EFFECTIVE TEACHING AS DESCRIBED BY TEACHERS WHO ARE ALSO DOCTORAL STUDENTS: A QUALITATIVE DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

Kelly R. Maguire, EdD, Grand Canyon University
Amy M. Anderson, EdD, Spokane Community College

ABSTRACT

Teachers' roles in their students' lives cannot be underestimated because they impact students in various ways. However, what makes a good teacher is often based on personal perspectives and values, making it subjective. This qualitative descriptive study sought to explore how teachers, who are also students or recent graduates of a teaching and learning doctoral degree program, define effective teaching and describe the characteristics of effective teachers. Data were collected using semi-structured, conversational interviews. The findings revealed that effective teachers exemplify three characteristics: rapport, communication, and passion. Recommendations for practitioners and future research are included.

Keywords: *effective teaching, teachers, students, rapport, communication, passion*

INTRODUCTION

Most people recall a teacher influencing their learning process. Whether the teacher had a negative or positive impact depends on many factors, including the student's learning journey in the classroom. Similarly, every teacher is a former student and knows what it is like to be on both sides of the chalkboard. However, the definition of effective teaching varies among teachers and students (Miron & Mevorach, 2014). Therefore, looking at effective teaching from both perspectives is valuable since students and teachers have unique opinions and experiences that help them describe what makes a teacher effective.

Effective teaching encompasses various elements that impact student learning and development. Since so many interconnected variables make a teacher effective, such as their personal attributes, subject expertise, and teaching skills, it is impossible to separate the teacher's process from their characteristics (Alhija, 2017). As such, describing an effective teacher can also be challenging. However, existing research highlights the value of teachers' personal characteristics, knowledge of the subject matter, and ability to engage students in the classroom (Anderson, 2021; Hu, 2020; Witter & Hattie, 2023). Furthermore, effective teachers have also been described as having the ability to empower and challenge students to think critically, motivate students to do more than they think they can, prepare students for future employment, and be willing to invest time into their students (Eck & Robinson, 2022).

Educational researchers have extensively studied the qualities and behavior of effective teachers. However, most existing research focuses on students' perspectives of quality teachers. There is a gap in the literature regarding how teachers, who are also students, define effective teaching (Hu, 2020). This study aims to expand the existing knowledge on effective teaching by highlighting the perceptions of educators who bring both their teaching and learning experiences to the conversation.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to explore how teachers, who were also students or recent graduates of a teaching and learning doctoral program, describe

the characteristics of effective teachers and define effective teaching. This study aimed to build on the existing literature on effective teaching. Moreover, the goal of this study was to fill the gaps in the literature on this topic.

Existing research has explored students' opinions on what makes a teacher effective. For example, Miron and Mevorach (2014) examined graduate students' perceptions of what makes a "good professor," and their study revealed that personal relationships, methods of instruction, and knowledge of the field are important factors (Miron & Mevorach, 2014). The authors recommended that "further research might expand the knowledge by extending the domains of research into areas such as andragogy and, moreover, teachers as adult learners" (Miron & Mevorach, 2014, p. 87). Additionally, Hu (2020) explored the perceptions of college students on effective teaching. This study revealed that college students want a teacher-student relationship, their teachers to engage with them, and real-world experiences (Hu, 2020). This timely research recommended that "an in-depth comparison between the perceptions of effective teaching from both students and teachers is limited in literature and warrants future research" (Hu, 2020, p. 326). As such, this study explored how teachers who are also students would define effective teaching and describe the characteristics of effective teachers.

Two research questions were developed to guide this study: (RQ1) How do teachers, who are also students or recent graduates of a teaching and learning doctoral program, define effective teaching? (RQ2) How do teachers, who are also students or recent graduates of a teaching and learning doctoral program, describe the characteristics of effective teachers?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of teachers is multifaceted, and the impact that teachers can have on the lives of their students is far-reaching. Unquestionably, there is a connection between teachers and students. While reviewing the extensive literature on effective teaching, several key themes related to this topic emerged, including teaching and learning theories and effective teaching from the perspectives of both teachers and students.

TEACHING AND LEARNING THEORIES
Pedagogy

Pedagogy is defined as the art and science of teaching children (Shah & Campus, 2021). According to Shah and Campus (2021), pedagogy also encompasses cultivating broader societal and cultural values within the teaching and learning relationship dynamics. Although teaching methods and strategies have evolved, pedagogy was historically considered a more teacher-centered approach, where the teacher was the expert in the room and imparted knowledge to the children (Gashoot & Mohamed, 2022). However, research in teaching and learning has increased awareness of the values of student-centered classrooms for increased motivation and engagement (Inada, 2023). A teacher's pedagogy significantly impacts how students view their teachers' effectiveness.

Andragogy

Malcolm Knowles' (1977) adult learning theory, also known as andragogy, addresses the unique perspectives of adults in the classroom. Knowles (1975, 1977) outlined the following five key assumptions about adult learners: (1) their learning should be self-directed; (2) they learn best through experiential education that uses their own background knowledge; (3) they want their education to be relevant to their current roles; (4) they benefit from problem-centered instruction as it gives them transferable skills; and (5) they are motivated to learn. All these factors can and do impact how adult learners view their teacher's effectiveness.

EFFECTIVE TEACHERS FROM THE TEACHER PERSPECTIVE

Teachers get feedback about their effectiveness in the classroom from various sources. They have regular evaluations from their colleagues and administrators to get feedback on their classroom work; some may even use self-reflection to assess their teaching with guided prompts or rubrics. The challenge is that, without a clear and universally accepted definition of effective teaching, how can teachers be accurately assessed?

In Ward's (2012) book review of Hickman's (2011) The Art and Craft of Pedagogy: Portraits of Effective Teachers, case studies examined teaching from the perspective of art teachers. Hickman (2011) concluded that effective teachers are experts, and they interact with learners, create dynamic

learning environments, and emphasize the importance of dialogic apprenticeships (Ward, 2012). However, the review by Ward (2012) determined that Hickman (2011) did not sufficiently answer the question of what makes an effective teacher.

Educational researchers have also created guides for assessing and reflecting on effective teaching from various lenses. Simonson et al. (2021) created a Framework for Assessing Teaching Effectiveness (FATE), which evaluates a teacher's ability to create a learner-centered classroom environment that includes scholarly teaching. FATE also assesses teachers' course design (Simonson et al., 2021). Similarly, Hepsibha and Catherine (2022) created an instrument to measure teacher effectiveness using feedback from teachers and experts in the field that measures teachers' professional/academic knowledge, preparation/presentation of lessons, attitudes toward students, feedback, and personal qualities. Furthermore, Anderson (2023) designed a self-reflection instrument for teachers to assess how well they incorporate equity, diversity, and inclusion into their course curriculum, teacher-student interactions, and teaching practices. Through reflection and assessment, educators can begin to see how effective they are in the classroom.

Teachers also receive feedback on the effectiveness of their instruction through peer evaluations, typically conducted through observations and a checklist. These evaluations often measure teachers' soft skills, such as their ability to communicate clearly (Griffin, 2022). Likewise, effective teachers are often assessed on how well they can modify lessons to promote student learning and be subject matter experts in their teaching content (Griffin, 2022; Maguire, 2023). However, there is no universal way to assess teacher effectiveness (Griffin, 2022).

EFFECTIVE TEACHERS FROM THE STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Describing an effective teacher from the student's perspective yields a variety of opinions. Cristian and Denisa's (2014) findings indicate that students feel the ideal teacher exhibits clarity in teaching, fairness in grading, encourages dialogue, possesses general content knowledge, exhibits enthusiasm for teaching, and has a sense of humor. Similarly, Konstantinou et al. (2022) and Antovska and Kostov (2017) explored how primary and junior high students describe effective teachers, and the results indicated that students want teachers who are creative, joyful, and humorous. Furthermore, Metruk (2021) explored effective teaching from the perspective of students enrolled in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) course, and they discovered that effective EFL teachers are knowledgeable, available, well-prepared, upbeat, create positive relationships with students, and efficiently manage time.

Research also continues to delve into the perceptions and opinions of pre-service teachers toward their professors. Wilson and Cameron (1996) used student journals to collect data from student teachers. Their findings indicate that instruction, management, and relationships are the predominant components of an effective teacher from the perspective of students working to become teachers. Further results shed insight into the importance of communication between the pre-service teachers and the instructor, especially in providing feedback (Lutovac & Flores, 2022; Maguire, 2023). Students' opinions and perceptions are essential to discover what makes an effective teacher.

METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

A qualitative descriptive design was selected as the methodology for this study. This methodology is beneficial when researchers want a straightforward description of specific events (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). This methodology and design were also chosen because it prioritizes practical considerations and real-world applicability (Guba, 1981).

RECRUITMENT STRATEGY AND SAMPLE

After approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the researchers began recruiting participants using snowball sampling. This non-probability sampling method is commonly used in qualitative research where specific individuals who fit the study's criteria recommend possible participants for recruitment (Goodman, 1961). Since the researchers had access to the personal email addresses of qualified individuals, they sent recruitment emails to invite participants to the study. Furthermore, with permission, the researchers posted a recruitment flyer on a doctoral learner-specific Facebook page.

The sample consisted of nine teachers who were also students or recent graduates of a teaching and learning doctoral program. Participants self-reported their gender; one was male (11%),

and the other eight were female (89%). The participants ranged in age from 35-64, where five were between 35-49 (56%), and the remaining four were between 50-64 (44%). The study incorporated teachers with varying years of teaching experience in various education levels. Four participants (44%) taught in pre-K-12th grade, and the remaining five (55%) taught in higher education. Eight teachers (89%) had taught between 10-40 years. All research participants (100%) said they were furthering their education, as students, to improve their teaching.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Qualitative data were collected using semi-structured, conversational interviews and an open-ended questionnaire/survey. The researchers used Braun and Clarke's (2006) Six-Step Guide for simple thematic analysis. The interviews were recorded and transcribed using Trint and member-checked for accuracy. The transcripts were uploaded to Quirkos, a qualitative software program for organizing the thematic analysis process.

The researchers began by familiarizing themselves with the data by reading and rereading the nine transcripts. Next, using Quirkos, initial codes were generated, with 56 codes from the doctoral learners' perspective and 69 from the teachers' perspective. Once condensed, 18 codes became clear, and the researchers collaborated to collapse them into overarching themes from both the doctoral learner and teacher perspectives. Data about the characteristics of effective teachers ultimately yielded three overarching themes, which were defined and named rapport, communication, and passion (see Figure 1).

Figure 1
Qualitative Codes and Themes

Rapport with Students	Communication with Students	Passion
• Caring • Empathetic • Open-minded • Patient • Inclusive • Sincere • Flexible • Reliable • Trustworthy	• Clarity • Listening • Feedback • Availability • Charismatic	• Passion for teaching • Passion for students • Dedicated • Engaging

FINDINGS

After analyzing the data, three overarching themes related to the characteristics of effective teachers became clear: rapport, communication, and passion. Participants, who were both teachers and students or recent graduates of a teaching and learning doctoral program, felt these three qualities were critical for effective teaching. The following section highlights participant interview responses related to these themes and delves into participants' definitions of effective teaching.

RAPPORT

Rapport was identified as the most important characteristic of an effective teacher. Several codes related to rapport emerged in the study, such as building strong relationships characterized by trust, availability, empathy, care, patience, and flexibility. One participant stated, "You have to have a positive relationship with your students, or they won't trust you." A teacher emphasized the importance of availability, explaining, "I believe that I make myself available in my current setting, and that impacts our relationship in a positive way." Another agreed and stated that when "you show that you're available to your students, then it builds trust.

Participants also described teachers who build positive student rapport as being open-minded, inclusive, and reliable. They believe effective teachers understand their students' backgrounds and create a strong relationship that positively impacts their learning. One participant commented, "The best way to learn what makes a student tick is to have conversations," reinforcing that communication is vital in building rapport.

It became evident in the data that teachers were intentional about building rapport with students. Several participants highlighted that "greeting students at the door" or "being present and approachable" fosters these relationships. Students positively received this intentionality. One remarked, "I like knowing that somebody cares about me. I like positive feedback. It helps me be a better student." Another noted that when "a teacher takes an interest in you and is easy to talk to, it makes it a whole lot easier to just bring your heart out or ask questions or take risks" in the classroom.

While rapport emerges as the most essential quality of effective teachers, establishing strong

teacher-student relationships can be challenging. One participant candidly noted, "Relationships are also hard work, and they take time." Another recognized the overwhelming nature of the task, stating, "You can get bombarded as a teacher with students trying to connect with you all the time." Maintaining a balance of self- and student-care was critical.

COMMUNICATION

Communication was identified as the second most crucial component of effective teaching. Codes that emerged in this theme were clarity, listening, feedback, availability, and charisma. Participants also reported that effective written, verbal, and non-verbal communication positively impacts classroom experiences and contributes to a conducive learning environment.

One element of communication that was emphasized in the interviews as an essential part of teacher communication was feedback. Participants expressed that specific, individualized feedback helps students "feel valued" and "enhances [their] learning experience." One participant stated, "Having expectations that are well communicated is vital to the success of the student." They noted that clear communication reduces students' confusion and anxiety.

Additionally, effective teachers made themselves available to students for questions and clarification. Students also appreciated it when various communication modes, such as in-person office hours, phone conversations, and Zoom appointments, were offered. One participant shared, "It is great when teachers give you their office hours, and you can talk with them face-to-face." Another highlighted that they had a busy schedule, so it was nice when "teachers could give you different ways and times to meet."

Participants also mentioned that teachers' charisma plays a significant role in effective communication. They observed that teachers who "demonstrate enthusiasm and engagement in their teaching" increase student motivation and interest in learning. One noted, "When a teacher is charismatic, it impacts the student's engagement in class." Another shared that "charismatic teachers are more fun and engaging" in class.

PASSION

Passion emerged as the third most important quality for effective teaching. Participants shared that passionate teachers exhibit engagement, dedication, and positivity. Additionally, effective teachers seemed to enjoy teaching and working with students.

Under the theme of passion, interview participants frequently talked about the outcome of passionate teachers, which was the code of student engagement. One participant stated, "A teacher's enthusiasm impacts students' engagement in class." Others expressed that teachers' "passion for the subject matter enhances [students'] interest in the class material. From the teacher's perspective, one noted, "I'm a passionate teacher. My actions show my passion for education," reinforcing that non-verbal communication, such as smiling, inflections in speaking tone, and positive body language, demonstrate a teacher's dedication to their role.

DEFINITION OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING

Along with identifying characteristics of effective teachers, participants in the study were also asked to define effective teaching. One subject reported that "effective teaching is a balance between building relationships, providing content, and preparing students with the skills necessary to be lifelong learners and contributors." Another participant commented that effective teaching occurs when "teachers bring real-world and relevant curriculum to students in an environment that is conducive to learning and student-centered." Additionally, effective teaching includes teachers who understand "who is in the classroom and how to support them academically, socially, and emotionally while maintaining high expectations." Not surprisingly, the definitions of effective teaching centered around the three themes of rapport, communication, and passion.

DISCUSSION

Effective teaching and the characteristics of effective teachers are inherently subjective and multifaceted, leading to challenges in reaching a unified definition among academics. This study provides a unique perspective by collecting data from individuals who have been in the role of a student and a teacher. The findings reveal that effective teachers intentionally build rapport and communicate with students while demonstrating their passion for the subject matter and the teaching profession. These insights resonate with existing research, reinforcing the complex nature of effective teaching and its profound influence on

student learning experiences. In light of these findings, the discussion will delve into the implications of these themes within the broader context of existing literature.

RAPPORT

The findings of this study highlight the importance of teacher-student rapport, which aligns with existing literature on effective teaching. Academic researchers have found that building rapport with students is crucial and involves teachers demonstrating empathy, care, patience, flexibility, and trustworthiness in the classroom (Hu, 2020; Raza & Irfan, 2018; Thakur et al., 2019). Rapport can also be built with students when teachers are approachable. For instance, Michael et al. (2023) suggested "warm welcomes" (p. 39) as a practical way that teachers can build rapport with their students. This research also illuminates the profound connection between rapport and student success, particularly concerning academic achievement, as found in the literature (Thakur et al., 2019; Theisen-Homer, 2021).

Additionally, researchers in this study found that rapport can be built when teachers demonstrate open-mindedness, inclusivity, and reliability when interacting with their students. These findings echo existing literature that discusses the role transparent communication plays in fostering equality (Chen & Liu, 2022). Furthermore, the findings in this study corroborated those of Glazier (2022), showing that a teacher's open-mindedness in establishing and maintaining genuine rapport enhances the classroom environment where students feel valued and understood. Communication

Communication was the second most crucial theme of effective teaching in this study. Under this theme, participants valued feedback, availability, listening, clarity, and charisma. Educational researchers agree that these characteristics of teachers have positive outcomes for students (Anderson, 2021, 2023; Comber & Hayes, 2022; Potvin, 2021).

In this study, teacher feedback was mentioned as crucial to successful communication in the classroom. Researchers have found similar findings and have noted that feedback on student performance plays a pivotal role in successful instruction (Anderson, 2021; Sogunro, 2015; Zhengdong et al., 2018). Additionally, positive feedback, highlighting

strengths in students' character and work, has the potential to foster a supportive learning atmosphere (Anderson et al., 2024).

Another characteristic of effective teaching that emerged from this study was that of availability. When teachers are accessible and help in the classroom, during office hours, or after class (Cladera, 2021), trust is built, and students are more inclined to feel comfortable asking for assistance. Students report that they feel emotionally valued when teachers are available and approachable (Fitzgerald & Hooker, 2022).

Listening was noted as another vital aspect of effective communication in the classroom, which aligns with existing literature. Teachers who actively listen can assess learning, foster connections, and create a welcoming classroom environment (Potvin, 2021). Moreover, when students are listened to, they have the potential to be seen and understood in ways that go beyond traditional performance measures (Comber & Hayes, 2022).

Teacher clarity was another code that emerged in the study under the theme of communication. Both teachers and students noted the value of clarity, and these findings are supported in the literature. Schneider and Preckel (2017) concluded that teacher clarity is strongly related to students' achievement in higher education.

The findings of this study also indicated that charisma was a characteristic of effective teachers. Academic researchers agree that charismatic teachers greatly influence student engagement and motivation (Anderson, 2021; Bolkan & Goodboy, 2014; Lin & Huang, 2016). This charisma is often reflected in their incorporation of active learning, meaningful feedback, and the creation of a positive learning environment (Anderson, 2021; Sogunro, 2015, 2017; Stover & Ziswiler, 2017).

Additionally, participants highlighted that many of these communication elements could be demonstrated in the classroom using written, verbal, and non-verbal forms of communication since all have the potential to shape classroom experiences and contribute to a positive learning environment. This insight echoes the findings of Xie and Derakhshan (2021), who found that positive teacher communication in both verbal and non-verbal formats encourages effective teacher-student interactions.

PASSION

Passion emerged as a third crucial factor in effective teaching. Participants articulated that effective teachers exhibit their passion through engagement, dedication, positivity, and genuine enjoyment of their work with students. These findings parallel the existing literature on effective teachers.

The participants of this study mentioned how non-verbal communication, such as body language, showed whether or not teachers were genuinely passionate. These findings align with existing research that found that students can easily identify when a teacher lacks enthusiasm for the content (Cowan, 2020). Specifically, Ramirez and Allison-Roan (2014) studied the influence of teachers' non-verbal communication and found that it influences teaching effectiveness.

In summary, the findings of this research indicated that teachers' passion is an important characteristic of effective teachers. These findings resonate with existing literature, suggesting that a shared passion for the subject matter is important for students' relationships with their teachers (Jesup et al., 2017). Additionally, when teachers exhibit positive traits, such as passion, it significantly impacts their students' engagement, interest in learning, attitude toward education, and intrinsic motivation (Anderson, 2021; Bolkan & Goodboy, 2014; Lin & Huang, 2014, 2016, 2017).

DEFINITION OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING

Aligning with the core themes of rapport, communication, and passion, the participants in this study defined effective teaching as a combination of building relationships, engaging in positive dialogue, and maintaining devotion to their role as educators. The participants, who were both teachers and students, expressed that effective teachers are open and approachable, creating safe spaces for their students to be seen and heard. These findings mirror those of Fitzgerald and Hooker's (2022) study, which highlights that when a teacher is perceived as trying to relate to the student's perspective, it is positively received. Ultimately, effective teachers are driven by their commitment to education and especially their dedication to their students. These findings are consistent with Daskan's (2023) conclusion that passionate

teachers are enthusiastic, dedicated, and committed to their profession.

While a universal definition of effective teaching has not been agreed upon in the literature, one of the goals of this study was to ask our participants to try to define it. Overwhelmingly, the participants in our study defined effective teaching/teachers as being student-centered, connecting real-world experiences to the curriculum, and building strong relationships in the education process. Similarly, Handa's (2020) results noted that effective teachers "provide a cohesive explanation of concepts, know their students well, and are sensitive to the aspects of the curriculum that students might find difficult to grasp" (p. 557). In both definitions, effective teaching involves creating a supportive learning environment by utilizing student-centered teaching approaches that tailor instruction to students' experiences and building strong relationships between teachers and students.

CONCLUSIONS

Educational researchers have extensively examined the characteristics, qualities, and behaviors of effective teachers. However, defining terms like "good teacher" and "effective teacher" is challenging due to the subjective nature of educational needs and preferences. A teacher may perceive effective teaching through one lens, while students might hold different perspectives based on their experiences in the classroom. This research aimed to explore both viewpoints within a single study.

Historically, the broad concept of effective teaching has focused primarily on students and their learning (Devlin & Samarawickrema, 2010). However, a gap remained in the literature regarding how teachers, who are also doctoral students, define effective teaching (Hu, 2020). Additionally, Miron and Mevorach (2014) recommend further exploration of what makes a good professor. This research examined how teachers, who are also students or recent graduates in a teaching and learning doctoral program, define effective teaching and explore the characteristics that make teachers most effective.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS FOR RQ1

The first research question explored the definition of effective teaching. Participants indicated that effective teaching encompasses establishing a strong rapport with students, communicating

effectively, and demonstrating passion in the class-room. Additionally, the findings reiterated that effective teaching includes a holistic student-centered approach to teaching in a supportive learning environment.

When viewed through a pedagogical lens, this definition highlights the pivotal role teachers play in building connections in the classroom, providing clarity in instruction, and demonstrating enthusiasm for the subject matter. Moreover, effective teaching is perceived as a delicate balance between providing content knowledge and nurturing students' broader skill sets necessary for their continual academic growth, which aligns with the priorities of pedagogy. This perspective underscores the need for instructional strategies, like charismatic teaching, to create supportive learning environments wherein students thrive academically, socially, and emotionally while maintaining high academic standards and expectations.

Viewed through an andragogical lens, this definition of effective teaching extends beyond mere instruction to encompass a dynamic partnership between educators and adult learners in their classrooms. It prioritizes mutual respect, collaboration, and relevance. Additionally, this definition of effective teaching pushes educators to be responsive to adult learners' unique needs and motivations, often emphasizing the importance of self-directed learning and professional growth. Within this framework, effective teaching also requires teachers to foster a learning environment that honors adult learners' autonomy.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS FOR RQ2

The second research question examined how teachers, who are also students or recent graduates of a teaching and learning doctoral degree program, describe the characteristics of effective teachers. Three essential characteristics emerged in the research: rapport, communication, and passion. These attributes not only define effective teaching but also speak to the characteristics necessary to foster an environment conducive to students' learning and growth.

When assessed from a pedagogical perspective, the emphasis on the characteristic of rapport aligns with principles that prioritize nurturing positive teacher-student relationships in classroom settings to enhance students' motivation and engagement, thereby creating a supportive learning atmosphere. Furthermore, effective communication, such as setting clear expectations and offering constructive feedback, is also critical in pedagogical practices. Instructional strategies that foster understanding and facilitate meaningful interactions in the classroom can be critical when engaging with younger students.

Conversely, when viewed through an andragogical lens, these characteristics of effective teachers underscore the importance of building mutual respect and collaboration between educators and adult learners. Rapport helps teachers foster an environment that encourages students' self-directed learning, allowing adult learners to feel valued and supported in their educational journey. Effective communication in this context also addresses the diverse needs of adult learners, such as active engagement and meaningful participation in the learning process. Lastly, teachers' passion can inspire adult learners to continue pursuing knowledge that is relevant and transferrable to their professional contexts.

LIMITATIONS

This qualitative descriptive study explored effective teaching, but it was not without its limitations. With a small sample size of only nine participants, this study may lack the diversity necessary to capture the full range of experiences or perspectives of a larger population. As such, the applicability of these findings may not be generalizable. Additionally, the data may have been inadvertently interpreted to confirm the researchers' preexisting beliefs. To mitigate this bias, reflexive strategies (Palaganas et al., 2017), such as peer debriefing (Guba & Lincoln, 1989), were exercised, and the two researchers examined and discussed personal biases with one another.

PRACTICAL AND THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Effective teachers' behavior and characteristics influence students' engagement, interest in learning, attitude toward learning, and intrinsic motivation (Anderson, 2021; Bolkan & Goodboy, 2014; Lin & Huang, 2014, 2016, 2017). As such, it is important for educators to know the impact of their rapport, communication, and passion to prioritize their energy and efforts to benefit their students. Teachers may need to participate in professional development opportunities to enhance

these skills or engage in reflective practice activities to self-assess.

Along with practical implications, this study also had theoretical implications. These findings contribute to the ongoing discourse of pedagogical and andragogical theories by providing empirical evidence of the enduring relevance of these principles in contemporary educational settings. For adult learners, this study particularly underscores the importance of individualized instructional approaches, which cater to students' autonomy, experiences, motivations, and aspirations. Furthermore, this study highlights the pedagogical and andragogical significance of building supportive teacher-student relationships, structuring clear communication channels, and demonstrating a passion for teaching and subject matter, all of which are foundational to promoting student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Effective teaching, from the perspective of teachers who are also doctoral students or recent graduates of a teaching and learning doctoral program, includes rapport, communication, and passion. Additional research is warranted on effective teaching from the perspective of teachers who are also students in other degree programs. Furthermore, this research utilized a qualitative descriptive methodology, and additional research could examine effective teaching with various methodologies, including quantitative or phenomenological research. Future research could also benefit from including elementary, junior high, high school, and community college teachers, integrating both action research and reflective practice research to provide a deeper understanding of effective teaching across educational levels. Finally, because of the small sample size, future research with larger and more diverse samples may be necessary to confirm and extend the insights gained from this initial study.

References

Alhija, F. N. A. (2017). Teaching in higher education: Good teaching through students' lens. *Studies in Educational Evaluation, 54,* 4–12. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0191491X16300827

Anderson, A. M. (2021). *Examining if charismatic teaching predicts community college students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation* (Publication No. 28321860) [Doctoral dissertation, Grand Canyon University]. ProQuest.

Anderson, A. M. (2023). A critical reflection to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion in the classroom. *Journal of Scholarly Engagement, 4*(1), 52–66. https://doi.org/10.9743/JSE.2021.4.1.5

Anderson, A. M., Or, J. M. L., & Maguire, K. R. (2024). The relationships between strengths-based teaching practices and students' general, strengths, and academic self-efficacy. *Discover Psychology, 4*(63), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.1007/s44202-024-00171-0

Antovska, A., & Kostov, B. (2017). The teacher as a students' overload factor. *International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology, 3*(1), 8–14.

Bolkan, S., & Goodboy, A. (2014). Communicating charisma in instructional settings: Indicators and effects of charismatic teaching. *College Teaching, 62*(4), 136–142. https://doi.org/10.1080/87567555.2014.956039

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 1–42. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/1347976.pdf

Chen, X., & Liu, Y. (2022). Effects of an outbound transcultural teacher education programme to prepare teachers for relationships with students. *Journal of Education for Teaching.* https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02607476.2022.2084368

Cladera, M. (2021). Let's ask our students what really matters to them. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education, 13*(1), 112–125. https://doi.org/10.1108/JARHE-07-2019-0195

Comber, B., & Hayes, D. (2022). Classroom participation: Teachers' work as listeners. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 55*(1), 37-48. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2022.2134738

Cowan, J. (2020). Students' evidenced claims for development of abilities arising from linked reflection-on-action and reflection-for-action. *Reflective Practice, 21*(2), 159–170. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14623943.2020.1716709

Cristian, S., & Denisa, M. A. (2014). Students' opinions regarding the qualities and skills of the teachers. *Procedia—Social and Behavioral Sciences, 128*, 146–151. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.03.134

Daskan, A. (2023). The characteristics of passionate educators and their role in education. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies, 10*(1), 358–368.

Devlin, M., & Samarawickrema, G. (2010). The criteria of effective teaching in a changing higher education context. *Higher Education Research & Development, 29*(2), 111–124. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360903244398

Eck, C. J., & Robinson, S. (2022). Assessing teacher effectiveness in agricultural education. In A. Thoron & R. K. Barrick (Eds.), *Preparing agriculture and agriscience educators for the classroom* (pp. 250–267). IGI Global. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-3420-8.ch013

Fitzgerald, J., & Hooker, J. (2022). Establishing rapport in higher education classrooms. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 68*(3), 357–371. https://doi.org/10.11575/ajer.v68i3.72342

Gashoot, M., & Mohamed, T. (2022). Promoting a pedagogical shift from didactic teacher-centered to participatory student-centered learning by harnessing the portability and versatility of mobile technology. *Art and Design Review, 10*, 296–315. https://doi.org/10.4236/adr.2022.102022

Glazier, R. A. (2022). Teaching online during a crisis: What matters most for students. In Szarejko, A. A. (Eds). *Pandemic pedagogy. Political pedagogies*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-83557-6_10

Goodman, L. A. (1961). Snowball sampling. *The Annals of Mathematical Statistics*, 148–170. https://doi.org/10.1214/aoms/1177705148

Griffin, D. K. (2022). Evaluating the classroom teacher. *Academic Exchange Quarterly, 26*(4), 1–10. http://www.rapidintellect.com/6063.pdf

Guba, E. G. (1981). ERIC/ECTJ Annual review paper: Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *Educational Communication and Technology, 29*(2), 75–91. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3021981

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Sage.

Handa, M. C. (2020). Examining students' and teachers' perceptions of differentiate practices, student engagement, and teacher qualities. *Journal of Advanced Academics, 31*(4), 530–568. https://doi.org/10.1177/1932202X20931457

Hepsibha, J. R., & Catherine, J. (2022). Teacher effectiveness. *Journal of Positive School Psychology, 6*(8), 2115–2119. https://journalppw.com/index.php/jpsp/article/view/10115/6569

Hickman, R. (2011). *The art and craft of pedagogy: Portraits of effective teachers.* Bloomsbury Academic.

Hu, C. C. (2020). Understanding college students' perceptions of effective teaching. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 32*(2), 318–328. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1286303.pdf

Inada, T. (2023). The benefits and reasons of student-centered classrooms: From psychological perspective. *International Medical Journal*, *30*(5), 251–254.

Jesup, C., Lucas, I., Nelms, R., Woodruff, A., & Shields, S. S. (2017). 'We've shared a lifetime with one another': Using reflective visual/verbal journals to develop graduate student relationships. *Reflective Practice, 18*(2), 161–182. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14623943.2016.1251409?journalCode=crep20

Knowles, M. S. (1975). Adult education: New dimensions. *Educational Leadership, 33*(2), 85–88.

Knowles, M. S. (1977). Adult learning processes: Pedagogy and andragogy. *Religious Education*, *72*(2), 202–211. https://doi.org/10.1080/0034408770720210

Konstantinou, I. C., Chatzisavva, E. A., & Logotheti, S. G. (2022). Students' opinions on the qualities of the preferred teacher. *Research Developments in Arts and Social Studies*, *5*(21), 28–43. https://doi.org/10.9734/bpi/rdass/v5/2905B

Lambert, V. A., & Lambert, C. E. (2012). Editorial: Qualitative descriptive research: An acceptable design. *Pacific Rim International Journal of Nursing Research*, *16*(4), 255–256. https://he02.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/PRIJNR/article/view/5805/5064

Lin, S., & Huang, Y. (2014). Examining teaching charisma and its relation to student engagement. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, *10*(6), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.3968/5631

Lin, S., & Huang, Y. (2016). Examining charisma in relation to students' interest in learning. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, *17*(2), 139–151. https://doi.org/10.1177/1469787416637481

Lin, S., & Huang, Y. (2017). The effect of teacher charisma on student attitude towards calculus learning. *International Journal of Science, Technology, and Society*, *5*(2), 26–32. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ijsts.20170502.12

Lutovac, S., & Flores, M. A. (2022). Conceptions of assessment in pre-service teachers' narratives of students' failure. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 52*(1), 55–71. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2021.1935736

Maguire, K. R. (2023). Pre-service teachers' reflections on their content knowledge through microteaching. *Reflective Practice, 24*(2), 153–167. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2022.2146082

Metruk, R. (2021). Male and female university students' perceptions of an effective EFL teacher. *International Journal of Instruction, 14*(2), 703–718. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1291000.pdf

Michael, E., Bailey, P., Benner, G. J., & Sanders, S. (2023). Welcome to our class! Building classroom rapport to support the development of social and emotional learning skills. *Beyond Behavior, 32*(1), 36–44. https://doi.org/10.1177/10742956221145951

Miron, M., & Mevorach, M. (2014). The "good professor" as perceived by experienced teachers who are graduate students. *Journal of Education and Training Studies, 2*(3), 82–87. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1055497.pdf

Palaganas, E. C., Sanchez, M. C., Molintas, M. P., & Caricativo, R. D. (2017). Reflexivity in qualitative research: A journey of learning. *The Qualitative Report, 22*(2), 426–438. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2017.2552

Potvin, A. S. (2021). "Students speaking to you": Teachers listen to student surveys to improve classroom environment. *Learning Environments Research*, *24*(2), 239–252. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10984-020-09330-1

Ramirez, L. A., & Allison-Roan, V. A. (2014). Insights into students, practice and self through engaging as learners in our own classrooms. *Reflective Practice, 15*(4), 456–467. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14623943.2014.900021

Raza, S. A., & Irfan, M. (2018). Students' evaluation of teacher attributes: Implications for quality in higher education. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, *40*(1), 197–214 https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1209774.pdf

Schneider, M., & Preckel, F. (2017). Variables associated with achievement in higher education: A systematic review of meta-analyses. *Psychological Bulletin*, *143*(6), 565–600. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/bul0000098

Shah, R. K., & Campus, S. (2021). Conceptualizing and defining pedagogy. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education*, *11*(1), 6–29. https://doi.org/ 10.9790/7388-1101020629

Simonson, S. R., Earl, B., & Frary, M. (2021). Establishing a framework for teaching effectiveness. *College Teaching, 70*(2), 164–180. https://doi.org/10.1080/87567555.2021.1909528

Sogunro, O. (2015). Motivating factors for adult learners in higher education. *International Journal of Higher Education. 4*(1), 22–37. https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v4n1p22

Sogunro, O. A. (2017). Quality instruction as a motivating factor in higher education. *International Journal of Higher Education*, *6*(4), 173–184. https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v6n4p173

Stover, S., & Ziswiler, K. (2017). Impact of active learning environments on community of inquiry. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, *29*(3), 458–470. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1150760.pdf

Thakur, D., Shri, C., & Vij, A. K. (2019). Impact of faculty student rapport on classroom environment. *Asian Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, *2*(3), 46–55. https://doi.org/10.34256/ajir1935

Theisen-Homer, V. (2021). Preparing teachers for relationships with students: Two visions, two approaches. *Journal of Teacher Education, 72*(3), 271–283. https://journals-sagepub-com.lopes.idm.oclc.org/doi/pdf/10.1177/0022487120922223

Ward, H. (2012). The art and craft of pedagogy. Portraits of effective teachers, *Journal of Education for Teaching, 38*(5), 636–638. https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2012.714127

Wilson, S., & Cameron, R. (1996). Student teacher perceptions of effective teaching: A developmental perspective. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 22*(2), 181–195. https://doi.org/10.1080/02607479620340

Witter, M., & Hattie, J. (2023). Can teacher quality be profiled? A cluster analysis of teachers' beliefs, practices and students' perceptions of effectiveness. *British Educational Research Journal,* 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3938

Xie, F., & Derakhshan, A. (2021). A conceptual review of positive teacher interpersonal communication behaviors in the instructional context. *Conceptual Analysis, 12,* 1–10. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.708490

Zhengdong, G., Honghan, N., & Kejuan, M. (2018). Trainee teachers' experiences of classroom feedback practices and their motivation to learn. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 44*(4), 505–510. https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2018.1450956