

Teacher as an Agent in Improving Students Learning

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Abstract

The main objective of primary education is to inculcate the basic knowledge about reading, writing and arithmetic among the children. Despite improvement in access and retention, the learning outcome of majority of children continues to be serious concern. Learning of students depend on many factors like infrastructure curriculum, teaching learning process etc, but the most important one is quality teaching. In other words, the quality of teachers. Thus there is a need of improving teachers training programmes especially in the primary level and also make child friendly schools and make teaching respectable and to feel pride in their work.

Key words: achievement, retention, access

The teacher is one of the pillar of the country. Without good and competent teacher no country can progress. The teacher influences the immature mind. According to Franklin D. Roosevelt, we cannot always build the future of our youth but we always build the youth for our future, with the viewpoint, that there should be qualitative importance of a teacher.

Primary level of education is the foundation of all levels. Enhancing access, equity and quality is necessary at all levels of education but more important at primary level of education. Sustained and meaningful access to education is critical for student's achievement. In educational perspective student's learning achievement, ability to apply learned knowledge into practical life and examination result exhibit the quality of education. How well pupil are taught and how much they learn can have a crucial impact on how long they stay in school and how regularly they attend. World Bank (1997) suggested the best way to improve the access is to improve quality of primary

education (which would make coming to school and staying in school). The main objective of quality primary education is to inculcate the basic knowledge about reading, writing and arithmetic among the children. It is expected that after successful completion of primary level of education, a pupil should be able to read, write and solve arithmetic problems. The approach paper of 12th five year plan spells, "Despite improvement in access and retention, the learning outcomes for a majority of children continue to be an area of serious concern. Concerted efforts are required to ensure that a minimum set of cognitive skills are acquired by all children during eight years of elementary education. Thus quality issue and determinants thereof such as ensuring availability of trained teachers, good curriculum and innovative pedagogy that impacts the learning outcome of children must be given priority. Quality of education is dependent on many factors such as curriculum, infrastructure, teaching-learning process, evaluation technique etc. In a school system, teachers are the principal means of proper

implementation of all the educational programmers' and appropriate transaction of curricula within the classroom and outside the classroom. Community can help the teacher in attaining the target of enrolment, retention and achievement and improving overall school effectiveness. Researches shows that involvement of teachers is the most important factor in the success of a school as various useful and creative ideas can be shared. Harry. K. Wrong in his work entitled there is only one way to improve students achievement says that programmers' don't produce achievement, teachers produce student achievement. Therefore successful schools wisely invest in their teachers.

For successful learning there must be quality teaching according to mental status and need of the child. At primary level mere literacy is not enough. Quality education is necessary of the development of a person and society in general. Government of India through the recommendation of 'Operation Blackboard Scheme' has given basic minimum facilities to all the existing schools for quality learning. R.H.Dave (1990) has also suggested minimum level of learning to all children in all schools. A study has been conducted on Parishadiya Prathmik Pathashala of Sitapur district of U.P. In order to know the achievement level, Vth class students were taken and the test used was the test of 'Hindi' and 'Maths' 'Sab Ke Liye Siksha' prepared by S.C.E.R.T. Lucknow, using M.L.L. as a criterion of achievement. It is found that the achievement is very low. No student has achieved Nipuranta and only 1.39% students are heading towards Nipuranta.

According to the ASER (Annual Status of Education Report) released by PRATHAM exposed a shocking picture of the education. Country is falling into dangerous low in terms of quality.

Key facts of ASER

1. Only 30% of standard 3 students could read standard 1 textbook and 50% of standard 3 kids cannot even correctly recognize digits up to 100 where they are suppose to learn two digits subtraction.
2. Unable to improve learning skills of primary school children.
3. The poor quality of education from standard 1 pulls down their rate of learning progressively so that by the time they are standard 5 their level of learning is not comparable with standard 2.
4. Private school also shows a low standard 'a downturn' in maths.
5. Decline in quality is more noticeable since 2010 RTE came into effect indicating target of blanket coverage compromising quality and standard.

School learning study conducted in 2010 by Educational initiative, one of the India's leading testing and assessment firms, main finding are as follows-

1. Learning levels are low (application of concept are lower than rote learning).
2. Mean score across India's public school in standard 4 language test is less than half that of the International mean.

For quality learning, two types of resources are required

1. **Physical resources**– It includes school building, boundary walls, appropriate transportation facilities furniture appropriate to the special needs, sanitation facilities etc.

2.Human resources– These includes principal and teachers working in the school, their qualification, training, experience, aptitude and skills which are very important for the development of the children. Quality education, quality teaching according to the special needs of the children, changing need of the society and in the local context makes the child adaptable in the educational system. A qualified experienced and competent teacher can be an effective indicator with fewer resources than untrained, poorly educated and inexperienced teacher. Competent teachers are the pillars of educational system, without whom it would not be possible to provide quality education. As per RTE act (2009) children have the right to have one qualified and trained teacher for every 30 pupil. Low number of teachers is also affecting the quality of education). The fact is that in the government schools at any given time 25% teachers are on leave for various reasons and many of them are unable to do justice to their profession. About one out of five primary school teachers do not have the requisite minimum academic qualification to ensure children right to quality education. Training is also required for the untrained teachers and also there is a huge gap in training imparted to teachers and to what they practice on the ground. Teachers have to understand the diversity among children in their social, cultural and political context and also need to engage and encourage learner in heterogeneous classroom enabling learning. Apart from quality teaching, teacher has to made learner confident, articulate and self-directed. Education should be free from fear, stress and anxiety. It pays stress on teacher's commitment to learner's all

round development of personality. Teacher have to do academic duties including timely completion of curriculum, providing additional support to children, prohibiting corporal punishment, mental harassment, detention and expulsion of the pupil, ban on private tuition by the teacher. The teacher would be committed to building knowledge, potentiality and talent through a system of child centered education.

Many studies shows that increasing inputs to primary education are unlikely to change the trajectories of students learning in a meaningful way unless accompanied by significant change in pedagogy and improvement in pedagogy and improvement in governance. Though many studies have also shows that teacher salary, training and reducing pupil teacher ratio has limited impact of this investment on improved learning outcome.

Just as water needs the wind to create waves of change so does every man needs a helping hand to achieve the impossible. Teachers have to play a leading role in transforming the children into responsible global citizens by facilitating them acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. For this

1. Teacher should use appropriate resources and learning opportunities to create a learning environment that allow each child to construct his on her own knowledge. There must be active engagement of students in their learning. For this
 - (a) Learning through activities
 - (b) Opportunities for free expression

- (c) Learning through mother tongue or local language
 - (d) Learning according to the need of the learner
2. Teacher will have to work towards a heterogeneous and democratic classroom, in which learner can and will participate in learning process as equal participant.
3. Teacher must encourage student's curiosity and intrinsic motivation to learn and provide students experience so that students become independent, creative and critical thinkers.
4. Emphasis should be given to co-operative work rather than competitive efforts.
5. Teacher should take appropriate measure to protect the child from all forms of physical and mental violence and injury and abuse, neglect, maltreatment exploitation including sexual abuse. So that parents send their children without any worry and learning takes smoothly. Because all these psychological traumas affect the personality of the students which in turn affects learning outcome.
6. Teacher makes themselves available to the students beyond classroom hour and help and guide students without any remuneration or reward. For this local person should be appointed as teachers.
7. Teacher should pay attention to the attainment of the students. For this it must be taken into consideration that teacher main work is commitment to the learner and no work other than teaching and learning should be given to them.
8. Training must be given to the teachers to use innovative and alternative method for street children, children with special needs (inclusive education) and non-enrolled, drop outs etc.
9. In every school there should be a room to read (library hour in timetable). Teacher should motivate students in using this because it has been found that reading books increases the achievement level of the students.
10. As trained teacher are required for quality education. No. of teacher training institutions such as DIET should be increased.
11. For improvement of quality of teachers four years integrated teacher preparation programme and also a course should be introduced namely Bachelor of elementary education.
12. The curriculum of training programme includes
 - (a) Understanding the childhood.
 - (b) Understanding of how children learn and acquire concept.
 - (c) Focus away from teaching as telling and as an outcome directed behaviourist programme to a more cognitive programme.
 - (d) Practical knowledge of school experiences.
 - (e) ICT supported education – Technology can be an effective teaching aid, but it may require higher initial levels of learning to be used effectively
 - (f) Training in comprehensive evaluation.
13. Teacher have to use remedial instructions in order to reduce the variance of achievement in the classroom and ensure that all students are progressing with focusing on those who are logging behind and teaching at level that is appropriate for their achievement. This will reduce the heterogeneity of student's learning level. Remedial instructions have a strong impact on learning outcome.

14. It has been seen that use of logically hired contract teachers on a fixed term who are not professionally trained and who are paid much lower salaries than the regular teacher affects the performance of the students. Under-qualified and untrained teachers will not produce learning outcomes and use of contract teacher de-professionalizing teaching.

15. Thus making child friendly schools, teachers are required to attend school regularly and punctually, complete curriculum instructions assess learning abilities and hold regular parent teachers meetings.

It must be taken care that teacher's performance is not only a function of the quality of their preparation but also the way they are governed, respected and enabled them to feel pride in their work.

classroom process and school effectiveness at primary school.

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