

**Chapter 2.**  
**Literature Review**

## **Literature Review**

The literature review has been categorized into 3 parts:

- Studies relevant to the definition & concept of teacher effectiveness
- Empirical studies pertaining to the role of teacher's effectiveness on student's learning levels.
- Experience as a factor influencing teacher's effectiveness.
- Gender as a factor influencing teacher's effectiveness.
- Nature of the school the teacher works in as a factor influencing teacher's effectiveness.

Teachers are the axis around which the education system revolves, and effective teachers are the hallmarks of an accomplished education system.

### **2.1 Studies relevant to the definition & concept of teacher effectiveness**

Teacher effectiveness has been understood in multiple ways. Kapur (2018) referred to it in terms of focus on students, their performance, teacher behaviours, classroom procedures and conduct that are implemented in order to better the outcomes of students. According to Ko, Summons and Bakkum (2013) teacher effectiveness centres on good teaching, possessing appropriate and sufficient knowledge of subject matter, evaluating the students, identifying their appropriate learning needs and requirements, possessing skills regarding the usage of questions to engage and challenge the students. Evans (2006) defined teacher effectiveness in 3 basic ways: teacher's personalities, teacher-pupil interactions and teacher's impact on pupil's behaviour and stated that teacher effectiveness is a measure of the extent of realization of instructional objectives. Goe, Bell and Little (2008) took a step forward and accentuated the characteristics of an effective teacher as someone who would make diverse use of resources and material to make learning fruitful; to plan and structure engaging learning opportunities, focus upon not just learning and development of the students but also on enhancing the classroom climate with excellent communication skills, collaborating with others to ensure student success. It is thus clear that effectiveness does not stem from rigid adherence to a standard set of behaviours, activities, methods, or strategies in all situations. Rather teachers who are consistently effective are those who are able to adapt their knowledge and skills to demands inherent in various situations so as to best achieve their goals. (Mathews and Nair, 2018)

### **2.2 Empirical studies pertaining to the role of teacher's effectiveness on student's learning levels.**

Teacher's effectiveness has also been proven to have significant improvements in student learning. A study by Inter-American Development Bank (2019) in Ecuador found that an effective teacher is able to close learning gaps between students from socio-economic disadvantaged and advantaged households. Hanushek (1992) found that all being equal, a

student with a very high-quality teacher can achieve a learning gain of 1.5 grade level equivalent while student with low quality teacher gains only 0.5 grade level equivalents. Effective teachers also have a positive impact on their student's access to higher education and even on future salaries. (Chetty et al, 2014; Hanushek,2009) Rivkin, Hanushek and Kian (2005) have in their work shown that exposure to a high-quality teacher for one school year improves student learning by 0.2 to 0.3 standard deviation. Darling and Hammond (2000) suggest that differential teacher effectiveness is a strong determinant of differences in student learning, far outweighing the effects of differences in class size and class heterogeneity.

### **2.3 Experience as a factor influencing teacher's effectiveness.**

The evidence that teachers vary widely in their ability to produce student learning gains has intensified the focus on how to identify effective teachers (Bruns and Luque,2014). There are studies which emphasise on teacher's Experience as an important attribute to explain teachers' effectiveness as it could directly impact student's learning. Podolsky, Kina and Hammond (2019) found that teacher experience is positively associated with student achievement gains. As teachers gain experience, their students are more likely to do better on measures of success beyond test scores. Koedel and Betts (2007) also found that teachers show greatest gains from experience during initial years but continue to make meaningful improvements in their effectiveness past these initial gains. On the contrary, there are several studies which disregard teacher's experience in explaining Teacher's effectiveness. Global researchers suggest that teachers' observable characteristics (age, level of formal education, certification status and years of experience teaching) are not well correlated with their effectiveness. (Goldhaber,2002; Kane, Rockoff and Staiger,2008; Hanushek et al,2005). In fact, there is much wider variation in teacher performance within each of these categories than across teachers with and without these characteristics (Bruns and Luque,2014). Jeff Irvine (2019) claims that it is tempting to equate effectiveness with years of teaching experience. Palardy and Rumberger (2008) examined the three dimensions of teacher effectiveness, them being: instructional practices, teacher attributes (self, efficacy, attitude, enthusiasm) and teacher background characteristics (certification, advanced degrees, years of experience) and found that teacher's instructional practices had the most direct impact on student achievement. Huang and Moon (2009) in their multi-level analysis of teacher characteristics and student achievement encompassing a data set of 1544 students, 154 teachers, 53 schools in the US found that total years of experience showed no significant association. While 3% studies indicated a negative association, 30% indicated a positive association (usually for 1<sup>st</sup> few years only) and 67% showed no correlation. Many studies indicate that teacher experience influences teacher effectiveness mainly in 1<sup>st</sup> few years of a teacher's career (Clotfelter et al 2007a, 2007b). Jacob (2012) backs this by saying that the average teacher is at her worst during the 1<sup>st</sup> year in the classroom, gets better in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, a little better in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year and then never gets any better after that. King Rice's (2010) study concluded that "more is better" in teacher experience assumption is simplistic and relationship between teacher experience and teacher effectiveness is more complex. She stated that impact of experience is strongest during 1<sup>st</sup> few years of teaching after that marginal returns diminish. There are also studies which claim that while it is tempting to assess teacher effectiveness easily through observable

attributes like years of experience, these are “at best weak predictors of a teacher’s effectiveness” (Harris and Sass, 2009; Winters,2011).

#### **2.4 Gender as a factor influencing teacher’s effectiveness.**

Another important dimension where we need to focus is the gender specific responsibilities of the teachers; enabling male and female teachers to produce high degree of effectiveness in their profession. There are studies which elaborate on the gender of a teacher’s being a distinguishing factor in explaining teacher’s effectiveness. Teachers are the building blocks of the education system and need to have insight, intelligence, knowledge, dynamism, and diligence to meet the classroom challenges successfully. While both men and women teachers appear to possess these traits, yet they meet these challenges differently. (Islahi and Nasreen, 2013). Gendered influence of teachers might be related to differences in teaching styles. Female teachers were reported to be more supportive, expressive (Rashidi and Naderi,2012), nurturing (Wood,2012), spend significantly greater proportion of time encouraging and allowing student participation, shared authority and maintained control in the classroom in a way that keeps their relationships with students intact (Statham, Richardson and Cook, 1991). Male teachers however tend to be dominating, exacting, and exercised greater control (Wood,2012; McDowell,1993), asked more display questions that made exchanges between teacher and students but more frequent (Rashidi and Naderi,2012), used their authority at the cost of involvement by students with an authoritarian and task-oriented teaching style (Good, Sikes and Brophy,1973; Chen, 2000; Chudgar and Sankar,2008). Marchbanks (2000) reported that females tend to generally possess the personality traits necessary to become an effective teacher to a higher degree than males did. However, there are some contrasting views on the gendered influence on teaching. Smith (2010) found that gender had little influence on how teachers use various instructional practices. Starbuck (2003) stated that when controlling for academic school, gender differences were found to be no longer significant. Controlling for academic school, gender differences were found to be no longer significant. Rani and Devi (2015) also opined that there exists no significant difference between male and female senior secondary school teachers in teacher effectiveness. Hence, there are several studies on relationship between gender and teacher effectiveness. While some suggest that gender has no influence, others report gender is a significant predictor of effectiveness and hence no consensus.

#### **2.5 Nature of the school the teacher works in as a factor influencing teacher’s effectiveness.**

Another distinguishing factor affecting teacher effectiveness is the type of the school the teacher is working in. King Rice (2010) in her study mentioned that she found a significantly uneven distribution of both inexperienced ineffective teachers with a preponderance of the latter group found in socioeconomically disadvantaged groups. She determined that even experienced teachers’ effectiveness declines when placed in high poverty schools. This may be because these teachers are ill equipped to deal with challenges in high poverty schools; and/or that such challenges may result in teacher

burnout. Backing this opinion Rani and Devi (2015) found a significant difference between government and private school teachers.

Based on the above literature review, I discovered conflicting views on the impact gender and teacher's years of experience have on the level of teacher effectiveness. There is a clear lack of consensus on whether there exists a significant relationship between the 2 factors and the level of teacher effectiveness. Regarding how the nature of school impacts teacher effectiveness, there is not sufficient literature to suggest a relationship.

## **2.6 Research Objectives**

The gaps identified through the literature review, have steered my study towards studying the attributes such as experience, gender, and type of the school as distinguishing factors in explaining teachers' effectiveness.

Hence, my **research objectives** can be enumerated as:

1. To capture the difference in teacher effectiveness based on the gender of the teacher.
2. To capture the difference in teacher effectiveness based on the years of experience of the teacher.
3. To capture the difference in teacher effectiveness based on the nature of the school the teacher works in.