

Characteristics of An Effective School: An Empirical Study



Sandeep Kaur
Research Scholar,
Deptt.of Education,
Punjabi University,
Patiala, Punjab



Kulwinder Singh
Professor,
Deptt.of Education and
Community Service,
Punjabi University,
Patiala, Punjab

Abstract

The study was intended to identify the more-effective and less-effective schools; to make out the difference between less-effective and more-effective schools in terms of physical facilities, principal's and teachers' performance and students' performance. Descriptive method of research, followed by evaluative approach, was used in the conduct of present study. The universe of the study was secondary schools of the state of Punjab comprising of three districts namely Ludhiana, Bathinda and Mansa were selected on random basis with due consideration to high, average and low literacy rate districts of Punjab. 60 schools were selected from all these three districts, affiliated to Punjab School Education Board, Mohali. *School Inventory* was administered to the 60 principals' or its nominee of selected schools, who is conscious to all the activities of the school. The *School Inventory* consists of three major dimensions such as: *Physical facilities; Principals and Teachers Performance and Students performance* was developed by the researcher.

Keywords: Effective School, Infrastructural Facilities, Principals' and Teachers' Performance, Students' Performance.

Introduction

School is an institution where students come for learning and developing desired behaviours. These are the institutions where the students of a specific age group and ability level have common goals to pursue, common curriculum to transact and common rules and norms to observe. But schools as individual institutions have their own definite standards and expectations to make a distinction among other schools and to perpetuate their own value system and culture. Some schools hard work to lay down code of behaviour for their teachers, administrators, students, and parents to develop a specific school setting and a congenial school environment aimed at excellence in performance on the part of students. School effectiveness includes all the contextual variables related with school such as teaching, learning, administration, students' motivation and community involvement. School effectiveness implies choice of certain values, programmes, inputs, processes and outputs to create a special achievement potential in teachers and students.

One can compare one's own school and individual performance against a set of benchmarks and criteria from the international literature on school effectiveness and school improvement. In terms of school effectiveness it is possible to identify several characteristics of effective schools. For example, Rutter et al. (1979) identified eight main characteristics: (1) school ethos;(2) effective classroom management; (3) high teacher expectations; (4) teachers as positive role models; (5) positive feedback and treatment of students; (6) good working conditions for staff and students; (7) students given responsibility and (8) shared staff-student activities. School improvement concerns the raising of students' achievements and the school's ability to manage change (Reynolds et al. 2001). An effective school is defined as a school where cognitive, affective, psychomotor, social and aesthetic developments of students are supported in the best way (Bakirci et al., 2012).

Aim of the Study

1. To identify the effective schools in Punjab.
2. To find out the differences between less-effective and more-effective schools in relation to physical facilities, Principal's and Teachers' performance and Students' performance.

Hypothesis

1. More-effective schools will be having better physical facilities, principal's and teachers' performance and students' performance.

Methodology

Descriptive method of research, followed by evaluative approach, was used in the conduct of present study.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The universe of the study was secondary schools of the state of punjab comprising of three districts namely Ludhiana, Bathinda and Mansa were selected on random basis with due consideration to high, average and low literacy rate districts of punjab. 60 schools were selected from these three districts , affiliated to Punjab School Education Board, Mohali. Thus, 60 School Headmasters/ Principals were included in the final sample for study.

Tool: *School Inventory:* For Headmaster/ Headmistress (self- structured).

Analysis and Discussion of Results

1. Identification of More- effective and Less-effective Schools

For identification of less-effective schools and more-effective schools, the *School Inventory* was administered to the principals' or its nominee who is conscious of all the activities of the school of the 60 randomly selected schools from the three districts naming Ludhiana, Mansa and Bathinda. The overall scores of all the listed schools were arranged in descending order according to their *School Inventory* score and systematically tabulated which is presented in table 1.

Table 1
Frequency Distribution of all the Selected Schools (N=60) on the Basis of Composite Scores Obtained on School Inventory

Class Interval	Frequency	Percentage
61-65	2	3.33
56-60	10	16.67
51-55	17	28.33
46-50	16	26.67
41-45	9	15.00
36-40	4	6.67
31-35	2	3.33
Total	60	100
<i>Mean=49.17, Median=50.5, Mode=54.84, S.D. = 6.96, Minimum score= 34.87, Maximum score= 61.5, Q₁= 46.61, Q₃= 54.62</i>		

Further the scores were classified into two groups on the basis of their effectiveness i.e. more-effectiveness and less effectiveness by adopting the criteria of Q₃ and Q₁ i.e. schools scoring above 54.62 marks were included in more-effective schools. Those scoring less than 46.61 marks were included in the less-effective schools. Finally, 15 more effective schools and 15 less- effective schools were classified and remaining ones were considered as average effective schools.

1.1 Significance of Difference Between More-Effective and Less-Effective Schools on Physical Facilities; Principal's and Teachers' Performance and Students' Performance

To find out the difference between more-effective and less-effective schools on physical facilities; principal's and teachers' performance and

students' performance the analysis has been done in the following paragraphs and tables.

Table 2
Significance of Difference Between the More-Effective and Less-Effective Schools (N=30)

Parameter	School Effectiveness		t-value
	More-Effective Schools	Less-Effective Schools	
Physical facilities	Mean=37.16 SD =1.68	Mean=24.80 SD =4.05	10.163**
Principals' and teachers' performance	Mean=11.57 SD=2.46	Mean=8.82 SD=1.93	2.581*
Students' performance	Mean=9.47 SD=1.88	Mean= 6.67 SD=1.59	2.956*
Overall	Mean=58.20 SD=2.11	Mean=40.29 SD=2.35	16.673**

*: 0.05 level of significance, **: 0.01 level of significance.

In table 2 data regarding physical facilities in schools have been presented. The mean score of availability of physical facilities in more effective schools is 37.16 with SD of 1.68 whereas for less effective schools mean score is 24.80 with SD of 4.05. The mean value of more effective schools is higher than that of less effective schools which indicates that more availability of physical facilities is there in more effective schools than less effective schools. The computed t-value is 10.163 which is found to be significant at 0.01 level of significance. Hence it is interpreted that more effective schools and less effective schools differs significantly in terms of availability of physical facilities.

Table 2 further highlights account of performance of principals and teachers in schools. It has been found that mean score for more effective schools is 11.57 with SD of 2.46 whereas mean score for less effective schools is 8.82 with SD of 1.93. It can be interpreted that performance of principals and teachers in more effective schools is better than that of less effective schools. The computed t-value is 2.581 which is found to be significant at 0.05 level of significance. Hence it is interpreted that more effective schools and less effective schools differs significantly in terms of overall performance of principals and teachers.

In table 2, difference in performance of students in schools has also been presented. It has been evident from the above table that students studying in more effective schools perform better (Mean 9.47 and SD 1.88) as compared to students studying in less effective schools (Mean 6.67 and SD 1.59). The mean value for more effective schools is higher than that for less effective schools. The computed t-value is 2.956 which is found to be significant at 0.05 level of significance. Hence it is interpreted that more effective schools and less effective schools differs significantly in terms of students' performance.

It also shows the difference in overall facilities and performance of schools. Mean score for more effective schools is 58.20 with SD of 2.11 whereas for less effective schools, mean score is

40.29 and SD is 2.35. The mean value of more effective schools is higher than that of less effective schools. It has been evident from the data that more effective schools have more facilities and greater performance than that of less effective schools. The computed t-value is 16.673 which is found to be significant at 0.01 level of significance.

Thus, it is interpreted that more effective schools and less effective schools differs significantly in terms of physical facilities; principal's and teachers' performance and students' performance.

Hence, the Hypothesis-1 of the study that more- effective schools will be having better physical facilities; principals' and teachers' performance and students' performance is accepted.

The findings can be seen in the light of research studies conducted by a number of researchers' naming Dash (2007) conducted a study on school effectiveness and organisation of learning and community participation and found that physical facilities, principal's, teachers', students' performance, school environment play a vital role in making a school effective. Ranjan (2012) further confirmed by conducting a research study on school effectiveness found that both human and non-human facilities in schools are associated with school effectiveness. Chauhan (2013) found that there is a significant difference in the mean scores of more effective and less effective schools on physical facilities, school heads' performance, teachers' performance and performance of the students. This finding is also in line with the present study.

Educational Implications

The present study revealed that the schools having the better physical facilities, principal's / teacher's performance and student's performance were identified as more effective schools. So, it becomes obligatory to diagnose the areas in which less effective schools are deficient. Educational authorities should take required steps in arranging quality human and non-human resources so as to enhance the performance of the teachers as well as students in order to increase school effectiveness. Quality education raises many issues such as curriculum renewal, textbooks improvement, effective teacher education, better teaching methods, and provision of material facilities in the schools. Improving the working of

teacher's in schools, progressive methods of evaluation, democratising school administration, provision of rich and varied programme of co-curricular activities, healthy school community interaction. Indeed the issue of wastage, dropouts, stagnation and improvement of quality of secondary education are interlinked. While appreciable efforts have been made, much need to be done and most probably one of the crucial step is to improve the quality of education at secondary level is to ascertain the effectiveness with which schools are imparting education at secondary stage.

Conclusion

It is concluded that there is no universal remedy that can be applied for all schools, but there were patterns that identified how schools prove advantageous to student achievement. The most common characteristics in all schools are availability of physical facilities, principals and teacher's performance, student performance, teacher engagement of students, small class size, high expectations about behavior and academics, dedicated and caring staff, and structured daily practices.

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