

Exploring The Effect of Teacher Personality Traits on Engagement, Learning Experience, and Well-Being

Wajiha Qamar

Abstract

Introduction: This study was designed with an objective to determine how teachers personality traits influence the active engagement of students of Bacha Khan College of Dentistry in their academic activities.

Material and Methods: The cross-sectional study included 80 dental students to gather responses on their perceptions of teacher personality traits and their effects on various aspects of dental education. The survey consisted of questions related to the impact of teacher personality on engagement learning experience and wellbeing. Specific teacher personality traits, such as friendliness, approachability, and clarity in communication, were also assessed for their role in facilitating effective communication.

Results: This study's findings indicate that teachers' personalities have a major impact on the educational experiences of dentistry students. Positive teachers' traits were reported by a vast majority of students (87.5%) to have increased their motivation and involvement. 95% of students said that having effective communication with teachers improved their overall learning experiences. Furthermore, a noteworthy percentage (78.75%) felt that their teacher's personality affected their emotional health while they were studying dentistry, emphasizing the significance of these characteristics. Additionally, 90% of students reported that they could easily communicate with teachers who had favourable personality attributes. The most desired teacher personality features in terms of communication were friendliness (56.25%) and approachability (45%), while encouraging (61.25%) and supporting (68.75%) qualities.

Conclusion: This study emphasizes how important teacher personality traits are to dental education, particularly emphasizing the value of friendliness, approachability, and clear communication in enhancing learning experiences and effective teacher-student interaction. Students highly value specific personality attributes like encouragement, support, and high standards, recognizing their importance in providing comfort and motivation during challenging academic periods.

Keywords: Dental; personality traits; teachers; commitment; students; learning

Introduction

The interactions between teachers and students in higher education have a significant impact on the learning process since they not only impart knowledge but also shape students' attitudes, motivations, and motivation to succeed.¹ The role of a

teacher is of paramount importance in the field of dentistry also requires not just academic proficiency but also a strong commitment to patient care and clinical skill.² Students pursuing dental education have specific demands as the field needs a strong foundation in patient care moral behaviour, practical clinical abilities, and academic subject comprehension.³ In this field of study, students need to comprehend theory and

^a Associate Professor, Department of Oral Biology, Bacha Khan College of Dentistry Mardan, Pakistan.

apply it in clinical settings, which frequently involve real-life patients. To succeed and prosper, people also need to develop and preserve an intense appreciation in their field of work. In this regard, dental education teachers bear the responsibility of fostering these fundamental qualities in their students, making the learning environment a crucial factor in determining both academic achievement and job satisfaction. While the predominant focus of educational research has primarily focused on curriculum design, assessment practices, and pedagogical strategies because of their demonstrated impacts on student outcomes.⁴ However, it is important to acknowledge the importance of teacher personality traits, teaching styles, and interpersonal skills. The teacher-student interaction has a considerable impact on both the quality of education and the zeal with which students engage the field they have selected.⁵ There is an evident lack of understanding of the particular effects of teacher personality in dental education, despite an increasing number of studies showing its relevance in education.^{6,7} These students are at critical stage in their academic careers and usually struggle with adapting to a new learning environment, challenging coursework, and the acquisition of clinical skills. It is crucial to explore how a teacher's personality and teaching techniques may affect students' early experiences and the growth of an enthusiasm for dental education.

Although the significance of a teacher's personality has been recognised in general education, surprisingly the issue remains unexplored in dental education.^{1,6,8} It is still unclear which personality attributes of teachers are most useful and relevant for dentistry students, necessitating further investigation. Furthermore, the varied cultural and geographical origins of dental students may offer complex relationships between teachers and students, calling for context-specific research. In addition, bullying must be addressed in the

context of dentistry education since it can negatively affect students' perspectives and experiences. Bullying, whether it comes from teachers or other students, may have a negative impact on the classroom atmosphere, lowering students' motivation, wellbeing, and even leading them to opt not to pursue a career in dentistry.⁹ Therefore, it is critical to look at how the personality qualities of teachers may work as a buffer against these negative experiences, creating a more welcoming, encouraging, and conducive learning environment.

The purpose of this study was designed with an objective to determine how teachers personality traits influence the active engagement of students of Bacha Khan College of Dentistry in their academic activities. By exploring this area, we hope to provide teachers, curriculum developers, and policymakers with insightful knowledge that may improve dental education and ensure a better future for the dental profession and its future practitioners. This research also aims to give useful information and improve dentistry education by thoroughly examining the impact of teacher personality qualities on dental students' learning experiences, engagement, and well-being.

Material and Methods

A cross-sectional survey was carried out between April and October of 2022 to identify the qualities of teachers that dental students believe are crucial for improving their learning, general well-being, and engagement. Using Raosoft® calculator the sample size was calculated as 80 students. Number of students at Bacha Khan College of Dentistry are 100. A customized questionnaire was developed to gather the relevant information. The study examined an array of personality traits, such as motivation, communication and rapport, influence on learning, comfort with teacher gender, and outlook and presentation. Faculty members at the institute were assigned to assist the authors collect the necessary information, and

the survey questionnaire was uploaded on an online survey platform. These faculty members participated in a virtual training session which covered how to use the data collecting tool, related processes, and what type of assistance might be required from them. These members received the link through a mobile messaging platform group. The faculty member was tasked to distribute the link with the students either personally visiting the four years of BDS students, or via mobile messaging platform groups for students. Two reminders were given to the students by the faculty to maximise participation. Ethical Review Committee approved the study. Ethical concerns were considered throughout the study. Before respondents completed the questionnaire, they were informed, among other things, that their identities would be kept private, that the data would not be used individually but would instead be presented as a group, and that policy decisions would be made to enhance the research environment in undergraduate dental schools. The students were briefed on the objectives and intent of the research and reminded that their participation was entirely optional. All data entry, cross-checking, and tabulation were performed using Microsoft Excel.

Results

In this study, we found that most of the students (52.5%) were in their first year of dental college, with third-year students (26.25%) made up the subsequent largest group. The male students made up 71.25% of the sample, while female students comprised about 28.75 %.

Regarding the effect of the teacher's personality traits, a majority of 87.5% of the students stated that positive attributes made them more motivated and engaged. Amazingly, none of the students thought that these characteristics made them less engaged, and 12.5% said that there was not a significant impact as shown in figure 1. The 95% of students indicated that having effective

interaction and a positive relationship with teachers improved their learning experience, highlighting the significance of these factors. Furthermore, 78.75% of students believed that their teacher's personality affected their emotional wellbeing while they were studying dentistry, and 90% of students felt it was simple to communicate with teachers who had good personality traits.

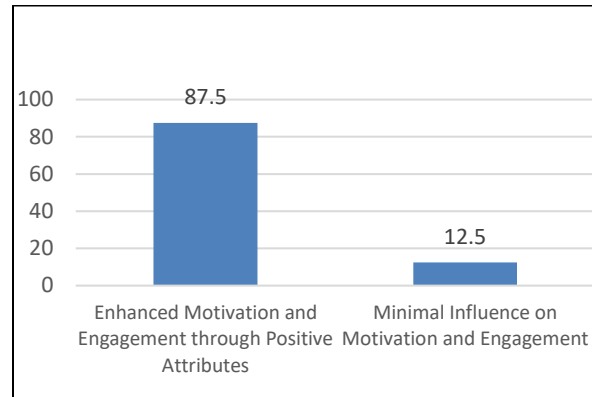


Figure 1: Effect of Positive Attributes on Motivation and Engagement

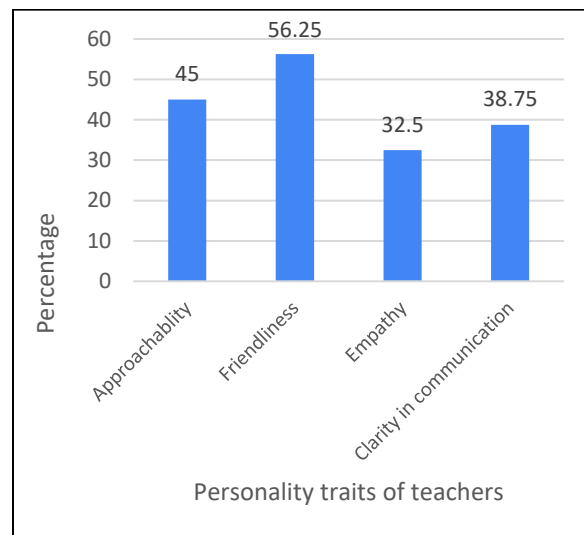


Figure 2: Student Preferences: Personality Traits that Facilitate Communication

Concerning certain personality traits that fostered effective communication, the most desired qualities were friendliness (56.25%) and approachability (45%), as reflected in figure 2. Furthermore, 61.25% of students said that having encouraging personality characteristics increased their confidence,

wellbeing, and engagement, while 68.75% said that that supportive trait had a similar effect, as demonstrated in figure 3.

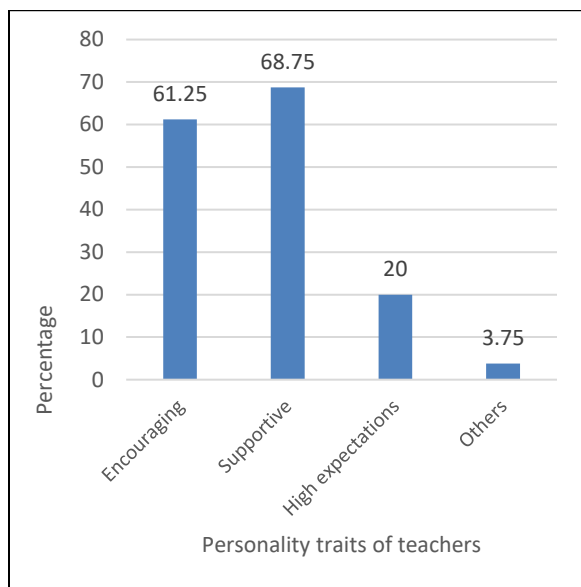


Figure 3: Personality Traits Enhance Student Confidence

Discussion

The results of our research demonstrate the significant effect that personality traits of teachers have on the educational experiences of dental students. The data reveals that certain personality traits are highly regarded by students, such as, more than half of students of our study population emphasize the importance of teacher friendliness, 45% underscore the necessity of being approachable, and 38.75% indicate the importance of communication clarity as critical qualities that lead to efficient communication and, as a result, enhance the learning process overall. Our findings reinforce and build on previous educational studies emphasizing the role of the teacher-student relationship in promoting student engagement and motivation.¹⁰ It is evident that a teacher with a pleasant personality could create a supportive learning atmosphere and develop stronger relationships with students.^{11, 12} Our findings not only are in tandem with the existing theories but also provide practical insights into enhancing dental education. Our

findings support the body of research demonstrating the critical role that teacher personality plays in education, underscoring its significance for educational institutions and policymakers.¹¹ When formulating initiatives to enhance dental education and, more broadly, education across a range of disciplines, these findings should be taken into consideration. However, it is essential to acknowledge that the results may have limited generalizability beyond dental education, and that response bias could be introduced by depending largely on self-reported data. To validate these findings in a variety of educational contexts, additional research is required. Research on methods for developing these desired personality qualities in teachers while assessing their efficacy should be further explored. Universities ought to support programmes for the development of faculty members that will help them become more approachable, interpersonally skilled, and competent communicators.

According to our research, a significant 78.75% of students are convinced that their emotional well-being during dental education is positively impacted by the personality traits of their teachers. This is consistent with a body of research in education that emphasises the critical role that positive relationship between teachers and students play in fostering both academic performance and emotional well-being.¹³ Positive relationships between teachers and students provide students with emotional support and comfort, as shown by a number of research, such as those conducted by Nisar and Baby.^{13, 14}

According to our survey, 56.25% of students believe that certain teacher personality traits- especially friendliness-improve their learning environment. This supports the premise that friendly teachers are essential to establishing a positive learning atmosphere.¹⁵ This result is in line with Sun's research, which showed how approachability of the teacher affects student engagement and learning.¹⁶

In addition, students emphasised the importance of supportive (61.25%), encouraging (68.75%), and high expectations (20%) as aspects of personality that they find comforting and uplifting when faced with difficulties. These results are consistent with the research conducted by Johnson, which highlighted the value of teacher encouragement and support in assisting students in overcoming obstacles in their academic careers.¹⁷

Lastly, four out of every five students who responded to our survey stated that they are more engaged and involved in dental education when they see certain traits in their teachers. According to study by Johnson, this supports the premise that teacher personality qualities are crucial in encouraging active student engagement in the learning process.^{12, 17} The results of our study, taken together, gives a clear picture of the critical role that personality factors played in dentistry education. These results highlight the necessity of teacher development programmes that support these personality qualities to raise educational standards, improve student wellbeing, and encourage active student participation. In addition, longitudinal research could explore the long-term impacts of a teacher's personality on students' success in the classroom and in the workplace. Understanding how personality qualities of teachers affect learning in many cultural and geographic situations may yield insightful information for teachers and educational institutes. The results emphasize the significance of teacher personality traits in dental education and serve as a call to action for educational institutions to make purposeful investments in assisting faculty members develop these attributes.

Conclusions

We have derived the following conclusions based on the findings of our study:

1. The study emphasizes that teacher traits have a significant impact on

dental students' educational experiences. Friendly, approachable, and clear communication are highly regarded traits that enhance learning and facilitate effective communication.

2. The emotional health of students is favourably impacted by their personalities of their respective teachers, which highlights the importance of healthy interactions between teachers and students.
3. Students place a high value on certain teacher features like support, encouragement, and high standards because they feel comforted and motivated by them. These attributes are thought to have a significant role in building resilience and a supportive learning environment.

Based to these results, focused teacher development initiatives are needed to improve student welfare, raise academic standards, and promote student engagement.

Ethical Approval

The study was approved by Research Ethics Committee of Bacha Khan College of Dentistry, Mardan. (No.325/BKCD)

Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest

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