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**Dr. Pardeep Singh Dehal**  
Assistant Professor,  
Department of Education,  
ICDEOL, HPU Shimla-5,  
India.

## Teacher Effectiveness and its Measurement

**Pardeep Singh Dehal**

Teaching Effectiveness is an act of faith. The most accepted criterion for measuring good teaching is the amount of student learning that occurs. There are consistently high correlations between student's ratings of the 'amount learned' in the course and their overall ratings of the teacher and the course. Those who learned more gave their teacher's higher ratings. It can be said that teaching in the absence of learning is just talking. A teacher's effectiveness is again about student learning. However, all teachers realize that what a student learns is not always within the teacher's control. The literature on teaching is crammed full of well researched ways that teachers can present content and skills that will enhance the opportunities for students to learn. It is equally filled with suggestions of what not to do in the classroom. However, there is no rule book on which teaching methods match up best to which skills/ content that is being taught. Students often have little expertise in knowing if the method selected by an individual instructor was the best teaching method or just "a method" or simply the method with which the teacher was most comfortable.

Teachers also have limited control over many of the most important factors that impact student's learning, including students attitudes, background knowledge of the course content, study and learning skills, time students will spend on their learning, their emotional readiness to learn, and on and on. Since there is clearly a shared responsibility between the teacher and the student as to what that student learns, and because many students are able to learn in spite of the teacher, while others fail despite all of the best efforts of a skilled practitioner, the definition of "teacher effectiveness" appears to be, as Derek Bok put it, "an act of faith" on the part of the students and teachers to do their best.

### Can we always prove that what we do is effective?

In candor, we cannot answer with certainty. But certainty has never been the criterion for educational decisions. Every teacher knows that much of the material conveyed in the classroom will soon be forgotten. The willingness to continue teaching must always rest upon an act of faith that students will retain a useful conceptual framework, a helpful approach to the subject, a valuable method of analysis or some other intangible residue of lasting intellectual value.

Highlights of the findings from some of this research are as follows which will make clear about the connotation of teacher effectiveness.

- Students achieve more when teachers employ systematic teaching procedures (Kemp & Hall, 1992).
- Effective teachers spend more time working with small groups throughout the day (Taylor, Pearson, & Walpole, 1999).
- Greater academic progress occurs when lessons being with review (Kemp & Hall, 1992).
- Effective teachers use systematic feedback with students about their performance (Kemp & Hall, 1992).
- Teachers who have higher rates of communication with parents of viewed as more effective (Taylor, Pearson, & Walpole, 1999).
- Effective teachers run more orderly classrooms. Achievement has been higher in classrooms where the climate is neither harsh nor overly lavish with praise (Kemp & Hall, 1992).

### Correspondence:

**Dr. Pardeep Singh Dehal**  
Assistant Professor,  
Department of Education,  
ICDEOL, HPU Shimla-5,  
India

- Teachers who adjust the difficulty level of material to student ability have higher rates of achievement in their classes (Kemp & Hall, 1992).
- Effective teachers have more students in their classes on task and engaged in learning throughout the day (Taylor, Pearson, & Walpole, 1999).
- Classrooms in which engaged learning occurs have higher levels of student cooperation, student success, and task involvement (Kemp & Hall, 1992).
- Effective teachers clearly articulate rules and include children in discussions about rules and procedures (Kemp & Hall, 1992).
- Effective teachers provide a variety of opportunities for students to apply and use knowledge and skills in different learning situations (Kemp & Hall, 1992).
- Effective teachers are able to pace the amount of information presented to the class, check student progress continually by asking questions of all students, and relate new learning to prior learning (Kemp & Hall, 1992). There is no substitute for a highly skilled teacher.
- Research in other areas indicates that realizing new learning for all students through professional development is an important concept. Professional development keeps teachers abreast of current issues in education, helps them implement innovations and refines their practice.

The most accepted criterion for measuring good teaching is the amount of student learning that occurs. There are consistently high correlations between student's ratings of the "amount learned" in the course and their overall ratings of the teacher and the course. Those who learned more gave their teacher's higher ratings. Teaching in the absence of learning is just talking. A teacher's effectiveness is again about student learning. However, all teachers realize that what a student learns is not always within the teacher's control. Teachers can present content and skills that will enhance the opportunities for students to learn. It is equally filled with suggestions of what not to do in the classroom. However, there is no rule book on which teaching methods match up best to which skills and/ or content that is being taught. Students often have little expertise in knowing if the method selected by an individual instructor was the best teaching method or just 'a method' or simply the method with which the teacher was most comfortable.

Teachers also have limited control over many of the most important factors that impact students learning, including student's attitudes, background knowledge of the course content, study and learning skills, time students will spend on their learning, their emotional readiness to learn, and on and on. Since there is clearly a shared responsibility between the teacher and the student as to what that student learns, and because many students are able to learn in spite of the teacher, while others fail despite all of the best efforts of a skilled practitioner, the definition of "teacher effectiveness" appears to be, as Derek Bok put it, "an act of faith" on the part of students and teachers to do their best.

Recent policies aims at improving teacher quality have begun to make a positive difference in the distribution of qualified teachers to traditionally under-served groups of students. Policymakers are now turning to ways to augment these efforts to evaluate and stimulate greater teacher effectiveness. Because of a desire to recognize and reward teacher's contributions to student learning, a prominent

proposal is to use value-added student achievement test scores as a key measure of teacher's effectiveness. The value-added concept is important, as it reflects a desire to acknowledge teachers contributions to students progress, taking in to account where students begin. However, there are serious technical and educational challenges associated with this approach, which limit its use as a primary measure of individual teacher effectiveness.

The collection of student ratings is not the only way or the best way but rather one way to evaluate instruction. Professionals in the field of teacher evaluation advocate a multiple-source and multiple-method approach to evaluating teaching effectiveness. The collection of student ratings should be combined with data collected from different sources using various methods such as peer review, teaching portfolios, classroom-observations, or self-evaluation(Oray,2001).The use of student ratings for evaluating teacher effectiveness is the single most researched issue in all of higher education.

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