

Identifying an effective teacher in public schools in Delhi

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Researchers



Deepti Goel

Assistant Professor, Delhi School of Economics



Bidisha Barooah

Researcher, University of Delhi

The Annual Status of Education Reports have focused on schooling outcomes among 6-14 year olds in rural India. They have found almost universal enrolment, but highlight abysmally low levels of learning (of all the students enrolled in class V, about half cannot read class II level). In this background, the debate in India has shifted from increasing enrolment to improving learning. Motivated by this, we look at senior secondary (Grades XI and XII)

government schools in Delhi to understand what factors determine a student's performance in exams. A primary focus is to understand the role of teachers and to identify the traits that make an effective teacher.

This would be the first micro-study to look at how government schools function in India. Another IGC sponsored study by Azam and Kingdon (2015), looked at the role of teachers in *private* schools in Uttar Pradesh. Our study would be a useful complement to theirs. We also extend their analysis by attempting to identify an effective teacher. In fact, several studies, including theirs, have found that things like teacher qualifications and experience do not matter for teacher quality. What then characterises a good teacher remains a black box. We hope to fill this gap.

Given that teachers in government schools are paid more than their private counterparts, public schools cannot be faulted on the grounds of poor compensation. Perhaps what is needed to improve learning outcomes in these schools is strategies to identify intrinsically motivated individuals who are inspired to teach even in the absence of career incentives that reward better performance. By identifying personality traits that characterize a good teacher, our findings could be used to redesign recruitment strategies in government schools.

Design and methodology

We will draw a representative sample of about 20 schools from all senior secondary government schools located within Delhi.

We consider only Grade 12 students who would be taking their final examination in May 2016. We will administer a student and a teacher survey to all Grade 12 students and their teachers. The primary aim of these surveys is to capture individual traits such as motivation levels, intrinsic abilities and inclinations.

Students will be matched with subject specific teachers, and scores in their forthcoming XII exams will be obtained. In order to quantify teacher effectiveness, we exploit variation in performance across subjects for a given student and correlate this with variation in subject specific teacher characteristics. By comparing performance across subjects for a given student at the same point in time we are able to control for other confounding factors, and are also able to account for non-random matching of students with teachers. Finally, to identify an effective teacher, we try to explain the teacher fixed effects using data on personal characteristics of teachers.

Project outputs



Deepti Goel, Bidisha Barooah
Project report

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