

**Original Research**

## A Survey of Qualities of a Good Teacher: The Case of Arab EFL Teachers and Learners' Viewpoints

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### Abstract

This study was intended to scrutinize the EFL teachers' qualities that students appreciate and those that the EFL teachers highlighted. This questionnaire-based survey study was both qualitative and quantitative and employed a correlational method to answer the addressed questions. The participants were selected among EFL teachers and students whose native language was Arabic with different ages, academic statuses, and periods of English teaching/learning experience. The findings showed that characteristics related to the Classical Aspect were the most important for the students. For teachers, the Social-Cultural and Technology Aspects were equally important, but the teacher characteristics related to the Classical Aspect were more important than the other aspects. However, no particular pattern of similarity or difference existed between teachers' and students' perceptions. Moreover, the teachers' job experiences and the students' academic year were proved to have no significant role in their perceptions.

**Keywords:** Education, EFL teachers, EFL learners, Teacher Education, Teacher qualities

## 1. Introduction

Generally, education aims at preparing students for life in the world. One key element in any educational context is the teacher. Individuals with different characteristics such as physical, cognitive, emotional, and attitudinal characteristics can be teachers. Teaching is a job that should be learned “on the job” along with gaining theoretical knowledge as an essential component of a teacher’s expertise, and the need for good teaching and efficient teachers have always been at the top of the education iceberg.

Considering the needs of contemporary society and the crucial role of education in gaining the required knowledge and skills, recent educational amendments have been attended to by educational professionals and researchers. The advent of globalization and the present international atmosphere in most universities worldwide means everything is rapidly changing, and teachers’ characteristics and qualities are no exception. Hence, the need for a change of perspective and enhancing the democratization of education systems is highly felt. Despite this recent recognition, still, most studies in the field of education still emphasize the importance of gaining knowledge while ignoring the essential qualities of a successful teacher. A good teacher has been defined by the Teaching and Learning Center at Winthrop University (2005) as one who is primarily knowledgeable enough and also one who is concerned about the students, is interested in the subject matter, shows enthusiasm, and employs the most practical methods for teaching the intended material.

So, in this study, the attributes of a good teacher, which have been elaborated on later in this paper, were viewed from both the teachers’ and the students’ perspectives. The main purpose of this survey was to scrutinize the EFL teachers’ qualities that students appreciate as well as those that were highlighted by the EFL teachers themselves to elaborate on the importance of attending to them in teacher training programs, especially for the teachers at the debut of their profession.

This study also examined the possible factors, such as the teachers’ teaching experience and students’ academic year, which might lead to a change in their perceptions in this regard. Finally, the teacher evaluation programs at universities mostly rely on the teachers' teaching quality, and teachers are rarely evaluated from the aspects of personal attributes, interpersonal relationships, and attitudinal factors that were included in this study.

Last but not least, the desired qualities of a good teacher were studied in the related literature by the researcher to compare them with the findings of this study. The objectives were to contribute to the existing literature on teacher qualities, examine how the participants' perceptions in this relation could vary as students complete more years at university or teachers gain more experience in their job and finally suggest practical implications to teachers and educational administrators. Furthermore, the findings can equip teachers with information to deal with the possible challenges in their classroom and provide them the confidence to adapt themselves to different situations and various students.

### **1. Literature Review**

The review of the related literature says that it is required to practice teaching and obtain teaching experience between four and seven years to develop into a competent teacher, (Varrella, 2000). Teaching experience, according to Crawford (2009), means full-time employment that is associated with taking full responsibility for the planning and delivery of instruction and evaluation of student learning. It is believed that even before teachers begin their education as a teacher, classroom experience can shape their general understanding of teaching and learning, that is, they are learning from experience (Berger, Girardet, Vaudroz, & Crahay, 2018).

According to Cochran-Smith and Fries (2005), all the teacher's characteristics that can contribute to achieving more favorable outcomes and educational efficiency can be referred to as the desired qualities of a teacher. A teacher's qualities are multidimensional, encompassing the teacher's beliefs, values, attitudes, behavior, knowledge, skills, and personal characteristics that contribute to the success and productivity of the teaching job (Yuan & Hu, 2017).

Different organizations have considered certain qualities to be the desired qualities for teachers. For example, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (2008) considered pedagogical and subject matter knowledge, learning how to learn, practical teaching skills, caring teaching skills, and accuracy and skill in using technology as some necessary teacher qualities. In 1998, the Council of Higher Education identified four qualities as a teacher's required competencies, including subject matter

competency, curriculum training, monitoring and teaching competency, and competency in assessing the students' learning (Council of Higher Education, 1998).

Cristian and Denisa (2014) categorize the teachers' qualities into scientific, social, digital, psycho-pedagogical, and managerial skills. Selvarjan and Toor (2016) classified these qualities into three components, namely, classical aspects, technological aspects, and social-cultural aspects. Pânișoară (2009) argues that the teacher's competence is not limited to his specialized scientific knowledge or knowledge of a particular subject. However, it is an amalgam of different ideas and qualities like psycho-pedagogical knowledge, and the ability to organize, coordinate, interpret, justify, and communicate effectively with the students.

In English language teaching, especially as a foreign language, the teacher is the most prominent feature in the teaching and learning process because English is taught only at school as a school subject. According to Zeiger (2014), a teacher's role is beyond merely standing in front of the classroom. Teaching is offering quality instruction to the students and conveying knowledge and information while performing different roles and activities in different educational contexts.

As Jain and Prasad (2018) put it, irrespective of the subject matter they teach, teachers are critical components of the teaching and learning process because they significantly impact the education system's success. The teacher can gain experience in teaching in different ways, including acquiring the required skills, receiving continuous training to perform his/her job, and gaining sufficient preparation for a teaching position through teaching practice and real-life experiences.

"Desired teachers' professional qualities" have been popular among educators, teachers, students in particular, and researchers in the context of non-native learners of English during the past decades (Alzebaree & Zebari, 2021; Yuan & Hu, 2018). Also, Teachers' professional qualities in different disciplines have been surveyed by many scholars, for instance, in mathematics (Kunter, et al., 2013). Zhou (2018) studied these features in physical education, and Lamb, Guerra, and Sorensen (2022) in medicine. However, limited research on teachers' qualities has been done in English as a foreign language (EFL).

Richter and Herrera (2017) found that utilizing the most up-to-date teaching approaches and methods and good personality traits such as patience, understanding, and

enthusiasm, were essential qualities of good teachers. Sundari (2018) also found that students considered the teacher's proficiency in speaking and reading more significant than the other crucial characteristics. Terras, Hendry, and Jarret (2019) found that trying to establish a friendly relationship with students was highlighted by the students. Also, inquisitiveness and being a continual learner were other desired qualities that students reported (Swargiary & Baglari, 2018; Wangdi & Tharchen, 2021).

In Ida (2017), the teacher qualities that received the highest value were the teacher's ability to teach effectively and transfer the instructional material in a meaningful way to the students, being good-looking and having a neat appearance, caring about all students, listening to their problems and trying to be helpful, and encouraging students. Said (2017) found that the perceived qualities of good English teachers based on Indonesian students' responses were creating an active learning environment, providing frequent feedback, and having high expectations of the students were highly beneficial in enhancing the students' learning.

Cruickshank, Jenkins, and Metcalf (2003) found that the main characteristics of good teachers were having a good command of the subject, the ability to explain the instructional points in straightforward ways, care and concern for the students, and having a positive attitude.

According to Kwangsawad (2017), the three top attributes that students reported for good English teachers were the teacher's subject-matter knowledge, his/her ability to establish and maintain a good relationship with the students, and the EFL teacher's characteristics.

Hosgorur (2012) also found that personal qualities, particularly patience and tolerance, were the most favored teacher qualities from the students' perception. The findings of Alzeebaree and Zebari (2021) indicate that the teacher's subject matter knowledge was preferred more by the students, and the socio-affective aspects were the second favorite while they ranked the pedagogical knowledge in third place.

According to the findings of Chanmanee (2018), for EFL teachers, socio-affective qualities and skills were more critical, while students reported that for them, the teacher's instructional skills and pedagogical competency were the most important ones. The findings of Strong (2010) showed that teachers' experience between one and three years usually has a positive impact on students' achievement. However, the research on the

relationship between more than three years of experience in teaching and the students' progress did not show a significant relationship.

In a recent study, teacher's knowledge and competency, employing different instructional methods, being interested in teaching, establishing a good teacher-student relationship, and creating an appropriate classroom atmosphere were among the preferred qualities of a teacher reported by the participants (Chu, Liu, & Fang, 2021).

Similar research was conducted in Iraq to investigate the qualities of good EFL teachers. Some qualities, such as the teacher's pedagogical competency, proficiency in English, social skills, and affective characteristics, were addressed (Alzebaree & Zebari, 2021). They found that, based on the collected data, the teacher's language proficiency was the most valued quality. In Saudi Arabia, Alzobiani (2020) studied the characteristics of good teachers perceived by students and teachers. Based on the findings of the study, Saudi teachers and students both reported that the pedagogical competencies and skills of teachers are more important than their characteristics. When these two attributes were compared, it was found that teachers and students showed contrary views toward the personal and professional qualities of a good teacher. Teachers stated that for them, the personal characteristics of a teacher are more important, while students emphasized the importance of the teacher's professional skills.

Taking the importance of the topic into account, this study aimed at answering the following questions.

1. What are Arab EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the qualities of a good teacher? Which category is more appreciated and valued from the teachers' point of view?
2. What are Arab undergraduate EFL learners' perceptions regarding the qualities of a good teacher? Which category is more appreciated and valued from the learners' point of view?
3. How are Arab EFL teachers' perceptions similar or different from the Arab undergraduate EFL learners' perceptions regarding the qualities of a good teacher?
4. How are Arab EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the qualities of a good teacher related to the period of their job experience?
5. How do Arab undergraduate EFL learners' perceptions regarding the qualities of a good teacher vary as they complete more years at university?

## 2. Methodology

The methodology was two-fold. It was both qualitative and quantitative. It was a survey study; however, to answer the last two questions addressed in the study, the correlational method was also used. The scope of the study was limited to the Arab educational context; it was conducted in Iraq.

### 2.1 Participants

The participants were selected among Arab EFL university teachers and undergraduate students of varying ages. Both male and female EFL teachers (30 male and 30 female) with varying academic degrees and different periods of English teaching experience whose native language was Arabic joined this study online. Also, the student participants were sixty male and female Arab EFL undergraduate students (freshman and senior).

**Table 1.**

*Demographic Background of the Participants*

No. of Participants	60 EFL Teachers and 60 EFL Students
Gender	30 Females & 30 Males in Each Group
Native Language	Arabic
Major	TEFL
Students 'Academic Years	Freshman and Senior Undergraduate Levels
Teachers' Teaching Experiences	Varying Years of Teaching Experience

### 3.2. Instruments

For collecting data, a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire developed by Selvaraju and Toor (2016) from Google Forms was adopted. Accordingly, two different questionnaires concerning the participants' demographic information were designed and used. The reliability of the questionnaires was checked in the previous studies through Cronbach's alpha coefficient and proved to be high (.83), and its validity was confirmed by expert opinion. Interview as a method of data collection was also employed for the sake of data triangulation and to add to the accuracy of the collected information.

### **3.3. Data Collection Procedure**

The participants were informed of the objectives of the study before participating voluntarily in the survey. All the collected information in this study was treated confidentially. The questionnaires were slightly modified to address the participants' demographic data and then distributed online among the participants, teachers, and students, to collect their responses in a short time. The teachers' ideal characteristics were categorized into three sections in the questionnaire including social and cultural aspect, classical aspect, and technology aspect.

The questionnaire was applied to 60 Arab EFL teachers and 60 Arab undergraduate EFL students. It was sent to them online, and the participants were asked to vote on the importance of each quality for being a good teacher by choosing one of the provided options on a Likert scale, ranging from the most to the least important. Then, the responses to the questionnaire items provided by teachers and students were compiled and converted to the percentage ratings. The qualities that were decided to be the most important by the teachers and the students were picked up and compared. Moreover, the questionnaires collected data regarding the EFL teachers' period of teaching experience to be compared with their preferred qualities later on. The students' academic years were also recorded to answer the fifth question in the study.

Then several participants (10 EFL teachers and 10 EFL students) were randomly interviewed. The online semi-structured interviews were conducted in English; however, when needed, the participants were allowed to express their viewpoints in Arabic. Each interview lasted approximately ten minutes and was recorded with the participants' permission. After the interview, the researcher transcribed and checked the recordings of the interviews for later analysis.

### **3.4. Data Analysis Procedure**

The analysis of the collected data comprised several steps. The data were analyzed quantitatively using the statistical software SPSS (version 24). The following steps were taken to answer the first two questions addressed in the study. First, frequency tables, ranking methods, and modes were employed to process and analyze the collected information. Second, Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) were computed for each of the



categories in the questionnaire separately. Third, the Friedman test was utilized to compare all participants' responses to the three categories.

The responses to the three categories in the questionnaire by EFL teachers were compared with those of EFL students to answer the third question. Then, an independent sample t-test was used to compare the responses given by the teachers and students in each category. Also, one-way ANOVA was utilized to compare the ranking categories between the freshman and senior students to answer question four and to examine the possible correlation between students' academic year and their responses to the questionnaire items.

Finally, the teachers' perceptions regarding the attributes of a good teacher were compared with their teaching experience to detect any existing correlation. Hence, one-way ANOVA was again utilized to compare the rankings between less-experienced (less than ten years of teaching experience) and more-experienced (more than ten years of teaching experience) EFL teachers.

The researcher also carefully read the transcribed textual data after the interview. Then, the participants' responses to the interview questions were matched with the study's findings to ensure the accuracy of the collected data and to remove any uncertainty about the interpretation of particular extracts.

### **3. Results**

According to the findings, the three aspects of teacher qualities, including the social and cultural aspect, classical aspect, and technology aspect, were essential characteristics of a good teacher. The results of the Friedman test showed that from the teachers' points of view, at the same time, Social-Cultural and Technology Aspects were equally important, the teacher characteristics that were associated with the Classical Aspect were more important than those that were related to the other aspects. Arab EFL learners also agreed on certain qualities of a good teacher; however, the results of the Friedman test revealed that from Arab EFL students' viewpoints, the characteristics related to the classical aspect were more important than those related to the Social and Cultural Aspects and Technology aspects. Also, they believed the features that were related to the Social and Cultural Aspects were more important than those related to the Technology Aspect. Table 2 represents the results.

**Table 2.**

*Results of One-Sample t-Test to Examine the Significance of Each Aspect of a Good Teacher's Qualities from the Teachers' and Learners' Viewpoints*

		One Sample Test				Fridman Test			
		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.	Mean Rank	rank	Chi-Square	Sig.
Teacher	Social and Cultural Aspects	3.65	.62	8.519	.00*	1.89	2		
	Classical Aspect	3.98	.59	13.562	.00*	2.50	1	27.946	.000*
	Technology Aspect	3.43	.63	5.551	.00*	1.61	2		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3.73</b>	.49	12.146	.00*	-	-		
Student	Social and Cultural Aspects	3.61	.78	6.715	.000*	1.93	2		
	Classical Aspect	3.89	.68	11.306	.000*	2.57	1	47.436	.000*
	Technology Aspect	3.26	.94	2.351	.021*	1.49	3		
	Total	3.63	.68	8.054	.000*	-	-		

An independent *t*-test was utilized to answer the third question addressed in this study. The results revealed that no particular pattern of similarity or difference existed between Arab EFL teachers' and students' perceptions regarding the qualities of a good teacher. Results are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.**

*Results of Independent t-Test to Compare the Characteristics of a Good Teacher from Arab EFL Teachers and Students' Viewpoints*

	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.
Social and Cultural Aspects	student	74	3.61	.78	.361	.719
	teacher	66	3.65	.62		

classical Aspect	student	74	3.89	.68	.843	.401
	teacher	66	3.98	.59		
Technology Aspect	student	74	3.26	.94	1.296	.197
	teacher	66	3.43	.63		
Total	student	74	3.63	.68	.985	.327
	teacher	66	3.73	.49		

Moreover, no significant relationship was found between Arab EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the qualities of a good teacher and the period of their job experience. An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was also used to analyze the collected data and answer the fifth question addressed in the study. It was found that there was no relationship between Arab undergraduate EFL learners' perceptions regarding the qualities of a good teacher and the years they completed at university. The results are represented in Table 4.

**Table 4.**

*Results of Comparing the Characteristics of a Good Teacher from Arab EFL Teachers' Viewpoints and the Period of their Job Experience and results of Comparing Arab Undergraduate EFL learners' Perceptions Regarding the Qualities of a Good Teacher and their Academic Year*

		<i>Job Experience</i>	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.
Teacher	Social and Cultural Aspects	5-10	34	3.70	.54	.634	.528
		>10	32	3.60	.70		
	classical Aspect	5-10	34	4.09	.48	1.575	.120
		>10	32	3.86	.67		
	Technology Aspect	5-10	34	3.52	.58	1.245	.218
		>10	32	3.33	.68		
	Total	5-10	34	3.82	.43	1.476	.145
		>10	32	3.64	.54		
		<i>Academic Year</i>	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig
Student	Social and Cultural Aspects	First-year	9	2.91	1.18	3.035	.035*
		Second-year	33	3.72 <sup>a</sup>	.68		
		Third-year	19	3.71 <sup>a</sup>	.66		

	Fourth-year	13	3.64	.64		
	First-year	9	3.32	1.08		
classical Aspect	Second-year	33	3.94	.59	2.699	.052
	Third-year	19	4.04	.51		
	Fourth-year	13	3.94	.64		
	First-year	9	3.02	1.23		
Technology Aspect	Second-year	33	3.27	.82	.304	.822
	Third-year	19	3.24	1.07		
	Fourth-year	13	3.42	.88		
	First-year	9	3.11	1.10		
Total	Second-year	33	3.69	.55	2.141	.103
	Third-year	19	3.73	.62		
	Fourth-year	13	3.71	.59		
	First-year	9	3.11	1.10		

Finally, the participants' answers to the interview questions were carefully studied and compared to their responses to the questionnaire items to shed light on the students' perceptions regarding the concepts of culture and cultural awareness and its integration into the language teaching program.

#### 4. Discussion

The teacher is at the core of any educational program. However, answering "which qualities may make a good teacher" is a thorny issue. Hence, identifying and developing such qualities are of paramount importance for the effectiveness and success of that program.

While Social-Cultural and Technology Aspects were equally important, the teacher characteristics that were related to the Classical Aspect were more important than those that were related to the other aspects. That is, being patient, flexible, enthusiastic, creative, prepared, and knowledgeable in line with Alzobiani, 2020; Alzebaree & Zebari, 2021, a continual learner, and creating a safe environment in line with (Chu, Liu, & Fang, 2021) were the most essential qualities of a good teacher from Arab EFL teachers' viewpoints. The findings were in line with Alzobiani (2020), who found that from the EFL teachers' viewpoints, personal characteristics such as patience, flexibility, and enthusiasm were more important than professional qualities.

However, the findings were contrary to those of Chanmanee (2018) in that EFL teachers put further emphasis on the importance of characteristics related to Social and Cultural Aspects and considered them the most important ones.

For Arab learners, the analysis of their responses showed that for them, characteristics related to the Classical Aspect were the most important, and characteristics related to the Social and Cultural Aspect and Technology Aspects were also important respectively. The findings were in line with Alzebaree and Zebari (2021). They found that teachers' pedagogical competency and proficiency in English (related to the Classical Aspect), as well as social skills and affective characteristics (related to Social and Cultural Aspects), were the most important from the students' viewpoints.

A similar pattern of desired qualities of a good teacher was observed by Haider and Jalal (2018), and Chu, Liu, and Fang (2021), who reported that a teacher's knowledge and competency, employing different instructional methods, being interested in teaching, creating an appropriate classroom atmosphere (related to Classical Aspect), and establishing a good teacher-student relationship (related to Social and Cultural Aspect) were the preferred qualities of a good teacher stated by the student participants.

Contrary to the findings of this study, Hajizadeh and Salahshour (2014) found a clear pattern of similarities and differences in views. They found that for teachers and students, being knowledgeable, using efficient methods, being enthusiastic and lively, creative, and having an interest in the job were the most crucial teacher characteristics. However, having self-confidence was the most important quality for the majority of teachers (88%), while it was not of such importance for the students (54%). Also, while appearance was an important issue from teachers' viewpoints, more than 50% of the students did not think so. For the students, having a lesson plan, and for teachers, punctuality was the characteristic at second rank.

In line with the findings of this study, the findings of Alzobiani (2020) show that Saudi teachers and students both reported that the pedagogical competencies and skills of teachers are more important than their characteristics (related to the Classical Aspect). However, professional qualities were even more important from the students' viewpoints than the teachers.

Another observable quality of a good teacher based on the results gained from this survey was the application of technology in the classroom by teachers. The importance of

using slides and video projectors, videos, e-documents, e-mail, and social networks such as WhatsApp and telegram for presenting instructional material while lecturing in the classroom as well as receiving and returning students' homework and giving them comments were among the issues that were voted for both by the teachers and the students. In addition, teachers' availability via online platforms was desired by the student participants.

The findings revealed that in recent years, mainly due to the coronavirus pandemic, when it was impossible to attend school and in-person classes, many schools were obliged to make fundamental changes in their educational plans and practices. Most classes were held online all over the world, and Iraq was not an exception. Hence, the need for knowing about and utilizing technological means in the classroom was highlighted. In addition, the results of the interviews showed that both teachers and learners felt and experienced the critical role of technology in education and the exigency of acquiring the required knowledge and skills in this relation.

The results were also in line with Stronge (2010), who found although teaching experience and the teacher's self-confidence were directly related, the teacher's years of experience in teaching and the credit the teacher received were not related to what makes a teacher more than other teachers in more than 97 percent of cases.

## **5. Conclusion**

Being a good teacher only sometimes means the ability to teach well. There are always environmental constraints and unexpected problems that may arise, as well as institutional, cultural, and religious issues that limit the scope of a teacher's territory and do not allow the teacher to act based on his/her knowledge, beliefs, and experiences.

The undeniable fact is that a teacher's personal and professional qualities can greatly impact students' achievements (Jacob, 2012; Stronge, 2010). However, the identification of such attributes and measuring them is a very challenging job. Looking at a teacher from different perspectives and focusing on and analyzing how EFL teachers act in their classes may help broaden the view of what makes a good teacher.

Hence, it is vital that teachers, mainly EFL teachers try to figure out what the EFL students' expectations are. For efficient teaching and gaining the pre-established educational objectives, attending to the qualities highlighted by the student participants

seems to be necessary. Having a high level of proficiency in the English language, the ability to convey knowledge and information using a variety of teaching methods and techniques to meet EFL students' needs and learning styles, clear pronunciation, accurate knowledge of grammar, availability, understanding, respect, and classroom management abilities can help yield better outcomes.

Moreover, it is essential that teachers make their lessons more exciting and the whole learning-teaching process more enjoyable. Enhancing interpersonal relationships and providing sufficient feedback are also precious qualities since non-native students usually expect teachers not to be merely a guide or source of information but a supporter, facilitator, a monitor, and a friend who makes the job of teaching another language, primarily teaching English as a foreign language a very demanding job.

To support the issues mentioned above and add to the liveliness and efficiency of their teaching, EFL teachers should integrate multimedia and digital devices into their classes. Implementing new techniques and tools would bring positive changes and more desirable results.

Finally, finding no clear and significant relationship between Arab EFL students' academic year and their perceptions regarding the qualities of a good teacher provides evidence that there are a variety of factors that may impact students' needs and learning styles and consequently, their expectations and views of what qualities characterize an effective language teacher. Therefore, teachers should be aware of the importance of individual differences and try to employ a variety of teaching methods and materials, technology, and promote different learning strategies to increase the chance of satisfying the needs of all students in the classroom.

### **5.1. Implications and Limitations of the Study**

A good EFL teacher's essential competencies and desired qualities have received little attention, particularly in the Arab educational context. Inspecting and evaluating the qualities of a good teacher can bring about fruitful results and valuable applications that can improve the efficiency of educational practice as a whole.

This study can provide attitudinal, behavioral, and procedural benchmarks for teachers, education systems, educational policymakers, and researchers. Also, it is the area for the teacher training program that still requires progress. For teachers, the findings can

be used as a guide to optimizing the teacher-student relationship and enhancing the quality of their teaching. In addition, the findings can allow teachers to improve and excel in their jobs, have more effective performance in the classroom, and become more successful teachers. The findings suggest EFL teachers review the EFL teacher's desired qualities mentioned in this study as adequate references to make up for their deficiencies, excel in their personality as a teacher, and teach more effectively.

On this account, to improve the quality of the teaching and learning outcomes, education systems must focus on improving such qualities by taking more innovative and motivational steps and offering in-service training and courses for the teachers to improve their knowledge and abilities in all the related dimensions. Opportunities should be provided for teachers to build up and enhance their self-confidence. Ongoing academic and professional training should be embedded in educational programs to enhance flexibility and versatility in the teaching-learning process.

The costs of making wrong decisions when hiring teachers at different educational levels are very high. Besides financial loss, the negative consequences on students' progress and achievements are severe. As examples, we may refer to the decline of students' motivation and negative social and emotional impacts.

Educational policymakers, such as school administrators should pave the way and provide the required resources for teachers' development. They should devise and employ reasonable strategies for assessing teachers' classroom performance, classroom management, teaching efficiency, and job promotions. The university and education officials need to be more concerned about the teachers' personal and academic qualities when hiring English language teachers. The lack of sufficient interaction between the teacher evaluators, the students, and the teacher being evaluated can lead to the teacher's thinking of being on the right track.

Last but not least, pre-service and in-service language teachers can try to develop desired EFL teachers' professional qualities and gain an in-depth understanding of how to satisfy the educational demands of their students and be efficient, expert EFL teachers.

Interested researchers can also benefit from the findings of this study. Looking at the issue from different angles, they can conduct more studies in the future and share their findings with educators and other involved professionals to help improve the quality of teaching-learning programs.



This study suffers from some limitations due to the existence of some constraints that are unpredictable or uncontrollable in conducting any research. First, the researcher did not have access to a larger population and so the sample size was small. The study reflects the opinions of 60 Arab EFL students and 60 Arab EFL teachers. Second, the researcher had to interpret the findings of this study based on the self-reported nature of the collected information. Third, the study was limited to EFL university teachers and students in Iraq. Finally, the impact of the participants' gender, student participants' proficiency level (as it does not usually match their academic year, especially in non-native contexts), and the teacher participants' academic degrees were possibly influential factors that were not controlled in this study and can be addressed by the interested researchers in the future research.

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