor by profession, a firefighter by vocation, and a poet by inspiration. CUAR seeks to offer a comprehensive education and quality of life, inspired by the values of Christian humanism. Consequently, its stated mission is to educate happy individuals with critical thinking and Christian values who, through an excellent, bilingual, and comprehensive education grounded in advances in university research, develop 21st-century competencies, challenged to transform the global world positively. The school's hallmarks are its family-oriented, university-oriented character, its sports programme, and bilingualism.

CUAR seeks to foster a sense of community with the family, ensuring that the family identifies with the school. The inclusion of the family in the Educational Program reflects a healthy commitment to school life rooted in the heart of the home. By the time of the study, the university environment was realised through a direct partnership with the University of Antofagasta (UA). In this way, students begin to experience higher education in the classrooms of the school. The school's sports program is aimed at stimulating and promoting students' emotional, psychological, and physiological development within the framework of well-being, healthy living, and academic excellence. Bilingualism involves managing two linguistic codes with equal efficiency and effectiveness. It's no longer just about communicating, but also about thinking in another language. Being bilingual opens up a wide range of possibilities for CUAR students in an increasingly globalised world.

Currently, the school under study has 829 students, divided between levels from Playgroup to 12th grade, in 39 classrooms, with an average of 21 students per classroom. They are served by six administrators, 54 teachers, and 25

paraprofessionals, who, in turn, are supported by 11 custodial and maintenance assistants and eight financial and administrative staff.

Academically speaking, CUAR divides the year into trimesters and, to determine its students' learning progress, applies diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments supported by centrally administered standardised tests. Within this assessment framework, we considered it pertinent to investigate the following research questions. What are the main characteristics that students identify in good teachers? What are the ten main features that students highlight about good teachers? What are the ten main features that students highlight regarding good teachers in their relationship with their peers? What are the ten main features that students highlight regarding good teachers in their educational institution? And, what are the teachers' features that students reject the most?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The search for the ideal teacher is a timeless yet evolving endeavour. While traditional benchmarks such as content mastery and classroom control remain relevant, modern educational research emphasises a more holistic vision—one that incorporates emotional intelligence, cultural responsiveness, ethical commitment, and adaptability.

The role of the teacher has undergone significant transformations over the decades, and the characteristics that define a good educator are the subject of ongoing study. This review explores the essential qualities of a good teacher, drawing on recent research and educational theories and highlighting theoretical and empirical insights from 2015 to 2024.

Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Instructional Expertise

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) remains the cornerstone of excellent teaching. Shulman (2015) famously introduced this concept to describe the fusion of content expertise and pedagogical skill. "It is not enough to know the subject matter; teachers must know how to make it comprehensible to others" (Shulman, 2015, p. 16). Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) further argue that effective teachers differentiate instruction and use formative assessment to tailor lessons to student progress. Furthermore, the authors argue that the effectiveness of teachers hinges not only on their abilities but also on the systems that prepare, support, and empower them. This report focuses on the key traits and characteristics identified as essential for good teachers. These key features are *Deep Content Knowledge*. Good teachers have a profound understanding of the subject matter, enabling them to

explain concepts clearly and accurately, and to respond effectively to students' questions and misconceptions. *Pedagogical Skill and Adaptability*. Effective teachers are skilled in diverse instructional strategies, adapting their methods to fit the learning needs of varied student populations. They emphasise active learning and critical thinking. *Commitment to Continuous Professional Growth*. High-quality teachers engage in ongoing learning and reflection. Collaborative professional environments and sustained development opportunities allow teachers to refine their practice throughout their careers. *Strong Relationships with Studen*ts. Good teachers build respectful, trusting, and motivating relationships that encourage student engagement and foster a positive classroom climate. *Assessment Literacy*. Teachers proficiently use formative and summative assessments to gauge student understanding and guide instruction, providing timely, constructive feedback. And *Passion, Resilience, and Responsibility.* They demonstrate dedication and perseverance, maintaining high expectations for all students and taking personal responsibility for their success. In the authors' (2017) words:

> Good teaching is not simply a matter of innate talent but rather the product of well-designed systems that support teachers in knowing their subjects deeply, mastering effective instructional practices, continuously reflecting and improving, and building strong relationships with their students. In high-performing education systems, teachers are seen as professionals who are empowered through rigorous preparation, ongoing development, and meaningful collaboration. They hold high expectations for all students and adapt their teaching to meet diverse needs, leveraging assessment thoughtfully to guide learning. This combination of knowledge, skill, commitment, and support enables teachers to foster equitable and excellent educational outcomes. Darling Hammond et al. (2017, p. 45)

Another important contribution to the current topics is Hattie's (2021) paper. The author presents a synthesis of over 1,200 meta-analyses and identifies teacher clarity as having a significant effect size (d = 0.75), suggesting that students learn best when instruction is precise and scaffolded. The following quote supports the author's previous suggestions.

> It is what teachers think, what they do, and what they are that ultimately shapes the learning climate and outcomes for students. The greatest effects on student learning occur when teachers become learners of their teaching, and when students

become their teachers. Expertise in teaching involves knowing the impact one is having on students and adjusting practices accordingly. Visible teaching and visible learning are both needed—the teacher must know what is happening in the heads of learners, and learners must know the intentions of their teachers. Hattie, J. (2021, p. 22)

Hattie identifies 8 key characteristics of good teachers. Teacher Clarity

Effective teachers are clear about what they are teaching and what success looks like. They communicate expectations and explanations with precision, helping students navigate learning objectives confidently. *Teacher Credibility.* According to Hattie, students are more engaged and motivated when they believe the teacher is knowledgeable, trustworthy, and caring. Credibility stems from competence, trust, dynamism, and immediacy. *Formative Evaluation and Feedback.* High-impact teachers constantly assess where students are in their learning journey and provide targeted, actionable feedback. Feedback is most effective when it is timely, specific, and focused on the task, not the learner personally. *High Expectations.* Great teachers believe all students can succeed and communicate high, yet realistic expectations. They create a classroom culture where challenge is embraced and effort is valued. *Assessment-Capable Teaching.* Teachers who help students become "assessment capable"—understanding learning goals, tracking their progress, and knowing next steps—see significantly higher achievement outcomes. *Teacher-Student Relationships.* Trusting, respectful relationships based on warmth, fairness, and responsiveness are foundational. Relationships are not just emotional but also instructionally supportive. *Passion for Teaching and Learning.* Hattie emphasises that teachers who love teaching and demonstrate visible enthusiasm are more likely to energise and motivate students. Passion amplifies clarity, engagement, and commitment. *Adaptive Expertise.* Good teachers are not just experienced but adaptive—they can modify instruction based on ongoing diagnosis of student needs and learning evidence.

Emotional Intelligence and Empathy

Emotional intelligence (EI), as conceptualised by Goleman (2006), encompasses five core competencies: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These elements are foundational not only to personal development but also to effective teaching. Educators with high EI are more adept at recognising and managing their own emotions, which enables them to respond calmly and constructively to challenges in the classroom. As Goleman (2006) emphasises, "Emotional self-awareness is the building block of the next fundamental emotional intelligence: being able to shake off a bad mood" (p. 65), highlighting the role of EI in maintaining emotional balance in high-pressure educational settings.

Research by Dolev and Leshem (2017) demonstrates that teachers with higher levels of emotional intelligence are significantly more capable of managing classroom stress, building meaningful and respectful relationships with students, and cultivating a psychologically safe environment. These capacities translate into more supportive and productive learning spaces. The authors note, "Emotionally intelligent teachers not only recognise students' emotional needs but also respond to them in ways that promote resilience, empathy, and academic engagement" (p. 162), underlining the holistic impact of EI on teaching effectiveness.

Empathy, in particular, is increasingly recognised as central to inclusive and transformative education. Zembylas (2020) stresses this point powerfully:

> Empathy lies at the heart of inclusive and responsive teaching. Without it, even the most informed pedagogy can fall short. Empathy is not merely about feeling for the other but entails a deeper ethical responsibility to understand, to act, and to create emotional connections that can transform learning relationships and challenge systemic inequalities (p. 307).

This relational and ethical dimension of EI encourages teachers to engage not just cognitively but emotionally with their students, especially those from diverse or marginalised backgrounds. As Jennings and Greenberg (2009) argue, emotionally intelligent educators are better equipped to develop what they call "emotionally supportive classrooms", which are linked to improved academic and behavioural outcomes. They explain: "Teachers who are socially and emotionally competent create classroom environments that are more emotionally supportive and better managed. These environments, in turn, support students' academic achievement and emotional development" (p. 492). Taken together, these insights affirm that emotional intelligence is not a peripheral quality in teaching—it is a central pillar of effective, ethical, and responsive pedagogy.

Reflective Practice and Metacognition

Reflective teaching is not merely a retrospective exercise but an ongoing, metacognitive process that informs and

reshapes practice (Brookfield, 2017). Brookfield emphasises that:

> The core process of becoming a critically reflective teacher involves hunting out the assumptions that guide our teaching, checking their accuracy by seeing how they compare to others' assumptions and perspectives, and developing alternative perspectives that guide future actions. This means that we are constantly moving through a cycle of reflecting on our actions, examining the assumptions behind them, and being open to alternative viewpoints—even those that challenge our core beliefs (Brookfield, 2017, p. 7).

Such a cycle fosters deeper understanding, authenticity, and responsiveness in teaching. Larrivee (2020) reinforces this by stating:

> When teachers critically reflect on their decisions, they interrupt habitual patterns and open space for innovation and responsiveness. Reflective practice involves a deep questioning of teaching routines, not only to improve instructional techniques but to ensure that teaching remains responsive to students' changing needs and experiences. In this way, reflective teaching is fundamentally a commitment to growth, ethics, and professional integrity (Larrivee, 2020, p. 101).

This self-inquiry enhances professional agency and supports teacher development, particularly in dynamic and uncertain educational contexts. Brookfield (2017) and Larrivee (2020) converge in positioning reflection as essential for effective teaching, but they approach it from slightly different angles. Brookfield emphasises the analytical and epistemological function of reflection—challenging assumptions and constructing new understandings—while Larrivee adds an ethical and affective dimension, highlighting personal transformation and moral responsibility. Where Brookfield stresses intellectual rigour, Larrivee underscores emotional awareness and social responsiveness, making their views complementary yet distinct.

Cultural Competence and Equity-Oriented Pedagogy

Diversity and equity are not peripheral concerns but central to the identity of the ideal teacher. Gloria Ladson-Billings (2021) defines culturally relevant pedagogy as:

> A pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Culturally relevant pedagogy does not just mean celebrating students' cultures—it

involves a serious analysis of power, privilege, and social justice. Teachers must incorporate students' experiences into the curriculum, teach in ways that recognise students' cultural strengths, and prepare them to challenge and change inequitable systems (Ladson-Billings, 2021, p. 142).

In parallel, Gay (2018) insists that teachers must consciously acknowledge and act upon cultural differences, rather than adopt a colour blind stance. She writes:

> Culturally responsive teaching is validating and affirming. It uses the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant and effective for them. Teachers cannot be colorblind. They must see, respect, and respond to cultural differences to truly engage learners, and they must be willing to challenge the inequities and biases that often shape educational content and interaction (Gay, 2018, p. 34).

Teachers who embody cultural competence promote inclusion, build meaningful connections with diverse learners, and foster equitable learning environments. Ladson-Billings (2021) and Gay (2018) share a firm commitment to culturally conscious pedagogy but articulate it with different focal points. Ladson-Billings places strong emphasis on empowerment and socio-political transformation, positioning the classroom as a site of resistance against systemic oppression. Gay, while also equity-driven, focuses more on pedagogical practice—how teachers use students' cultural knowledge to enhance engagement and comprehension. Both advocate for cultural responsiveness, but Ladson-Billings leans toward activist pedagogy, while Gay offers a practical framework for inclusive teaching.

Adaptability, Technological Fluency, and Growth Mindset

Modern classrooms demand flexibility in teaching strategies and fluency in technology integration. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this need, exposing disparities in readiness for digital instruction. Trust et al. (2022) note:

> Teachers who had previously avoided or underutilised technology found themselves thrust into a digital teaching environment without preparation or adequate support. The pandemic revealed inequities not only in students' access to technology but in teachers' access to professional development and digital resources. Effective

online instruction requires more than transferring face-to-face lessons into a virtual space—it demands a rethinking of pedagogical practices, collaboration tools, and communication strategies to maintain engagement and foster learning (Trust et al., 2022, p. 18).

Such challenges underscore the importance of a growth mindset. Dweck (2016) explains:

> In the growth mindset, failure is not a permanent condition but a necessary step toward mastery. Teachers with a growth mindset approach technology as a field of experimentation—open to failure, willing to iterate, and focused on improvement. They model this openness for students, showing that learning is a continuous, nonlinear journey. Growth-minded educators embrace digital tools not as replacements but as enhancements to pedagogy, tools to differentiate instruction and expand students' learning opportunities (Dweck, 2016, p. 210).

Adaptable, growth-oriented teachers are better equipped to innovate and respond to evolving educational demands. Trust et al. (2022) frame adaptability and technological fluency as institutional and logistical challenges brought to light by crisis, whereas Dweck (2016) contextualises adaptability within a psychological framework of mindset and motivation. Trust et al. highlight systemic gaps and the need for structural support, while Dweck zooms in on the internal attitudes that empower teachers to meet those challenges. Together, they illustrate that successful adaptation is both an external and internal process, requiring both institutional scaffolding and a resilient mindset.

Effective Communication and Instructional Dialogue

Effective communication encompasses not only clarity but also responsiveness, dialogic interaction, and constructive feedback. Hattie (2021) emphasises the strength of teacher-student relationships, writing:

> Feedback and teacher-student relationships are among the most powerful influences on student achievement. The greatest effects on student learning occur when teachers become learners of their teaching, and when students become their teachers. This level of interaction and mutual understanding is only possible in classrooms where communication is dialogic, not monologic, where students are encouraged to question, explain, and build on ideas collaboratively with the teacher (Hattie, 2021, p. 112).

Alexander (2020) highlights the transformative potential of dialogic teaching:

> Dialogic teaching is about more than talk—it is about using talk purposefully and thoughtfully to help learners think and learn. It involves creating classroom interactions that are collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative, and purposeful. In such classrooms, students are not passive recipients but active participants in meaning-making. Classrooms rich in dialogue become sites of democratic learning and shared inquiry where voices are heard, differences respected, and understanding deepened through interaction (Alexander, 2020, p. 65).

This approach supports cognitive engagement and fosters a collaborative, inquiry-based learning culture. Hattie (2021) and Alexander (2020) both advocate for dialogue-rich classrooms, but from different vantage points. Hattie emphasises feedback and relational dynamics as measurable drivers of achievement, rooted in meta-analytic research. Alexander, conversely, presents a more philosophical and democratic rationale, emphasising classroom talk as a means to foster citizenship, critical thinking, and mutual respect. Hattie focuses on effectiveness and impact, while Alexander underscores process and purpose, making their perspectives synergistic yet differently prioritised.

Student-Centeredness, Motivation, and Autonomy Support

Student-centred pedagogy places learners' needs, interests, and agency at the heart of instruction. According to Ryan and Deci (2020):

> The most effective educational environments are those in which students perceive themselves as autonomous, competent, and related to others. These three needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—are fundamental to the development of intrinsic motivation. When teachers support these needs, students are more likely to take initiative, persevere through challenges, and achieve deeper learning. Ideal teachers create environments where students feel capable, connected, and free to take intellectual risks, rather than being controlled by grades, rules, or extrinsic incentives (Ryan & Deci, 2020, p. 38).

They further stress the importance of designing autonomy-supportive contexts:

> Motivation is not something that can be imposed; it flourishes in environments where students feel

that their perspectives are valued, their choices are respected, and their contributions matter. In such settings, learning becomes meaningful and self-driven. Teachers play a vital role in designing these conditions, making decisions that communicate trust, encouragement, and belief in students' potential (Ryan & Deci, 2020, p. 91).

By centring instruction on students' intrinsic motivations, ideal teachers cultivate deeper engagement, curiosity, and a sense of ownership over learning. Ryan and Deci (2020) offer a unified framework rooted in self-determination theory, so rather than differing perspectives, they provide a coherent conceptual lens for understanding motivation. What sets them apart from other educational theorists, however, is their emphasis on psychological needs as universal motivators, applying their theory across diverse educational settings. Their work supports and complements other student-centred approaches by grounding them in a rigorous understanding of human development.

Professional Ethics and Moral Purpose

Ideal teachers are ethical practitioners who navigate complex, value-laden decisions. Campbell (2022) underscores that:

> Teaching is a moral endeavour. It involves navigating value-laden decisions on a daily basis, often in ambiguous contexts where rules and procedures are not enough. Ethical teaching is about fairness, care, and fidelity to students' best interests. It's about doing what is right, not just what is permissible. It entails being attuned to students' needs, advocating for their well-being, and reflecting deeply on the consequences of one's actions (Campbell, 2022, p. 59).

Sockett (2016) extends this view by framing professionalism as a moral disposition:

> Professional ethics in teaching are grounded in character, not compliance. It includes qualities such as honesty, courage, compassion, and humility. It involves a commitment to lifelong learning, to safeguarding students' dignity, and to upholding the ideals of social justice and human rights. An ethically grounded teacher does not simply follow standards—they embody them, modelling integrity and moral purpose in every aspect of their work" (Sockett, 2016, pp. 27, 41).

These dimensions of professionalism connect deeply with the transformative potential of teaching as a vocation grounded in service, justice, and humanity. Campbell (2022) and Sockett (2016) share a moralistic vision of teaching but emphasise different dimensions. Campbell situates ethics within the daily dilemmas of teaching—focusing on responsibility and student advocacy—while Sockett develops a character-based conception, seeing ethics as a matter of personal virtues and professional identity. Campbell highlights moral action; Sockett highlights moral being. Their views reinforce one another, portraying the teacher as both an ethical decision-maker and moral exemplar.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The following are the objectives that guide the research, being directly related to the investigation questions presented in the introduction section of the current work.

1. To identify the features of a good teacher that students value the most.

2. To determine whether those features vary when compared by estate.

3. To document the features that students reject the most in a teacher.

METHODOLOGY

The current work uses a quantitative descriptive research methodology as it aims to systematically describe characteristics associated with a population without manipulating the variables involved. This approach is well-suited for this study as it seeks to provide a broad overview of good teachers' characteristics and behaviours. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), "descriptive research designs help provide answers to the questions of who, what, when, where, and how associated with a particular research problem" (p. 176). Quantitative descriptive research is grounded in objectivity and statistical analysis. It emphasises numerical data collected through instruments such as surveys or structured observations, enabling researchers to summarise large amounts of information efficiently. As Babbie (2020) points out, "descriptive studies are frequently the first step in a line of inquiry, helping researchers establish basic patterns and frequencies" (p. 112).

The quantitative descriptive methodology used in the current investigation is justified because the research objectives are to identify, determine, and document aspects of a good teacher's characteristics as described by the students. The research structure and design, its statistical rigour, and ability to handle data sets make it a powerful tool for generating evidence-based insights without engaging in causal explanations or experimental manipulation.

Description of the population

The population considered for the current study are the students who in December 2024 were completing their 12th and final year at CUAR. By that time, 40 students were already 18 years old, which represents 85% of the whole generation. Students under 18 were not included in the current research. 32 students of 40 potential informants (80%) agreed to answer the survey on a voluntary basis, constituting the final sample.

Research technique and instrument

Accordingly, with the quantitative descriptive methodology used, the informants had to answer a semi-structured survey consisting of 5 sections. In the first one, students had to identify the ten most important characteristics or features of a good teacher. Sections 2 and 3 asked for the same, but relating their answers to two different estates: peers and school. In section 4, the informants had to assess a series of 21 attributes identified in a previous study (Barrios, 2020) from 1 to 10, with the highest score relating them to a good functioning of a class. Finally, in section 5, the students had to establish characteristics a good teacher should never present.

RESULT ANALYSIS

Characteristics of a good teacher regarding students

The data reveals that patience, respectfulness, empathy, and kindness are the most highly valued traits in teachers from the students' perspective, with each receiving more than 20 mentions. This suggests that students prioritise emotional and interpersonal qualities that foster a supportive and understanding learning environment. Attributes like understanding and enthusiasm, while mentioned less frequently, still hold considerable importance, indicating students appreciate teachers who are both knowledgeable and passionate. The relatively lower mentions of creativity, communicativeness, motivation, and flexibility could imply that while these qualities are appreciated, they are secondary to emotional connection and respect. These findings underscore the central role of emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills in student-teacher relationships, aligning with contemporary educational theories emphasising empathy and respect as foundations for effective learning.
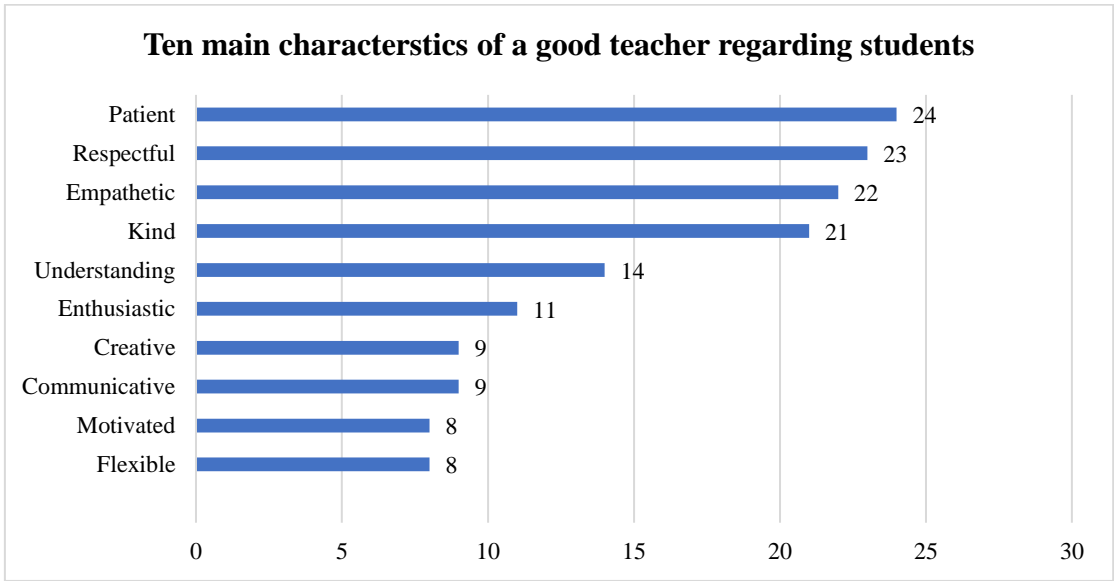

Figure 1. Ten main characteristics of a good teacher regarding the students

Characteristics of a good teacher regarding peers

Respect again emerges as the cornerstone characteristic in peer relationships, suggesting that teachers value collegial respect highly in their professional environment. The equal mentions of empathy, patience, and cooperativeness illustrate the importance of collaboration and emotional support among colleagues. Interestingly, communication, enthusiasm, responsibility, and understanding received fewer mentions, which may reflect a focus on relational qualities over task-oriented skills in peer dynamics. This pattern highlights that a positive and respectful work culture among teachers is built on mutual empathy and cooperation, which can indirectly enhance overall school effectiveness.
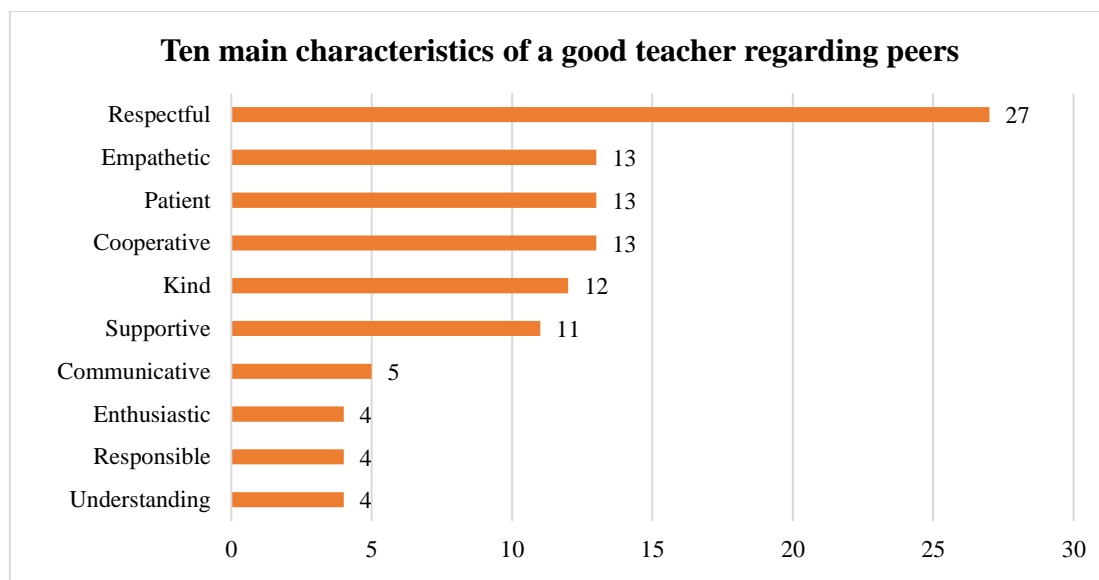
Ten main characteristics of a good teacher regarding peers

Characteristic	Value
Respectful	27
Empathetic	13
Patient	13
Cooperative	13
Kind	12
Supportive	11
Communicative	5
Enthusiastic	4
Responsible	4
Understanding	4

Figure 2. Ten main characteristics of a good teacher regarding peers

Characteristics of a good teacher regarding school

While respect remains the most cited attribute, the lower frequency of other characteristics (all below 10 mentions) suggests that teachers may view their relationship with the institution more formally or administratively. Commitment ranks second, indicating that dedication to the school's mission is valued. Kindness, empathy, and patience also appear as key qualities, perhaps reflecting the need for a supportive attitude toward the school community as a whole. The comparatively lower mentions here could imply that teachers prioritize interpersonal relationships more with students and peers than with the school institution itself, which may point to areas where institutional culture and engagement can be strengthened.
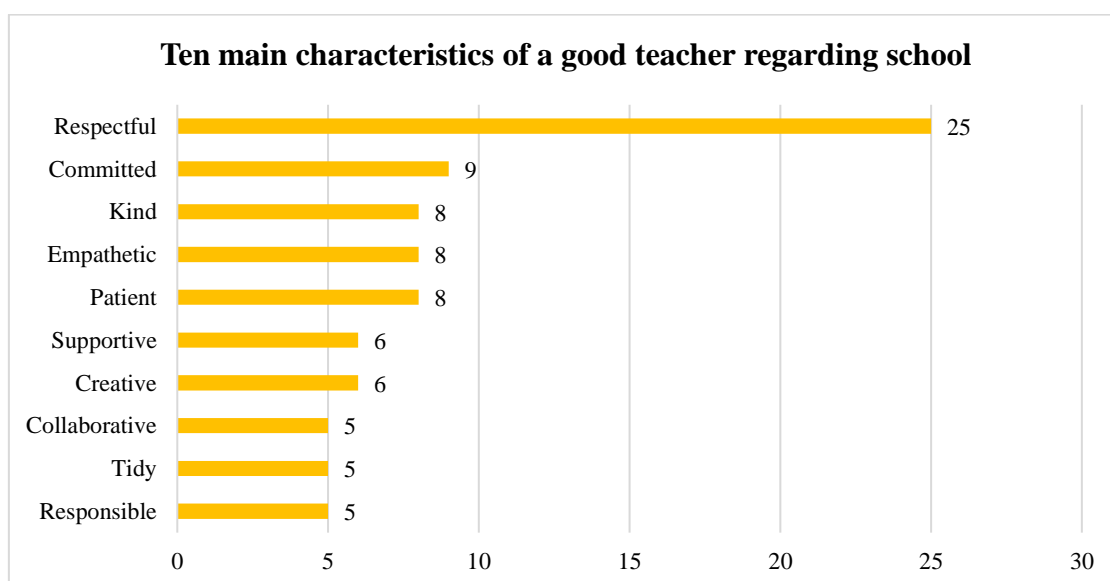

Ten main characteristics of a good teacher regarding school

Characteristic	Value
Respectful	25
Committed	9
Kind	8
Empathetic	8
Patient	8
Supportive	6
Creative	6
Collaborative	5
Tidy	5
Responsible	5

Figure 3. Ten main characteristics of a good teacher regarding school

Most rejected characteristics

The most rejected traits, led by disrespectfulness, impatience, and disinterest, reinforce the positive qualities previously valued. The prominence of these negative characteristics highlights behaviours that significantly undermine teacher effectiveness and student trust. Notably, sarcasm, disorganization, and favouritism also appear as serious concerns, reflecting student sensitivity to fairness and professional conduct. The clear delineation of undesirable traits provides actionable insights for teacher training and professional development, emphasising the elimination of behaviours that damage teacher-student rapport and classroom climate.
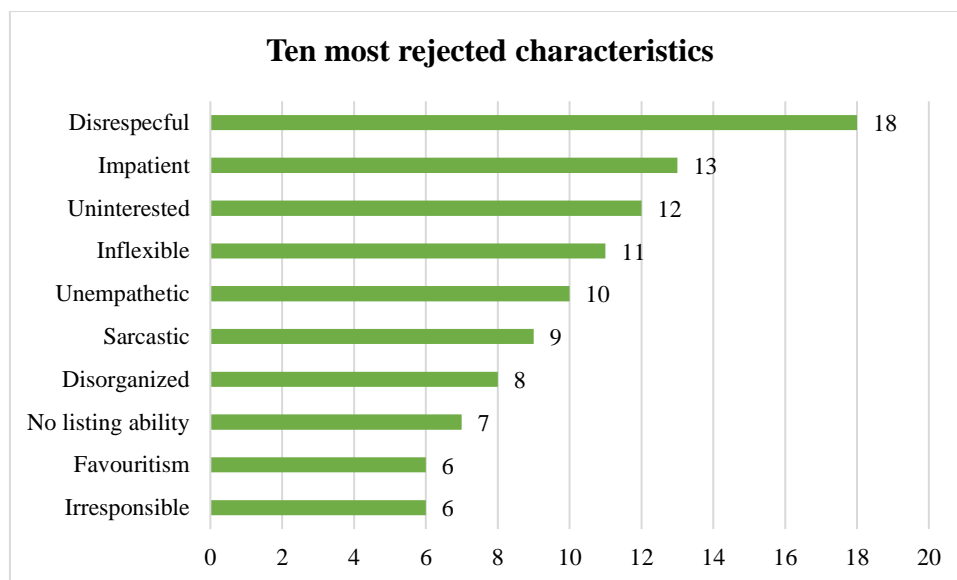
Ten most rejected characteristics

Characteristic	Value
Disrespecful	18
Impatient	13
Uninterested	12
Inflexible	11
Unempathetic	10
Sarcastic	9
Disorganized	8
No listing ability	7
Favouritism	6
Irresponsible	6

Figure 4. Ten most rejected characteristics

Average Scores of Teacher Characteristics

In the last section of the survey, informants were asked to score from 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest score, a series of 21 characteristics obtained in a previous research (Barrios, 2020) about the same subject. The consistently high ratings (above 7) across all 21 characteristics indicate a generally strong consensus among students about what makes an effective teacher. The overall mean score of 8.72 suggests that students hold high expectations for their teachers' qualities. Given the standard deviation and minimum significant difference, the analysis can confidently identify which characteristics stand out statistically, providing a nuanced understanding of priority areas. These quantitative ratings reinforce the qualitative data, confirming that interpersonal skills and professionalism are critical dimensions of effective teaching in this context.
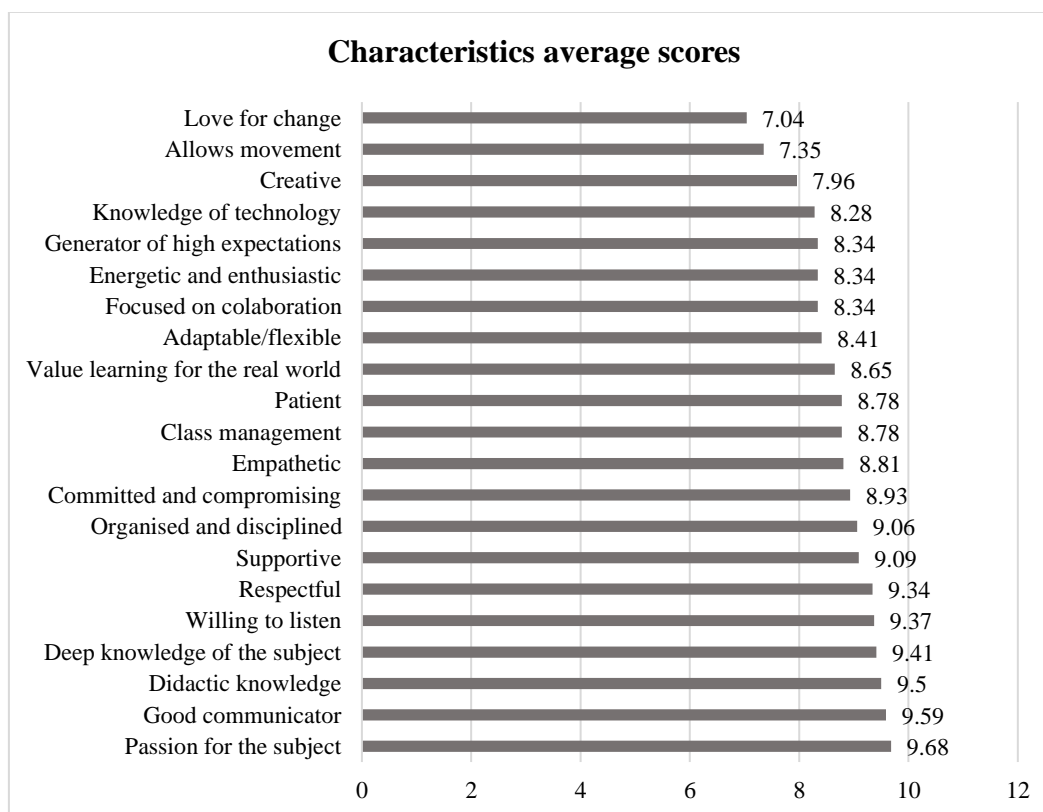
Characteristics average scores

Characteristic	Score
Love for change	7.04
Allows movement	7.35
Creative	7.96
Knowledge of technology	8.28
Generator of high expectations	8.34
Energetic and enthusiastic	8.34
Focused on colaboration	8.34
Adaptable/flexible	8.41
Value learning for the real world	8.65
Patient	8.78
Class management	8.78
Empathetic	8.81
Committed and compromising	8.93
Organised and disciplined	9.06
Supportive	9.09
Respectful	9.34
Willing to listen	9.37
Deep knowledge of the subject	9.41
Didactic knowledge	9.5
Good communicator	9.59
Passion for the subject	9.68

Figure 5. Average Scores of Main Teacher Characteristics.

CONCLUSION

This study reinforces and expands upon contemporary educational scholarship by empirically validating the qualities that senior students at Colegio Universitario Antonio Rendic associate with good teaching. The prominence of patience, respect, empathy, and kindness identified in the findings aligns closely with the established importance of emotional intelligence and empathetic engagement highlighted by Goleman (2006) and Zembylas (2020). These affective qualities underpin supportive and inclusive classroom environments that foster student motivation and resilience.

Furthermore, the recurrent emphasis on respect across students' perceptions of teachers' relationships with peers and the school community reflects the ethical and relational dimensions underscored by Campbell (2022) and Sockett (2016). The strong rejection of disrespectful behaviour further underlines the critical role of professional ethics and moral purpose in shaping effective teacher-student and collegial interactions.

The high average ratings across all assessed characteristics suggest that students recognise the multifaceted nature of good teaching, encompassing not only pedagogical expertise and instructional clarity, as discussed by Shulman (2015) and Hattie (2021), but also adaptability, continuous professional growth, and strong communication skills. These findings echo the literature's emphasis on the dynamic and reflective nature of teaching practice (Brookfield, 2017; Larrivee, 2020), where educators are encouraged to evolve responsively to meet diverse student needs.

Notably, the study's results highlight the need for teachers to balance cognitive and socio-emotional competencies, confirming Ryan and Deci's (2020) theory that autonomy-supportive and motivating environments enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. This holistic view aligns with Ladson-Billings' (2021) and Gay's (2018) assertions on the necessity of culturally competent pedagogy that validates and empowers students' diverse backgrounds.

In conclusion, the findings emphasise that the ideal teacher embodies a synthesis of expertise, empathy, ethical integrity, and adaptability. These interconnected dimensions form the foundation of teaching excellence and underscore the importance of fostering these traits in teacher education and ongoing professional development. Such an approach is essential for cultivating equitable, responsive, and effective educational environments that meet the evolving challenges of contemporary schooling.

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