



## Teaching with Passion: The Role of Passion in Learning and Teaching

### KEYWORDS

Passion, Emotion, Motivation, Inspire

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**ABSTRACT** *Passion has a motivating factor; therefore, for high quality learning and teaching it is an indispensable need. Passion plays an important role in creating a positive learning environment that will lead to effective learning and teaching. Passion may influence student learning. Passion inspires and stimulates, and teaching with passion promotes learning. Passion makes difference in effective teaching. Passionate teaching has an effect on good learning.*

### Introduction

Passion is associated with learning something new, caring, and action. Passion is motivation, seek for the new, eagerness to learn. According to Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (1996), passion is "a strong liking or desire for or devotion to some activity, object, or concept." In another definition, passion is "a strong inclination or desire towards an activity (e.g., one's job) that one likes (or even loves) and finds important and in which one invests time and energy" (Carbonneau et al., 2008, p.977). Passion is known for unlimited enthusiasm, effort, and desire. As Day puts it "passion is associated with enthusiasm, caring, commitment, and hope, which are themselves key characteristics of effectiveness in teaching" (2004, p. 12). Fredricks et al (1999) offer some concepts to understand passion better:

- interest (enjoyment of a task)
- attainment value (the extent to which doing the activity fulfills core aspects of one's identity)
- flow (being totally involved in the activity)
- mastery orientation (a focus on learning and mastery)

### The Importance of Passion in Teaching and Learning

Passion, which is fundamental to commitment, is at the heart of effective teaching. As Day puts it: "passion is not an option. It is essential to high quality teaching" (2004, p.3). Knowledge of subject area, skills, competencies are factors that help effective teaching but one of the primary factors in good teaching is passion teachers have (Day, 2007). As Day puts it: "passion is not a luxury, a frill, or a quality possessed by just a few teachers. It is essential to all good teaching (2004, p. 11). Passion drives teachers to action because of its motivational properties (Vallerand, 2007); therefore, a passionate teacher can play a crucial role in motivating students, and creating a positive learning environment. A passionate teacher has emotional, and motivational qualities; moreover, through these qualities he/she can drive the students towards personal and professional goals with ease. A passionate teacher has a "sense that one has something to contribute, that one can make a difference, and that one can shape the world and not just be shaped by it" (Hansen, 1995, p. 90). Passion has a motivating factor that arises from the power of emotion. A Passionate teacher is full of energy and is strong against problems.

A passionate teacher is

Someone truly enamored of a field of knowledge, or deeply stirred by issues and ideas that challenge our world, or drawn to the crises and creativity of the young people who come into class each day-or all of these. To be a passionate teacher is to stop being isolated within a classroom, to refuse to submit to a culture of apathy or cynicism, to look beyond getting through the day (Fried, 1998, P.53).

Fried in *The Passionate Teacher* (2001, p.44) describes a passionate teacher as "someone in love with a field of knowledge, deeply stirred by issues and ideas that challenge our world, drawn to the dilemmas and potentials of the young people who come into class each day". Similarly, students are motivated by passionate teachers because of their passionate teaching (Carbonneau et al., 2008). Through passion, passionate teachers create emotions that may influence student learning. Passion may lead to enthusiasm, and teachers with enthusiasm affect student learning success. The role of passion holds an important place in learning, as Hargreaves (1997, p.18) puts it: "pedagogical changes fail, when they do not engage the passions of the classroom". There is a clear link between learning and passion. Successful learning and teaching depends on establishing a close relationship with students and creating an effective learning environment, and a passionate teacher has the ability to provide these opportunities through action and change created by passion. Fried (2001) offers another description of a passionate teacher as: "It is this quality of caring about ideas and values, this fascination with potential for growth within people this depth and fervor about doing things well and striving for excellence that comes closest to what I mean in describing a "passionate teacher." (p. 17). Passion stems from love. A passionate teacher may be encouraged by enthusiasm. "The passionately committed teachers are those who absolutely love what they do" (Zehm & Kottler, 1993, p. 118).

A Passionate teacher loves what he/she does. Fried (1998) is of the opinion that passion makes difference in the quality of student learning. A Passionate teacher believes that passion inspires their students, and a passionate teacher is strongly aware of the impact he/she has on students. A passionate teacher can convey his passion to the students. "We all need to find something about our teaching that matters deeply to us, get passionate about it, and share that passion. When we discover and explore our passions about teaching and learning and begin to share them with others, doors are opened, and the possibilities are endless" (Olson, 2003, p. 305). A Passionate teacher's energy, determination, commitment, dedication, and even obsession to people in a positive way increase. It is through passion that people can reach their targets. A passionate teacher can look at the teaching issue from different perspectives, and is always busy with teaching.

The impact of passion on teaching quality is unquestionable. A passionate teacher continually strives for a better student achievement and professional development. "A teacher who 'really knows and believes' that teaching worthwhile will likely conduct him- or herself differently from a teacher who has lost faith in the endeavor or who resorts to expediency in the face of challenge ... (Hansen, 2001, p.56). Passion stimulates; therefore, passion that a passionate teacher conveys to the students enables them achieve higher learning results.

"When students care about something, they have the energy they need for learning more about it and making it part of their lives. Without energy for learning, nothing happens" (Fink, 2003, p. 32).

Passion affects teacher-learner relationship. An enthusiastic teacher through passionate teaching may create zealous learners. Passion may drive learners to get involved in all learning activities. As Day puts it:

When students can appreciate their teacher as someone who is passionately committed to a field of study and toughholding high standards within it, it is much easier for them to take

their work seriously. Getting them to learn the becomes a matter of inspiration by example rather than by enforcement and obedience (2004, p.15).

### Conclusion

Passion in teaching matters as it motivates for a good learning and teaching. Passion is a great factor that can enrich teachers' teaching. Passion can create a love for teaching and learning. A passionate teacher can inspire students and get students interested in what they are learning. A passionate teacher can create a caring learning environment. Passion is a motivational force that may improve teaching quality.

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