

## Teaching Profession and Passion

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**Abstract:** Passion is an important power that develops, matures, and exalts personality within certain boundaries and dimensions, reflected in thought, behaviour and action from emotional life. Passion in the broadest sense is a form of behaviour that is constantly evoked by the influence and enforcement of the tendencies arising from forces within the human being. Passion is identified with learning new things, care, and action. Passionate education requires emotional, motivational and scientific qualities. Teachers, who are considered as passionate about teaching, have features such as emotion, motivation and knowledge.

**Keywords:** Passion, Teaching, Motivation, Achievement

Teachers give great place and value to the object, the person and the thought that they aim in the field of passionate education. They glorify and sanctify it. Achieving this goal brings life and vitality to the teachers. Passion has the ability to transmit. It has the aspects of creating and changing the action. Passion is motivation and looking for new things. It is the desire to learn. Learning, experiencing new ideas and being passionate is closely related concepts. When passion reaches the highest level one of the following steps will become true. First, if new learning and motivation are not given, a person cannot remain passionate and productive. Second, individuals can be directed to another business area to find a passion and third, they try to be passionate about a different branch of work they do.

Successful teaching and learning depends on establishing close relationships with learners and creating teaching conditions to facilitate understanding. And a passionate teacher is the person who provides these opportunities.

When you ask a student what it is that makes him successful at school, he will not tell you a great new book or a great series of educational films. The answer will often be like: "Thanks to my teacher Mr. Chelik because he never gave up on me".

What children take from successful education and bring to their lives are usually related to what they build with a teacher who is passionate and inspires their students in what they do. As the first sign of passionate teaching, passionate teachers share their strength, knowledge and love with their students. They create different learning conditions in their field to guide their students. As a second sign, passionate teachers accept themselves as part of their learning and pass this passion on to their students.

They specify that less experienced students should be directed to research for information. According to other students, they build confidence in those who cannot learn effectively and try to improve their abilities.

When we speak about the word “teacher”, many good examples immediately come to mind. A passionate teacher believes that teaching guides the others. Teaching raises individuals who know they did not know before, know how to do what they couldn’t do before, take attitudes they have never taken before, and believe in things they have never believed before. A passionate teacher likes to work, is willing to serve students well and believes that teaching is full of hope. Teacher’s determination, courage and imagination supports the idea of what he can do with little things.

Teaching is a way of life for a passionate teacher. The role of the teacher cannot be separated from his personality. The passionate teacher is very considerate when communicating with others. He is the one who undertakes the teaching profession. Students need people to believe in them. They need wiser and older people to see their talents. Successful teachers keep the pitch high and then create an environment where it is normal to make mistakes. This motivates students not to give up trying to reach the targets they are expected to achieve.

Sigmund Freud's granddaughter, Sophie Freud, had a good career as a housewife, mother, social worker and therapist, but she suddenly wanted to do something better on her own. She wanted to enrich her experiences and the lives of the people she worked with. After she began teaching, her education became emotional and became a source of honour. Contributing to the lives of students like Freud, making changes and shaping them in the best way is the behaviour of a passionate teacher (Freud, 1987).

The passionate teacher helps the student find the emotional balance, identity and spiritual consciousness. He invites the student to responsibility and puts the imagination into action. The passionate teacher is passionate about knowledge, dealing with world problems and children. Passionate teachers offer neither a specific form of instruction nor a similar personal character. It is their connection to active learning that unites them and how they are entering the teaching mission.

We all need to find something about our teaching that is relevant to us, to convert it into passion and share this passion. When we discover our passions about teaching and learning and share with others, the doors are open and possibilities become endless. It is passion which makes the quality and intensity of the student different. The passionate teacher conveys passion to students as his example.

Teaching is difficult and often done alone. Teaching requires rich and diverse life experiences as well as the need for loyalty to the subject. Teaching requires openness to people, diving into ideas, time and energy conservation, as well as endless connections to students. It requires loneliness and meeting many people at the same time.

The search and talent confirms the daily belief of a passionate teacher. Search and talent is essential for continuous teaching. It is seen that the talented teachers are not just satisfied with the teaching, they are prone to change and value personal freedom. They shape the things that occur in the classroom. Teachers who know and believe that teaching is really difficult are led differently from teachers who have lost confidence and effort.

Passion is known with unlimited excitement, effort, desire and enthusiasm. Passionate teachers are filled with passionate energy and strong against problems. Passionate teachers are the ones who make changes in the lives of the students. Passion is not intended to be educational, but instead finds a bridge that connects the concentration of thoughts and real-life experiences when the student meets the passionate teacher. Students always know that there is someone who separates learning from teaching.

Passion lies at the base of teaching. Passion is not a luxury for teachers, or a quality that only a few teachers have but is lacking in most teachers. Passion is a feeling that strongly influences your mind. Passion is a leader and a motivating factor that emanates from emotional power. Within a border and a scale, passion is necessary for the teacher to develop their own personality, to change positively, to mature the development and to maintain its structure. Attitudes of a passionate person that he strikes to achieve his goal positively contributes to himself as well as other by his behaviours and actions. You will immediately notice the passionate teachers who love their jobs. As if they radiate an infectious energy. The subject, even a very difficult mathematical operation, is absolutely alive. If you do not like your job or your subject, it will also be reflected in your teaching.

The affectionate person's energy, determination, commitment, dedication and even his obsession with people increases in a positive way. People can reach the goals that they have set through passion. Passionate teachers are not the only ones who only content themselves by planning the next lesson. They are always engaged in teaching by looking at teaching from different focuses. Rest (1986) wrote about the features of passionate teachers as follows, "Developing people are people who love teaching, who love to study, who love to encourage, reflect what they know, make plans and determine goals, take risks, and take responsibility for themselves and others" (p. 174-175).

The period we live in is a time when the students need emotional support rather than knowledge. Establishing an emotional connection with your students will allow them to listen more of your recommendations and feel these recommendations in their hearts. Students need mentors as much as they need teachers. Passionate teachers are the people who will make a difference in students' lives and achievements. Passionate teachers accomplish this with who they are, what they know (field knowledge) and how they teach (beliefs, attitudes, personal and professional values).

Rowe (2003) argues that teacher quality is a key variable in student experience and school success. On the other hand, Konstantipolos (2006) suggests that teacher efficacy is greater than school efficacy in student achievement. The effect of passion to the quality of teacher is indisputable. The passionate teacher is always in the endeavour of professional development because he constantly targets his students' success. People are not born passionate. Passion is increased or decreased according to personal and social status. Five key qualities have been observed in passionate teachers. These are (Day, 2009):

1. It is very important for passionate teachers to reflect their educational ideals and beliefs in terms of being motivated, loyal and effective.
2. Teachers' understanding of feelings of their own and the people around them are proportional to their good teaching abilities. Good learning requires the use of good knowledge together with emotions.

3. Factors affecting good teaching are technical and personal skills, deep field knowledge and ability to develop empathy with students. Teachers invest in their own business. Good teaching is a passionate work.
4. Being an effective teacher requires being hopeful. It requires being able to find solutions, when difficulties are encountered.
5. Good teachers give importance to students. Teachers see students as an important part of the work they do and they take care of their students' success.

Three important features that must be found in a passionate teacher (Day, 2009):

- Emotional characteristics
- Moral values: importance and courage
- Relationship to students

1. Emotional characteristics

Emotions have an effect on the formation of pollution. Emotions are important in teaching in terms of personal and professional aspects.

- ✓ Emotions are necessary to make conclusive decisions
- ✓ Emotional understanding is necessary in a good professional process
- ✓ Emotional and scientific health is influenced by personal background, career and external factors
- ✓ Emotional health is important for effective teaching

2. Moral values: importance and courage

Moral values are important features of effective teachers. Passionate teachers take the need for the knowledge and moral circumstances of students into account as the nature of teaching.

3. Relationship to students

The most important feature of excellent teachers is their passionate desire for student achievement. And this can only be achieved by ensuring classroom environment, temperament, patience, empathy and the trust of the students (Hopkins & Stern, 1996).

A teacher who knows and believes that teaching is everything is different than a teacher who has lost these feelings (Hansen, 2001). The passionate teacher invites students to engage in teaching and strengthens their dreams (Bullough, Mayes & Patterson, 2002).

The expressions of Olson (2003) about passion are remarkable: we need to find something about the teaching that makes us passionate and deeply interested. When we discover our passions about learning and teaching and share them with others, the doors are opened and the possibilities become endless. A passionate teacher is someone who is deeply committed to an area of knowledge or challenging the world and who has deeply thoughtful ideas, or who has goals to develop the creativity of students coming to class every day. A passionate teacher is not the one who abstracts himself from the classroom (Fried, 1998).

Riehl and Sipple (1996) indicate that the dependence of the teachers may increase or decrease depending on their life and work experience. They think that student behaviour can vary depending on administrative support, family demands, national education policy, teacher's professional past and career stages.

Passionate teachers do not work alone. They are in a social interaction, therefore this school culture influences their life and work experience. Passion is essential in teaching. It's an accepted fact that passionate teachers are considered to have a positive and effective effect on the students. According to Vallerand et al. (2003) passion is a tendency and a strong feeling for someone who loves his job, finds it important, spends time and tries to work hard.

Johnson (2002) summarizes the three essential characteristics a teacher must possess as passion, readiness, and determination. He explains the passion to be found in a teacher as follows: "You must love teaching and show it to other people who do not know you on paper or visually on the video and do not know what you are doing. Being passionate in your practice reflects both the ability to communicate with students and the desire to develop professionally. Your students can tell you very clearly whether you like teaching or not. Do not hesitate to show the students how important it is for you to reach this process. Interesting practices, projects, assignments reflect your passion for your field. The students will respect you when they are interested and feel you are interested in them" (p. 16).

Day (2004) expressed the dictionary meaning of passion as "any feeling that strongly influences and sets the mind in motion" (p. 11). According to Day (2004), passion is an important concept that should be considered in education because teaching is a profession where the teachers devote time, energy and their hearts. Nias (1996) does not see passion as a feeling that only affects the teachers and keeps them in business; passion is a feeling that leads the teachers to continuous research to be beneficial to their students and their work. Day (2004) argues that enthusiasm is not just an option but necessary for a qualified teaching; and passion is the key to teachers to get satisfied with what they do.

Considering the content discussed in the definitions, it seems that the passion has a guiding and motivating structure. People can be passionate about certain people, events, objects and causes. Being passionate can create energy, determination, conviction, loyalty, and even obsessions in people. Passion can cause an effect on two different extremes. The passion, which leads to a determined commitment to a truly desired goal, can open a new vision to the person and also it is possible to narrow the point of view of one person by focusing on only one target (Day, 2004).

When the meaning of passion is examined, it is seen that it has a very comprehensive content. Teaching passions of teachers should not have to be one-way. The source of passion for the individual may be different. In an article written by Fried (1995) passion for teaching can be seen in three general areas:

- ✓ The teacher may be passionate about developing events in the world.
- ✓ The teacher may be passionate about his or her field of knowledge.
- ✓ Teacher may have a passion for children.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (Johnson, 2002) said that the secret of education is to respect children. Research in identifying the qualities of the excellent teacher in different countries has produced a common factor

that all of the teachers have a passionate desire for the success of their students. Teachers' interests are also very influential on this passion. Fried (1995), in his book *Passionate Teacher*, identifies ten essential characteristics of a passionate teacher as follows:

- ✓ Likes to work with young people, and at the same time has a deep interest in information and ideas.
- ✓ Does not show his compassion towards the students as an excuse for their ignorance and lack of skills.
- ✓ Coddles with his students.
- ✓ Keeps track of events happening at the class and in the world, reflecting these different perspectives into his work with his students.
- ✓ Has a natural personality and can be very serious or humorous. The most interesting of all that he can be both serious and humorous at the same time.
- ✓ Can accompany children with very absurd and meaningless events that can occur in human nature but at the same time he can show a very serious interest in issues that may cause critical and important consequences, such as equality and children's behaviour towards each other.
- ✓ Try to create a culture of mutual respect in the midst of problems such as rejecting young people and their impressions with social pressures, which discredit people and thoughts that are not popular and to stamp them in certain ways.
- ✓ Always takes risks and therefore makes as much mistakes as any person can make, but instead of ignoring them and countering them, chooses to learn from the experience.
- ✓ Helps to make the classroom environment a safe environment for students to make mistakes.
- ✓ Takes missions seriously and reflects beliefs.

Fried (1995) expresses that a relationship between passionate teaching and learning qualities of students, and lists the reasons for them as follows:

- ✓ Students become much more serious when they know that their teachers are passionate about the subject they are working on and that they have set high standards for themselves. Teaching at this point no longer serves as a forced task and transforms into an example that influences students.
- ✓ Unless there is communication between the teacher and the student based on respect and trust, the chance of creating a collaborative and risk-taking learning environment will be very low.
- ✓ Students will not have sufficient motivation to learn as long as they do not have a clear idea of how things will be put into practice in real life situations.
- ✓ Since good teaching is an essential condition for raising standards, it is necessary that the teachers who will provide good education and the schools they work with are to provide their passion, love, care and respect for good teaching, as a continuous structure that can go deeper and have hope for a better future (Day, 2004).

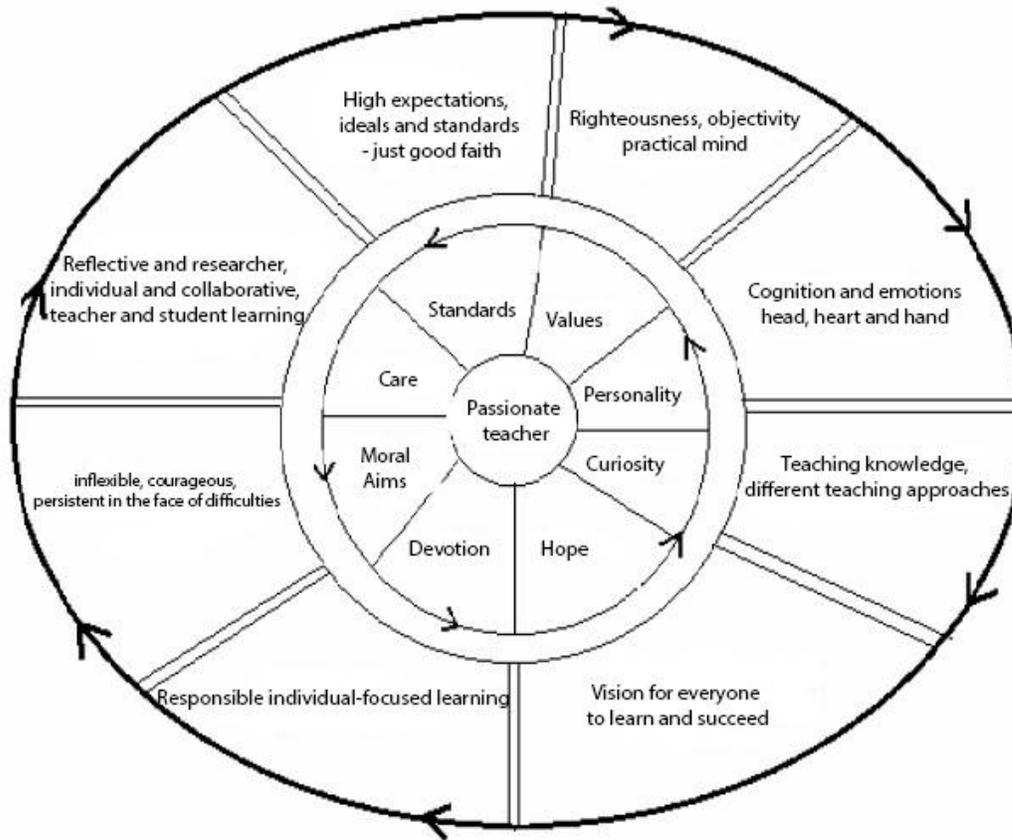


Figure 1: Passionate teacher

Source: Day, 2004, p.21

Anticipated Features of an Effective Teacher (Çelikten, Sanal & Yeni, 2005).

- ✓ Acts patient, resistant to events and keeps emotions under control.
- ✓ Is respectful and acts as a mediator to different beliefs, opinions and groups.
- ✓ Takes care of appearance, hygiene and tidiness.
- ✓ Open to self-development and criticism.
- ✓ Does not engage the classroom and the school with personal problems.
- ✓ Has qualities to motivate students.
- ✓ Focused on students, supports students in a high expectation of success.
- ✓ Is a model to students in terms of thoughts and behaviours.
- ✓ Good-humoured, tolerant and caring to the students.
- ✓ Establishes a constructive and educational discipline in the class.
- ✓ Has leadership qualities.
- ✓ Successful in influencing their students, parents, and the environment.
- ✓ Has the qualities of mediation, arbitration and representation.

- ✓ Encourages and supports the students.
- ✓ Has a loving, understanding and humorous character.
- ✓ Strives to find solutions instead of complaints.
- ✓ Establishes authority to the class, does not punish the class as a group, but punishes the individual.
- ✓ Follows and controls assignments.
- ✓ Acknowledges the basic concepts of educational sciences and makes learning easier.
- ✓ Is a good observer and endeavours to constantly renew himself.

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