

¹ In Search of Academic Excellence By Becoming An Effective
² Leader: A Study of Academic Leadership in Higher Education

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⁶

⁷ **Abstract**

⁸ From the beginning of time, leadership has been one of the most sought after feature in
⁹ human civilization. A strong leader makes the difference between simple existence and
¹⁰ excellence. They inspired others, create vision among the followers, communicate what they
¹¹ want to communicate, show openness, and listen what their followers want to say. These
¹² people not only create actual value in others, but also change the society in a holistic way.
¹³ Now, it is becoming a passion to get an authentic, effective leader in higher educational sector,
¹⁴ where students do not want to see their teacher as a teacher only rather they ask for
¹⁵ something more. The objective of this research was to identify a number of
¹⁶ attributes/qualities of a teacher perceived as most important by students at tertiary level.
¹⁷ These attributes/qualities will make him a leader of a group of followers, a group of students,
¹⁸ which then make him an excellent teacher. Data of 280 students were assimilated to come to
¹⁹ the findings. The authors found 15 most important qualities identified by students among 111
²⁰ qualities identified by the authors, which should be poses by all teachers to be a good leader.
²¹ As leadership is not science, part of social science, there is further scope for research in private
²² tertiary level, as well as other educational sector to make it more authenticate.

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²⁴ **Index terms**— Academic Leader, Leadership, Qualities, Attributes.

²⁵ **1 Introduction**

²⁶ rom the beginning of time, leadership has been one of the most sought after feature in human civilization. Human
²⁷ beings seek dynamic, revolutionary, confident, and passionate leaders. A strong leader makes the difference
²⁸ between simple existence and excellence. A capable leader carries a nation to unimaginable heights (Akhter, et
²⁹ al. 2005).

³⁰ Education is essential for the future of society, and our role in this future is that of competent leaders of
³¹ education (Dale, 2011). Now, it is becoming a passion to get an effective leader in education sector. And it is
³² becoming more and more important in tertiary education where students do not want to see their teachers as a
³³ teacher only rather they ask for something more. When a student enter in higher education at the age of 18 s/he
³⁴ desire to have good person(s) besides them who will act not only as a teacher but also as a leader, as a mentor.
³⁵ Sometimes they will give feeling of their parents as some of them stay away from their parents. Buchen (2000)
³⁶ argues that the only leadership that will make a difference is that of teachers. Today, an increasing number of
³⁷ colleges and universities worry about students' development of values and habits of mind. Whether designated
³⁸ leaders or not, they develop a sense of personal commitment, move beyond themselves to relationships with others
³⁹ in ways that galvanize their commitment to a common purpose (Larry and Jon, 2008). This article mainly tried
⁴⁰ to find out the most important qualities of a teacher by which s/he is consider as an excellent teacher as well as
⁴¹ an effective, authentic leader to her/his followers, a group of students, who again become a leader in her or his
⁴² own areas in future.

43 **2 II. OBJECTIVES**

44 To gain knowledge about the leadership qualities of an effective teacher at tertiary level. In particular, to find
45 out the leadership qualities/traits those are most important for a teacher from in the eyes of students besides
46 excellence in teaching, which will make him an effective leader. In specific, to find out-? a list of qualities, which
47 are normally posses by leaders. ? a list of leadership qualities, which are most important for an effective teacher.

48 **3 III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY a) Data Collection Method**

49 This is mostly an explorative study. Both primary and secondary data have been used for the purpose of this
50 study. The authors first prepare a list of qualities (111) normally posses by leaders. This list (Table 2) was
51 developed after rigorous exploration of different books, journals, publications, and web based papers. Then with
52 the help of academicians, the author listed 30 (Annexure-II) most important and related qualities of a teacher
53 at tertiary level from those 111 qualities. In this case the authors conducted a focus group discussion with few
54 faculty members of tertiary level. To collect primary data, a group of students (280) were asked to identify 15
55 most important qualities (from those 30 qualities) which should be posses by academicians when they perform
56 their regular activities. For the purpose of this research, the study only focused on the leadership qualities of a
57 teacher.

58 **4 b) Sampling Plan and Sample Size**

59 Sampling Plan and Sample Size: A stratified random sampling survey was adopted for selecting students from
60 different institutes\departments at masters' level. It is assume that the result will be more accurate as the
61 students of master's level are quite mature and stable. 280 students were selected randomly from the following
62 7 institutes/departments of Jahangirnagar University: IV.

63 **5 LITERATURE REVIEW a) What is Leadership**

64 The desire to understand, defines, and explains the essence of leadership has interested researchers and scholars
65 for most of the twentieth century. Though thousands of studies have been published in the last several decades
66 alone, the term "leadership" did not come into usage until the late 19th Century. The words "lead" and "leader"
67 have a much longer history, however, they usually referred only to authority figures (Curtis, 1998). The topic
68 of breakthrough leadership was the subject of the first special issue in the Harvard Business Review's seventy-
69 nine year history (Bowmen & Garten, 2008). Today, scholars discuss the basic nature of leadership in terms of
70 the "interaction" among the people involved in the process: both leaders and followers (Rost, 1991). In truth,
71 leadership exists as part of a duality: Leaders forge and sustain relationships with followers (Goffee & Jones,
72 2001) who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes (Curtis, 1998) and the essence of leadership
73 is not the leader, but the relationship (Rost, 1993). Rost's (1991) contemporary definition is composed of four
74 basic components, each of which must be present if a particular relationship is to be called leadership. (1) if it is
75 based on multidirectional influence, not based on authority; (2) both leaders and followers are doing leadership;
76 (3) leaders and followers intend real changes; and (4) the changes reflect their mutual purposes.

77 Leadership is an important dimension of management whose presence and existence depends on several skills
78 of a group of people (Bennett and Anderson, 2003). Leadership excellence requires being in touch with one's
79 mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual aspects including one's values, talents, personality, and self-image
80 (Nahavandi, 2000), passions (Vicere & Fulmer, 1997), intellect, competencies, personal aspirations, and family
81 and community life (McCauley, Moxley, & Velsor, 1998). Effective leaders understand themselves, learn to set
82 personal goals, and work to achieve those goals through their self-selected plans and abilities (Kouzes & Posner,
83 1993).

84 **6 b) What should be hold by a Leader**

85 Leadership is a process to develop one as a leader. This is happen by personal development which discovers who
86 we are, as well as what skills we possess (Bennis, 1989). Not all leadership roles are fixed. Someone might act as a
87 mentor one week and then assume the role of innovator with a unique proposal the following week (Gabriel, 2005).
88 Authentic leaders are more agile in their behavior, more effective in decision making, clearer about motivations
89 and expectations of others, and more flexible in adjusting to new situations (Lee & King, 2001). Again, authentic
90 leaders see themselves as stewards of the assets they inherit and servants of all their stakeholders (George, 2003).

91 Certain skills are necessary in order to remain authentic as a leader which makes them more flexible and
92 confident in their approaches to goal achievement (Lee & King, 2001). Like skills traits are also important for
93 leadership. According to Davis and Newstrom (2003) some common leadership traits are: visionary, experts
94 and knowledgeable, mentors, patient, organizer, charisma, thinkers, listeners, sensors, good communicator, and
95 self-confidence. Kouzes and Posner (2007) developed a survey name 'The leadership practices inventory' that
96 asked people which, of a list are common characteristics of leaders. The results of the study showed that people
97 preferred characteristics, such as honest, forwardlooking, competent, inspiring, intelligent, fair-minded, broad-
98 minded, supportive, straightforward, dependable, cooperative, determined, imaginative, ambitious, courageous,
99 caring, mature, loyal, self-controlled, and independent.

100 In recent years the new competencies of leadership such as sense making, ability to deliver, inter organizational
101 representation, has been known as one of the effective leadership qualities. It is composed of four dimensions:
102 ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Storey, 2004).
103 Now, a good number of educational institutes giving increasing importance on leadership learning. A recent
104 study by Howe and Freeman (1997) shows that an increasing number of institutions of higher learning are now
105 offering programs that prepare students for leadership. c) What qualities should be hold by a Teacher Much has
106 been written over the years about the centrality and importance of 'academic leadership' to the success of higher
107 education (Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education Management, 1995). Although the options for leadership
108 are varied, there are a number of qualities that leaders have in common. Many of these characteristics are seen in
109 effective teachers, which might be why people gravitate toward them and why they seek leadership positions. In
110 some texts (e.g., ??eaming, 1998;Gmelch & Miskin, 1993;Hecht, et al., 1999) the term 'academic leadership' has
111 been used to describe a collection of tasks or functions performed by individuals appointed to formal positions
112 of responsibility within universities. In other texts, the term is used to describe the qualities or characteristics of
113 particular individuals who are recognized by others as being academic leaders (e.g., Fisher & Koch, 1996;Ramsden,
114 1998). In yet others, the term is used to describe anyone who holds an academic appointment. In such texts
115 (e.g., Trowler, 1998;Taylor, 1999), all academics are considered to be academic leaders as they are assumed to
116 be at the forefront of their discipline, and active in the definition of future directions and strategies within their
117 academic programs and research.

118 During a brainstorming exercise in the Department of Education at Winona State, faculty members identified
119 more than fifty discrete roles and leadership demands central to key aspects of the Department's daily operations
120 (Bowman, 2002). Rice (2003) in a meta-analysis focused on empirical studies of teacher quality and qualifications,
121 and found five broad categories of teacher attributes that appear to contribute to teacher quality: (i) experience,
122 (ii) preparation programs and degrees, (iii) type of certification, (iv) coursework taken in preparation for the
123 profession, and (v) teachers' own test scores. Cruickshank, Jenkins & Metcalf (2003) when define effective
124 teaching include caring, supportive, concerned about the welfare of students, knowledgeable about their subject
125 matter, able to get along with parents and genuinely excited about the work that they do. honest and ethical,
126 organized, perceptive, empathetic and supportive, altruistic, accessible, resourceful, fair, accepting, vulnerable,
127 forward-thinking, global, decisive and incisive, and intelligent. Glenda (2008) in his writing Characteristics of a
128 good teacher identified seven characteristics to have to be a good teacher. These are communicates knowledge,
129 flexibility and tolerance, sense of detachment, creativity and humor, listener, patient yet firm, and set good
130 example. According to Alex Landis (2011), the important twelve characteristics of a teachers are love what they
131 do, good communicators, admirable, positive reinforcement, fair & just, leadership, committed, understanding,
132 compassion & caring, confidence, prepared, professionalism.

133 Teaching is a career that provides challenges, excitement, personal reward and a chance to encourage and
134 support others to achieve their goals. John Hattie (2003) identified five major dimensions of excellent teachers.
135 Expert teachers: (i) can identify essential representations of their subject; (ii) can guide learning through
136 classroom interactions; (iii) can monitor learning and provide feedback; (iv) can attend to affective attributes;
137 and (v) can influence student outcomes. Different authors define academic leadership within different outlook.
138 In this article the scope of academic leadership will be strictly relate with the people who is directly relate with
139 teaching profession in tertiary level.

140 IV.

141 7 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

142 First, from the secondary survey the authors identified thirty most important qualities of a teacher which are
143 also important for a leader. Secondly, the authors asked respondents to identify 15 most important qualities
144 of a teacher from those 30 qualities identified by authors, to come to conclusion. Interestingly, nine organizing,
145 insightfulness and responsibility scored lowest in this ranking. Accessibility and patience (42.86) got same ranking
146 (13). Determination, involvement, and personality (28.57) got same ranking (17). Flexibility and insightfulness
147 ??17.14) According to Gabriel (2005) the following are some common traits found in the teachers: principled,
148 Dynamism and organizing (14.29) got same ranking (22). Details have been included in Annexure-II.

149 Students look for certain qualities/traits in teachers. When a student enters into a tertiary level, s/he qualities
150 (Table ??3) have been supported by 100% of respondents in the sample.

151 Besides those nine qualities identified by students as most important qualities, students preference against
152 other six qualities (Table -4) have been ranked. 65.71% students prefer knowledge (Table-4) as 10th quality of a
153 teacher. Other five qualities among first fifteen are integrity, confidence, accessibility, patience, and dedication.
154 Here, patience and accessibility got same importance ??42.86).

155 The other 15 qualities depending on the preference of the respondents have been ranked . Creativeness,
156 discipline, dynamism, flexibility, perceives his/her teacher as more than a teacher. It varies with the type of
157 educational institute and the subject s/he studies. Definitely students of science discipline perceive their teacher
158 in different ways than students of arts discipline. However, there are some traits or qualities which are common
159 to all. For example, honesty, humanity, intelligent, etc. Students of all discipline in the sample identified nine
160 most important qualities, for which they are 100 percent agreed. The most important fifteen qualities identified
161 by respondents are discussed below:

7 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

162 Communication: Good communication skills are a must for a teacher. This skill involves speaking, listening
163 and watching. With regard to speaking, the teacher has to be able to deliver the subject in a voice manner that
164 will generate interest and response from the student. At the time of listening students should give the opportunity
165 to construct questions they may wish to ask or to give an opinion. And by watching students, good teachers will
166 be able to notice if any are being left behind in the learning process, or if confusion is arising (Lines, 2008).

167 Competency: Competency is the total package of one's ability to conduct his/her task in an effective and
168 efficient manner. Competent teachers encourage active learning. By staying active in an array of professional,
169 legal, ethical, political and policy activities related to the subject being taught, students learn to be professionals
170 in the broadest meaning of the term (Rodgers, et. al. 1997).

171 Honesty and trustworthy: People want leaders who are honest, whose words are dependable, who are open,
172 who are not always hiding the true reality of a situation from those they lead and who are genuine (Millard,
173 2008). In higher educational sector students want to have not only a teacher but an honest mentor. Because the
174 sensitivity of the beneficiaries and the lead players in higher education system considering the nature of their
175 tasks, calls for more attention to be paid to the observation of moral and human coeds ??Noorshahi & Sarkhabi,
176 2010).

177 Humanism: People behave according to certain principles of human nature and human needs are an important
178 part of human nature. Values, beliefs, and customs differ from country to country and even within group to
179 group, but in general, all people have a few basic needs. In educational sector when it consider about a teacher
180 it must about qualities which is not nonhuman in nature. As a leader, a teacher need to interact with his/her
181 students and to understand and motivate them, to know human nature is must. However, human nature is the
182 common qualities of all human beings.

183 Intelligence: Intelligence is the ability to learn and apply what has been learned. To develop intelligence one
184 need to commit to continual learning both formally and informally (Suryavanshi, 2011). Robert Sternberg (1997)
185 adds further that it involves the ability to adapt to the environment, or modify the environment, or seek out and
186 create new environments. Different researchers have identified different components of intelligence. Sternberg
187 (2000) focuses on just three main components: practical intelligence, experiential intelligence, and componential
188 intelligence.

189 Judgment: Unlike decision-making, judgment is a continuous process, from inception to execution (Hoeffner,
190 2008). Unlike leaders, teacher's judgment plays a crucial role. Judgment about right and wrong is sometimes
191 related with the future of students (Tichy and Bennis, 2007). That's why a teacher's behavior must be consistent,
192 which can be achieved through setting applying equality. Teachers should treat their students equally, yet giving
193 them the individual attention they need (Landis, 2008).

194 Motivation (inspiring): The inspirational leader understands that, while money is a motivator, so are praise,
195 recognition, rewards and noticing an individual's contribution to a successful attempt (Heathfield, 2012). Good
196 teachers try to motivate students by working within their own incentive system. Teachers who know their
197 students' likes, dislikes, problems and personal issues are more likely to be able to "push the right button" and
198 motivate students to learn (Rodgers, et. al., 1997).

199 Support: A supportive leader assists others emotionally, socially, and instructionally, and forges connections
200 with them (Gabriel, 2005). The 6th century B.C. Chinese philosopher Laozi suggested that enlightened leadership
201 is service, not selfishness. The leader places] the well-being of all above the well-being of self alone (Millard, 2008).
202 Cruickshank, Jenkins, & Metcalf (2003) reported that effective teachers are supportive of students in multiple
203 ways and help to meet their needs for belonging and success.

204 Vision: Actually, the whole point of leadership is figuring out where to go from where we are now. When
205 people do not consider their leader forward-looking, that leader is usually suffering from one of two possible
206 problems: The leader doesn't have a forward-looking vision, or the leader is unwilling or scared to share the
207 vision with others (Suryavanshi, 2011). Students need to know that a teacher has a strong vision for the future
208 and a strong plan for going forward.

209 Knowledge: Knowledge brings respect. When a teacher is knowledgeable, his students will have a high respect
210 and esteem for him. This is because they already know that their leader is capable of providing solution to their
211 problems. They will see him as the brain behind the success. It may be reverse when a teacher knows little and
212 it may lead to lack of respect.

213 Integrity: Integrity is the integration of outward actions and inner values. A teacher of integrity can be trusted
214 because he or she never changes direction from inner values. A person of integrity acts as a powerful model for
215 people to copy thus builds an effective cultural values (Bennis, 1989).

216 Honest dealings, predictable reactions, well-controlled emotions, and an absence of tantrums and harsh
217 outbursts are all signs of integrity.

218 Confidence: In order to lead and set direction a leader needs to appear confident as a person and in the
219 leadership role. A teacher can't teach without confidence. Students won't believe in a teacher that first doesn't
220 believe in there-self. Great teachers are confident that they know how to teach, and in what they are teaching
221 (Landis, 2008).

222 Accessibility: Accessibility an intention to be available to others, whether holding regular office hours, having a
223 public presence in a community, or simply regularly returning phone calls and emails. These types of leaders are
224 transparent and reveal themselves without inhibition. Teachers obviously should be accessible during contract

225 hours. But because the nature of the job demands that teachers often take their work home, they should be
226 accessible after hours as well (Gabriel, 2005).

227 Patience: Teachers need to be patient, but they also need to be firm. Patience is a part of being firm. If
228 a teacher does not remain firm on some set boundaries in the classroom, students usually retaliate through
229 behaviors. Patience comes in giving students time to absorb the reality of boundaries. Firmness is in correcting
230 the student through reminders (Glenda 2008).

231 Dedication: Dedication means spending whatever time and energy on a task is required to get the job done
232 (Bennis, 1989). There is no doubt that a great teacher is dedicated. They go above and beyond the time
233 requirements of a typical teacher, and are willing to help students whenever they need it. They are very dedicated
234 to the curriculum they teach, and continue learning in the hopes of becoming even better teachers.

235 **8 VI.**

236 **9 CONCLUSION**

237 Excellence in teaching is expected by everyone. However, excellence in teaching is not just good technique. People
238 give importance on different attributes/qualities of a teacher to be excellent depending on their own judgment.
239 This judgment varies from person to person, country to countries. It depends on persons own values, norms,
240 customs, ethics, culture, etc. These attributes are sometimes same regardless of countries boundary. These
241 attributes/qualities make a teacher a leader. Bennis (2002) contends that "leadership is not a science. It's not
242 a recipe. It's not the five rules about this or the six effective habits of that. It is an art". It is mainly part of
243 social science. It is important for a teacher to act as a leader, as a mentor and in doing so the required qualities
244 do not need to be of magnificence or not about doing something out of world. It should be noted that teachers
245 are actually of the students, by the students and for the students.

246 The insights about the fifteen characteristics revealed by the study are mere indication of a 'profile of preference
247 of trait/qualities', perceived by students of different discipline. We tried to portray that. The degree of importance
248 of qualities sometimes varies depending on the discipline (science, arts, and business). At the same time, there
249 are many external factors which influence the teachers and create discrepancy between the teachers' desired/
250 expected behavior and overt behavior. For example, the administrative complexity of the institution; resource,
251 time and support available to the teacher; explicit teaching policy of the institution and a lot more things can
252 be addressed. However, common qualities are common to everyone. Teacher's qualities not always depending on
253 teachers' own state of art. Situational factors are also play an important role here. As a teacher it is of utmost
254 importance that one tunes her/his leadership skills and find the best style of teaching for the students they are
teaching.

¹ ² ³

1

students interviewed:

Sl.	Institutes/ Departments	Students Interviewed	% Sample	of
i.	Anthropology	40	14.29	
ii.	Archeology	40	14.29	
iii.	Economics	40	14.29	
iv.	Geography and Environment	40	14.29	
v.	Govt. and Politics	40	14.29	
vi.	Institute Business Administration	of 40	14.29	
vii.	Statistics	40	14.29	
	TOTAL	280	100.0	

Figure 1: Table 1 :

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[Note: 7 Global Journal of Management and Business Research Volume XII Issue X Version I 2012 June © 2012 Global Journals Inc. (US)]

Figure 2:

2

Sl	Qualities	Sl.	Qualities	Sl.	Qualities	Sl.	Qualities
1	Accessibility	29	Dignify	57	Inspiration	85	Punctiliousness
2	Adventurous	30	Diplomat	58	Integrity	86	Punctuality
3	Affectionate	31	Discipline	59	Intelligence	87	Quietness
4	Altruistic	32	Diversity	60	Interaction	88	Realism
5	Ambitious	33	Dynamism	61	Interest	89	Regularity
6	Aspirational	34	Efficiency	62	Intransigence	90	Reliability
7	Calmness	35	Empathy	63	Invincibility	91	Reliance
8	Candid	36	Energy	64	Involvement	92	Resource
9	Care	37	Enthusiasm	65	Judgment	93	Respect
10	Charisma	38	Experience	66	Kind	94	Responsibility
11	Cheerfulness	39	Extrovertness	67	Knowledge	95	Revolution
12	Communication	40	Faith	68	Listen	96	Rightness
13	Compassion	41	Flexibility	69	Loyalty	97	Riskiness
14	Competence	42	Focus	70	Maturity	98	Robot
15	Comprehension	43	Friend	71	Modesty	99	Sensible
16	Confidence	44	Frugality	72	Motivation	100	Seriousness
17	Conformity	45	Generosity	73	Optimism	101	Sincerity
18	Consciousness	46	Global	74	Orator	102	Spirituality
19	Consideration	47	Grate	75	Organizing	103	Support
20	Constructiveness	48	Hard-work	76	Passion	104	Sympathy
21	Cooperation	49	Honesty & Trustworthy	77	Patience	105	System
22	Courage	50	Humanism	78	Persistence	106	Thoughtfulness
23	Courtesy	51	Humbleness	79	Personality	107	Thrift
24	Creativeness	52	Humour	80	Persuasion	108	Tolerance
25	Dedication	53	Imagination	81	Planning	109	Toughness
26	Deliberation	54	Independence	82	Politeness	110	Unpretentiousness
27	Determination	55	Innovation	83	Positiveness	111	Vision
28	Devotion	56	Insightfulness	84	Practicality		

Figure 3: Table 2 :

3

Sl	Criteria	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)	Quality Accepted by All
1	Communication	280	100.00	?
2	Competency	280	100.00	?
3	Honest & trustworthy	280	100.00	?
4	Humanism	280	100.00	?
5	Intelligence	280	100.00	?
6	Judgment	280	100.00	?
7	Motivation	280	100.00	?
8	Support	280	100.00	?
9	Vision	280	100.00	?
n=280				

Figure 4: Table 3 :

4

Sl	Criteria	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)	Ranking of other qualities
10	Accessibility	120	42.86	13
11	Confidence	128	45.71	12
12	Dedication	112	40.00	14
13	Integrity	136	48.57	11
14	Knowledge	184	65.71%	10
15	Patience	120	42.86	13
n=280, S=Students				

Figure 5: Table 4 :

9 CONCLUSION

5

Rank	Criteria	No. of respon- dents	(%)	Sl.
15	Global	104	37.19	20
16	Resourcefulness	96	34.29	23
17	Determination, Involvement, & Personality	80	28.57	16, 21, 22
18	Devotion	72	25.71	17
19	Empathy	64	25.71	19
20	Diplomat	56	20	18
Other Important Qualities of a Teacher (0%<S<20%)				
21	Flexibility, & Insightfulness	48	17.14	27, 28
22	Dynamism, & Organizing	40	14.29	26, 29
23	Discipline	32	11.43	25
24	Responsibility	24	8.57	30
25	Creativeness	16	5.71	24

n=280, S=Students

Figure 6: Table 5 :

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