CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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TEACHER PERSONALITY AND TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS: AN OVERVIEW

"The quality of a nation depends on the quality of its citizens. The qualities of citizens depend upon the quality of their education. The quality of their education depends to a considerable extent upon the quality of their teachers."

Teachers occupy a pivotal position in any progressive society. Whether viewed as a model, a director, a supervisor, a guide, or a leader, the task of a teacher is crucial in moulding the youth. They become contributing individuals of the society. Philosophers, psychologists and great leaders of the twenty first century have highlighted the significance of the role of a teacher in the society, and the part he plays directly or indirectly in the building up of a nation. During 1966, the late president of India, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan observed that the teacher’s place in the society is of vital importance. He acts as a pivot for the transmission of intellectual traditions, and technical skill, from generation to generation, and helps to keep the lamp of civilization
burning. He not only guides the individual, but also to say, the destiny of the nation.

The emphasis here is on ‘teacher personality’ which influences the younger generation continuously, and one can never tell where his influence stops.

In olden days, there were very cordial relations between the teacher, and the taught. The teacher enjoyed a unique position in the society, full freedom in his work, and received substantial help and encouragement. The teacher devoted himself whole-heartedly to the mission of teaching, learning, and development of desirable personality characteristics in children. But, the present situation is quite different. Sri. Aurabindo has summed up the fundamental change that has occurred in the role of teachers thus.

The first principle of true teaching is that nothing can be taught. The teacher is not an instructor, or task master. He is a helper, and guide, his business is to suggest, and not to impose. He does not actually train the pupil’s mind, he only shows him how to perfect his instruments of knowledge, and helps, and encourages in the process. He does not impart knowledge to him; he shows him how to acquire it. He does not call forth the knowledge that is within; he only shows him where it lies and how it can be habituated to the surface.
The above said expanded role of teacher necessitates effective teaching skills and very good personality traits.

Now-a-days, a ‘sensitive’ teacher, a teacher who possesses the heart of a poet, the eye of a scientist, the faith of a saint, and the hand and head of a writer is not so common, and also, the status of teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of a society.

It is in the fitness of things that research studies are needed in the areas of teacher personality, as well as the value system of teachers, their attitudes and behaviour in relation to teacher effectiveness. A competent teacher is generally considered to be one who is not only intelligent, personally desirable, and socially adequate but also professionally able with optimum motivation for work.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRESENT INVESTIGATION

Teachers are the builders of the society. It is their responsibility to set a strong foundation to the pillars of nation, and also raise them to great heights. But these lofty operations can come true only when they perform their duties with dedication, and sincerity which is possible only when their personality is adequately developed.

The teacher of today has to be quite different from that of his predecessors. He should make the teaching-learning process a joyful experience, and not a sordid soulless activity for students. He should perennially be involved in the creation of new knowledge, and concepts. He should have a vision for the future; the kind of society to be built.
Researches showed that the teacher is probably the single most important factor affecting student’s achievement, and the more can be done to improve student achievement by improving the effectiveness of teacher than by any other single factor.

The influence of teachers’ personality on his teaching performance has been a fertile area of educational research during the past few decades. How the personality of the teacher interacts with his teaching ability is a critical factor in teacher effectiveness. The changing role of teacher from that of a dispenser of knowledge, to that of innovator, stimulator, motivator, helper, and agent of social change presumes that teachers possessing certain specific personality traits alone can perform any of these roles effectively (Baez, 1976).

Personality traits which determine teaching success could be obviously subject specific. A personality trait which influences the teaching success in one subject, for example literature, may turn out to be a hindering influence in the teaching success of another subject like Mathematics. Identification of the personality traits associated with success in teaching a particular subject has not received the attention of researchers. The present study is an attempt to identify the personality traits essential for an effective Mathematics teacher.

A glance at the present scenario of Mathematics education is quite distressing. It is generally observed that there is a sense of fear, and dislike for Mathematics in many of our students. While comparing the achievement in various subjects, majority of the students got low
scores in Mathematics. Various researchers have shown that there is significant relationship between student achievement, and teacher effectiveness. So the Mathematics teaching should be effective which in turn demands certain personal traits in teachers.

The new taxonomies insist that the outcomes of instruction should go beyond cognitive domain. Newly developed Mathematics curriculum gives emphasis to affective variables like values, interest, and attitudes, in one hand, and skills like psychomotor variables, on other hand. This forced the investigator to give greater attention to the personality of Mathematics teachers.

It is also believed in this context that the present study will be useful in identifying a list of generalized personality variables which predict teacher effectiveness in Mathematics. These findings will provide insight to the Mathematics teachers, and teacher educators to modify their thoughts, and actions according to the needs, and objectives of present day Mathematics education.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The topic for the investigation has been stated as:

PERSONALITY AND TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS - AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON MATHEMATICS TEACHERS.
OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Personality

The key term ‘personality’ stands for an individual’s unique pattern of traits (Guilford, 1959). Here, trait is defined as any distinguishable relatively enduring way in which one individual differs from others. Personality in this study stands for a representative set of ten affective variables, namely, Quality of life, Teacher attitude, Critical thinking, Leadership style, Gregariousness, Objectivity, Stability, Autonomy, Endurance, and Emotional adjustment. For the present investigation, the term personality indicates the scores obtained on the psychological test, viz., ‘A Test Battery of Personality Factors’ used for measuring personality.

Teacher Effectiveness

The term ‘Teacher Effectiveness’ refers to the degree of success of a teacher in performing instructional, and other duties specified in his contract, and demanded by the nature of his position. The scores obtained by a teacher on “An Index of Teacher Effectiveness” is taken as the score for the variable teacher effectiveness. Here for each item in the index, the investigator rates the teacher while observing his/her performance in the actual teaching-learning situation in a classroom.

Mathematics Teacher

The term ‘Mathematics Teacher’ as used in the present investigation implies the teacher who teaches mathematics in high schools.
An Analytical Study

The term 'an analytical study' implies the analysis of data collected for the study with the help of various statistical techniques to throw light on the hypotheses formulated for the present study. The term also implies analyses done on various categories of Mathematics teachers on the basis of personality variables and teacher effectiveness.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following were the major objectives of the investigation:

1. To construct and standardize 'A Test Battery of Personality Factors' for measuring the personality of Mathematics teachers in terms of ten selected variables, namely, Quality of life, Teacher attitude, Critical thinking, Leadership style, Gregariousness, Objectivity, Stability, Autonomy, Endurance, and Emotional adjustment.

2. To construct and standardize 'An Index of Teacher Effectiveness'.

3. To find out the difference, if any, in the ten personality variables of Mathematics teachers based on the background variables, namely, sex, locality, teaching experience, type of management, religion, and community.

4. To find out the difference, if any, in teacher effectiveness of Mathematics teachers based on background variables.

5. To find out the correlations among the ten personality variables used in the study.
6. To find out the correlation of teacher effectiveness with the personality variables, namely, Quality of life, Teacher attitude, Critical thinking, Leadership style, Gregariousness, Objectivity, Stability, Autonomy, Endurance, and Emotional adjustment.

7. To elicit the common factors yielded by the ten personality variables and teacher effectiveness.

MAJOR HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were formulated for this investigation:

1. There will be significant difference between Mathematics teachers categorized on the basis of sex, locality, teaching experience, type of management, religion, and community on the ten variables of personality, namely, Quality of life, Teacher attitude, Critical thinking, Leadership style, Gregariousness, Objectivity, Stability, Autonomy, Endurance, and Emotional adjustment.

2. There will be significant difference between various categories of Mathematics teachers classified on the basis of sex, locality, teaching experience, type of management, religion, and community on teacher effectiveness.

3. There will be positive and significant correlations among the ten personality variables under study.

4. The variable teacher effectiveness will correlate positively and significantly with the ten personality variables under study.
5. Factor analysis of the ten personality variables and teacher effectiveness will yield significant factors with moderate or high loadings of the variables on it.

METHODOLOGY IN BRIEF

a. Population

The population in the present investigation constituted Mathematics teachers working in high schools of Kanyakumari, and Tirunelveli districts of Tamilnadu.

b. Sample

The sample for the present investigation consisted of 300 Mathematics teachers selected from various schools of Kanyakumari, and Tirunelveli districts of Tamil Nadu by using stratified sampling technique. While selecting the sample, due consideration was given to factors such as sex (147 male Mathematics teachers, and 153 female Mathematics teachers), locality (135 rural Mathematics teachers, and 165 urban Mathematics teachers), teaching experience (141 Mathematics teachers having teaching experience above ten years, and 159 Mathematics teachers having teaching experience below ten years), type of management (155 Mathematics teachers from government schools, and 145 Mathematics teachers from private schools), religion (102 Hindu Mathematics teachers, 137 Christian Mathematics teachers, and 61 Muslim Mathematics teachers). Community (119 forward caste Mathematics teachers, 141 backward caste Mathematics teachers, and 40 scheduled caste Mathematics teachers).
c. Tools used

The following tools were used for the study

I. ‘A Test Battery of Personality Factors’ for measuring the ten personality variables, namely, Quality of life, Teacher attitude, Critical thinking, Leadership style, Gregariousness, Objectivity, Stability, Autonomy, Endurance, and Emotional adjustment (Constructed and standardized by S. Sreelatha, Dr. B. Krishna Prasad, and Dr. A. Amal Raj, 2006).

II. ‘An Index of Teacher Effectiveness’ (Constructed and standardized by S. Sreelatha, Dr. B. Krishna Prasad, and Dr. A. Amal Raj, 2006).

III. Personal Information Schedule (developed by the investigator for the present investigation).

d. Procedure for data collection

The investigator used Normative Survey method for this study. After obtaining permission from the authorities, the investigator met the Mathematics teachers to collect the relevant data individually, as explained below.

Rapport was established with each teacher before the commencement of data collection. The Personal Information Schedule was being filled and then the Test Battery of Personality Factors was administered.
An appointment was fixed with each teacher for observing his/her class, so that the Index of Teacher Effectiveness could be filled in by the investigator. For this purpose, expert opinion was sought from superiors like headmasters or principals whenever necessary. The fact that the investigator is a teacher educator evaluating the teaching competency of prospective teachers for the purpose of university examinations for more than one decade was of immense help for her to fill in the Index of Teacher Effectiveness.

The responses were scored as per instruction and were consolidated for analysis using computer facilities.

e. Statistical techniques used for analysis

The test of significance of difference between means of large independent samples (t-test), Analysis of Variance (Anova) followed by Scheffe procedure, Pearson product-moment method of correlation (r), and Factor Analysis were the important statistical techniques used for analysis of the data.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The delimitations of the present investigation were the following:

1. The scope of the study was limited to ten personality variables, namely, Quality of life, Teacher attitude, Critical thinking, Leadership style, Gregariousness, Objectivity, Stability, Autonomy, Endurance, and Emotional adjustment.
2. The sample for the investigation consisted of Mathematics teachers working in Kanyakumari and Tirunelveli districts in Tamilnadu.

3. The sample for the study was limited to three hundred Mathematics teachers of high school classes.

4. The analysis of data was done using t test, Anova, Pearson product moment method of correlation, and Factor analysis as statistical techniques.

5. Other-rating technique (Rating by the investigator) alone was used for measuring Teacher effectiveness.

ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

The present investigation is reported under five chapters. The need and significance of the study is presented in Chapter I, along with the objectives, major hypotheses, and a brief note on the methodology of the investigation. The theoretical overview of the various key concepts, viz., personality, and teacher effectiveness are given under Section A in Chapter II, while Section B of the chapter deals with related studies conducted in the area.

Development of psychological tests, and the plan and procedure for the investigation including details of the sample, variables and statistical techniques used for analysis are presented in Chapter III. Chapter IV deals with the analysis of data and interpretation of results. The summary of the study, conclusions, implications, and suggestions for further research are presented in Chapter V.
The report is presented following the guidelines suggested in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (American Psychological Association, 2002). The references and appendixes are given towards the end of the report.