
TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS: A UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Teaching indeed requires professional competence and core pedagogical skills to realize the strengths and weaknesses of the students with individual differences, learning styles and multiple personality types. Teachers deal with students' mix ability and needs in different ways, however, the term "teaching effectiveness" is denoted as the capability, competency, or behavioral characteristic that teachers may possess and utilize to achieve the set teaching goals. According to Geo, Bell, & Little (2008), the measurement of such capability or characteristics of effectiveness is debatable as the roles of effective teacher are not adequately and precisely comprehended at broader level. However, teacher's class management skill, building relationships with stakeholders i.e., students and parents, expertise in the subject area, professionalism, way of teaching and his/ her personality type are different aspects of the teacher effectiveness were considered. The data were collected using self-developed questionnaire based on the identified variables of the study. This questionnaire is used to measure different dimensions of effective teacher at higher education level. The respondents of the study were 115 students of BS programs enrolled in different universities of Islamabad. The data analysis was done by descriptive statistics using mean. The analysis depicted that the students rated their teachers with high mean score and according to their views, teachers have sound personalities, have good knowledge

of the subject, and maintain satisfactory classroom environment. The teachers may try to know the concerns of students and may respond to queries of students in a better way.

KEYWORDS

Teaching effectiveness, students' perspectives, competence

INTRODUCTION

Education is a human activity which is critical for the nurturing of a character in a society. According to Anderson (2004), this is mandatory for the development purpose of human society that we invest in education field. The teaching as an activity is involutedly tedious and complex phenomenon because of its practice with human in a social context. However, expectations of society from teachers are comparatively higher than from other professions. Teaching is a noble and prestigious profession which is honored all around the world as it had greatly influenced the society throughout the history. Therefore, the significance of the teachers is obviously well-known fact. Teachers' roles and responsibilities are multifaceted and multidimensional. As a social practice it demands accountability during the process. (Rao & Kumar, 2004).

There are multiple factors that affect teaching practice throughout its history. According to David and Macayanan (2010), the learning is directly connected to its effectiveness. Particularly, the life of student is eminently influence by educational process. According to many studies, up to 30 percent of the variation in test scores of students each year can be attributed to teachers (Hunt, 2009). This effect can be linked to the fact that this is a process to fill in an empty mind to make it an open one with dedicated and special skills of pedagogical techniques and educational field. In views of de-Ramos (2011), the teachers are supposed to create an atmosphere where students regularly benefit and learn to the optimal level. With significant contributions to their pedagogical process, it is direly needed that the teachers are encouraged to be effective to the fullest. TEMM (2012) recommends that as necessary for the society to encourage teachers to improve themselves to be more effective. Conventionally, many people strived to distinguish effective teachers from ineffective teachers. However, the evaluation failed to measure the difference.

Keeping in view the whole evaluation process, many new ways for the evaluation of teachers were introduced by researchers in their studies in educational field. The alternative ways of evaluation were emerged and applied for the improvement purpose over the time. Jacob and Lefgren (2005) declare that the validity of instruments used to measure the effectiveness of teachers is highly significance and was also reputedly questioned by critics and policy makers.

Previously, it was acknowledged and comprehended by the University administrators that the students are good evaluators and their depiction about classroom environment are more authentic and reliable. As it is not easy to monitor and evaluate what is happening in classrooms or what students are experiencing as learner, during the teachers' evaluation process the contribution of students as respondents to the statements asked in a questionnaire assists university administrator to improve the teaching and learning process equally in the institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To give more light on the apprehensions, this study does not concern about the experiences of the students in the classroom context in general, however, the term teaching effectiveness is used to understand the collective characteristics i.e. skills, competence, capability and behavior related feature of effective teachers (Hunt, 2009). The same is suggested by Burden and Bird (2009) that knowledge, disposition and skills are the highly essential characteristics of the teaching effectiveness (Touzel, Wiseman & Hunt, 2009). In addition, in views of Awofala (2012), teaching effectiveness is a synonym for the performance of each teacher and "is included in the effectiveness of teacher knowledge, attitudes and performance" (Hunt, 2009). The effectiveness of the teacher is important because "all effective teachers are the life of every School"(Kumar,2004). According to Anderson (2004), the characteristics of teachers highly impact the overall teaching effectiveness. These are usually formatted habits and well-built traits of teachers' personalities which are directly connected to the performance of teaching profession and pedagogical practice (Anderson, 2004).

In its essence, the effectiveness of teaching is directly associated with the achievement of the set learning goals of teachers and sometimes by the university seniors or heads. In views of Anderson (2004), they follow the professional standards and ultimately contribute to the national curriculum. Their students feel independent in class. The learners are allowed to achieve "specific goals and learning objectives on a larger scale, such as the ability to problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication". Hunt (2009) states that the teaching effectiveness can be witnessed when the learners in classroom build their needed life skills as team-worker and improve the collaboration skills and ultimately the citizenship is inculcated and improved. The contribution of teachers is not restricted to the classroom; rather it is much about their life beyond the school's wall. In fact, the students are nurtured by the authority and thrive throughout the learning period. They grow and flourish by believing in their actions which contributes to their future (TEMM, 2012).

Similarly, as Hunt (2009) reports that the teaching effectiveness prevails over the period of learning time. It influences full year learning of students qualitatively. Evaluation of the effectiveness of teachers is considered as must since the effective

teachers are a necessity of institutions. The evaluation is critical for the professional growth. David & Macayanan, (2010) declare teachers' evaluation as equivalent to the learning assessment of the students in an academic context. The idea is supported by Hoyt and Pallet (1999) that higher education may prioritize and conduct the evaluation of teachers to lead the way toward efficacy and best performance. Pagani and Seghieri (2002) recommend special measurements and improvement techniques that may help strengthen the overall teaching effectiveness. Bell and Little (2008) view the measurement of effectiveness as an elusive part of teaching because the teaching is a continuing and complex activity; hence it is debatable to conclude teachers' effectiveness. Evaluation of the teachers is more alike students' evaluation.

Keeping in view the fact that the students are stakeholders of the classroom who are directly facilitated by the teachers, their depiction in form of evaluation is more authentic and valid. Burke (2005) views the point of view of the students as quite valuable. They are the ones who experience the real situations and know better about the environment in their classroom. Their evaluation can be proven valuable in this regard. The students may be given chance by the University administrators to play their role in enhancement of quality of their learning. Furthermore, the freedom of expression, independence and ownership may prevail. Burke (2005) also claims that the students' scores either formative or summative are necessarily depiction of the effectiveness of the teaching practice.

Buskist (2002) supports the idea of evaluation by the students and teaching effectiveness as it is multifaceted. It enhances the effectiveness through interactions between stakeholders of classroom. Similarly, the study is multidimensional as it actively supports participant's contribution, management of class rules and clears the point of attention at university level. With a special attention to faculty professional development, other aspects like building relationship, making improvements in managerial and administrative tasks and conducting evaluations are focused on the study which obviously helps in improvement of knowledge and understanding. Moreover, the time allotted for teaching personal and academic research papers is the center of many discussions as senior politicians and education administrators responsible seek to improve the productivity of faculty members. It also includes the traditional methods of teaching in higher education to work on projects and tasks. This also provides guidance after discussions on the subject matter. In views of Brew (1999) it develops the involvement of the students and develops their comprehension of the phenomenon. In addition, Broder and Dorfman (1994) support the view that the higher education determines the teaching quality by ensuring the provision of effectiveness of opportunity to the university students. As stated by Ramsden (1992), the pivotal point and purpose of educational institutes is to enable the learners to learn to the fullest.

Considering the students' evaluation on teaching as a key to quality education, recognition of the significance of the part student play in teacher's evaluation process and their perceptions and comprehension of the roles are the central points of the current study. The study aims at psychometric properties along with development of the scale which assists in measurement of the teaching effectiveness by the students at higher education level. Thousands of studies were conducted on the contrastingly teaching effectiveness, however, the available literature was not sufficient on the teaching characteristics i.e., behavior, competence, and skills. Therefore, the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge of empirical research on the subject matter. Among the existing studies, the development of teacher personality was somewhere less focused. The compact and precise definition was necessary for the comprehension of the teaching effectiveness. The consensus gained from the current study encourages students' contribution to evaluation and to the teaching quality. It side by side helps improve students needed skills like curiosity, critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, citizenship, independence, communication, and ownership in the classroom Killbert and Baker (1990).

In line with Braskamp (1979) views, overall objectives can be achieved in multiple ways across a range of disciplines and contexts of teaching in higher education institutions i.e. presenter, facilitator and director and then revealed ten attributes the effectiveness of the teacher. These traits were then called in two dimensions sympathy Factorized and professional maturity. It is referred to as the first dimension to the major characteristics, while relation to the second dimension of art. Moreover, Al-Ansari (2000) summed up the effectiveness of teachers in the five dimensions of the so-called field or subject knowledge, named preparing and organizing the conferences, communicating with clarity, being enthusiastic, is able to arouse thinking and development of students' interest. The current study has added Islamic orientations as well.

Attempts have been taken for the development of standards for the teaching of the effectiveness of various shapes, just the same centered the respondents answers to the statements/questions. In spite of certain foundation for this kind of assessment in the evaluation of the student at the university, which are used on a large scale opposition has been developing a series of student questionnaires with a difference arises mainly due to the intention of the questionnaire (Ansari, and others, 2000; Sentra, 1979). It is believed student assessment usually for performance and functionality to assist the staff in decision making and managerial tasks, in choice of the suitable course; in developing standardized effective approach etc. Knapper (1977) reports that the students feel more comfortable and volunteered for the evaluation of teachers. Teaching effectiveness is important for student learning aid effective teaching. Quality education has become one of the most import priorities of higher education. Teaching

effectiveness is challenging which never happens accidentally. It demands careful attentions as well as professional development at different phases of education. The assessment of the learners is among the professional responsibilities of the teachers which arise from the dedications and devotions to their profession towards understandings of performance of the students. Students in higher education equally benefit from teaching effectiveness as they also learn to become effective professionals. Teaching effectiveness can be monitored in multiple ways. According to Beck (2005), 12 viable and possible points of teaching effectiveness are there. Following are the details of these sources:

- Classification of the learners (ranking);
- Critique or Review of the peer (as referee)
- Self-assessment (review)
- Visual evidence of the source during practice (video);
- Conference with learners (interviews);
- Degree holders, administrators, and accountable
- Apportions or awards or grants (scholarships);
- Knowledge of the tools use for assessment of the outcomes
- Maintaining portfolios

Variations and sources as above witnessed are offering various measurement tools. This depends on the institution how it allows and arranges such sources of evidence to enhance the effectiveness of teachers. The college may design a rubric along with success criteria which is reviewed by seniors and heads and finally helps improve the overall effectiveness of the teaching practice. However, the goal varies sometimes. The modifications in plans or structures may be applied to various levels or standards. Thousands of studies were conducted on effectiveness of teaching as complex phenomenon and were supported by a large body of empirical research. Apparently, the general indicators are considered, but in depth the written is considered as standard evaluation for teaching effectiveness. Despite the variation and difference of responses of the teachers, it is considered as more authentic way to evaluate teacher's progress through evaluation questionnaire. This evaluation serves multifaceted functions; especially it helps policy makers in decision making, adaptation of the best suitable course and also in formatting rules (Knapper et al. 1977).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

This study was carried out to gather the perspective of students regarding teaching effectiveness at university level.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the view point of students regarding personality of their teachers?
2. Where do the students rate their teachers regarding subject matter expertise?

3. What is the perspective of students regarding their relationship with their teachers?
4. What is professional competence of teachers as per the students?
5. What is view point of students regarding teaching style of their teachers?
6. What are classroom management practices of teachers in universities according to their students?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It was a descriptive study. The questionnaire was used to gauge different dimensions of effective teacher at higher education level. The respondents of the study were 115 students of BS programs enrolled in different universities of Islamabad. The self-developed questionnaire was based on the identified variables of the study including personality, subject matter expertise, and relationship with students, professional competence, teaching style and classroom management. The data analysis was done by descriptive statistics using mean.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Questionnaire

While developing the initiation scale, various conceptual frameworks were examined and contemplated. Proportions and dimensions unfolded during literature review process is categorized into professional competence, subject matter, personality, relationship with learners, classroom management and teaching style. A self-developed instrument based on Likert scale with five options were used. They were codified as 1 for seldom, 2 for sometime, 3 for often, 4 for most of the time and 5 for always. It was administered to the selected sample of students to know about the effectiveness of their teachers. The number of items in questionnaire addressing each dimension of teacher effectiveness is as follows:

Table 1: Dimensions of questionnaire

S No.	Dimension	No of items
1.	Personality	16
2.	Subject matter expertise	07
3.	Relationship with students	15
4.	Professional competence	06
5.	Teaching style	27
6.	Classroom Management	06
	Total items	77

Sample

The respondents of the current study included BS students studying in different programs at universities of Islamabad. The detail of sample is as follows:

Table 2: Sample of the study

S. No.	Name of University	Sample
1.	Quaid e Azam University Islamabad	26
2.	International Islamic University Islamabad	33
3.	National University of Science and Technology	24
4.	National University of Modern Languages	32
	Total	115

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The collected data were put into Microsoft Excel 2007 and was analyzed by using mean score of different dimensions for effective teaching.

Table 4: Personality of the teachers

Dimension of Personality	Mean score
My teachers respect others.	4.27
My teachers think thoroughly before decisions are made.	3.94
My teachers show firmness in making decisions.	3.61
My teachers are always prepared when holding classes.	3.61
My teachers display kindness for others.	3.55
My teachers use reason more than emotions.	3.55
My teachers accept ideas of others.	3.44
My teachers are active.	3.44
My teachers display friendly attitude towards others.	3.0
My teachers socialize with others easily.	2.94
My teachers show predictability of actions.	2.88
My teachers know what I really want from specific subjects.	2.61
My teachers possess good sense of humor.	2.61
My teachers exhibit grace under pressure.	2.5
My teachers accomplish tasks creatively.	2.44
My teachers assume responsibilities for mistakes committed.	2.27
Overall mean of personality	3.17

The depiction of teachers' mean scores and analysis of different universities teaching undergraduate students respect others, have strong personalities but when they are under pressure, they do not exhibit grace.

Table 5: Subject Matter Competence of Teachers

Dimension	Mean Score
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My teachers share information that are only relevant to lessons taught	3.55
My teachers share fascinating ideas of the lesson that interest students	3.5
My teachers respond to queries of students.	3.44
My teachers know the techniques to answer the questions on taught lesson.	3.33
My teachers mastery on lessons taught.	3.27
My teachers thorough understanding of lessons taught	3.05
My teachers exhibit capability and competence to teach variety of subjects	2.77
Overall mean of subject matter competence	3.27

The analysis and mean scores in the table show that teachers have sound subject matter knowledge, they respond to the queries of students, but they only sometimes show ability to teach all subjects.

Table 6: Relationship of teachers with students

Dimensions	Mean score
My teachers exhibit non-threatening behaviors when interacting with students.	3.55
My teachers show approachability with students.	3.55
My teachers have a positive regard of students.	3.5
My teachers extend help to students.	3.5
My teachers display open-mindedness in issues concerning students	3.22
My teachers exhibit fair treatment of students.	3.16
My teachers have high expectations for students	3.166
My teachers display sensitivity to the needs of students.	3.05
My teachers solicit students' feedback.	3.05
My teachers communicate often with students.	3.05
My teachers welcome comments from students.	2.94
My teachers interact with students outside of class hours.	2.88
My teachers make students feel they belong	2.72
My teachers believe in the potential of students	2.66
My teachers show interest to know more about students	2.61
Overall relationship with students	3.11

The analysis about relationship of teachers with students depict that they have positive regard of students, they communicate often with students, but they only sometimes believe in the potential of students and show little interest in knowing more about students.

Table 7: Professional Competence of Teachers

Dimension	Mean score
My teachers show dedication to the teaching profession.	3.33
My teachers observe ethical conduct in the teaching profession	3.27
My teachers serve as positive role model to students.	3.27
My teachers observe proper dress code.	3.16
My teachers give appropriate assessment of students.	3.05
My teachers show passion for teaching.	2.88
Overall mean of professional competence	3.16

The table and analysis illustrate that students feel their teachers are dedicated to teaching profession and show professional competence, but there is need to show passion for teaching.

Table 8: Teaching Style

Dimension	Mean score
My teachers give plenty of examples relevant to lessons.	3.72
My teachers manage time in the classroom well.	3.66
My teachers explain complicated lessons well.	3.55
My teachers, welcome students' participation in classroom discussions	3.55
My teachers announce requirements ahead of time	3.55
My teachers choose relevant strategies to maximize students' learning gains	3.55
My teachers elicit enthusiasm among students when teaching	3.444
My teachers set realistic goals for students to accomplish.	3.44
My teachers give instructions clearly	3.38
My teachers consider the morality growth during teaching	3.38
My teachers make learners the center of learning.	3.33
My teachers arrange provision of activities which inculcate critical thinking	3.33
My teachers relate lessons to real life situations.	3.27
My teachers encourage students to be hard working.	3.27
My teachers provide many examples to help students learn difficult topics	3.22
My teachers provide students with activities relevant to lessons	3.16
My teachers use a variety of instructional strategies.	3.16
My teachers give opportunities by coming up with different activities and appreciate students to be responsible.	3.16
My teachers encourage students to raise questions	3.16

My teachers give a lot of activities aimed at facilitating students' intellectual development.	3.11
My teachers interact with students during class discussions.	3.05
My teachers communicate ideas effectively.	3.0
My teachers can come up with differentiated tasks to meet the need of all the students in classroom	3.0
My teachers encourage students to analyze lessons.	2.94
My teachers incorporate creativity in delivering of lessons.	2.88
My teachers use instructional equipment/materials effectively	2.83
My teachers make learning enjoyable for students.	2.55
Overall mean of Teaching style	3.25

The students' views about their teaching style portray that the teachers engage them in different activities, encourage them to ask questions, but they may work for making the learning enjoyable for students.

Table 9: Classroom Management

Dimension	Mean score
My teachers show keenness to inappropriate behaviors.	3.38
My teachers enlist classroom rules for students to follow.	3.16
My teachers maintain discipline in class.	3.16
My teachers try to know the concerns of students	3.16
My teachers acknowledge positive behaviors.	3.05
My teachers maintain the absence of classroom disruptions.	2.77
Overall mean of classroom management	3.12

When the students were asked to give their views about the classroom management practices of their teachers at universities, they expressed that their teachers show concerns about inappropriate behavior of students and set class rules for them. According to students' views teachers may exhibit their keenness to maintain absence of classroom disruptions.

Table 10: Mean score of dimensions of teaching effectiveness

Dimension	Mean Score
Overall mean of personality	3.17
Overall mean of subject matter competence	3.27
Overall mean of relationship with students	3.11
Overall mean of professional competence	3.16
Overall mean of Teaching style	3.25

Overall mean of classroom management	3.12
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It is evident from the table that the students rate their teachers high. According to students' perspective their teachers have very good command on subject matter knowledge, they have good teaching style, and they have impressive personalities and are professionally competent. The teachers exhibit good classroom management skills and have sound relationship with their students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the students think positive about their teachers and rate them high on almost all dimensions of teachers' personalities and competence, yet the teachers may improve their relationship with students and bring novelty in their teaching. The teachers may try to know the concerns of students and may respond to queries of students in a better way.

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