

IMPACT OF TEACHERS' CHARACTERISTICS ON THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF GRADE 11 STUDENTS

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Abstract

The main aim of the study was to study the impact of teachers' characteristics on the academic achievement of Grade 11 students. It explored (8) teachers' characteristics (enthusiasm, warmth and humor, credibility, holding high expectation for success, encourage and support, businesslike, adaptability/flexibility and knowledgeability). The participants in the study were 400 Grade 11 students from five Basic Education High Schools and three Basic Education High Schools (Branch) in Salin Township. Survey method was used in the study. The questionnaire used in the study was the teachers' characteristics questionnaire. As for students' academic achievement, the total marks of each student from the first semester examination were used. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA, independent samples *t*-test and Pearson product moment correlation. The results revealed that most of the senior teachers possessed good teachers' characteristics. The ANOVA results showed that teachers' characteristics were significantly different among schools. The independent samples *t*-test results showed students' perceptions of teachers' characteristics were significantly different in terms of gender. Moreover, it was also found that students' perceptions of teachers' characteristics were significantly different, except teachers' adaptability/ flexibility in terms of school type. Pearson product moment correlation showed that teachers' characteristics had a significant positive relationship with students' academic achievement.

Keywords: effective teacher, teacher's characteristics, academic achievement

Introduction

Importance of the Research

Education has played and is still playing an important role in forming and training the individual throughout his existence. Education transforms the life experience of children and young individuals to be better prepared for life, for their integration in society with benefits for the individual as well as for society. The teachers bring the qualitative change and raise the standards of education which ensures the welfare, progress and prosperity of the nation. As teachers in 21st century are responsible for the overall well-being of their students, not only the education they give to their students but also they themselves as teachers must be effective. Therefore, teachers' characteristics are fundamental to become an effective teacher. As students spend a lot of time with their teachers, teachers' characteristics have a lot of influence on their students. Students learn more from teachers with certain characteristics.

Effective teachers' characteristics can have a great importance on students' academic development. Many variables can affect students' achievement. They include family life, community, diet, involvement in extracurricular activities, and the school environment. However, teachers are the most important school-based factor in affecting students' achievement levels (Rockoff 2004; Rivkin et al., 2005; Aaronson et al., 2007 cited in Rockstroh, 2013). When the students possess a good attitude toward teachers' characteristics, they are more inclined to trust and like those teachers and thus are more motivated to succeed. Therefore, it is important to examine which teachers' characteristics may be related to students' academic achievement. Therefore, this research was conducted to study the impact of teachers' characteristics on the academic achievement of Grade 11 students.

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Aim

The aim of the research is to study the impact of teachers' characteristics on the academic achievement of Grade 11 students.

Purposes of the Study

1. To express the characteristics of senior assistant teachers perceived by Grade 11 students
2. To describe the impact of the characteristics of senior assistant teachers on Grade 11 students' academic achievement
3. To give suggestions and recommendations based on the results of the study about the impact of teachers' characteristics on the academic achievement of Grade 11 students

Research Questions

1. Are there any significant differences between the selected schools in characteristics of teachers?
2. Is there any significant difference between male and female students' perception on teachers' characteristics?
3. Is there any significant difference between B.E.H.S and B.E.H.S (Branch) students' perception on teachers' characteristics?
4. Is there any relationship between each characteristic of teachers and students' academic achievement?
5. Is there any relationship between teachers' characteristics and students' academic achievement?

Definition of Key Terms

Teacher's Characteristics : Teacher characteristics are features that distinguish between teachers and include teacher personality, teacher attitudes, teacher expectations (Hanushek, 1971).

Academic Achievement : Academic achievement is a level of proficiency attained in academic work which is represented by percentage of marks obtained by students in examinations (Kohli, 1975 cited in Mehdipour & Balaramulu, 2013).

Effective teacher : Effective teacher is the one who combine professionalism with care, understanding, fairness, and kindness (Rubio, 2010).

Scope

This research is intended to study the impact of teacher characteristics on academic achievement of Grade 11 students from five Basic Education High Schools and three Basic Education High Schools (branch) in Salin Township during 2015-2016 academic year.

Review of Related Literature

Effective Teaching and Effective Teachers

Effective teaching is at the heart of student learning. From the teachers' point of view, "how to teach effectively" is a challenging task. Effective teaching has been broadly understood as teaching that is oriented to and focused on students and their learning (Devlin & Samarawickrema, 2009). According to Hussein (1996) cited in Renmin (2000), effective teachers

are friendly, firm, fair, and humane towards their students. They respect and trust students, are enthusiastic about teaching and learning, can cope with frustration and difficult aspects of teaching, develop self-awareness and self-evaluation skills, are alternative thinkers, explore new possibilities, and evaluate criticism. They are flexible enough to change and possess a sense of humor, are available to students when needed, are well-rounded and have balanced experiences, are academically experts, are professionally competent and demand high standards with moderate expectations, possess good communication skills, are creative and innovative, and are well organized.

Eight Key Characteristics Contributing to Effective Teaching

Early research defined effective teachers as those whose supervisors or administrators rated highly. Researchers in new era begin to define effective teachers as those who help their students learn more than other teachers with similar students. These researchers also observed the classroom and classroom behaviors of effective teachers and found that they share common attributes and abilities which tend to increase students' learning and satisfaction with teaching and to enhance students' self-concept. Cruickshank, Bainer, & Metcalf, (1999) found eight key characteristics that can help students learn more effectively. They are (a) Enthusiasm (b) Warmth and Humor (c) Credibility (d) Holding high expectation for success (e) Encourage and Support (f) Businesslike (g) Adaptability/Flexibility and (h) Knowledgeability.

Relationship between Teachers' Characteristics and Students' Achievement

The influence of teacher's characteristics plays an important role in the academic achievement of students. Teachers' characteristics tend to have a strong potential to influence the lives of students in terms of their academic achievement as well as their behaviors (Palaniandy, 2009). Adu & Olatundun (2007 cited in Kosgei, 2013) contend that teachers' characteristics are strong determinants of students' performance in secondary schools. These sources of evidence conclude that quality teachers are a critical determinant of students' achievement.

Several experimental studies found that teachers' enthusiasm leads to high achievements of students (Wyckoff, 1973; Williams & Ware, 1976, 1977; Land 1980 cited in Orosz et al., 2015). Positive connections between teachers' use of humor and academic achievement even follow students into colleges and beyond (Hickman & Crossland, 2004-2005 cited in Role, 2011). According to Evans (2012), the students' achievement is high when teachers constantly show credibility. According to Smith (1980) cited in Cotton (1989), teachers' expectation has a strong effect on students' learning and achievement. According to Klem & Connell (2004), teachers' support associated highly with student engagement and achievement. Six of the seven studies related to businesslike behavior reported by Rosenshine (1971 cited in Gabrys, 1978) contained significant results relating teacher businesslike behavior and student achievement. Metzler & Woessmann (2010) found a significant effect of teacher subject knowledge on student achievement. Teachers' pedagogical knowledge has been found to positively impact student achievement (Hill et al., 2005). Benjamin (2014) found that teachers' knowledge on individual student has greater influence upon students' learning and achievement.

Research Method

Descriptive research design involves collecting data to test hypothesis or answer questions concerning the status of the subjects of the study (Gay, 1987). In this paper, survey method which is one of the descriptive methods was used.

Subjects

The sample of this study was (400) Grade 11 students (male = 200, female = 200) who were studying at five Basic Education High Schools and three High Schools (Branch) in Salin Township during 2015-2016 academic year. The participants in this study were selected by using simple random sampling method. The numbers of students were equally taken (male = 25, female = 25) from each school.

Instruments

A questionnaire for teachers' characteristics perceived by Grade 11 students was constructed on the basic of the questionnaires of Palaniandy (2009) and Kamal & Hossein (2012). The questionnaire included five points Likert-type items for eight dimensions. They are (1) Enthusiasm, (2) Warmth and Humor, (3) Credibility, (4) Holding High Expectation for Success, (5) Encourage and Support, (6) Businesslike, (7) Adaptability/Flexibility and (8) Knowledgability. There were (48) Likert-type items in the instrument having five alternative options (1. strongly disagree, 2. disagree, 3. undecided, 4. agree, 5. strongly agree) for each statement. The maximum total score was 240 and the minimum was 48. All items were positively stated. As for students' academic achievement, the total marks of each student from the first semester examination were used.

Pilot Testing

A pilot test was administered with 50 high school students at B.E.H.S (1) Sagaing. Based on the findings of the pilot test, internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire is determined by Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach's alpha internal consistency was (0.886).

Procedure

To get the required data, an instrument was constructed under the guidance of the supervisor. For the validation of the instruments, the questionnaires for teachers' characteristics were distributed to four experts from Sagaing University of Education. The instrument was modified according to the guidance of four experts. After getting the validity from these four experts, pilot testing was conducted with 50 students at B.E.H.S (1) in Sagaing Township. For the internal consistency reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.886. Then, the major survey was conducted at five Basic Education High Schools and three High Schools (Branch) in Salin Township. The questionnaire and demographic data were distributed to Grade 11 students with the request to complete and return as soon as possible. The students were asked to decide about their agreement with the statements and mark the relevant response category honestly.

Analysis of the Data

The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA, independent samples *t*-test and Pearson product moment correlation. To know mean and standard deviation for perceptions of Grade11 students on teachers' characteristics and students' academic achievement, descriptive analyses were used. Moreover, one-way ANOVA was used to compare Grade11 students' perceptions on teachers' characteristics among the selected schools. The independent samples *t*-test was used to compare the perceptions of Grade11 students on teachers' characteristics by gender and by school type. Then, Pearson's correlation was used to determine whether there is any relationship exists between teachers' characteristics and students' academic achievement.

Findings

The mean comparison of all dimensions and the relationship between teachers' characteristics and students' academic achievement were discussed.

Descriptive Statistics for Mean and Standard Deviations of Overall Teachers' Characteristics Among Eight Schools

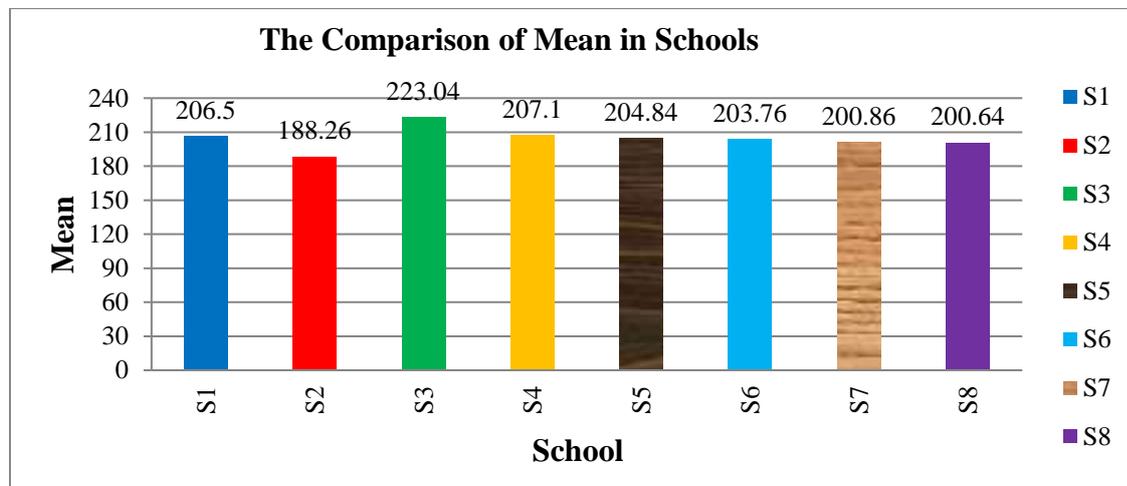


Figure1. Mean Comparison of Teachers' Characteristics Among (8) Schools

Note. S1 = B.E.H.S, Sin Phyu Kyune S2 = B.E.B.H.S, Thayet Chin S3 = B.E.H.S, Pyi Soe Kone
 S4 = B.E.B.H.S, Kya Pin S5 = B.E.B.H.S, Salin S6 = B.E.H.S, Salin
 S7 = B.E.H.S, Zee Phyu Pin S8 = B.E.H.S, Ta Nyoung

According to the Figure (1), it was found that the mean score of B.E.H.S Pyi Soe Kone was the highest and the mean score of B.E.H.S (Branch) Thayat Chin was the lowest. Then, teachers' characteristics perceived by students among eight schools were evaluated and the results were as follow:

Table 1 Mean Comparison of Each Teacher's Characteristic in Schools

Schools	E	W & H	C	H	E & S	B	A/F	K	Total
School 1	4.54	4.15	4.54	4.13	4.41	4.28	4.20	4.20	4.30
School 2	3.96	3.73	4.18	3.76	3.86	3.86	3.92	3.93	3.92
School 3	4.65	4.51	4.76	4.60	4.68	4.65	4.67	4.66	4.65
School 4	4.38	4.18	4.46	4.22	4.30	4.27	4.35	4.36	4.31
School 5	4.42	4.14	4.41	4.19	4.31	4.13	4.31	4.23	4.27
School 6	4.42	3.98	4.54	4.16	4.19	4.08	4.26	4.32	4.25
School 7	4.20	4.17	4.35	4.08	4.16	4.18	4.17	4.18	4.18
School 8	4.35	4.11	4.11	4.09	4.18	4.16	4.20	4.24	4.18

Note. E = Enthusiasm W & H = Warmth and Humor C = Credibility
 B = Businesslike E & S = Encourage and Support K = Knowledgeability
 A/F = Adaptability/ Flexibility H = Holding High Expectation for Success

According to the Table (1), the mean of credibility was the highest. The second highest was enthusiasm and the third one was knowledgeability. The fourth were encourage, support and adaptability/ flexibility, the fifth one was businesslike characteristic and the sixth was holding

high expectation for success. The last one, warmth and humor had the lowest mean. It was found that teachers’ credibility had the highest mean in the six schools, except School 5 and School 8.

Descriptive Statistics of Teachers’ Characteristics for Each Dimension

The mean comparison of Grade 11 students’ perceptions on teachers’ characteristics for each dimension was as follow:

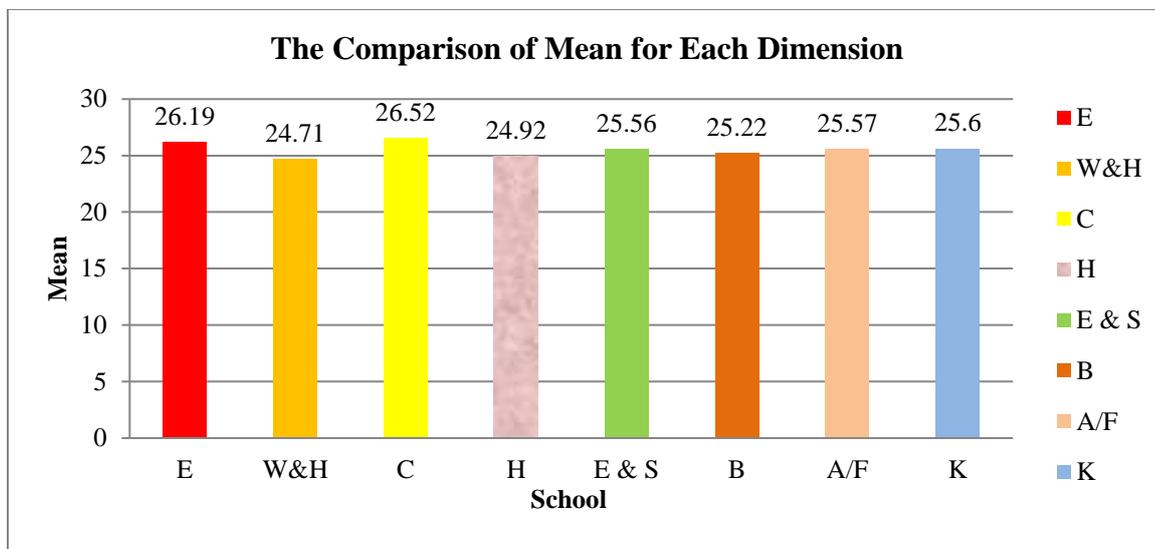


Figure 2. Mean Comparison of Teachers’ Characteristics on Each Dimension

According to the Figure (2), it can be seen that credibility had the highest mean score, and warmth and humor had the lowest mean score among eight dimensions. To investigate students’ perceptions on teacher characteristics in terms of gender, the independent sample *t*-test was calculated.

Table 2 The Result of *t*-test for Overall Teachers’ Characteristics in Terms of Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Teachers’ characteristics	Male	200	200.35	24.010	-3.534	398	.000***
	Female	200	208.41	21.543			

Note. ****p*<.001

The mean scores of perceptions of male and female students on teachers’ characteristics were presented in Table (2). There was significant difference between male and female students with respect to teachers’ characteristics (*t* = -3.534, *p*<.001).

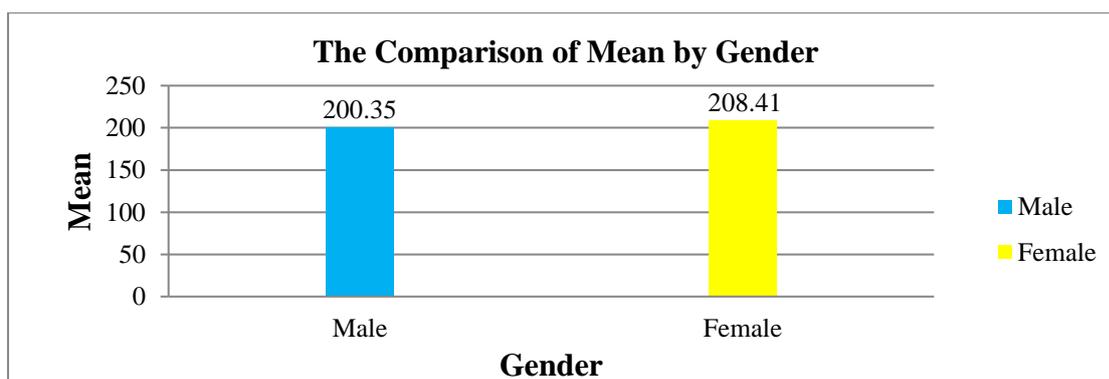


Figure 3. Comparison of Mean of Overall Teachers’ Characteristics by Gender

According to the Figure (3), it was found that the mean scores of female students were higher than those of male students. This meant that female students perceived teachers' characteristics more than male students do.

Analysis of *t*-test for Overall Teachers' Characteristics in terms of Gender

To investigate whether there were gender differences in terms of gender for each dimension, the independent samples *t*-test was calculated.

Table 3 The Result of *t*-test for Overall Teachers' Characteristics in terms of Gender for Each Dimension

Dimension	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Enthusiasm	Male	200	25.88	2.919	-2.205	.028*
	Female	200	26.51	2.793		
Warmth and Humor	Male	200	24.13	3.924	-3.081	.002**
	Female	200	25.30	3.652		
Credibility	Male	200	26.16	3.557	-2.325	.021*
	Female	200	26.89	2.657		
Holding High Expectation for Success	Male	200	24.16	3.941	-4.274	.000***
	Female	200	25.69	3.152		
Encourage and Support	Male	200	25.19	3.744	-2.131	.034*
	Female	200	25.93	3.125		
Businesslike	Male	200	24.68	3.872	-2.942	.003**
	Female	200	25.76	3.459		
Adaptability/Flexibility	Male	200	25.02	3.630	-3.197	.002**
	Female	200	26.12	3.242		
Knowledgeability	Male	200	24.99	3.631	-3.525	.000***
	Female	200	26.21	3.282		

Note. **p*<.05, ***p*<.01, ****p*<.001

It was found that the mean of female students were higher than those of male students for each dimension.

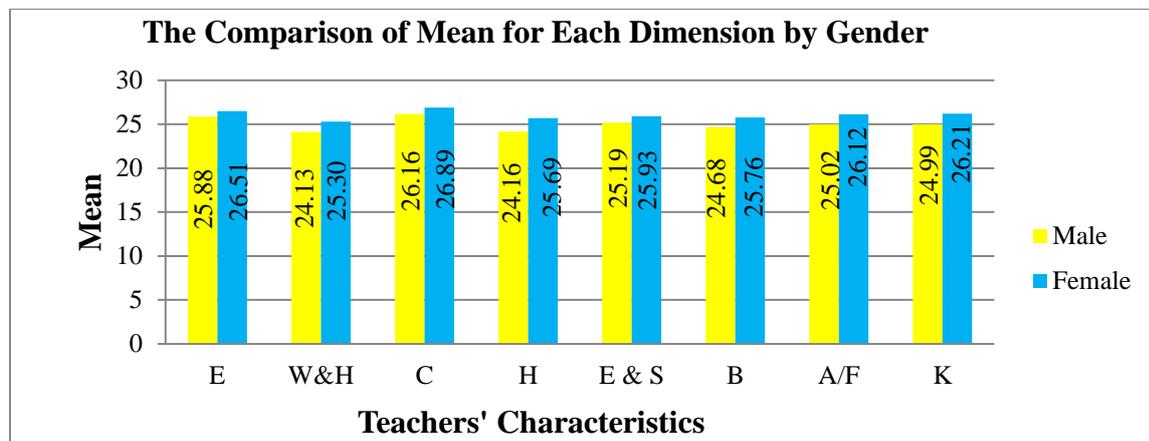


Figure 4. Comparison of Mean of Each Dimension of Teachers' Characteristics by Gender

According to the Figure (4), it can be seen that female students had higher perceptions toward teacher characteristics than male students had.

ANOVA Results for Teachers' Characteristics in Schools

In order to determine whether there is any significant difference in students' perceptions of teachers' characteristics among schools, a one-way (ANOVA) was used.

Table 4 ANOVA Results for the Teachers' Characteristics in Schools

Variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Teachers' Characteristics	Between Groups	32345.880	7	4620.833	9.995	.000***
	Within Groups	181225.920	392	462.311	-	-
	Total	213571.750	399	-	-	-

Note. *** $p < .001$

According to the table (4), it can be seen that there was significant difference among the schools concerning students' perceptions of teachers' characteristics ($F(7, 392) = 9.995, p < 0.01$).

Mean Comparison of Teachers' Characteristics by School Type

Then, the independent samples t -test was calculated to determine whether there was any significant difference in terms of school type among the students' perceptions on teachers' characteristics.

Table 5 The Results of t -test for Overall Teachers' Characteristics by School Type

Variable	School Type	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	df	p
Teachers' Characteristics	B.E.H.S	206.96	22.149	2.912	398	.004**
	B.E.H.S (Branch)	200.07	24.159			

Note. ** $p < .01$

According to the table (5), there was significant difference between high schools and high schools (branch) students' perceptions on teachers' characteristics ($t = 2.912, p < .01$).

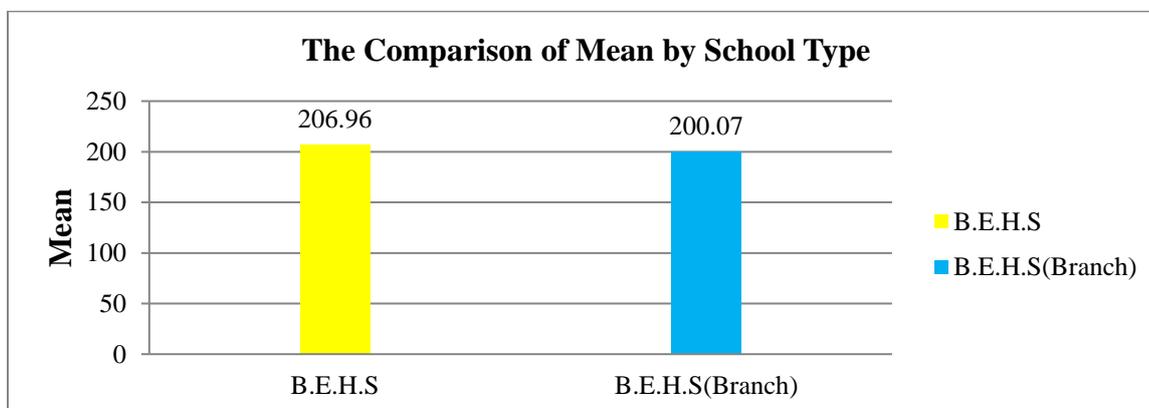


Figure 5. Comparison of Mean of Overall Teachers' Characteristics by School Type

According to the Figure (5), the mean score of perceptions of high school students was higher than that of high school (branch) students on teachers' characteristics.

Table 6 Results of *t*-test for Teachers’ Characteristics by School Type for Each Dimension

Dimension	School Type	Mean	Standard Deviation	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Enthusiasm	B.E.H.S	26.58	2.607	3.597	.000***
	B.E.H.S (Branch)	25.53	3.164		
Warmth & Humor	B.E.H.S	25.09	3.749	2.582	.010*
	B.E.H.S (Branch)	24.08	3.870		
Credibility	B.E.H.S	26.76	3.208	2.003	.046*
	B.E.H.S (Branch)	26.11	3.036		
Holding High Expectation for Success	B.E.H.S	25.27	3.647	2.492	.013*
	B.E.H.S (Branch)	24.34	3.578		
Encourage & Support	B.E.H.S	25.94	3.216	2.877	.004**
	B.E.H.S (Branch)	24.92	3.766		
Businesslike	B.E.H.S	25.63	3.472	2.932	.004**
	B.E.H.S (Branch)	24.52	3.983		
Adaptability / Flexibility	B.E.H.S	25.80	3.426	1.740	.083
	B.E.H.S (Branch)	25.18	3.547		
Knowledgeability	B.E.H.S	25.98	3.380	2.458	.014*
	B.E.H.S (Branch)	25.05	3.663		

Note. **p* < .05, ***p* < .01, *** *p* < .001

According to the table (6), there was statistically significant difference between high schools and high schools (branch) students’ perceptions for each dimension of teacher characteristics. The mean of high school students’ perceptions were higher than those of high school (branch) students’ perceptions in (7) dimensions of teachers’ characteristics, except adaptability/flexibility. The comparison of mean for each teacher's characteristic in terms of school type was presented in Figure (6).

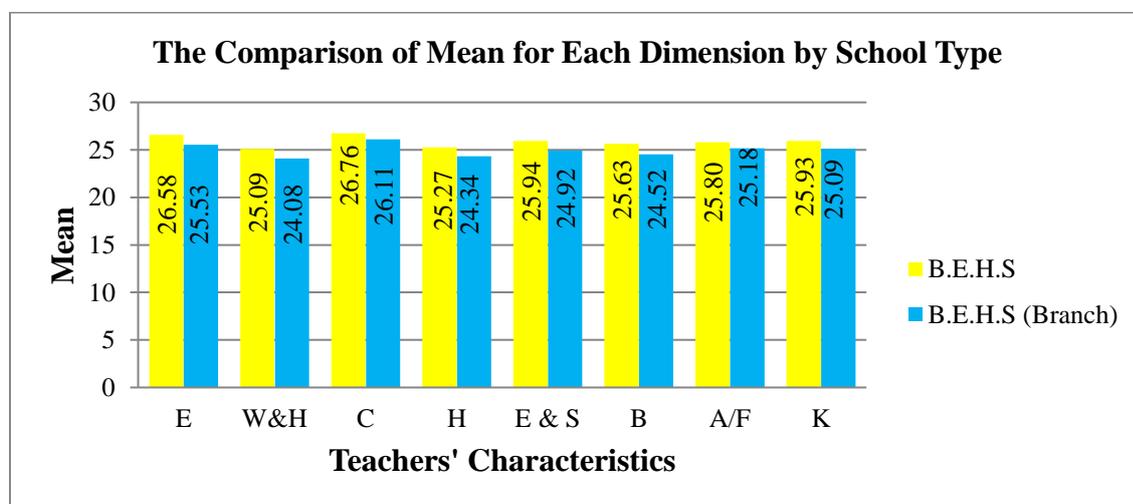


Figure 6. Comparison of Mean for Each Dimension of Teachers’ Characteristics by School Type

According to the Figure (6), it can be seen that the mean of high school students’ perception was higher than high school (branch) students’ perception on teachers’ characteristics.

Analysis of Students' Academic Achievement in Schools

To reveal the academic achievement in each of the school, the mean and standard deviations for students' academic achievement in each of the schools were presented in the following table.

Table 7 Means and Standard Deviations of Students' Academic Achievement in Five Basic Education High Schools and Three Basic Education High Schools (Branch)

Schools	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
B.E.H.S Sin Phyu Kyune	50	199.68	36.815	102	254
B.E.H.S (Branch) Thayet Chin	50	159.10	35.238	54	215
B.E.H.S Pyi Soe Kone	50	171.62	31.032	86	23.5
B.E.H.S (Branch) Kya Pin	50	157.84	33.120	81	222
B.E.H.S (Branch) Salin	50	203.40	20.359	116	246
B.E.H.S Salin	50	229.98	26.458	160	261
B.E.H.S Zee Phyu Pin	50	179.68	26.932	89	210
B.E.H.S Ta Nyoung	50	183.48	27.160	108	232

According to the table (7), the mean of the students' academic achievement of B.E.H.S Salin was the highest and that of B.E.H.S (Branch) Kya Pin was the lowest among five high schools and three high schools (branch). The comparison of mean for students' academic achievement can be seen clearly in Figure (7).

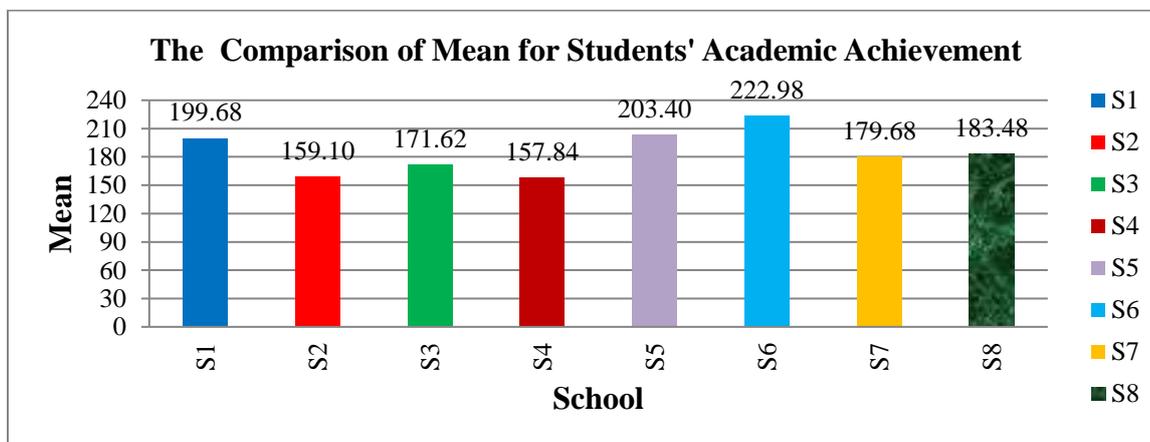


Figure 7. Comparison of Mean for Students' Academic Achievement in Schools

Analysis of the Relationship between Teachers' Characteristics and Students' Academic Achievement

To investigate the relationship between teachers' overall characteristics and students' academic achievement, Pearson product moment correlation was used.

Table 8 The Relationship between Teachers' Overall Characteristics and Students' Academic Achievement

Scale	Teachers' Overall Characteristics	Students' Academic Achievement
Teachers' Overall Characteristics	1	.447**
Students' Academic Achievement	.447**	1

** Correlation is significant at the (0.01) level (2-tailed).

According to the table (8), it was found that teachers' overall characteristics were significantly and positively correlated with students' academic achievement. Thus, it can be said that if teachers' characteristics are high, the academic achievement of their students will be high.

Discussion and Recommendations

The teachers play many roles in the learning process of the students. Effective teaching is an art that requires mastery in a wide variety of areas. The aim of this research was to study the impact of teachers' characteristics on the academic achievement of Grade 11 students. Based on the research findings, the following conclusion was drawn.

1. Most of the senior teachers in Salin Township possessed good teachers' characteristics. It was found that the teachers' characteristics of B.E.H.S Pyi Soe Kone had the highest mean scores and those of B.E.H.S (Branch) Thayat Chin had the lowest mean scores.
2. Among eight schools, teachers' credibility had the highest mean scores in six schools, except B.E.H.S (Branch) Salin and B.E.H.S Ta Nyoun.
3. Among eight dimensions, teachers' credibility had the highest mean scores while teachers' warmth and humor had the lowest mean scores.
4. There were significant differences among (8) schools in teachers' characteristics. It was found that the characteristics of teachers from B.E.H.S Pyi Soe Kone were significantly better than those of teachers from all other schools.
5. There were significant differences in the perception of Grade 11 students on teachers' characteristics in terms of gender. It was found that female students' perception was better than male students' perception on teachers' characteristics.
6. There were significant differences in the perceptions of Grade 11 students on teachers' characteristics except adaptability/flexibility in terms of school type. It was found that high school students' perception was higher than high school (branch) students' perception on teachers' characteristics.
7. It was found that the academic achievement of Grade 11 students from B.E.H.S Salin was found to be the highest mean and that of Grade 11 students from B.E.H.S (Branch) was the lowest mean among (8) schools.
8. There was a positively significant relationship between teachers' characteristics and Grade 11 students' academic achievement. It was found that if the teachers' characteristics are high, the academic achievement of their students will be high and if the teachers' characteristics are low, the academic achievement of their students will be low.

Based on the findings of this study, the following suggestions were discussed. Demonstrating enthusiasm for the course was highlighted as a positive characteristic. Research on enthusiasm of the teacher is strongly connected to student success (Bettencourt et al., 1983; Cabello & Terrell, 1994 cited in Thompson et al., 2007). To be enthusiastic in teaching, teachers should use broad, animated gestures and they should be expressive, and they should also use varied pitch to make the lesson more interesting.

The teacher should communicate personal warmth to students. A rather strong body of research evidence exists to support the hypothesis that teacher warmth is positively correlated to student achievement gains (Rosenshine, 1971 cited in Gabrys, 1978). According to the results of Wilson & Corbett (2001) cited in Bondy & Dorene (2008), teachers' warmth make the students complete the academic tasks necessary for successful futures. To show the warmth on students, the teacher should use day to day actions like a smile, a hand on the shoulder, or the use of a student's name. They should observe students closely to learn more about their interests, experiences, and talents. Students appreciate the sense of humor as a characteristic of effective teaching. It makes for better relationship between the teacher and the students (Delaney et al., 2010). Therefore, the teachers should inject stories, personal experiences, and some humor into their lectures. This not only makes students to think and feel them relax, but also feel happy with laughter.

According to Pogue & Ah Yun (2006) cited in Freeman (2011), the researchers found that credibility significantly influence student learning. Credibility is the ability to be believed. Teachers' credibility is examined in relation to the teachers' credentials, the message they send to their students, and teachers' behaviors. To get credibility from students, the teachers should be honest, equitable and open to their students.

Teachers' expectation levels also affect student learning. The study of Cotton (1989) provided that teachers' expectations can and do influence students' achievement and attitudes. To improve the ways teachers form expectations and communicate them, the teachers should value the ideas and opinions of their students. They should have expectations for all students.

The results indicate teachers' encouragement and support is important to students. Support positive relationships between teachers and students can contribute significantly, not only to students' social-emotional health and well-being, but also to their academic performance (Stipek, 2006). To give effective encourage and support to their students, the teachers should be optimistic about the students and can understand and forgive their misbehaviors. They should provide a variety of activities to help different kinds of learners and taught until the light bulb went on for every student.

Businesslike behavior has a strong research base for being correlated with student achievement. Six of the seven studies related to businesslike behavior reported by Rosenshine (1971) contained significant results relating teacher businesslike behavior and students' achievement. The specific descriptors used to define the variable of business-like behavior are: 1) seriousness, 2) deliberateness, 3) goal orientedness, 4) organization. To be businesslike, the teachers should place classroom materials systematically and create the teaching-learning process where all their students can take part.

Flexibility and adaptability are also strongly correlated with students' achievement. The teacher should have the ability to adapt the learning styles of students, provide different approaches to teaching. They should not have one viewpoint of something. There should also be flexibility regarding due dates for homework and the timing and administration of tests (Delaney et al., 2010).

Students also indicated clearly that they believed effective teachers have strong content knowledge, knowledge about students and expertise on how to teach what they know. The teachers should have the ability to communicate freely about their subject area, possess a strong background in the area; inspire confidence by serving as a student resource, elicit student interest, and the ability to respond students' problems. Those who are interested in their students' learning have a bigger impact on student learning (Delaney et al., 2010). Further studies should be carried out in other states and regions with other factors influencing on students' academic achievement. Besides, longitudinal study should be undertaken to confirm and validate the findings of the study.

As regard with students' perception of teachers' characteristics in terms of gender, the results indicate that female students had higher perception toward teachers' characteristics than male students. The findings obtained in this study confirmed the findings of previous research conducted by Smith et al., (1994 cited in Acikgoz, 2005).

Conclusion

It was found that there was a positively significant relationship between teachers' characteristics and students' academic achievement. It has been proved that teachers' characteristics have an important influence on students' academic achievement. This is consistent to the study of Kimani et al., (2013). Academic achievement is important because it prepares students for future careers. Teachers play a crucial role for boosting students' academic achievement. If the teacher is ineffective, students under the teacher's tutelage will achieve inadequate progress academically. Teacher characteristic is one of the factors that can affect on academic achievement. The extent to which students can get a high level of academic achievement is directly related to the extent to which the teachers bring their characteristics to improve the students' educational attainment. Therefore, based on the study, it was found that the teachers should emphasize strong enthusiasm, apparent credibility, warm, humorous, and supportive relationships, effective adaptability/ flexibility, high and clear expectations, consistent businesslike conduct and deep knowledge of subject, pedagogy, and students to create high-quality academic environments with positive benefits for students.

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