

***“Seems to have taken teaching as a job without thinking they will have to deal with teenagers”:***

Students’ and teachers’ perceptions of an ‘ideal’ and ‘non-ideal’ secondary school teacher

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**Research Questions:**

How do students and teachers define an ideal secondary school teacher?

Does this differ depending on the ethnicity of the student and/or teacher?

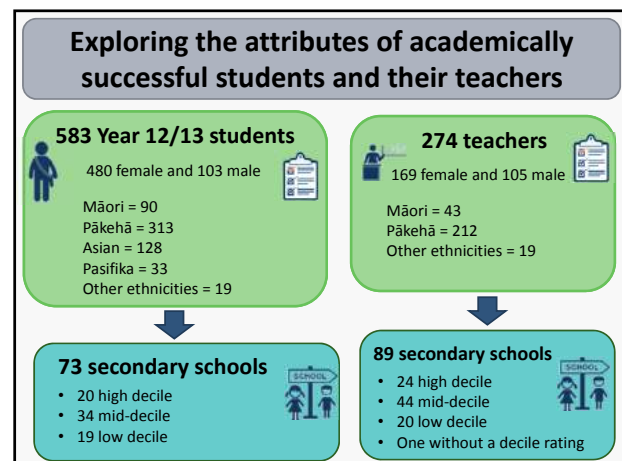
**Selected literature on ‘Ideal’ teachers**

**Whitney, Leonard, Leonard, Camelio & Camelio’s** (2005) study, “What is good teaching & how do we know it when we see it?”

**Horsley’s** (2009) mixed methods study on effective teachers of NZ Scholarship students.

**Sexton** (2012) undertook focus group interviews with a total of 74 students across Years 1-4, 5-8, and 9-13 to explore what makes a good teacher.

**Bishop et. al’s** (2009) ‘Effective Teaching Profile’



An Ideal Teacher	
Students	Teachers
Explained the work & answered questions (34%)	Knows students & interested in their lives (85.4%)
Knows students & interested in their lives (31.9%)	Focused on student learning & success (60.9%)
Provided interesting & engaging lessons (31.4%)	Provided interesting & engaging lessons (37.6%)
Focused on student learning & success (31%)	Knows subject and how to teach (35.4%)
Supported, helped & encouraged students (30.7%)	Passionate about teaching & their subject (33.9%)
Passionate about teaching & their subject (22.5%)	Culturally responsive & inclusive (19.0%)

**Knows students & interested in their lives**

*“She can relate to her students because she comes from our community, knows how we grew up and connects with the people we live around on a cultural level”* [S-001, Female, Māori, Decile 1]

*“...Makes an effort to get to know all of our names...”* [S-017, Female, Pākehā, Decile 7]

### Knows students and is interested in their lives

"...has a genuine interest in their students, gets to know them and their interests. This builds positive relationships which are really important in engaging students. Students like to know their teacher cares about them..." [T-036, Female, Māori, Decile 6].

### Statistically significant differences between the groups in the perceptions of an ideal teacher

### Statistically significant differences by student ethnicity

**Explained the work & answered questions:** Asian students reported more frequently than Māori and Pākehā students that an ideal teacher explained the work and answered questions.

#### Z-tests

Asian and Māori ( $Z = 2.53, p = .0114$ )

Asian and Pākehā ( $Z = 2.047, p = .0406$ )

### Explained the work and answered questions

"Uses basic terminology to explain complicated things"

[S-539, Male, Asian, Decile 3]

"...always answers questions to the best of his ability. If he doesn't know the answer he will go away, look it up and come back and tell us"

[S-199, Female, Pākehā, Decile 6].

### Statistically significant differences by student ethnicity

- **Passionate about teaching & their subject:** Pākehā students reported more frequently than Māori students that an ideal teacher was passionate about teaching & their subject.

#### Z-test

Pākehā and Māori ( $Z = 2.34, p = .0193$ )

### Passionate about teaching & their subject

"She is so passionate about her subject and the passion is contagious. She believes Calculus is beautiful and we should all be 'super excited' about it"

[S-027, Female, Pākehā, Decile 10]

### Statistically significant differences between Māori & Pākehā teachers

**Culturally responsive & inclusive:** Māori teachers reported more frequently than Pākehā teachers that being culturally responsive was a characteristic of an ideal teacher.

#### Z-test

Māori and Pākehā ( $Z = 2.527, p = 0.0115$ )

### Culturally responsive and inclusive (Māori Teachers)

"Sees their potential as leaders in their households, their whānau, hapū and iwi" [T-028, Female, Māori, Decile 3].

"...an open, unbiased mind-set regarding their students' potential and does not stereotype...Relates concepts to be learnt to students' world context"

[T-226, Male, Māori, Decile 6].

### Culturally responsive and inclusive (Pākehā Teachers)

"inclusive to all cultures" [T-016, Male, Pākehā, Decile 3].

"celebration of, acceptance of, and recognition of cultural differences" [T-027, Female, Pākehā, Decile 6].

"wants to get to know their 'cultural baggage'" [T-196, Pākehā, Female, Decile 6]

### Statistically significant differences between students & teachers

More frequently reported by teachers	More frequently reported by students
Focused on student learning & success ( $Z = 9.288, p = <.001$ )	Explained work & answered questions ( $Z = 8.232, p = <.001$ )
Passion for teaching & their subject ( $Z = 3.859, p = 0.001$ )	Supports, helps, and encourages their students ( $Z = 3.543, p = <.001$ )
Knows subject and how to teach ( $Z = 7.769, p = <.001$ )	
Knows students and interested in their lives ( $Z = 14.611, p = <.001$ )	
Culturally responsive & inclusive*	
*not reported by students	

## Non-Ideal Teachers



### An Non-Ideal Teacher

Students	Teachers
Did not explain work or answer questions (38.9%)	Poor connections with students (69%)
Poor connections with students (23%)	Boring and unengaging lessons (37.6%)
Poor content knowledge &/or teaching (21.1%)	Disorganised or does not plan lessons (33.2%)
Taught at wrong pace or level (17.3%)	Lacks passion or enthusiasm for teaching (31.8%)
Disrespectful (16.5%)	Not focused on student learning & success (29.6%)
Discriminatory (11%)	Close-minded or inflexible (24.1%)



### Poor connections with students

"Seems to have taken teaching as a job without thinking that they will have to deal with children or teenagers" [S-082, Female Asian, Decile 10].

"He gets names wrong or doesn't know them which shows a lack of interest in us..." [S-485, Female, Pākehā, Decile 6].

### Not focused on student learning and success

"I have actually heard a teacher tell a kid that their future is as a street cleaner - and it wasn't said like it was a good thing"

[T-044, Female, Pākehā, Decile 8].

### Statistically significant differences between the groups in the perceptions of a non-ideal teacher

### Statistically significant differences by student ethnicity

Poor content knowledge: Asian students reported more frequently than Māori students and Pākehā students that their worst teacher had poor content knowledge or teaching competence.

#### Z-test

Asian and Māori ( $Z = 3.407, p = 0.0007$ )

Asian and Pākehā ( $Z = 4.631, p = < .001$ )

### Poor content knowledge & teaching competence

"She doesn't have sufficient knowledge about what she's teaching...and cannot spell properly...When a student asks her how to spell something she says it's not important, so don't worry too much (that's because she doesn't know how to spell it)..." [S-131, Female, Asian, Decile 9].

### Statistically significant differences by student ethnicity

Discrimination: Māori students reported more frequently than Pākehā students that their worst teacher discriminated against them or other students in their classes.

#### Z-test

Māori and Pākehā ( $Z = 2.14, p = 0.0323$ )

## Disrespect & Discrimination

"Pronounces names wrong without apology" [S-319, female, Māori, Decile 3]

"Tries to tell me, I'm saying my name wrong" [S-320, female, Māori, Decile 3].

## Disrespect

"I was once looking at the school Dux board, reading the names, and was told to 'keep dreaming' by my teacher in quite a demeaning fashion"

[S-507, Female, Pākehā, Decile 3]

## Statistically significant differences between Māori & Pākehā teachers

Poor content knowledge: Pākehā teachers reported more frequently than Māori teachers that a non-ideal teacher had poor content knowledge or teaching pedagogy.

### Z-test

Pākehā and Māori ( $Z = 1.979$ ,  $p = 0.0478$ )

## Statistically significant differences between students & teachers

More frequently reported by teachers	More frequently reported by students
Poor connections with students ( $Z = 12.79$ , $p = <.001$ )	-
Not focused on student learning or success ( $Z = 5.269$ , $p = <.001$ )	-
Disorganisation ( $Z = 6.841$ , $p = <.001$ )	-
Lacked passion for teaching ( $Z = 13.986$ , $p = <.001$ )	-
Boring and unengaging lessons ( $Z = 6.301$ , $p = <.001$ )	-

## Did not explain work or answer questions

"...any questions regarding answering exam questions are brushed off with answers along the lines of 'Oh, the exams are supposed to be confusing'"

[S-448, Female, Asian, Decile 3].

"Always tells us to refer to the book, even though the explanations are sometimes too complex to understand"

[S-556, Female, Māori, Decile 3].

## Poor connections with students

"A less than ideal teacher forgets that those are someone's children. These are people who have thoughts and ideas and feelings"

[T-202, Male, Pākehā, Decile 3].



### **Conclusions/Educational Implications**

- Students' names are important.
- Culturally responsive teaching is still emerging.
- The dissimilarities between students' and teachers' perceptions of an ideal teachers suggests that 'student voice' is not being utilised in schools.



## **Thank you**

### **Any questions?**

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