Personality Characteristics of an Ideal Teacher from the Perspectives of Higher Secondary School and College Students

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Resilience is a skill that is helpful for individuals to get through stressful situations. It is influenced by various external and internal factors. Past research has suggested that individuals' attachment styles influence Resilience. The current study examined the Attachment to Mother, Father and Peer and their relationship to Resilience. The IPPA scale - Revised version (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987) and the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (Connor & Davidson, 2003) were administered to 158 participants (Male = 49, Female = 108, Preferred not to disclose = 1) from colleges in Mumbai between the age range of 17-22 years (Mean age = 19.42). Spearman's rho correlation analysis revealed a positive, moderate, and statistically significant correlation between Mother Attachment and Resilience (rs(156)= 0.39, p<0.01). The relationship of Father Attachment and Peer Attachment with Resilience was found to be positive, low and statistically significant (rs(156)= 0.22, p<0.01; rs(156)= 0.30, p<0.01 respectively). This study yields a background for future research wherein, Attachments with Parents and Peers can be explored as a predictor of Resilience among college students.

Keywords: Ideal teacher, Personality, School students, College students.

In the traditional teaching-learning method, the emphasis was given to the transmission of factual knowledge and information, and the teacher was the main source of information (Azer, 2005). The outcomes of such a teaching-learning process would only give unfavourable results, and all blame would perhaps go to the students. Empirical research suggests that the student-centred or learner-centred learning approach significantly positively affects academic achievement rather than traditional teacher-centred or instructor-centred learning (Cornelius-White, 2007; Wilson et al., 2019). Garrett (2008) suggests that in a student-centred approach, the instructional goal is based on constructivist principles of learning in which the idea is to create a kind of environment for learning so that the student and the teacher co-construct the knowledge instead of the traditional direct receiving from the teacher by the students. Many pieces of research which are done recently have put the importance of student-centred education. Canon and Newble (2000) suggest that the responsibility and activation of students' constitution are the main progress in student-centred education as opposed to teacher-centred education.

Similarly, Hannafin and Land (1997) criticized teacher-centred education for lack of critical thinking skills and practical problem-solving skills. After reviewing the related literature on the advantages of student-centred teaching over teacher-centred teaching, educationists explored the knowledge of students' needs and requirements. The question is whether it is not significant to find out what the student wanted. What should be the personality of an ideal teacher from students' way of thinking? It is widely believed that investigating students' perspectives on an ideal teacher would help enhance the motivation level of the students in academic matters.

Personality

Individuals' feelings, thoughts, and behaviours across varying occasions are generally influenced by the specific psychological qualities held by the individuals, and it may be called personality (Roberts and DelVecchio 2000; Roberts and Jackson 2008). Allport's (1938)

believed that an individual's personality might be described as "the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustments to his environment". However, there are multiple perspectives on personality. It is probably the Big Five model that could describe many individual differences (Costa & McCrae, 1985) and is considered the dominant personality framework by many (John et al. 2008). This model talks about five different personality dimensions-extraversion (active and sociable), agreeableness (trusting and soft-hearted), conscientiousness (reliable and well organized), emotional stability (relaxed and calm), and openness (creative and curious) (Costa and McCrae, 1992). Hence, it is relevant to study the day-to-day behaviour and performances of the individual in its broad range of domains (Costa and McCrae, 1985) and are considered assessable through personality inventories (Goldberg et al., 2006). Existing literature indicates that the Big Five domains may be measured by Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI; Gosling et al. 2003), the Mini-Markers (Saucier 1994), and the Big Five Inventory (BFI; John et al. 1991), 60-item NEO Five Factory Inventory (NEO-FFI; Costa and McCrae 1992), 240-item Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R; Costa and McCrae 1992), and 12-item NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI; Costa and McCrae 1985).

In educational psychology, the Big Five dimensions are positively related to academic achievement (O'Connor & Paunonen 2007). It has been useful in predicting academic motivation (Komarraju et al., 2009), academic dishonesty (Giluk & Postlethwaite 2015), and career decision-making (Martincin & Stead, 2015). Numerous educational researches have also explored that the personality traits have contributed to the explanation of individual differences in academic achievement (e.g., Noftle & Robins, 2007; Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2008; Furnham & Monsen, 2009; De Feyter et al., 2012). Moreover, studies have been primarily focused on understanding students' personalities (Kim, Jorg, & Klassen 2019); on the other hand, there have been limited studies on teachers' personalities, especially using

established personality theories.

Teacher's Personality

A teacher is a person with whom the students would spend most of their time within the school. Students' school time is defined by what they do with their teachers. So, the teacher's behaviour and how he/she explains the subject matter and interacts with the students significantly impact students' academic performances (Karima, 2019). Furthermore, it suggests that teachers with good personalities and good behaviour towards their students are the best teachers. In the educational disciplines, the significance of teacher personality has long been an area of research interest (Tyler, 1960; Barr, 1961). However, there is a paucity of research in India in this area. It could be speculated that teachers' personalities may also impact the students' academic achievement.

Ideal teacher

The concept of the ideal teacher may be considered in two different ways. One is related to the teaching method used by the teachers, and the other may be related to the teachers' personality traits. When we talk about the teaching method, we are mainly focused o the personality patterns of the teacher in the classroom interaction. The other aspect may be related to the personality patterns of the teacher outside the classroom in the interaction with the students.

Teachers' Personality and Students' Performance

It is believed that the teachers who are appreciated, liked, admired, and envious by the students may attract more students to the classroom regularly, which is an important step for teaching-learning. It is the teacher who can motivate the students to attend classes, read relevant books, interact with other meritorious classmates, debate on important topics within and outside the syllabus, and benefit from the various facilities provided by the institution, such as a library. Dedicated teachers can point out students' strengths and weaknesses, provide relevant counselling to improve academically poor students and advise academically bright students to use their knowledge in the right

way for a better future. Therefore, teachers' personality is expected to make a big difference in the academic performance of the students.

Significance of the study

The study would immensely add new knowledge to teacher education and educational psychology in the Indian context. It would help explore the expectations and desires of the students about their teachers whom they could consider ideal teachers. It would help in the recruitment of good quality teachers. Such ideal teachers, from the students' perspectives, would help in nation-building as teachers are the nation-builders by providing sound, responsible and respectful citizens of the country.

Hypotheses

H1: The higher secondary school students would provide higher ratings to ideal teachers than themselves on extraversion, agreeableness, open-mindedness, and conscientiousness but lower negative emotionality.

H2: The college students would provide higher ratings to ideal teachers than themselves on extraversion, agreeableness, open-mindedness, and conscientiousness but lower negative emotionality.

Study 1

Method

Participants

One hundred and seventy-five students (female = 100) studying in Darjeeling (India) participated in this study, and their ages ranged from 15 to 20 years. Out of these, one hundred and forty-one students were in the 11th standard, and thirty-two students were in the 12th standard. One hundred students identified themselves as rural residents and another sixty-six as urban residents. The participants were spread across religious communities, including Hindus (54.9%), Buddhists (35.4%), Christians (4.6%), Muslims (2.3%), and 2.9% of participants did not identify religious affiliation. 97.1% of participants reported Nepali as their mother tongue and 2.3% as Hindi. There was one person (.6%) whose mother tongue was Bhojpuri. The questionnaire was administered in English, and the reported mean value of English fluency was 4.09 (SD = 1.22) on a 7-point scale with one as a minimum and seven as maximum.

Measure

Personality was measured by the Big Five Inventory-2 (Soto & John, 2017). It consisted of sixty items in the form of short and descriptive phrases. Each domain consisted of 12 items and six reverse items, and each subscale consisted of 4 items. Each respondent had to respond to the inventory as well as ideal teacher personality as per their opinion. The inventory was a 5-point scale ranging from disagree strongly (1) to agree strongly (5). The same inventory was used to measure the ideal teacher's personality as per the student's perception. Each domain included three subscales as given below:

Procedure

The data were collected in different schools located in Darjeeling, India. Permission was taken from the concerned school Principal and class teachers, and the questionnaire was

Table 1

Domains (Alpha)	Subscales(Alpha)		
Negative Emotionality (.90)	Anxiety (.78)	Depression (.84)	Emotional Volatility (.84)
Extraversion (.88)	Sociability (.85)	Assertiveness (.78)	Energy level (.76)
Open-mindedness (.84)	Intellectual Curiosity (.67)	Aesthetic Sensitivity (.76)	Creative Imagination (.75)
Agreeableness (.83)	Compassion (.66)	Respectfulness (.71)	Trust (.70)
Conscientiousness (.88)	Organization (.85)	Productiveness (.78)	Responsibility (.74)

administered in a small group of 15-20 students. The selected schools were English medium schools, and students could understand English, so instructions and procedures were explained in English. However, they were allowed to ask if they had any doubt about understanding the questions and instructed to fill the questionnaire with a pencil for correction in case of any unintended mistake. After an explanation about the test and instructions on how to respond to the questionnaire, they were given enough time to fill it out.

Results and Discussion

The data were subjected to descriptive statistics (Mean and Standard deviations) and analysis of variance in order to examine if the scores of the personality traits responded by the students about themselves were different from the scores of personality traits perceived by the students about their ideal teachers. The results are presented in Table 2.

The results in Table 2 showed that the secondary school students expected their ideal teachers to be significantly more in extraversion than the student themselves. It may be speculated that the school students wanted their teachers to be more talkative so that they were more approachable by the students. Perhaps school students thought that introverted teachers were difficult to approach for discussing their subject matters. Secondary school students are at the threshold of their career in the Indian education system because after the 12th standard; they have to decide on their main professional course. Some may choose medical

Table 2: Means, Standard Deviations and F-values on personality traits of secondary school students and their perception of ideal teacher's personality.

Personality Domains and subscales	Mean		SD		F-values
	Ideal teacher	Self	Ideal teacher	Self	
Extraversion	41.215	38.699	5.437	5.783	17.323**
-Sociability	13.484	13.046	3.075	3.228	1.594ns
-Assertiveness	12.824	12.298	3.227	2.760	2.093ns
-Energy Level	14.896	13.368	2.904	3.175	25.109**
-Agreeableness	43.368	40.885	5.882	5.086	17.613**
-Compassion	14.266	13.403	2.373	2.286	9.621**
-Respectfulness	14.836	13.859	2.848	2.610	11.451**
-Trust	14.278	13.584	2.676	2.704	4.984*
Conscientiousness	44.057	39.057	6.903	6.195	50.436**
-Organization	16	14.514	3.169	3.078	21.665**
-Productiveness	14.642	12.894	3.275	2.944	29.801**
-Responsibility	13.4	11.766	2.894	2.469	31.297**
Negative Emotionality	32.25	34.953	5.710	5.499	20.000**
-Anxiety	11.854	12.356	2.639	2.704	2.707ns
-Depression	10.012	11.052	2.793	2.770	12.435**
-Emotional Volatility	9.987	11.543	2.778	2.930	26.238**
Open-Mindedness	40.827	40.005	5.265	5.486	1.994ns
-Intellectual Curiosity	13.187	13.345	2.609	2.590	1.032ns
-Aesthetic Sensitivity	14.206	13.479	2.526	2.939	5.815*
-Creative Imagination	13.460	13.111	2.865	2.690	1.379ns

Note: n for ideal teacher personality = 168-173; n for self-personality = 172-174; ** indicates .01 level of significance; * indicates .05 level of significance; ns = non-significance

or engineering, while others may take an interest in general line studies. So, the school students might be interested in taking guidance from the school teacher on career issues, and it would be perhaps easier if the teacher is extraverted.

School students also wanted their ideal teachers to be significantly higher on agreeableness than the student community. Teachers with higher agreeableness would be more flexible, ready to cooperate with the students and less stubborn in their interaction with them. Perhaps the students believed such qualities would facilitate student-teacher interaction, which is vital for effective teaching-learning. It may be speculated that teachers who are low on agreeableness may only expect the students to depend on what is being taught in the class as per the prescribed textbook and the class notes rather than allowing the students to use multiple books and explore multiple views in classroom discussion and examination answer. This is a quality which may not be suitable for most students. The student would expect a teacher to be compassionate toward the students in case of mistakes rather than punishment. Students at secondary school are at the stage of late adolescents, so the students would expect the teachers to show some kind of trust and respect (aspects of agreeableness) as an individual to the students because such qualities would help the students to resolve identity crises (Erickson, 1977) of the late adolescence.

Likewise, the students provided significantly higher scores on conscientiousness for their ideal teachers than themselves. One may assume that every student and teacher must work hard to increase the effective teaching-learning process. However, in this study, the students thought that their ideal teachers should work harder than the students. Perhaps the students thought that highly hard-working teachers would come fully prepared for the classroom lecture and discussion in terms of organizing the information to be transferred to the students by taking full responsibility for the authenticity of the information transferred to the students. Students might be interested to see teachers who come to the classroom after consulting several books on the topics to

be taught in the classroom. Teachers who are well updated with the new developments in the subject of their teaching may be preferred by their students. On the other hand, teachers with a lower score on conscientiousness may provide limited information in the classroom, and their lectures and discussion may be very dull. Students would not like teachers who did not update their notes and slides for the last many years despite many new developments in the subjects, especially science and technology. All these reasons may attribute to the higher scores the students gave to their ideal teachers compared to their scores on conscientiousness.

Unlike the other personality dimensions, the students wanted their ideal teachers to be significantly lower in negative emotionality than the students. One may speculate that students would not like to see teachers who get angry about minor matters and unintended mistakes committed by the students. Instead, students would like to see the ideal teacher be emotionally more stable in dealing with the students. On the other hand, it may also be a matter of great concern for the classroom environment if the teacher often feels sadness whenever students cannot solve subject-matter-related problems in the classroom. Such teachers may exaggerate the issue in such a way that the future of the students is dark because some students are not paying attention to the classroom discussion and are unable to solve subject-related problems. The problem is that the transfer of emotion from one individual to another is faster when it is from a higher authority (teacher) to a lower authority (students). Instead, students would like teachers who are more optimistic and cheerful in the classroom so that students may feel more energetic in the teaching-learning process. Thus, the students would be more motivated to study the subject matter. They are leaders in the classroom. The teacher is expected to bring positive energy to the minds of the students and the classroom. Hence, it is believed that students prefer their ideal teachers to be significantly lower on negative emotionality than the student themselves.

There was no significant difference in the openness dimension of personality between the students and the ideal teachers as per the

opinion of the students. However, the students thought their ideal teachers were expected to be significantly higher on aesthetic sensitivity.
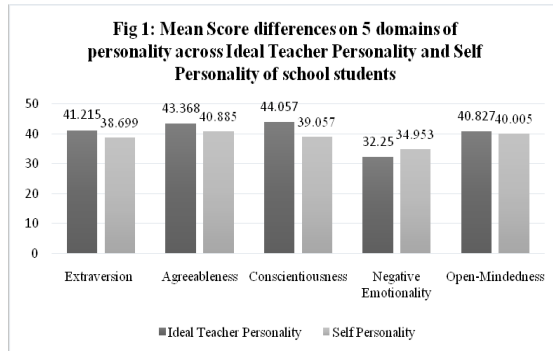

Figure 1 shows comparative scores of the five dimensions in bar graphs.

Study 2

The second study was conducted to examine if the ideal teacher's personality traits as perceived by the secondary school students are the same or different from the perception of the college students.

Method

Participants

One hundred and fifty college students (male = 66) in Sikkim who hailed from Sikkim, West Bengal, Arunachal, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, and Delhi participated in this study, and their age ranged 18 to 26 years. Sixty-one students identified themselves as rural residents and another eighty-four as urban residents. The participants were spread across religious

Table 3: Means, Standard Deviations and F-values on personality traits of college students and their perception of ideal teacher personality

Domains and subscales	Mean		SD		F-values
	Ideal teacher	Self	Ideal teacher	Self	
Extraversion	40.349	37.520	5.13	5.26	21.478**
-Sociability	13.513	12.383	2.61	2.94	12.170**
-Assertiveness	12.718	11.761	2.22	2.18	13.961**
-Energy level	14.087	13.315	2.66	2.78	5.998*
Agreeableness	43.02	41.482	6.27	6.97	3.967*
-Compassion	13.666	13.258	2.79	2.41	1.816ns
-Respectfulness	15.28	14.231	2.50	2.81	11.567**
-Trust	14.073	13.966	2.75	4.39	.064ns
Conscientiousness	43.195	40.387	6.66	9.21	9.012**
-Organization	15.617	14.120	2.84	2.98	19.640**
-Productiveness	14.44	12.979	2.95	2.73	19.739**
-Responsibility	13.107	13.312	2.62	7.48	.100ns
Negative Emotionality	32.493	35.248	5.82	5.02	18.595**
-Anxiety	11.714	12.473	2.50	2.33	7.322**
-Depression	10.496	11.157	2.54	2.41	5.259**
-Emotional Volatility	10.128	11.581	2.97	2.68	19.516**
Open-Mindedness	40.6	39.993	5.61	5.39	.885ns
-Intellectual Curiosity	13.093	13.209	2.45	2.66	.154ns
-Aesthetic Sensitivity	13.885	13.724	2.46	2.66	.291ns
-Creative Imagination	13.612	13.013	2.53	2.47	4.210*

Note: n for ideal teacher personality =144-150; n for self-personality =144-150; ** indicates .01 level of significance; * indicates .05 level of significance; ns = non-significance

communities, including Hindus (50%), Buddhists (30%), Christians (12%), and Muslims (4.7%). 70.7% of participants reported Nepali as the mother tongue,7.3% and 6.7% of participants were Hindi and Lepcha speaking people, respectively; the remaining were Bengali, Bhutia, Sherpa, Tibetan, Assamese, and Khasi. Level of English fluency with one as not at all and seven as completely fluent was included, and the reported Mean value was 4.84 (SD = 1.34).

Measure

Like in Study 1, personality was measured by Big Five Inventory-2 (Soto & John, 2017).

Procedure

The data were collected in different colleges located in Sikkim, India. Permission was taken from the concerned college Principal and class teachers, and the questionnaire was administered to a small group of 20-25 students. The instructions and procedures were explained in English because the selected colleges were English medium colleges, and students could understand English.

Results and Discussion

From Table 3, we understand that according to college students, the ideal teachers should score significantly higher than the students on extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness but lower on negative emotionality. There was no significant difference between the college students and their ideal teachers as per the students' opinion on open-mindedness. We may speculate the results in the following way.

The college students seem to think that the ideal teachers should be more sociable, assertive, and of higher energy level in their interaction with the students in the classroom as well as the campus. Like in the case of secondary school students, the college students may also be interested to see their ideal teacher guiding them in exploring various career options after graduation (BA/BSc) as many students in the College tend to be confused about their future course of actions. Generally, in India, the trend is that most of the meritorious students go for professional course after completing 12th standard and the remaining sections of

students who may comprise of few meritorious students, average students and below average students admit in the colleges for courses like BA, BSc, and BCom. Many such students would be probably happy if their ideal teachers help them in finding recourses for careers in different streams like union public service commission, state public service commission, defense service, banking, or exploring the sea of opportunities in higher education in the country or abroad. All such expectation of the students from the teachers may require teachers to be more in extraversion in personality traits. Thus, the college students might be expecting their ideal teachers to score high on extraversion.

The ideal teachers were expected by the college students to be more in agreeableness as compared to the college students in terms of respectfulness. It might be because of the reason that the college students are now young adults and they would be happier if they are treated as respectful individual, especially in co-education colleges. They may think that being treated as kids in terms of the teacher-student interaction by the teachers in front of the opposite gender may make them feel insulted. Moreover, the data were collected in co-education colleges in Sikkim where love marriage is very common and many students have either boyfriend or girlfriend.

The college students believe that the ideal teachers should be more in conscientiousness in terms of organization and productiveness. We think that many college students would bunk the classes if the teachers do not come with well-organize information and the information is not value-addition in their learning. Merely reading the text or showing the slides and asking the students to mug up may make the students bored in the class. Therefore, in our opinion the students would like their ideal teacher to provide a wide range of information in the classroom, and such expectations would be probably fulfilled by the teachers who are greater in organization and productiveness components of conscientiousness.

Creative imagination was expected to be higher among the ideal teachers than the students as per the perspectives of the college students. This personality trait could help the

teachers in exploring different teaching methods rather than following the same old-fashioned one. The students in the present generation have access to multiple learning resources from institutional digital library (e-books, e-journals), Google for general and academic resources, and YouTube for academic lectures. Hence, we believe that the college students of the current generation would expect their ideal teachers to be very creative in their teaching methods for better learning.
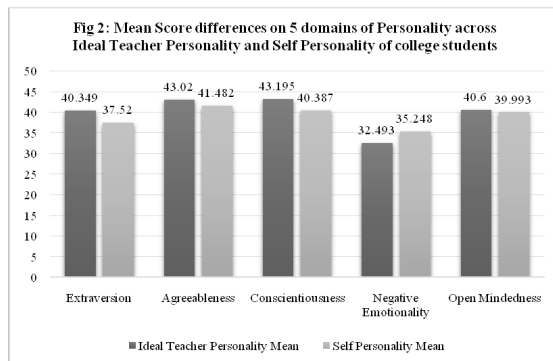

Fig 2: Mean Score differences on 5 domains of Personality across Ideal Teacher Personality and Self Personality of college students

Figure 2 indicates comparative scores of the five dimensions in bar graphs.

General Discussion

The purpose of the study was to investigate the personality traits of ideal teachers as per the opinion of the students. For this the data were collected from two sets of students, that is, secondary school students in 11th and 12th standards and college students. In both the groups the data on ideal teachers' personality was provided by the students and the scores were compared with the scores of the personality of the students themselves. The two groups of students responded to the revised Big Five Inventory for the measurement of five personality dimensions that were further divided into three facets per dimension, making it fifteen personality traits. Overall, the two groups of students indicated similar trends: they wanted to see their ideal teachers be more in extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, but less on negative emotionality and did not see the need for any difference in open-mindedness. However, some differences were observed at the facet level of the different dimensions. Therefore, it is understood that the hypothesis related to

extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and negative emotionality in both the groups of higher secondary school and college students were accepted. However, in both the groups the hypothesis related to open-mindedness was partially accepted.

In extraversion, college students scored significantly higher in all the three facets (sociability, assertiveness and energy level) than their counterparts, ideal teachers but the secondary school students yielded greater only on the energy level.

In agreeableness, secondary school students believed their ideal teachers should score significantly higher in all three facets (compassion, respectfulness, and trust). However, it was slightly different from the opinion of the college students. The college students expressed their desire that their ideal teachers should be more only in respectfulness and did not see any requirement for different personality traits in compassion and trust.

In conscientiousness, the secondary school students firmly believed that their ideal teachers should be higher in all the three facets, organization, productiveness and responsibility. However, the college students expressed a slightly different view because the more score by the ideal teacher was on two facets, organization and productiveness, and did not express the need for any difference in responsibility.

In negative emotionality, the college students believed that their ideal teachers should score lower than the students on all the three facets (anxiety, depression and emotional volatility but this was not the case among the secondary school students because such difference was observed only on two facets, that is, depression and emotional volatility.

In open-mindedness, there were differences in the opinions of ideal teacher personality because the secondary school students provided significantly higher ratings than the students on aesthetic sensitivity and did not see the need for any difference in intellectual curiosity and creative imagination. However, the college students wanted their ideal teachers to be significantly more in creative imagination and wanted both the students and ideal teachers

to be equal in both intellectual curiosity and aesthetic sensitivity.

Implications

The present findings suggest that the recruitment of the higher secondary and college teachers should be supplemented by the presence of higher aspects of extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness but lower neuroticism in the teachers if we consider the perspective of the students. The study also points toward the importance of training the existing teachers to increase the desirable personality traits and decrease the undesirable ones. The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) emphasizes the students' feedback of the teachers in ranking the higher institutions in India, so policymakers at different levels may utilize the benefits of the present investigation.

Limitations and Conclusion

The current findings are based on the data collected in two areas of Eastern Himalayas (Darjeeling and Sikkim) only, so it is desirable to investigate in future if the student's perspectives of ideal teachers are the same in other parts of India. One may also include more personality traits which are not covered under Big Five Personality-2. For example, sattvic, rajasic, and tamasic gunas of triguna may be used. Alternatively, the open-ended questionnaire may also be used to explore the ideal teacher personality so that the study may not be limited to the standard personality measures only. However, we are of the opinion that the present findings provide initial evidence for the understanding personality of ideals teachers from the perspective of students who are at the 11th and 12th standard and college students.

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