

**Perceptions of Teacher Personality Characteristics among Second-Year Secondary School
Students: A Field Study in Select High Schools in Laghouat**

السمات الشخصية للأستاذ كما يدركها تلاميذ السنة ثانية ثانوي- دراسة ميدانية ببعض المؤسسات
الثانوية بالأغواط

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Abstract: This study aimed to explore the personal characteristics of the teacher from the perspective of second-year high school students in the city of Laghouat. It sought to achieve this by determining the hierarchical order of importance of these characteristics and revealing the differences between genders in their appreciation of them. The study adopted a descriptive methodology and used a questionnaire on teacher personal characteristics, consisting of 44 items distributed across five main dimensions. The questionnaire was applied to a simple random sample of 96 male and female students. After confirming the psychometric properties of the instrument, the data were analyzed using SPSS. The results showed that students prioritize cognitive characteristics, followed closely by ethical characteristics. The study also revealed statistically significant differences in favor of females in their appreciation of cognitive, ethical, emotional, and professional and social characteristics, while no differences were found in the appreciation of physical characteristics. These findings highlight the pivotal importance of intellectual and ethical factors in shaping students' perceptions of their teachers.

Keywords: Teacher Personal Characteristics, Cognitive Characteristics, Ethical Characteristics, Gender Differences.

الملخص: هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف الخصائص الشخصية للمعلم من منظور طلاب السنة الثانية في المدرسة الثانوية في مدينة لغوات. سعى إلى تحقيق ذلك من خلال تحديد الترتيب الهرمي لأهمية هذه الخصائص وكشف الفروقات بين الجنسين في تقديرهم لها. اعتمدت الدراسة منهجية 描写ية واستخدمت استبيانا حول الخصائص الشخصية للمعلم، يتكون من 44 بندًا موزعة على خمسة أبعاد رئيسية. تم تطبيق الاستبيان على عينة عشوائية بسيطة من 96 طالباً وطالبة. بعد تأكيد الخصائص السيكومترية للجهاز، تم تحليل البيانات باستخدام SPSS. أظهرت النتائج أن الطلاب يعطون الأولوية للخصائص المعرفية، تلتها عن كثب الخصائص الأخلاقية. كما كشفت الدراسة عن فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية لصالح الإناث في تقديرهن للخصائص المعرفية والأخلاقية والعاطفية والمهنية والاجتماعية، بينما لم تجد فروق في تقدير الخصائص الجسمية. تسلط هذه النتائج الضوء على الأهمية المحورية للعوامل الفكرية والأخلاقية في تشكيل تصورات الطلاب عن معلمهم.

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الكلمات المفتاحية: الصفات الشخصية للمعلم، الخصائص المعرفية، الخصائص الأخلاقية، الفروق بين الجنسين.

1. Introduction

The teacher is the cornerstone of the educational process, and their role extends beyond merely transmitting knowledge to become a major influence in shaping students' personalities and values (Shehata & Abu Omeira, 2000). The teacher's effectiveness is not limited to their mastery of the subject matter but extends to their personal characteristics, which affect the classroom environment and the healthy development of learners. Psychology has given great attention to the concept of personality as a dynamic system of relatively stable traits that determine an individual's behavior (Abu Asaad, 2010). In this context, this study seeks to understand the characteristics that students prefer in their teachers, which is an essential step towards improving the quality of education and developing teachers' professional competencies.

2. The Research Problem:

Today's teacher faces multiple challenges in light of rapid technological and cognitive developments, which have imposed a radical update on the methods and content of the educational process. The teacher's role is no longer limited to being a source of information but has become more complex, encompassing the development of skills, the instillation of values, and the guidance of student behavior toward positive adaptation to their environment. In this context, the importance of understanding the personal characteristics that a teacher possesses, and students' perceptions of them, stands out, especially given the knowledge gap in local research literature that has addressed this topic from the perspective of students.

3. Research Questions:

1. What is the hierarchical order of teacher personal characteristics from the perspective of second-year high school students?
2. Are there statistically significant differences between genders in their appreciation of cognitive characteristics?

3. Are there statistically significant differences between genders in their appreciation of ethical characteristics?
4. Are there statistically significant differences between genders in their appreciation of physical characteristics?
5. Are there statistically significant differences between genders in their appreciation of emotional characteristics?
6. Are there statistically significant differences between genders in their appreciation of professional and social characteristics?

4. Research Hypotheses:

1. **Main Hypothesis:** Ethical characteristics hold the top position in the hierarchy of teacher personal characteristics as perceived by students.
2. **Sub-Hypotheses:**
 - There are statistically significant differences between genders in the appreciation of cognitive characteristics.
 - There are statistically significant differences between genders in the appreciation of ethical characteristics.
 - There are statistically significant differences between genders in the appreciation of physical characteristics.
 - There are statistically significant differences between genders in the appreciation of emotional characteristics.
 - There are statistically significant differences between genders in the appreciation of professional and social characteristics.

5. Research Objectives:

The study aims to achieve the following:

- Determine the order that second-year high school students place on the personal characteristics of the teacher.
- Reveal the statistical differences between males and females in their appreciation of these characteristics.

6. Significance of the Study:

The importance of this study lies in two aspects:

- **Theoretical Significance:** It is considered one of the few studies in the local context to address this topic, which contributes to enriching the scientific literature and opens up horizons for future research.
- **Applied Significance:** Its results can provide practical recommendations for educational officials in the Ministry of Education to develop teacher preparation and training programs that meet the needs and expectations of students.

7. Operational Definitions of Study Variables:

- **Personal Characteristics:** A set of qualities (cognitive, ethical, physical, emotional, and professional and social) that distinguish the teacher, measured by the total score that the sample members obtain on the personal characteristic's questionnaire.
- **Teacher:** A person who holds a bachelor's degree and works in one of the high schools in the city of Laghouat, teaching one of the secondary education subjects.
- **Student:** An adolescent between the ages of 16 and 18, studying at the secondary level.

8. Some Previous Studies:

- **Aliyan's Study (2010):** Aimed to determine the relationship between teacher characteristics as perceived by basic stage students and their creative activities. It found that cognitive characteristics ranked first, with differences in favor of females in social and professional characteristics.
- **Da'oum et al. (2010):** Explored the qualifications of the future teacher from the perspective of high school principals in Jordan and concluded that professional academic qualifications are the most important, followed by ethical and social ones.

- **Ghannam's Study (2005):** Examined the personal characteristics and organizational loyalty of basic stage teachers in Nablus, and its results indicated a high availability of these two variables.
- **Al-Rasheed's Study (2001):** Dealt with some personal characteristics and their impact on teacher performance in Kuwait, such as ego strength and psychological adjustment.
- **Al-Shayeb's Study (1998):** Aimed to compare gender differences in personality traits and found significant differences in traits such as neuroticism and extraversion across different age groups.

9. Theoretical Framework:

9.1. The Concept of Personality:

The concept of personality is one of the central concepts in psychology. It refers to a set of physical, emotional, and mental characteristics that distinguish an individual (Al-Waqfi, 2003). Definitions provided by psychologists have varied, including:

- **Gordon Allport (1937):** "The dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustments to his environment."
- **Raymond Cattell (1965):** "Personality is that which permits a prediction of what a person will do in a given situation."

9.2. Theories Explaining Personality:

- **Trait Theory:** This is one of the most prominent theories in the study of personality, as it assumes that personality is formed from a set of relatively stable traits that guide an individual's behavior. Its prominent pioneers are **Gordon Allport**, who classified traits into cardinal, central, and secondary, and **Raymond Cattell**, who used factor analysis to identify 16 basic personality factors. **Hans Eysenck** (1947) also presented a model that focuses on three main dimensions: extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism (Othman, 2006). This theory is considered important in the context of education, as the

personal characteristics of the teacher can directly affect their effectiveness in the classroom.

- **Humanistic Theory:** This theory, pioneered by **Abraham Maslow** and **Carl Rogers**, focuses on the concept of the "self" and the individual's ability to achieve their full potential. The theory holds that humans possess an innate drive towards growth and self-actualization (Al-Zawawi, 2003). From this perspective, a teacher's personality is considered a reflection of their degree of self-actualization, which enables them to create a positive and supportive learning environment for the psychological growth of students.
- **Social Cognitive Theory:** **Albert Bandura** (1986), the pioneer of this theory, believes that personality is formed through the dynamic interaction between cognitive factors, behavior, and the environment. The theory emphasizes the importance of observational learning, where individuals learn by observing and imitating the behavior of others (Farhoud, 2011). In the school environment, the teacher is an important role model from whom students learn not only knowledge but also social skills, moral values, and problem-solving methods.

10. Field Section:

10.1. Study Methodology:

The study adopted a descriptive methodology, which aims to describe the phenomenon as it exists in reality and to collect and analyze data accurately and objectively.

10.2. Sample and Study Population:

The study population consisted of second-year high school students in the high schools of the city of Laghouat. A simple random sample of 96 male and female students was selected.

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Table 1: Distribution of the Study Sample by Gender

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	52	54.16%
Female	44	45.83%
Total	96	99.99%

10.3. Study Instrument:

The teacher personal characteristics questionnaire, prepared by the researcher, was used. The questionnaire consists of 44 items distributed across five dimensions: cognitive characteristics (11 items), ethical characteristics (11 items), physical characteristics (5 items), emotional characteristics (8 items), and professional and social characteristics (9 items). A five-point Likert scale was used to answer the items.

10.4. Psychometric Properties of the Instrument:

First: Instrument Validity:

Table 2: Instrument Validity Coefficients Based on Referees

Dimension	Number of Items	Number of Referees	Agreement Percentage
Cognitive Characteristics	11	12	95%
Ethical Characteristics	11	12	95%
Physical Characteristics	5	12	95%
Emotional Characteristics	8	12	95%
Professional & Social Characteristics	9	12	95%
Total	44	12	95%

Second: Instrument Reliability:

Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient for the Instrument

Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
Cognitive Characteristics	11	0.90
Ethical Characteristics	11	0.90
Physical Characteristics	5	0.90
Emotional Characteristics	8	0.90
Professional & Social Characteristics	9	0.90

Total	44	0.90
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10.5. Study Results:

Table 4: Hierarchical Order of Teacher Personal Characteristics from the Perspective of Students

Rank	Characteristics	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Cognitive Characteristics	32.57	7.98
2	Ethical Characteristics	32.47	8.48
3	Professional & Social Characteristics	28.09	7.32
4	Emotional Characteristics	23.64	6.42
5	Physical Characteristics	17.95	4.43

Table 5: Results of the (t)-Test for Gender Differences in Characteristics Appreciation

Dimension	Gender	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-Value	df	Significance Level (P)
Cognitive Characteristics	Male	52	30.92	8.02	2.42	94	0.02
	Female	44	34.52	7.57			
Ethical Characteristics	Male	52	30.86	8.73	2.06	94	0.04
	Female	44	34.38	7.85			
Physical Characteristics	Male	52	17.48	5.18	1.14	94	0.25
	Female	44	18.52	3.30			
Emotional Characteristics	Male	52	22.42	6.55	2.06	94	0.04
	Female	44	25.09	6.03			
Professional & Social Characteristics	Male	52	26.46	7.42	2.43	94	0.01
	Female	44	30.02	6.79			

10.6. Discussion of Results:

1. Discussion of the Main Hypothesis: The hypothesis stated: "Students rank ethical characteristics at the top of the hierarchy of teacher personal characteristics."

- **Analysis:** Based on Table (4), this hypothesis was rejected, as cognitive characteristics came in first place, followed by ethical characteristics with a slight difference in the mean score.
- **Interpretation:** This order can be explained by high school students prioritizing the quality of knowledge and the academic competence that the teacher provides, perhaps due to their focus on academic achievement as a primary goal. This result is consistent with Aliyan's study (2010), which indicated that cognitive characteristics are the most important for students.

2. Discussion of the Sub-Hypotheses:

- **Cognitive Characteristics:** The hypothesis was accepted, as significant differences were found in favor of females ($P=0.02$). This indicates that females are more interested in the cognitive aspect of the teacher than males, which may reflect differences in socialization and role expectations between genders.
- **Ethical Characteristics:** The hypothesis was accepted, as the results showed statistically significant differences in favor of females ($P=0.04$). This confirms that females are more sensitive and appreciative of ethical traits such as sincerity and respect in the teacher's personality, which may be due to the values instilled by socialization.
- **Physical Characteristics:** The hypothesis was rejected, as no statistically significant differences were found between genders ($P=0.25$). This means that the teacher's external appearance affects both genders to the same degree at this age, indicating that interest in appearance and elegance is a general matter for adolescents.
- **Emotional Characteristics:** The hypothesis was accepted, as statistically significant differences were found in favor of females ($P=0.04$). This may reflect

females' preference for a calm, optimistic, and friendly teacher, while males may tend to appreciate the wise and disciplined aspect of the teacher's personality.

- **Professional and Social Characteristics:** The hypothesis was accepted, as statistically significant differences were found in favor of females ($P=0.01$). This result is consistent with Aliyan's study (2010) and may be explained by the increasing interest of females in society in seriousness and professional discipline, which makes them more appreciative of a teacher who possesses these characteristics.

11. General Conclusion:

The results of this study confirm that the personal characteristics of the teacher play a vital role in the educational process and that students' perceptions of these characteristics are influenced by multiple factors, the most important of which is gender. Cognitive competence and ethical traits are at the forefront of students' priorities. The noticeable differences between genders in their appreciation of the teacher's personal characteristics highlight the impact of socialization in shaping adolescents' interests and expectations. These results provide an informational basis that can be used to design teacher preparation and professional development programs to enhance the characteristics that students see as essential for the success of the educational process.

12. Suggestions:

- Conduct similar studies in other educational stages, such as elementary and university levels, to identify differences in students' perceptions of the teacher's personal characteristics.
- Include training courses in teacher preparation programs that focus on developing personal characteristics, especially in ethical and emotional aspects, in addition to the cognitive aspect.

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- Organize workshops for current teachers to raise their awareness of the importance of aligning with the psychological and social characteristics of their students.

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