

Competence, Personality, Attitude, And Soft Infrastructure: A Literature Review On Teachers' Effectiveness In Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

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Abstract: Teacher effectiveness is a cornerstone of educational quality and student achievement. In Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where education reform is a central pillar of Vision 2030, understanding the interplay of teacher attributes and institutional supports is essential. This systematic literature review synthesizes empirical and theoretical studies on competence, personality, and attitude as determinants of teacher effectiveness, and evaluates the moderating role of soft infrastructure. Findings show that competence, conscientiousness and emotional stability as personality traits, and positive professional attitudes strongly predict instructional quality, classroom management, and student engagement. Soft infrastructure—comprising professional development, administrative support, and technology—emerges as a critical enabling factor, though empirical research on its moderating role remains limited. The review identifies research gaps and proposes future directions for evidence-based policies to enhance teacher development in alignment with Vision 2030.

Keywords: teacher effectiveness, competence, personality, attitude, soft infrastructure, Saudi Arabia, Vision 2030

I. INTRODUCTION

Teacher effectiveness is widely recognized as one of the most critical school-based factors influencing student achievement (Stronge, 2018). In Saudi Arabia, teacher quality is central to the Vision 2030 Human Capital Development Program, which emphasizes teacher professionalization, innovative pedagogy, and enhanced educational outcomes (Knight Frank, 2021; OECD, 2023). Three key teacher attributes consistently emerge in research: competence, personality, and attitude (Burić et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2019; Omar et al., 2020). Competence—comprising subject knowledge and pedagogical skill—forms the technical foundation of effective teaching (Shulman, 1986). Personality traits, especially those described in the Big Five model, influence classroom engagement, resilience, and relationships (McCrae & Costa, 1991; Klassen et al., 2013). Attitude, defined as teachers' evaluative disposition toward their profession, shapes motivation, instructional enthusiasm, and persistence (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Beyond individual

qualities, soft infrastructure, professional development, administrative support, and access to teaching resources—serves as an enabling environment that enhances the application of these attributes (Johnson et al., 2012; Desimone, 2009). This review consolidates empirical and theoretical literature on these determinants of teacher effectiveness and assesses the potential moderating role of soft infrastructure.

II. HISTORICAL AND CONTEXTUAL OVERVIEW

The education system in Saudi Arabia has evolved substantially over the past decades, transitioning from a primarily religious curriculum to a modern system integrating global standards while preserving Islamic values (OECD, 2023). Jeddah, as a key economic and cultural hub, reflects the broader reforms underway in the Kingdom. Since the launch of Vision 2030, education has been prioritized as a driver of human capital development. The Ministry of Education has invested heavily in teacher training, professional standards,

and resource provision (Knight Frank, 2021). However, despite these reforms, international assessments reveal that student performance still lags behind global benchmarks (OECD, 2023). Addressing this requires attention to both intrinsic teacher attributes and systemic supports.

III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) illustrates how competence, personality, and attitude influence teacher effectiveness, with soft infrastructure moderating these relationships. The framework aligns with Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) and Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory (1979), highlighting interactions between individual attributes and environmental conditions.

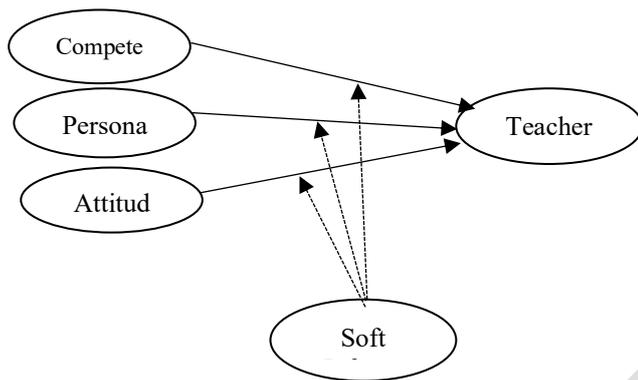


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

IV. METHODOLOGY

This systematic literature review was conducted by identifying and synthesizing empirical and theoretical studies on teacher effectiveness, focusing on competence, personality, attitude, and soft infrastructure. Peer-reviewed articles, meta-analyses, and policy reports were prioritized. Thematic analysis was applied to organize literature into four constructs, identifying key findings and research gaps.

V. THEMATIC DISCUSSION OF LITERATURE

COMPETENCE AND TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

Teacher competence is a multidimensional construct encompassing subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, and classroom management abilities (Shulman, 1986). Empirical evidence consistently underscores competence as a critical driver of student achievement. Baumert et al. (2010) demonstrated that teachers with strong pedagogical content knowledge facilitate more cognitively demanding classroom interactions, leading to deeper student learning. Similarly, Hattie (2009) highlighted competence as a high-impact factor influencing student achievement in his synthesis of meta-analyses. In the context of Saudi Arabia, competence is central

to Vision 2030 reforms, which emphasize strengthening teacher qualifications and continuous professional development (OECD, 2023). Competent teachers not only deliver effective instruction but also adapt strategies to meet the diverse needs of learners, thus contributing to inclusive and equitable education.

PERSONALITY TRAITS AND TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

Teacher personality significantly influences classroom climate, student engagement, and instructional effectiveness. The Big Five personality traits conscientiousness, emotional stability, openness, agreeableness, and extraversion have been linked to teacher performance (McCrae & Costa, 1991; Kim et al., 2019). Conscientiousness fosters planning, organization, and consistent classroom management, which are essential for sustaining learning environments (Klassen & Tze, 2014). Emotional stability mitigates stress and prevents burnout, while openness encourages creative and innovative teaching approaches (Shakeel et al., 2022). Research shows that personality interacts with environmental factors, such as administrative support and access to resources, underscoring the need to consider both intrinsic and extrinsic determinants of teacher effectiveness.

ATTITUDE AND TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

Attitude reflects a teacher’s evaluative disposition toward teaching and students, influencing motivation, commitment, and instructional practices (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Positive professional attitudes correlate with greater instructional enthusiasm, willingness to adopt innovative practices, and resilience in the face of challenges (Kunter et al., 2013; Jimenez, 2020). In Saudi Arabia, where teacher motivation is a focal point of Vision 2030, fostering positive attitudes is essential to improving both teacher satisfaction and student outcomes. Professional development initiatives that nurture supportive school climates and recognize teacher contributions can reinforce these attitudes.

SOFT INFRASTRUCTURE AS A MODERATING FACTOR

Soft infrastructure, comprising professional development, supportive policies, administrative backing, and access to teaching resources, plays a pivotal role in enabling teachers to apply their competence, personality traits, and attitudes effectively (Johnson et al., 2012; Desimone, 2009). While these intrinsic attributes are fundamental, the presence of strong institutional support amplifies their impact. For instance, competent teachers in resource-rich environments can integrate innovative pedagogies more effectively, and teachers with high openness can leverage technology-enhanced learning platforms. However, empirical evidence on the moderating role of soft infrastructure remains limited, particularly in Saudi Arabia, indicating a critical avenue for future research. Table 1 presents the summary of empirical research on teacher effectiveness.

Study	Focus	Key Findings
Baumert et al. (2010)	Competence & Instructional Quality	Teacher competence (subject knowledge, pedagogical skill) strongly predicts student achievement through enhanced instructional processes (adjustment to learners, classroom control). Conscientiousness, emotional stability, and extraversion significantly linked to higher teaching evaluations; all Big Five traits (except agreeableness) negatively associated with burnout
Kim, Jørg, & Klassen (2019)	Big Five Personality & Effectiveness/Burnout	Teacher self-efficacy and personality traits (especially conscientiousness and extraversion) predict instructional quality and reduce burnout
Klassen & Tze (2014)	Personality, Self-Efficacy & Teaching Outcomes	Teacher characteristics and competencies account for approximately 9.2% variance in student academic performance.
López-Martín et al. (2023)	Teacher Traits & Student Performance Meta-analysis	Teachers significantly influence student attitudes—self-efficacy in math, classroom behavior, and happiness—with effect sizes comparable to academic outcomes.
Blazar (2016)	Teacher Effects on Student Non-Academic Outcomes	In-service training (blended learning) improved teacher attitudes and self-efficacy toward inclusive mathematics instruction.
Nührenbörger et al. (2025)	Attitude & Self-Efficacy in Inclusive Instruction	Teacher attitude toward student-centered learning predicts higher implementation fidelity and engagement in active learning approaches.
Qafa, Sina & Prendi (2024)	Attitude & Student-Centered Teaching Effectiveness	Positive attitudes and collective efficacy in behavior management
Gülsün et al. (2023)	Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education & Efficacy	

Study	Focus	Key Findings
		correlate strongly with inclusive teaching effectiveness.

Table 1: Empirical Findings on Teacher Effectiveness

VI. RESEARCH GAPS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Although teacher effectiveness has been extensively studied, significant gaps remain in integrating competence, personality, and attitude within a single research model that includes soft infrastructure as a moderating variable. Most existing studies analyze these attributes in isolation, overlooking the complex interplay between individual teacher characteristics and the systemic supports that may enhance or constrain their application. Additionally, research within the Saudi Arabian context remains limited, particularly in examining how Vision 2030 reforms influence teacher development and effectiveness.

Furthermore, the majority of studies employ cross-sectional designs, which fail to capture the dynamic evolution of teacher competence, personality expression, and attitudes over time. Longitudinal and mixed-methods approaches are needed to examine the sustained effects of professional development interventions and policy initiatives. Incorporating multi-level analyses that account for classroom, institutional, and policy contexts will provide a more comprehensive understanding of teacher effectiveness, thereby informing evidence-based reforms in Saudi Arabia.

VII. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Competence, personality, and attitude are critical determinants of teacher effectiveness in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Soft infrastructure plays an enabling role, though empirical studies on its moderating effects remain scarce. Policymakers should invest in targeted professional development, supportive institutional environments, and equitable resource distribution to maximize teacher potential. Integrating individual and systemic factors can better align teacher development strategies with Vision 2030 goals and improve student outcomes.

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