

Chapter 1.

Introduction

Study on teacher effectiveness of Secondary school teachers working in Government & Private schools

1. Introduction

The greatest gift of God to mankind is the human brain. The brain serves as the ultimate seat of learning and is capable of marvels. The brain, when moulded appropriately, can help individuals lead a meaningful and purpose driven life. The system that transforms and transitions the brain functioning is what we identify as the Education System. Education is thus understood as a system, the goal of which is the harmonious and progressive development of its learners. Besides humanizing humanity, it enables individuals to develop logic, thinking abilities, problem solving skills, positive attitudes, and values. It is for this reason that a successful educational system is often believed to be the backbone of a rational, civil and a responsible society and teachers are one of the primary stakeholders of this education system. This system is the compilation and product of many and varied factors which can be categorized as:

- Factors pertaining to students, their homes, their environment.
- Factors pertaining to school.
- Factors pertaining to education system. (Vegas and Petrow,2008)

According to American Commission on Teacher Education (1974), “The quality of a nation depends upon the quality of its citizens and the quality of its citizens depends upon the quality of their teachers.” In fact, on the school side, teachers are considered the most important factor for students to learn and acquire necessary skills. They are the main players that help increase student achievement, skill development and provide equal opportunities (Hanushek and Revin,2012; Hanushek,2011; Kane and Staiger,2008).

The Education commission (1964-66) too observed that the success of any system of education depends on the quality of its teachers, who shape the classroom by sharpening younger generations. It is no exaggeration that any system of education can never rise above the level of the quality of its teachers.

It would thus, not be wrong to say that teachers have in them the ultimate powers to make or mar the society.

As Sodhi (2010) also put it, the teacher is potentially the integrator of personalities, the counsellor and guide to learners, the developer of citizens and the servant of the state as guardian of the individual.

The shape a society takes is largely attributable to the quality of her teachers and this was reinstated by Dr S. Radhakrishnan who opined that, “Teacher’s place in a society is of vital importance. He acts as the point of transmission of intellectual tradition and technical skill from generation to generation and helps to keep the lamp of civilization burning.”

A growing body of evidence suggests that schools can make a substantial difference in terms of students' achievement and a considerable portion of that is attributable to the teachers. The quality of a school depends vitally on the effectiveness of its teachers as the schools are only as good as their teachers (Darling and Hammond, 2015).

As there is no general consensus on what can be defined as "good teaching" or "effective teaching", teacher effectiveness has been defined differently by different people with the core idea being that a teacher's role involves much more than merely providing subject-matter instructions. It is instead the impact that classroom factors such as teaching methods, teacher expectations, classroom organization and use of classroom resources have on a student's performance (Campbell Kyriakides Muijs Robinson, 2004). Teaching can thus be viewed as a complex set of processes which involves sharing content to generate critical thinking abilities, curiosity and new ideas and enabling learners to use this knowledge for problem solving.

Teacher effectiveness has received increased attention in recent years. Teaching is not restricted to lecturing, instead teachers are expected to motivate, inspire, explain, engage, understand and guide the students for their all-round development. Teachers are expected to guide their students towards content, concepts, attitudes, values, knowledge and skills under the set frame of pre-determined goals. They are also expected to possess professional proficiency, educational efficiency and social sufficiency. It will thus be appropriate to purport that the effectiveness of education is very much dependent on the effectiveness of its teachers.

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 can close learning gaps between students from socio-economic disadvantaged and advantaged households.

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). The characteristics of an effective teacher have been summed up by Krishnan and Nightingale (1994) as follows:

- He can teach using different methods of teaching, employing a variety of audio-visual aids.
- He should have moral prestige.
- He should have intellectual depth.
- He should have a sense of humour.
- He should be man of all-round personality.
- He should be confident and at ease when teaching.
- He has a good relationship with the pupils.
- He manages the class well.
- He stimulates and motivates pupil to think independently.

- He explains the points clearly.
- He should be resourceful in providing the varied experiences to the students.

Woolfolk (2004) suggested that "teacher knowledge, clarity and organization and warmth and enthusiasm" are the core elements in explaining "effective teachers".

It can thus be concluded that teacher effectiveness is a cumulation of cognitive and affective factors like qualification and academics, thought process, personality traits, charisma, experience and other socio-economic attributes. Research shows that teacher effectiveness is a function of multiple teacher attributes including her degree, experience level, subject matter knowledge, Pedagogical knowledge, gender, general academic ability & intelligence, certification status and many more.

The various dimensions of teacher effectiveness can thus be identified as:

a) Teaching

Subject matter knowledge Instructional practice skill Pedagogical knowledge Preparation & planning Evaluation, assessment & feedback

b) Teacher as a person

Communication Mind frames Psychosocial resources, & attitude, Cultural competency Numeracy & literacy ready

c) Behaviour as a teacher

Adhere to a set of standards Professionalism Leadership Accreditation & credentialing

d) Continuous learning

Skill & specialisation Career progression Subject specialisation

The need for developing and attaining standards of effectiveness has increased for all teachers in today's competitive teaching environment. Despite inexhaustible literature and studies on which of these above-mentioned attributes tend to show direct and distinct relationship with the level of teacher effectiveness, no consensus has been reached. For example, 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. Pedolsky, Kina and Hammond (2019) found that teacher experience is positively associated with student achievement gains. 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. Also, there are studies which elaborate on the gender of a teachers being a distinguishing factor in explaining teacher's effectiveness. 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). 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.

Hence, there is a need to not just identify the significant factors which could influence the effectiveness of a teacher but also to boil it down to a few, which can make some significant difference in the teacher's effectiveness and can be looked upon by the policy makers and academicians to improve the overall teaching and learning standards. As effectiveness of an individual in her profession directly affects her job performance, this study focuses on capturing the effectiveness of Secondary school teachers. Focus is laid on the secondary level exclusively because the secondary school stage plays a crucial role in the career of students and is a connecting link to the college life. The cost of an ineffective teacher at this stage includes sub optimal student achievement, motivational declines, social and peer stigmatization and negative emotional impacts thus impacting the overall quality of human capital in the country.

There is an increasing concern to study varying degrees of effectiveness of secondary school teachers and look for ways to improve and enhance the effectiveness levels of these educators/ teachers. The present study thus, aims to capture the difference in teacher effectiveness based on the gender of the teacher, the years of experience of the teacher and the nature of the school the teacher works in. The purpose of the study is to identify the factors which would significantly create a difference in the teacher's effectiveness

The dissertation is a descriptive research with a target sample of 80 secondary school teachers who will be chosen from 8 schools- 4 Government and 4 Private. And 10 teachers were chosen from each school. Schools were chosen by simple random sampling while selection of teachers was undertaken by purposive sampling. The results were derived by using E-views software based on the responses of the teachers collected by a survey method with a help of a structured questionnaire.

Teachers, thus, have in them the ability to expand students' limits and creativity. They are the future role models who can kindle the drive to succeed, giving the students a purpose for tomorrow. Considering the impact an effective teacher can have on her learners, this research study will contribute immensely in deciphering the impact of the above discussed teacher attributes on her level of effectiveness. This study will help us conclude whether a teacher's observable characteristics are an indicator of her effectiveness.

This dissertation is structured as follows: Section 2 is the literature review that introduces teacher's effectiveness along with relevant studies on the factors which influence the teacher's effectiveness. The literature review helped in identifying the gaps and the research objectives. Section 3 analyses the primary data collected based on the survey of the secondary school teachers. Section 4 discusses the findings and section 5 concludes.