



Qualified Teachers in the Perception of Primary Teachers of a Private School in Lopburi

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Abstract

The purpose of this case study research was to identify the perceptions of qualified teachers of primary teachers of a private school in Lopburi Province. The population used in this study consisted of 30 teachers who were primary teachers of a private school in Lopburi province. The research instrument was a survey questionnaire investigating what qualified teachers should possess, know, be and do. The questionnaire, as the main instrument of the study, was written based on the framework drawn from related literature review that indicated four aspects of qualified teachers: 1) Values and Characteristics 2) Knowledge and Art of Teaching 3) Teacher's Responsibilities and 4) Relationship with Parents and Communities. The total number of items in the questionnaire was 69. The results of the study were the average score of Values and Characteristics was 4.64, while that of Knowledge and Art of Teaching was 4.41. The third and the fourth aspects got the average scores of 4.63 and 4.28 respectively. The findings indicated that the most important qualities that good teachers needed to possess were their inborn true teacher qualities. Good teachers were believed to care in all ways for their students and although Knowledge of the Field of Teaching was important, it was not as important as the Teacher's Responsibilities Aspect. Recommendations from this study are to groom a good teacher, responsible authorities must value the significance of 'teacher spirituality,' which can be defined as possessing the caring nature of a human being, kindness, warmth and best wishes bestowed on their students.

Keywords: *Qualified teachers, Private primary teachers, Teacher's spirituality*

1. Introduction

The World Teachers' Day on 4 October 2018 marked the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) that recognizes education as a fundamental right. This year's theme, *the right to education means the right to a qualified teacher*, did not come as a surprise because it is high time that students in formal schooling should get not only an opportunity to go to a school to get an education but also the right to have trained and qualified teachers (en.unesco.org, 2018). Education is indeed important and the most important people who are responsible for making quality education accessible to all children are 'the teacher' in a nurturing classroom (Boorn, Dunn & Page, 2010; Sahlberg, 2012; Panich, 2016). However, what is worth knowing is what aspect embodying teaching professionalism is the most important.

Undeniably, teachers come in all sizes and shapes. In Thailand, if only the number of teachers is considered, there are more than enough teachers. However, the country faces a shortage of 'qualified teachers' as many available teachers do not fit the requirements. Literature from the field about the definition of a 'good' teacher is abundant. The following table shows the studies reviewed by the researchers about the expectations in the teacher's qualities.

**Table 1** Characteristics, abilities and behaviour of good teachers proposed by various experts and researchers

Researchers	Findings
Chalabkang (2016, pp. 123-127)	Teacher's Spirituality will result in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upgraded perception and skill in teaching ▪ Moral, ethics and responsibilities ▪ Flexibility and understanding changes ▪ Respect students' rights for their integrity and potential enhancement ▪ Motivation for displaying leadership ▪ Happiness and pride of being a teacher ▪ Acceptance and faith from others
Promkarn (2019, pp.96-109)	10 characteristics of 21 st Century teachers in schools with cross-cultural students are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good assessor • Knowledge and adaptability • Communication skills • Teaching skills and specialized learning management • Cultural performance • The ability to use technology • Spirituality as a teacher • Good role model • Cultural skills • Self-improvement as a person of learning
Underhill (http://englishpost.org)	Three different kinds of teacher: the explainer, the involver and the enabler
Scrivener (2005)	Creating a positive class atmosphere involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows respect • Is fair • Listens to his or her students • Have a good sense of humour • Gives clear positive feedback • Is patient • Is non-judgmental • Does not complicate things unnecessarily • Is honest • Trusts people • Is approachable • Cannot be authoritative without being defiant • Is enthusiastic and inspires enthusiasm • Is well-organized • Empathizes with students' problems • Inspires confidence
Savekpan (office.nu.ac.th)	Good teachers must show desire for student development, endurance, versatile, love, organizing, and positive thinking
Panich (2016, moe.go.th) in Bangkok Dhurakij Newspaper (15 January 2559)	Professionalism is not enough. First, love for students, Second, find ways to support them.



The following categories were grouped from what was reviewed:

1. Values and Characteristics
‘Values’ means concepts of how to lead a life. They show attitudes and behavior that are deep rooted in a person. The teacher’s values and characteristics will reveal his or her true character.
2. Knowledge and Art of Teaching
The teacher needs to have a solid body of knowledge of what he or she teaches. Also, the delivery styles and techniques are very important as they are the means to support student understanding.
3. Teacher’s Responsibilities
Being a good teacher, one must demonstrate the abilities to get things done. Being responsible means the teacher should not neglect duties assigned and be determined in carrying out duties.
4. Relationship with Parents and Community
This is not a new area. Teachers long ago proved themselves to be part of the community and were a respected figure. They can be the leaders for others, especially in the promotion of education.

2. Objective of the Study

Since this was a small survey study launched as a pilot study prior to a more complex study, there was only one objective—to explore the characteristics of qualified teachers in the perception of primary teachers of a private school in Lopburi province, Thailand. Their responses to the survey questionnaires will be significant to many. The teachers should be aware of all these expectations in them, while people in the authority will make policies about recruiting teachers with great care. Should only the top applicants with the highest scores be recruited or should we consider ones who are caring and kind to students although the scores they make are not as high. Indeed, able teachers are necessary but what if they cannot deliver the human qualities expected.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Research Design

The research was designed as a survey research because the data came from the questionnaires of 30 primary teachers who they themselves were teaching. The survey aimed at identifying the perceptions of the teachers. They themselves are teachers, so it was expected that they would tell the truth about what qualities teachers should possess, how much and what knowledge of the field should they have, what their behaviour should be like and what they can do.

3.2 Research Site

The place where the questionnaires were distributed was a selected primary school in Lopburi. It is a big private school, one of the most popular. There are 36 classrooms, 1594 students and 30 teachers and 20 non-teaching staff.

3.3 Research Population

The population of the study was 30 primary teachers.

3.4 Research Instrument is the survey questionnaire of 69 items. The research instrument was a survey questionnaire regarding what qualified teachers should ‘possess’, ‘have’, ‘be’ and ‘do’.

The 69-item questionnaire was divided into 4 parts:

- 1) Values and Characteristics (20 items)
- 2) Knowledge and Art of Teaching (25 items)
- 3) Teaching Performance (20 items)
- 4) Relationship with Parents and Communities (4 items)

The validity of the questionnaire was done by getting three experts: one statistic expert and two teaching experts to do the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) for confidence in the validity of the questionnaire (IOC). The validity of the paper was found to be 0.995. The reliability obtained from getting a



similar group of primary teachers in another school to fill out the questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha was 0.956.

The statistics used in this study consisted of percentage, frequencies, average and standard deviation.

Each item was a range of 5 (Likert Scale). The average is used with the following criteria (Best, 1981).

Level	Interpretation
4.50-5.00	The most important
3.50-4.49	Important
2.50-3.49	Average
1.50-2.49	Little important
1.00-1.49	The least important

4. Results and Discussion

Table 2 below shows the 30 respondents' perceptions on each item that embodies the values upheld and the characteristics of 'qualified' teachers.

Table 2 Values and characteristics of teachers

Values and Characteristics of 'Qualified' Teachers		\bar{X}	S.D.
1. Persistent, hard-working, determined and perseverant	4.57	0.568	
2. Kind, generous and public-service-minded	4.67	0.479	
3. Honest	4.73	0.450	
4. Fair and reasonable	4.67	0.479	
5. Grateful	4.67	0.547	
6. Tolerant and patient	4.57	0.568	
7. Disciplined and responsible	4.70	0.466	
8. Maintaining customs and traditions	4.40	0.724	
9. Civic-minded and law-abiding	4.57	0.626	
10. Healthy and taking good care of health	4.33	0.711	
11. Leading a life of self-sufficiency	4.33	0.711	
12. Showing love and faith in the teaching career	4.83	0.379	
13. Showing love and care, concern and devotion for students	4.73	0.450	
14. Be a good role model	4.73	0.450	
15. Promote the system of government with the king as the head of state	4.80	0.407	
16. Be a trustworthy member of the Professional Teachers' Organization	4.53	0.571	
17. Showing faith in the religion worshipped and refrain from looking down on others	4.70	0.466	
18. Obey and listen to the superior's advice and act according to the law	4.77	0.430	
19. Refrain from seeking benefits from students	4.80	0.484	
20. Avoid plagiarism in all ways	4.67	0.606	
The total average of the average scores obtained from Items 1 to 20	4.64	0.529	

Table 2 shows an average score of 4.64 (S.D. 0.529) of all the 20 items, which can be interpreted as the highest score of all the four aspects. The respondents perceived that this aspect, Values and Characteristics of Teachers, was the most important with the highest average score of 4.83 (S.D. 0.379) for Item 12 (Showing love and faith in the teaching career) to be followed by an average score of 4.80 (S.D. 0.407) for Item 15 (Promote the system of government with the king as the head of state) and an average score of 4.80 (S.D. 0.484) for Item 19 (Refrain from seeking benefits from students). Other items ranged between 4.50-4.79 of the highest level but the items that got the lowest score of 4.33 (S.D. 0.711) of the high level were Item 10 (Healthy and taking good care of health) and Item 11 (Leading a life of self-



sufficiency) and the second lowest score of 4.40 (S.D. 0.724) was Item 9 (Maintaining customs and traditions).

Table 3 below shows the scores for each item under the Knowledge and Art of Teaching Aspect. Certainly, this aspect is what most teachers must know and the more able ones should perform in this area much better.

Table 3 The knowledge and art of teaching aspect

Knowledge and Art of Teaching	\bar{X}	S.D.
1. Body of knowledge of the subject taught	4.60	0.563
2. Knowledge of the theories of learning	4.43	0.568
3. Knowledge of the principles of teaching	4.50	0.682
4. Knowledge of curriculum development	4.37	0.765
5. Knowledge of lesson planning	4.47	0.629
6. Knowledge of classroom management	4.33	0.547
7. Knowledge of testing and assessment	4.47	0.571
8. Knowledge of instructional material production	4.33	0.661
9. Knowledge of classroom-based research	4.30	0.702
10. Knowledge of the changing world	4.07	0.640
11. Knowledge of giving consultations	4.43	0.626
12. Knowledge of teaching techniques	4.40	0.724
13. Knowledge and skill in using modern technology	4.33	0.606
14. Understanding of the learner individual differences	4.53	0.571
15. Effective problem-solving skill	4.47	0.629
16. Good attitude towards students	4.67	0.547
17. Ability to adapt	4.43	0.568
18. Ability in knowledge application	4.50	0.572
19. Ability in using examples to support explanation	4.47	0.629
20. Ability to connect bodies of knowledge in different fields	4.37	0.669
21. Ability in critical thinking, synthesizing and evaluating	4.33	0.711
22. Awareness of potential and limitation of individual learners	4.37	0.615
23. Skill in potential enhancement of each individual student	4.40	0.675
24. Ability in motivating students to learn	4.40	0.621
25. Coaching abilities	4.17	0.791
The total average of the average scores obtained from Items 1 to 25	4.41	0.623

Table 3 shows an average score of 4.41 (S.D. 0.623) of all the 25 items, which can be interpreted as the third highest score of all the four aspects. The respondents perceived that this aspect, Knowledge and Art of Teaching, was third in importance with an average score of 4.60 (S.D. 0.563) for Item 1 (Body of knowledge of the subject taught to be followed by an average score of 4.53 (S.D. 0.571) for Item 14 (Understanding of the learner individual differences) and 4.50 (S.D. 0.572) for Item 18 (Ability in knowledge application). Other items ranged between 4.07-4.49 in the high level but the item that got the lowest score of 4.07 (S.D. 0.640) was Item 10 (Knowledge of the changing world).

This aspect has most items in the theoretical side of teaching, which is often what most teachers are taught in colleges and universities. However, it may be difficult to understand all taught learning theories if one is not practicing teaching in real situations. That may be the reason why the questionnaire respondents ranked the aspect in the third place. For them, the Knowledge and Art of Teaching Aspect is important but not as important as the Values and Characteristics of 'Qualified' Teachers Aspect and The Teacher's Responsibilities Aspect.



Table 4 below shows the scores for each item under the Teacher's Responsibilities. Teachers are always checked whether or not they can perform their duties well. Each item represents what is expected of a teacher.

Table 4 The teacher's responsibilities aspect

The Teacher's Responsibilities Aspect	\bar{X}	S.D.
1. Determination to groom students with integration of knowledge and moral	4.83	0.379
2. Give love, kindness and support to all students equally with love and care	4.83	0.379
3. Pass on knowledge to students without hiding	4.80	0.407
4. Never ignore to complete all assigned work	4.73	0.450
5. Be a good role model in behavior and manners	4.73	0.450
6. Keep all information about students, colleagues and school secret	4.70	0.466
7. Help, support and encourage students in their studies	4.73	0.450
8. Do not look for bribes from students	4.73	0.450
9. Teach students with accurate and up to date knowledge	4.70	0.466
10. Teach students to become a self-directed learner	4.63	0.490
11. Teach students to change from negative to positive learning behaviour	4.70	0.466
12. Encourage students to develop based on their potential	4.70	0.466
13. Develop curriculum in learning management	4.47	0.681
14. Do the lesson plans	4.40	0.675
15. Assess student learning with accuracy	4.57	0.626
16. Manage class skillfully	4.57	0.568
17. Create appropriate learning materials	4.47	0.629
18. Do classroom action research	4.40	0.675
19. Have teamwork skills	4.50	0.630
20. Create conducive learning environment	4.50	0.572
The total average of the average scores obtained from Items 1 to 20	4.63	0.519

Table 4 shows an average score of 4.63 (S.D. 0.519) of all the 20 items, which can be interpreted as the second highest score of all the four aspects. The respondents perceived that this aspect, The Teacher's Responsibilities Aspect, was second in importance with an average score of 4.83 (S.D. 0.379) for Item 1 (Determination to groom students with integration of knowledge and moral) and Item 2 (Give love, kindness and support to all students equally with love and care) to be followed by an average score of 4.80 (S.D. 0.407) for Item 3 (Pass on knowledge to students without hiding). Other items ranged between 4.50-4.79 in the highest level. Four items were ranked at the high level: Develop curriculum in learning management (4.47 (S.D. 0.681)) and Create appropriate learning materials (4.47 (S.D. 0.629)), while the items that got the lowest score of 4.40 (S.D. 0.675) was Item 14 (Do the lesson plans) and Item 18 (Do classroom action research).

It can be seen from the scores given to each item in this aspect that the items that show love and care for students were ranked the highest whereas the academic actions such as doing research and do the lessons, design learning materials and design curriculum seem farfetched from the group. They placed more importance on the affective domain more than activities that contributed to the teacher's cognition (SERC, 2016). This reflects the question posed at the beginning of the paper: Should we select the teachers who know the theories or those who excel in practices? The answer is we must choose the teachers who have values and beliefs commanded by teaching professionalism.

Table 5 shows the relationship of the teacher with parents and the community as literature review shows that the community can be a good supporter for the school and a qualified teacher needs to work in harmony with the representatives of the community such as parents, people in the neighbourhood, temples and villagers.

**Table 5** The Relationship with parents and the community aspect

Relationship with Parents and the Community	\bar{X}	S.D.
1. Access to the community context and be the education leader	4.17	0.747
2. Listen to suggestions and recommendations from parents	4.30	0.702
3. Cooperation with parents in developing the students' desirable characteristics and in problem solving	4.27	0.691
4. Work in teams with others	4.37	0.615
The total average of the average scores obtained from Items 1 to 4	4.28	0.689

Table 5 shows an average score of 4.28 (S.D. 0.689) of all the 4 items, which can be interpreted as the lowest score of all the four aspects although the average score of the aspect was at a high level. The respondents perceived that this aspect, The Relationship with Parents and the Community Aspect, ranked last in importance concerning the characteristics of 'qualified' teachers with an average score of 4.37 (S.D. 0.615) for Item 4 (Work in teams with others), 4.30 (S.D. 0.702) for Item 2 (Listen to suggestions and recommendations from parents), Cooperation with parents in developing the students' desirable characteristics and in problem solving. The items that got the lowest score of 4.17 was Item 1 (Access the community context and be the education leader). The findings revealed that the Relationship with Parents and the Community Aspect is not getting much attention from the teachers. The respondents realized that they must listen to suggestions and recommendations from parents. This is probably what they are practicing at school but they have not taken another step beyond the school gate, that is, to go into the community, work with community representatives and emerge as leaders in educational activities such as how to promote educational activities in the villages/provinces.

When the scores from each aspect are compared, it is clear that the aspect of Values and Characteristics of Teachers is most important. To be a teacher does not mean that the main job is to teach the class or envelop them with knowledge. The teacher must pay special attention to how their students can develop to full potential and grow up among love and care of fair, tolerant and patient teachers. Second in importance is the Teachers' Responsibilities Aspect. If the teacher is not professional, students will not get opportunities to maximize their learning within the time spent in classes. The classroom should be a safe place where students can learn life skills and other soft skills by taking up their teachers as the role models. As we can see from the statistics, the teacher must have faith in what they are doing. They must love their jobs. They will not look for any kinds of profit making from students as teaching is not business. Certainly, in Thailand, they must believe in the system of government that has the king as the head. A good teacher loves children and devotes time and sometimes money to students. Besides, one must be a good example.

In essence, the characteristics of qualified teachers in the perception of primary teachers of a private school in Lopburi province is to be a qualified teacher, one needs to be a caring human being more than a knowledgeable teacher. When one believes that the teacher is the most important person for a young kid, he or she will do everything to protect or nurture them (Phanich, 2016; Savekkarn, 2019; Phromkarn, 2019; Ckalakbang, 2016; Scrivener, 2005; SERC, 2016).

5. Conclusion

Most respondents, when asked for their perceptions about what qualified teachers are like, they choose to go for values and characteristics. It means although we can say that good teachers can be trained, we have to also find out whether they have any inborn qualities to be a kind-hearted person with love and understanding for their students or not. Good teachers can be trained into how to write lesson plans, choose appropriate materials for students but without evident upheld values to enter the teaching career, maybe it is not easy to change them. Besides, working with parents and community, nowadays, has reduced in its importance. This aspect needs to be highlighted in a teachers' training course to make them aware that a teacher cannot work alone in trying to educate students. All stakeholders must combine efforts.



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