

# Medical Students' Perception about the Impact of Teachers' Attitude on their Academic Performance and Character Building.

Marwa Saif<sup>1</sup>, Safa Saif<sup>2</sup>, Noor Shahid<sup>3</sup>, Aiza Anwar<sup>4</sup>, Tahseen Kazmi<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Medical Student 4th year MBBS, Central Park Medical College Lahore, Pakistan

<sup>2</sup>Medical Student 2nd year MBBS, Central Park Medical College Lahore, Pakistan

<sup>3</sup>Statistician, Community Medicine, Central Park Medical College Lahore, Pakistan

<sup>4</sup>Medical Student 4th year MBBS, CMH Lahore Medical College and Institute of Dentistry, Lahore, Pakistan

<sup>5</sup>Professor, Community Medicine, Central Park Medical College Lahore, Pakistan

## Correspondence to

Marwa Saif

Medical Student 4th year MBBS, Central Park Medical College Lahore

E-mail: [tomarwasaiif@gmail.com](mailto:tomarwasaiif@gmail.com)

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## Abstract

**Objective:** To observe the student's perception about teacher's attitude and its impact on academic performance and character building of the student.

**Methodology:** A descriptive cross-sectional study using a random sampling technique was conducted among students from all the years of MBBS of Central Park Medical College, CMH Lahore Medical College & Institute of Dentistry, and Allama Iqbal Medical College in July- August 2021. The minimum sample size calculated from Raosoft sample size calculator was 314. The questionnaire consisted of questions sorted as students' insight regarding teachers' attitude and impact of that attitude on academics and on character building. Factor analysis and chi-square method was used to interpret the results.

**Results:** Two hundred eleven female and one hundred three male students filled in the questionnaire. Approximately 74% of the students mentioned that negative attitude of the teacher decreased their academic performance and had a negative influence on their character building. **Conclusion:** There is a positive correlation between the attitude of a teacher and academic achievement of students as well as their character building. Positive attitude leads to higher achievement of the students whereas negative attitude deteriorates their progress and demotivates them.

**Keywords:** Teachers' Attitude, Medical Education, Character building.

## Introduction

In the esteemed field of medical education, the impact of the teachers' behaviour is essential while considering the capability and qualities of the undergraduate medical students, as it profoundly influences the students in many ways.<sup>1,2</sup> Teachers are influencers who shape the personality and future of their students not only by their teaching methods but also by their frame of mind, attitude, action, and conduct.<sup>3,4</sup> The conduct and approach of the teacher is replicated by the students, which imparts immense responsibilities on the teachers regarding the intellectual and character development of the students.<sup>5</sup> Through the research done globally, it is found that the tutor, through either uplifting or degrading attitude when connecting with the students, impact their lives.<sup>6</sup> A meta-analysis was done which highlighted that the overall teacher-student relationship climate profoundly affects students' achievements.<sup>7</sup> A study conducted in Taiyuan, China concluded that the impact of the instructor on the student's success and personality development is a reality that cannot be ignored.<sup>8</sup> A correlational study conducted in

Nigeria showed the significant relationship between teacher's attitude and student's academic performance.<sup>9</sup> A study conducted in Peshawar, Pakistan observed that positive attitude of teacher contributed to student's achievement.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, teachers' skills and attitudes should be given due weightage.<sup>11</sup>

Limited research has been done on the significance of teachers' attitude in the education of medical students in Pakistan. This study will reveal how the teacher's attitude impact the characters and academic achievements of medical students in Lahore, Pakistan. The outcomes of this research can be utilized to identify ways to improve practices to better meet the needs of medical students. The objective of this study was to find out the perception of students about the impact of teacher's attitude on student's academic performance and character building.

## Methods

A descriptive cross-sectional study using a random sampling technique was conducted among students from all the years of MBBS of Central Park Medical College, CMH Lahore Medical College & Institute of Dentistry, and Allama Iqbal Medical College from March to August 2021. The Ethical Review Committee of Central Park Medical College (CPMC/IRB-No/1289) gave approval for research. Medical students of both gender were included in the study. All those students whose attendance percentage was below 75% in the present academic year or previous years were excluded. The minimum sample size calculated from Raosoft was 314. The desirable margin of error was taken as 5% and the confidence interval was selected at 95%.

An online survey was conducted using Google Forms. The response was restricted to only single response sheet per person. Data was collected from a self-designed questionnaire that was validated. The first section of the form was regarding the consent to participate in the study. The second section was about demographic variables such as gender, institute and the main section consisted of statements categorized as: Teachers' attitude ranging from kind to rigid; Impact of that attitude on academic performance and achievements; impact of that attitude on character development; "teacher compliments you on your activities"; "attendance of the class is affected by the teachers' behaviour"; "teacher makes or breaks your love for the subject"; "you are able to ask for assistance without fear of rejection"; "teacher ignores your progress"; "your result is affected by your teachers' behaviour"; "teacher guides you in a positive direction"; "teacher uses strategies to promote unity"; "teacher tries to understand your emotions"; "teacher is patient with students and is a

role model for you”.

A 5-point Likert scale was used for responses ranging from strongly agree (SA) to strongly disagree (SD) with each statement. The reliability of the questionnaire was 83.8% using Cronbach alpha. Data was analysed using SPSS 25.0. Frequencies and percentages were obtained for the responses. The results were interpreted using factor analysis to observe the reliability of the designed statements and chi square test of independence. A p-value of 5% or less was considered as significantly associated with teachers’ attitude

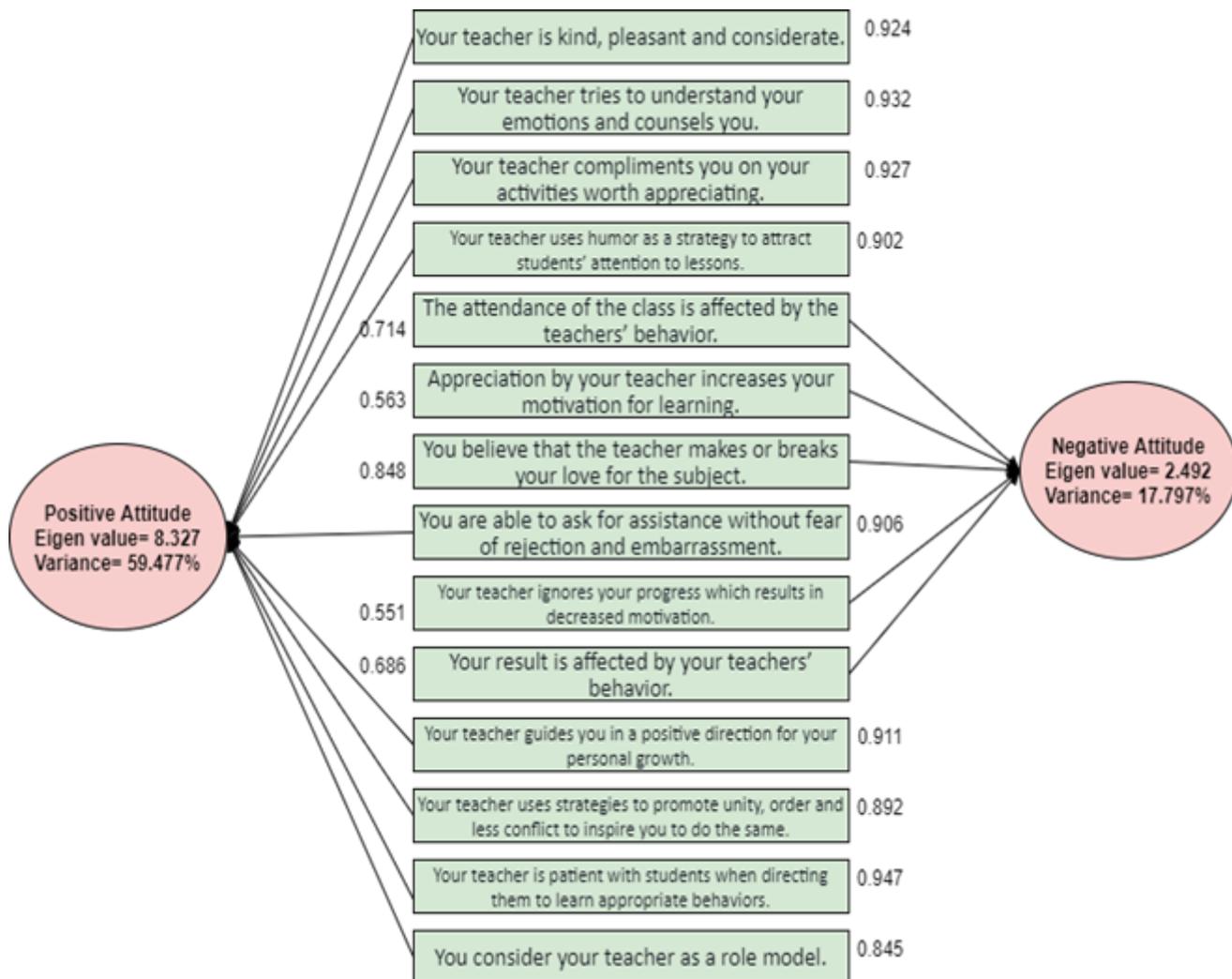
**Results**

Data was collected from 314 participants. About two third of the participants were female (67%) whereas male participants were about 33%. Approximately 74% of the students mentioned

that the attitude of the teacher was negative which in turn had a negative impact on their academic performance.

To access the internal structure of the designed questionnaire, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used. Principal Component (PC) analysis was used with varimax rotation. The criteria for eigen values was set at greater or equal to 1.0. Significance of Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett test allows for EFA. Two factors were extracted that explained 77% of the variation. These two factors were named as “Positive Attitude” and “Negative Attitude”.

The overall reliability of the questionnaire was approximately 84%. The reliability of the two extracted factors was also checked using Cronbach alpha. The reliability of “Positive Attitude” was 97.7% with nine factors whereas the reliability of “Negative Attitude” was 78.6% with five factors (Figure 1).



**Figure 1: EFA of the Designed Questionnaire**

**Table I: Effect of Teachers' Attitude on Academics (n=314)**

Factors	SA	A	N	D	SD	X <sup>2</sup>	Sig.
Your teacher is kind, pleasant and considerate.	49 (15.6%)	30 (9.6%)	34 (10.8%)	59 (18.8%)	142 (45.2%)	280.94	.00*
Your teacher compliments you on your activities worth appreciating.	38 (12.1%)	49 (15.6%)	34 (10.8%)	56 (17.8%)	137 (43.6%)	201.54	.00*
Your teacher uses humour as a strategy to attract students' attention to lessons.	29 (9.2%)	32 (10.2%)	32 (10.2%)	65 (27.2%)	156 (49.7%)	212.84	.00*
The attendance of the class is affected by the teachers' behaviour.	200 (63.7%)	60 (19.1%)	18 (5.7%)	24 (7.6%)	12 (3.8%)	25.44	.00*
Appreciation by your teacher increases your motivation for learning.	146 (46.5%)	108 (34.4%)	12 (3.8%)	22 (7.0%)	26 (8.3%)	30.47	.00*
You believe that the teacher makes or breaks your love for the subject.	186 (59.2%)	96 (30.6%)	14 (4.5%)	12 (3.8%)	06 (1.9%)	21.66	.00*
You are able to ask for assistance without fear of rejection and embarrassment.	28(8.9%)	32 (10.2%)	38 (12.1%)	54 (17.2%)	162 (51.6%)	179.91	.00*
Your teacher ignores your progress which results in decreased motivation.	140 (44.6%)	80 (25.5%)	34 (10.8%)	50 (15.9%)	10 (3.2%)	81.48	.00*
Your result is affected by your teachers' behavior.	178 (56.7%)	78 (24.8%)	24 (7.6%)	24 (7.6%)	10 (3.2%)	33.86	.00*

SA= strongly agree; A= agree; N= neutral; D= disagree; SD= strongly disagree.

P-value < 0.05 considered statistically significant.

**Table II: Effect of Teachers' Attitude on Character of Students (n=314)**

Factors	SA	A	N	D	SD	X <sup>2</sup>	Sig.
Your teacher guides you in a positive direction for your personal growth.	32 (10.2%)	48 (15.3%)	34 (10.8%)	62 (19.7%)	138 (43.9%)	190.89	.00*
Your teacher uses strategies to promote unity, order and less conflict to inspire you to do the same.	26 (8.3%)	52 (16.6%)	32 (10.2%)	68 (21.7%)	146 (43.3%)	166.58	.00*
Your teacher tries to understand your emotions and counsels you.	26 (8.3%)	38 (12.1%)	25 (8.0%)	77 (24.5%)	148 (47.1%)	222.91	.00*
Your teacher is patient with students when directing them to learn appropriate behaviours.	32 (10.2%)	46 (14.6%)	22 (7.0%)	68 (21.7%)	146 (46.5%)	205.63	.00*
You consider your teacher as a role model.	44 (14.0%)	42 (13.0%)	28 (8.9%)	52 (16.6%)	148 (47.1%)	189.73	.00*

SA= strongly agree; A= agree; N= neutral; D= disagree; SD= strongly disagree.

P-value < 0.05 considered statistically significant.

## Discussion

No matter how impressive and striking a system of medical school and its programs may be, the execution will be in vain unless suitable and effective teachers handle them.<sup>12</sup> It is a necessity that a medical student should be skilled, knowledgeable, well trained, and possess values of kindness, compassion, responsibility, accountability, humility, and respect. Otherwise, the outcomes would be disastrous in concerns for public service.

This study explored the impact of teachers' attitude in medical college on the professional and mental development of students. In this study, it was observed that high percentage of college students (81.5%) were of the opinion that instructors' polite or rash attitude has a major impact on their educational performance and personality development, and this observation is supported by similar findings documented by Mucella Ulug et al.<sup>3</sup> It showed that 81.5% of students agreed that teachers' positive attitudes (kind, thoughtful, supportive, grateful, humorous, emotionally supportive, pleasant) generated tremendous academic and person-constructing outcomes,<sup>12</sup> (Figure 1) whereas negative attitude (strictness, harshness, ruthlessness, discrimination, insulting behaviour, criticism) of teachers added to the poor academic performance, lack of confidence and low morale.<sup>12</sup>. Furthermore 56.7% of college students strongly agreed that their average result is drastically affected by using the method instructors use to communicate with students.<sup>13, 14, 15</sup> As displayed in Table I, a total of 89.8% students agreed that teacher created or destroyed their love for the subject.<sup>16</sup> This aligns with the results in the literature which observed that there exist a statistically significant association between academic performance of students and instructional communication abilities of teacher in medical schools.<sup>17</sup> Literature supports the role of proper work environment and appropriate communication skills to develop and enhance the interest of students in their subject.<sup>18, 19</sup>

In this study, 74% of the students reported to be affected by teachers' negative attitude. The students unanimously agreed on the fact that their ability to focus on lecture as well as their interest to attend the lecture was also affected by the negative environment created by the teachers' unreasonable attitude (Table-I; Figure-1). According to a research, instructors were the second most common influential factor, parents being the first common, in the individual's development.<sup>20, 21</sup> It must be carefully considered that a child take on role models during education and teacher's behaviour and attitude has an impact on their personality development because they spend most of the time with them.<sup>22</sup> Unfortunately, 43.9% students reported that their teachers do not guide them for their personal growth. (Table-2); 46.5% students were of the opinion that the teachers do not set an example by themselves depicting qualities like patience or compassion for the students to follow. Hence, a majority of 47.1% do not consider their teachers as role model. This perspective is of utmost importance for medical students as in their professional lives, they would maintain this attitude towards the patients too whereas this field is about empathy, consideration and kindness.<sup>23,24,25</sup>

As this research was limited to colleges in one city only, further studies can be done involving colleges in other cities. Access of the questionnaire was to students who had access to internet and who knew how to fill them possibly leading to selection bias so in further studies it can be avoided. Participants with low technical aptitudes, and with decreased proficiency in the English language may have had trouble with filling the google forms and choosing the responses so a similar questionnaire in native language can be used. Survey is based on self-report, and in its answers lacks the certainty of detailed interviews and other methods. This study could have been performed more in detail if qualitative aspect had been considered and in-depth interviews could have yielded more detailed understanding of the impact of teachers' attitude on medical students.

Teachers' attitude can help or hurt student's motivation, achievement and well-being. Negative teachers' attitude can impair academic achievement and increase students' stress. Those teachers who are strict in their appearance of power, leave a persistent sensation of negativity within the medical student. Whereas positive attitude uplifts the medical students' spirits and increase their success rate. Such students take their teacher as a role model and work to serve humanity.

## Conclusion

We found that most of the students feel that teachers' attitude is greatly affecting students' academic performance, character building and personality. Undergraduate medical students are greatly affected by the teachers' conduct.

## Limitations of this study

The research was limited to colleges in one city. Reach of the questionnaire was to circles who had access to google forms and knew how to fill them possibly leading to selection bias. Participants with low technical aptitudes, and with decreased proficiency in the English language may have had trouble with filling the google forms and choosing the responses. Survey is based on self-report, and in its answers lacks the certainty of detailed interviews and other methods.

## Authors Contributions

MS conceived the research study and design and helped in data collection and analysis.

THK Designed, devised and did the interpretation of data and overall supervised the work of other authors. NS did the statistical analysis. AA and SS did data collection and manuscript writing.

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