

EFFECTIVE TEACHING TO ENHANCE QUALITY EDUCATION
(Sub Theme : Quality Education.)

By

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INTRODUCTION.

Effective school learning requires good teaching and good teaching requires effective, professionally competent teachers are in a position to exercise research based judgements in reconstructing the education of their students. Teaching is a complex task, often teachers are less systematic in planning and carrying out their teaching strategies. In order to help the teachers to be more effective and making their task more functional and meaningful. The present paper attempts to draw findings from all the four surveys of Education Research and to find out the components that are relevant to 'effective teaching'. Teaching is an important task a teacher does in the classroom. How effectively one teaches determines to a great extent the success to students at schooling and to some extent their success in their life. Let us share more about this challenging task.

TEACHING : A DESCRIPTION

To a layman the term 'teaching' is taken to mean what a teacher does in the classroom with students, whether inside or outside the four walls of the classroom.

Teaching-Learning is said to be going on when ---

- a teacher performs such activities as explaining, demonstrating, questioning, maintaining classroom discipline, encouraging students to answer questions,

illustrating, posing problems for students to solve, and so on. All these are planned and performed by the teacher to bring about learning in students.

- Students are engaged in activities which lead to learning intended by the teacher, such as listening to the teacher, answering as well as raising questions, performing an experiment, working on assignment, reading a book – all in response to what the teacher has suggested or asked for. Thus teaching and learning cannot be disassociated. Teacher brings about learning in students by deliberately performing teaching activities. Such activities stimulate students to get engaged in learning activities. Learning implies what students will acquire in terms of information, understanding, thinking abilities, skills, attitudes, values and so on, as a result of teaching

Teaching involves a process of transacting between teacher and students leading to achievement of learning objectives in the latter. Although such a transaction is generally face to face, it can be at a distance also. Thus teaching activities are performed instantaneously in the context of face to face interaction with students as well as, in a delayed manner, not while with students.

These teaching activities can further be analysed into teacher behaviours. Teacher behaviour may be taken as specific act of the teacher within an activity. For example, while engaged in explaining activity, the associated teacher behaviours are ‘using vague terms’, making irrelevant statements, and so on. Such teacher behaviours are usually observable. Researchers have tried to analyse teaching in terms of teacher behaviours. Anyway, it is very difficult to analyse all activities of teaching in this way.

To summarise, TEACHING

- constitutes activities deliberately planned and performed
- involves achievement of learning objectives by students
- involves transaction between teacher and students
- involves instantaneous activities while directly interacting with students as well as, delayed activities, while not with the students and
- can be analysed into teacher behaviours which are observable

WHAT IS EFFECTIVE TEACHING ?

Let us say, teaching has occurred with the objectives of bringing about learning in students. Teaching is said to be effective ONLY IF the intended objectives are achieved. This sounds simple, but difficult to demonstrate that it has occurred.

HOW CAN ONE FIND OUT WHETHER TEACHING WAS EFFECTIVE ?

According to the above understanding, one can know whether our teaching was effective or not, only by administering tests and tools specially prepared for the purpose. Such testing can be done immediately after teaching. Even then, it is not easy to demonstrate that students have learnt only because of your teaching. Moreover, effects of teaching are not always intended to be immediate, just like making students learn a definition of a term. Through teaching, you intend to develop values, attitudes, skills and interests. These outcomes may not occur solely because of your teaching.

Thus 'Effective Teaching' is a difficult concept to demonstrate in your day to day teaching. Researchers have been able to do it in a scientific way.

Objectives :- The objectives of the study were :

1. To measure the teacher effectiveness.
2. To draw the findings from all the four surveys of Educational Research relevant to 'effective teaching'.

Tool :- The data were collected using self-checklist related to teaching effectiveness on a five point scale.

Sample :- The final sample of 100 teachers were randomly selected from 8 schools, among four secondary, higher secondary schools and four were primary schools

Limitations :-

- (1) The present study is restricted to about to draw findings from only four surveys of Educational Research.
- (2) The teachers during the data collection were only considered for the final sample of the study.
- (3) The study is restricted to schools situated in Adipur and Gandhidham town areas and managed by Gandhidham Maitri Mandal.

WHAT DOES RESEARCH SAY ABOUT HOW WE TEACH ?

A number of research studies have described how teachers in classroom, especially in India teach. Here are some observations

- Most of the time in the classroom is devoted to teacher talk and students get very little opportunity to express themselves.
- Teachers spend more time in giving information and less on clarifying ideas and still less on giving explanations.
- A very low percentage of teacher's time in the classroom is used for making encouraging remarks.
- The amount of talk initiated by students in the classroom is very less; and it is in the form of responding to teacher's questions.
- Most of the teachers are not systematic in planning and carrying out instruction.
- Less than ten percent of the time of the teacher talk is devoted to teacher questioning.
- During classroom interaction, teachers tend to promote mostly wrote learning requiring memory level thinking.
- In spite of what actually exists as observed above, teachers are highly satisfied with their teachers.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR TEACHING MORE EFFECTIVE ?

In order to improve the state of affairs of how we teach, let us examine the reasons for the same.

You may attribute your difficulty in making your teaching effective to certain situational factors which you may think 'can't help'. Some such factors related to the conditions in which you have to teach are examined below. Teachers generally attribute the difficulty in making teaching effective to the following factors.

- large class size.
- Non-availability of library resources and poor physical facilities.
- Non-availability of adequate instructional materials.
- 'Not so encouraging' climate in the school for working; in other words poor organizational climate.

DO YOU HAVE ANY RESEARCH SUPPORT ?

Here are some findings :-

- Suitable class size and school size and availability of library and other physical facilities do not ensure effective teaching by teachers.
- Proper use of instructional materials like audio-visual aids, books, etc., does contribute to effective teaching.
- Effective teachers are found in schools where there is an open organizational climate.

WHAT DO THEY IMPLY ?

- You can be an effective teacher inspite of the large classes; you can use suitable teaching methods like conducting small group activities, peer-tutoring and co-operative teaching.
- It is not the availability of library facilities that matters, rather it depends on how well they are used.

- A responsible teacher will explore ways and means of adopting of developing his own instructional materials.
- Certain background factors related to your students like their innate abilities and contextual factors like class size, content to be taught, etc. cannot be changed. Hence you may have to adjust your teaching to such factors.

ARE THERE FACTORS RELATED TO YOU WHICH MAKE YOUR TEACHING EFFECTIVE?

Apart from the above factors external to you, there are many aspects related to you, as a teacher, which are likely to affect your effectiveness in teaching. Researchers have identified a number of factors which if properly modified can make your teaching more effective. Some of the important ones over which we have some control are elaborated in this paper. They relate to

- WHAT YOU ARE
- HOW YOU FEEL OR PERCEIVE
- HOW YOU TEACH

Let us discuss each one of them in separate sections.

SECTION I YOURSELF AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING HOW DOES TEACHER'S BACKGROUND RELATE TO EFFECTIVE TEACHING ?

Research points out the following

- Effectiveness in teaching does not relate to teacher's age, sex and teaching experience.
- Higher the educational qualifications and attainment and greater the professional training possessed by teacher, more effective they are at teaching.
- Effective teachers not only know the subject matter they intend their students to learn but also know the misconceptions their students bring to the classroom that will interfere with the learning of subject matter.

What are the implications for TO KNOW ?

- You can become an effective teacher irrespective of your age and experience.

What are the Implications FOR ACTION ?

- Whenever an opportunity arises, improve upon your educational and professional qualifications.
- Try to improve your study habits.
- Try to get involved in academic and professional discussions and programmes.
- Try to understand student' misconceptions along with their previous understandings related to what you intend to teach.

HOW DO THE CAPABILITIES OF TEACHERS RELATE TO EFFECTIVE TEACHING ?

Research says :

- More intelligent and creative teachers are, more effective they are at teaching.
- Teachers who are able to perceive the abilities of students, their problems and individually are likely to be effective in the classroom.
- Teachers who have aptitude for teaching are likely to teach more effectively.

What are the Implications FOR ACTION ?

Here are some suggestions

- You can cultivate intellectual and other capabilities. Try to know more about general as well as profession – related information and reflect critically on it.
- Experiment and explore new methods of teaching.
- Develop in yourself good study habits especially related to your profession.

- Make deliberate efforts to observe students in different contexts.
- Take interest in their welfare and help them to resolve their problems.

HOW DO OTHER PERSONALITY FACTORS RELATE TO EFFECTIVE TEACHING ?

Research points out that effective teachers generally

- are emotionally mature, i.e., know what is proper and behave accordingly and exhibit their emotional balance,
- are responsible and dominated by sense of duty ;
- have fairly well developed value system ;
- can express themselves clearly ;
- have clear perceptions of themselves and have realistic aspiration levels ;
- are socially adjusted, i.e., ready to co-operate, attentive to people, warm-hearted, maintain good interpersonal relation-ship, have trust in others, and so on ;
- are interested in social service than in economic returns and in occupations that bring prestige rather than power, ready to accept intellectual challenges ; and
- provide democratic leadership in the classroom.

What are the Implications ?

- Practise what you preach; whatever good values you wish your students to develop, practise them.
- Be democratic as well as assertive with students about what you think as right.
- Try to be a little outgoing if you are not, as it might help in expanding your areas of contacts with neighbouring schools and community; thus you will be able to involve better in school complex activities.
- Try to face problems in school in a relaxed manner
- Avoid acting out your emotions disproportionately in the classroom situations.

- Try to maintain good interpersonal relationship with the class, with colleagues and other members of the community extending co-operation, being warm, having trust in others.
- Be realistic in your ambitions and aspirations
- Develop healthy attitudes towards your profession
- Develop liking for your students
- Be receptive to new ideas and practices
- Be a responsible person and be dominated by sense of duty.

The above implications are derived from how effective teachers behave. This only means that you are likely to be more effective than what you are if such characteristics are possessed by you.

SECTION II

YOUR ATTITUDES, PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING

HOW DO YOUR ATTITUDES RELATE TO EFFECTIVE TEACHING ?

It is observed by researchers that effective teachers possess favourable attitude towards both teaching as a profession and students.

What does this imply ?

Try to cultivate in yourself

- healthy attitude towards your profession,
- liking for your pupils and exhibit it explicitly in your interaction with them,
- interest in teaching and other school activities.

This can be achieved by deliberate efforts on your part.

HOW DO YOUR PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS ABOUT STUDENTS INFLUENCE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING ?

RESEARCH has pointed out that higher the level of expectations set and communicated to their students, greater will be the academic performance of those students. The logical explanation for this finding is given in Box

What are the Implications ?

The following 'Tips for Action' help you to improve academic performance of students and hence to make your teaching more effective.

- Set higher level expectations about each student than what you normally have.
- Indicate to each one of them by comments that you believe they are capable of doing better.

- Make students whom you think are of low ability to sit near you even though they prefer to sit farther away; you may rotate positions of all students.
- Provide more challenging tasks than what you normally give especially to students of whom your expectations are low.

TEACHER EXPECTATIONS – a self fulfilling prophecy

Teacher expectations refer to teachers' beliefs about what students can and cannot learn.

Generally, students tend to learn as much as what their teachers expect. The level of expectations of what students can do are communicated to them verbally and non-verbally by their teachers through such behaviours as

- the physical distance maintained in the class in terms of seating position;
- amount of direct instruction received ;
- the number of opportunities given to learn new materials ;
- the quantum and difficulty of work assigned ;
- the level of thought provoked by questions put ; and
- amount of time and help given to respond especially when the answers are wrong.

Except the physical distance on all the above aspects, the quantum or the level of teachers' behaviour is low with such students from whom they expect less in terms of academic performance. When the same students are treated in the counter way, the students contribute more ideas in class discussion, show greater involvement and hence improve in their level of academic performance.

- Pay more attention to students whom you think are below average, by encouraging remarks, giving more thought provoking questions, helping them to respond even if they are wrong.
- Involve students who normally do not show much interest in the classroom and provide more opportunities to learn new material.

- Provide more direct instruction to students in whom you want to set higher levels of expectations.
- Make sure that students are aware of and perceive the high expectations you hold for them.
- Avoid labelling students as dull, lazy, poor in intelligence. Your opinions you hold about your students are likely to be baseless.

You can try doing some of the above activities, on a few selected students. To start with observe the effects.

HOW DOES YOUR ACCEPTANCE OF RESPONSIBILITY INFLUENCE TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS ?

Teaching effectiveness cannot be disassociated from learning. Factors related to both teacher and students affect effectiveness in teaching. How teachers perceive their responsibility for the effectiveness, has also something to contribute.

Research says the following TO KNOW :

- **Teachers who accept responsibility for student outcomes are more effective than teachers who see their students as solely responsible for what they learn and how they behave.**
- **Low-aptitude students achieve much more if their teachers accept responsibility for seeing that all students learn than they do if their teachers attribute the degree of mastery primarily to ability and motivation factors residing solely within the students themselves.**

What are the Implications FOR ACTION ?

- When you face problems related to student adjustment or learning, explore ways of helping the students. Most effective teachers view that such problems need to be corrected rather than endured.

- Avoid turning over the responsibility to someone else like the principal or attempt to control student behaviour by threats of punishment.

SECTION III

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND HOW YOU TEACH

DOES THE WAY YOU TEACH CONTRIBUTE TO EFFECTIVE TEACHING ?

Yes, to a great extent. You have learnt about other factors related to your personality and the given situation over which you cannot do much, but they influence effectiveness in teaching. The ‘way you teach’ is something you can do much about in order to make your teaching effective.

HOW DO THE PERFORMANCE OF DIFFERENT TEACHING ACTIVITIES INFLUENCE EFFECTIVENESS IN TEACHING ?

The way the different teaching activities are performed are likely to influence your effectiveness in teaching. Activities where there are research evidences, are listed below along with implications for practice.

THE WAY YOU COMMUNICATE TO STUDENTS WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THEM AND WHY ?

Just as teachers, students are also likely to behave in accordance with the goals and responsibilities perceived by them. It is desirable if students perceive school as a place of learning important academic knowledge rather than a place to acquire a certificate.

What does Research say ?

Effectie teachers

- help students to understand what is to be learned and why the learning might be useful to them ;
- begin their lessons with explicit statements about what is to be learned and how it relates to what has been learned earlier or will be learned in future ;
- make students understand the reasons behind doing any task.
- Making students clear about what is expected of them and why it appears to be useful in promoting academic achievement.

What are the Implications TO KNOW ?

- Students are more efficient if they have a desire to learn what is being taught.
- Clarification of objectives before teaching helps students to pay selective attention, focus on essentials and to integrate the new learning with what they know earlier.

What are the Implications FOR ACTION ?

- Promote a desire to learn by convincing the students of the value of mastering the subject matter.
- Whenever possible involve students in planning the educational activities as this would increase their desire to learn.
- Motivate students to learn by providing explanations that go beyond the immediate school context.
- Throughout the lesson, monitor the students understand the reasons behind assignments as well as how to complete them.

While planning your lesson, keeping the objectives in view, you select the content from the prescribed curriculum, organize and present it. How you do this job has something to contribute to your effectiveness in teaching.

Conclusion :-

Effective teaching is an evolving concept. It is a complex activity. As teachers we should always be in the process of making our teaching more effective.

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