

Teachers' Sense of Responsibility: The Key of Successful Teaching

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ABSTRACT

Teachers are the real architects of a nation and their competency, performance and sense of responsibility are crucial factors for successful nation-building. Teachers' sense of responsibility is a key factor for the successful teaching-learning process. It refers to the sense of obligation and commitment towards the profession to produce anticipated outcomes. Reflecting on the importance of this factor, the present study aimed to examine secondary and college teachers' sense of responsibility towards different dimensions related to the teaching profession. The sample of the study consisted of both in-service and prospective teachers. The study employed the descriptive survey method and both quantitative, as well as qualitative approaches, were used in the analysis of collected data. Overall the study found a high level of sense of responsibility among teachers. Whereas, the study found a disparity in results concerning the different demographic variables and distinct dimensions.

Keywords *Sense of responsibility, commitment, in-service and pre-service teachers, accountability.*

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Introduction

The quality of a nation depends on the quality of its citizens and the quality of its citizens depends on the quality of the education. The quality of education depends to a great extent upon the quality of the teachers. The Kothari commission (1964-66) rightly pointed out that the teacher is undoubtedly the most important factor to determine the overall quality of education (Edugyan, 2017). Teachers are responsible for shaping the destiny of the country. Therefore they are called architects of society and the makers of mankind. In the whole educational process, teachers are the actual backbone. The quality and

standard of an education system largely depend on the quality, characteristics and commitment of the teachers of their profession. Therefore, the professional education of the teacher is very essential for the qualitative improvement of the education system. The term responsibility refers to the state of being accountable or answerable to do something that is someone's job or duty. Responsibility also refers to an obligation to perform certain functions to achieve certain results. The people who are responsible for a particular work don't make any kind of excuses for their actions and never blame others when things go in a working way. When we talk about accountability, it arises out

of responsibility. The person who accepts responsibility is also accountable for his performance. Sense of responsibility includes conscious awareness, a sense of security, a sense of self and a sense of danger. A sense of responsibility is an awareness of one's obligations.

The concept of teachers' sense of responsibility is less explored and it is distinct from teachers' competency. A teacher's sense of responsibility can be defined as a sense of obligation and commitment to produce or prevent anticipated outcomes. In today's competitive and student-centric educational endeavor, the realization of teachers' responsibility is very vital for satisfactory educational outcomes. If the teachers' sense of responsibility is approach-oriented, they will work to produce desired outcomes (Lauermann and Karabenick, 2013). Whereas, teachers with an avoidance-oriented sense of responsibility cannot influence the desired positive outcomes in education. Being important professionals, teachers are greatly responsible for the larger societal benefit. Teachers' sense of responsibility has very important implications for developing a sound outlook, positive attitude, motivation, professional dedication, and self-regulation in their profession (Higgins, 1997). It is also having a positive influence on job satisfaction, teachers' willingness and finally in students' achievement (Guskey, 1988; Lee and Smith, 1997).

A teacher must be responsible for one's actions. It is said that it is the teachers who are responsible to shape the future of the country. Chanakya had said that the destruction or construction of a country lies in a teacher's lap. Such is the responsibility of the teacher. And it does because of that teacher have been accorded a very high status in the society. Every teacher must keep in mind that they are dealing with the human mind and not with the machines. The target of teachers' responsibility is generally considered to be their students; a qualitative study conducted with high school teachers indicated that teachers may also feel

responsible to parents, employers, colleagues, the community, their families, and to themselves (Fischman et al., 2006).

Review of Related Studies

Diamond et al. (2004) argued that the teachers' beliefs about the students' potentialities and the teachers' responsibilities towards students are deeply correlated or dependent on each other as well as for guiding teachers' expectations and sense of responsibilities the organizational habits are important. Lauermann and Karabenick (2013) stated that teacher responsibility is conceptually and empirically distinct from self-efficacy and that the associations between responsibility and self-efficacy vary by the type of educational outcome. Matteucci and Kopp (2013) examined the relationship between contextual and personal variables like school climate, self-efficiency, beliefs, motivations as well as implicit theories of intelligence are linked with responsibility and shapes teachers' sense of responsibility. Aliakbari and Kafshgar (2013) revealed significant statistical relationships between a sense of responsibility for student motivation and two of job satisfaction sub-scales; supportive administration and job characteristics. The results showed that demographic factors influence various aspects of these two variables. Khany and Ghoreishi (2014) study revealed that transformational leadership style is a very positive predictor of teachers' sense of responsibility. Therefore, higher transformational leadership styles can contribute to a higher sense of responsibility, which ultimately affects the whole students' learning and also helps them to achieve their goals of education. Gunduz (2016) emphasized the kind of responsibility that has been formed on the students or learners when a teacher performs his/her responsibility. Teachers feel more reliable when s/he provides the learners' some sense of reliability. Therefore teachers' success and responsibility depend on the trust and sense of devotion to knowledge from the student's side. Matteucci et al (2017). Stated that, in the teachers' sense of personal responsibility, both the contextual

and person-specific factors can contribute a lot and that sense of responsibility can have positive implications for teachers' instructional practices as well as for wellbeing. Lu (2017) stated that in terms of teaching English, the college teachers' sense of responsibility is determined by three factors including recognition of identity, teaching regulations and teaching activities. The college English teachers' sense of responsibility can be interpreted both legally and morally. Matteucci et al (2017) stated that a positive predictor of teacher responsibility can emerge from their perception of their school's climate as well as the teacher's sense of teaching self- effectiveness. Moreover, the level of teaching, work engagement and job satisfaction can indicate the teachers' sense of responsibilities. Waters (2014) emphasized on inclusion of character education coursework in the curriculum of teacher education programs in preparation for secondary school teachers. It can create a good role model for future students. But sometimes the teacher preparation program faced some challenges in terms of preparing teachers for the task of character education.

Need and Significance of the Study

Teachers are the real builder of the nation. They are one of the important determinants upon which the quality of education is depending. A teacher is someone who works selflessly for the all-round development of the students. The role and responsibility of the teacher are multiple in the life of the students. One of the main responsibilities of the teacher is to create an environment where learners can feel safe to express their views freely and can learn things without any kind of hesitation. Teachers' sense of responsibility plays a very important role in developing a sound outlook, positive attitude, motivation, professional dedication, and self-regulation in their profession. Moreover, it is considered as the key to the successful teaching-learning process. Sense of responsibility refers to how teachers themselves view their responsibilities and the conditions under

which they are willing to accept personal responsibility for such outcomes. Teachers' sense of responsibility influences the whole instructional processes, psychological well being and the academic achievement of the students.

Considering the above-discussed points, it is clear that studying teachers' sense of responsibility is having a large range of significance. In this regard, after reviewing the related literature the investigators found some research gaps. No extensive and comprehensive research has been witnessed which explored teachers' sense of responsibility concerning gender, locality, phase of teaching, and teaching experience. Remarkably, no studies have been witnessed which dealt with the teachers' sense of responsibility in the state of Assam. Therefore, the investigators had a keen interest in examining the pre-service and in-service teachers' sense of responsibility in the state of Assam with the expectation of greater benefits. First of all by knowing their level of responsibility a teacher can improve himself/herself. Secondly, the administration of the institution can take necessary measures for the improvement of a sense of responsibility among subordinates. Thirdly, this may help the policymakers, school/college administrators, and the larger social endeavor. Therefore, this study is the need of the hour as it deals with examining the sense of responsibility among pre-service and in-service teachers concerning their demographic variables.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the status of teachers' sense of responsibility in colleges of Assam.
2. To compare the teachers' sense of responsibility concerning their gender.
3. To compare the teachers' sense of responsibility concerning their locality.
4. To compare the sense of responsibility among pre-service and in-service teachers.

5. To compare the teachers' sense of responsibility concerning its different dimensions.

The methodology of the Study

The descriptive survey method was employed for the present study. A self-constructed scale consisting of 38 items with five points Likert model. The scale consisted of a total of eight (8) dimensions namely (i) responsibility of classroom instruction, (ii) responsibility towards the society, (iii) relationship with students, (iv) student motivation and achievement, (v) professionalism, (vi) leadership, (vii) psycho-emotional responsibility, and (viii) evaluation. Face validity and content validity of the scale were checked by experts' from the discipline of education. Norms were set based on the experts'

opinion and by dividing the esteemed scores into six ranges (very low to extremely high). The sample consisted of 120 teachers and prospective teachers (B.Ed. trainees) from all around the state of Assam. The sampling technique used in the present study is the convenient sampling technique. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used in the analysis of collected data. The sample of the study was limited to B.Ed. trainee, college teachers and teachers associated with the higher secondary level.

Analysis of the Data

The collected data were calculated and analyzed according to the objectives of the study. Calculated values are tabulated herewith and the investigators tried to analyze accordingly.

Table 1: Overall status of teachers' sense of responsibility

N	Range	Average Score	S.D.	Remarks
120	67	162.73	12.14	High Level of Sense of Responsibility

It is witnessed from table 1 that the range of the score is found to be 67, as the highest and lowest scores of the scale were 190 and 123 respectively. The standard deviation was found 12.14 and the mean or average score of teachers' sense of responsibility was found to be 162.73 for the total

sample (120). The calculated average score (163.73) falls under the range of 142-167 which denotes a high level of sense of responsibility as per the standardized norms. Therefore it can be stated that the level of teachers' sense of responsibility towards the teaching profession is found high.

Table 2: Teachers' sense of responsibility concerning their gender

Gender	N	Average	S.D.	t- value	Remark
Female	82	163.58	12.17	0.43	No significant difference
Male	38	160.89	12.19		

The above table reflected the comparison of teachers' sense of responsibility concerning their gender. The average score obtained by the female teacher was 163.58 and by the male teacher was 160.89. The standard deviations of both genders were respectively 12.17 and 12.19. Further, when

calculated mean scores were projected to check the difference between the two groups; the t-value was found 0.43. The calculated t-value is less than the critical value of 1.98 at a 0.05 level of significance with 118 degrees of freedom. Therefore it can be stated that although the mean score of female

teachers is slightly higher than male counterparts, statistically there is no significant difference

between female and male teachers concerning their score of sense of responsibility in teaching.

Table 3: Rural versus urban teachers' sense of responsibility

Type of Locality	N	Average	S.D.	t- Score	Remark
Rural	78	162.46	11.96	0.81	No significant difference
Urban	42	163.23	12.74		

From the above table, it is witnessed that the mean score of teachers from the rural and urban locality were 162.46 and 163.23 respectively. Further, the standard deviations were 11.96 and 12.74 respectively for both groups. When a comparison was made between both groups, the calculated t-value was found 0.81, which is less than

the critical value of 1.98 at a 0.05 level of significance with 118 degrees of freedom. Therefore, it can be stated that there is no significant difference between the rural and urban teachers in terms of their sense of responsibility towards the teaching profession.

Table 4: Sense of responsibility among pre-service and in-service teachers

Type of Service	N	Average	S.D.	t- value	Remark
Pre-service	60	165.73	10.14	0.05	No significant difference
In-service	60	159.73	13.35		

To compare the sense of responsibility between pre-service (prospective teachers) and in-service teachers towards their teaching profession, the above table depicted that the average score obtained by pre-service and in-service teachers were 165.73 and 159.73 respectively. The standard deviations for both the groups were found 10.14 and 13.35 respectively. Further, the calculated t-value

was found 0.05 which is less than the critical value of 1.98 at a 0.05 level of significance with 118 degrees of freedom. Hence although the average sense of responsibility score is higher for the pre-service teacher group, statistically there is no significant difference between pre-service and in-service teachers in terms of their sense of responsibility towards teaching.

Table 5: Dimension-wise status of sense of responsibility

Dimensions	N	Average Points	Remarks
1. Responsibility of Classroom Instruction	120	4.45	4 th
2. Responsibility Towards Society	120	4.42	5 th
3. Relationship with Students	120	4.83	1 st
4. Student Motivation and Achievement	120	4.19	6 th
5. Professionalism	120	4.47	3 rd
6. Leadership	120	4.08	7 th
7. Psycho-emotional Responsibility	120	4.50	2 nd

8. Evaluation	120	4.01	8 th
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The above table depicted the status of teachers' sense of responsibility concerning different dimensions. Average scores were obtained for every dimension considering the responses of all 120 samples. After evaluating the obtained average scores it can be stated that rank-wise or comparatively teachers' sense of responsibility is highest in the dimension of 'relationship with students' (4.83), 2nd in 'psycho-emotional responsibility' (4.5), 3rd in 'professionalism' (4.47), 4th in 'responsibility of classroom instruction' (4.45) and 5th in 'responsibility towards society' (4.42). Further, the dimension namely 'evaluation' (4.01) placed last, 'student motivation and achievement' (4.19) placed 6th and 'leadership' (4.08) placed in 7th place. Therefore, it is clear that there is existence of deviation in teachers' sense of responsibility concerning different dimensions.

Findings and Interpretations

Concerning the first objective, the study revealed that teachers have high levels of sense of responsibility as their obtained average score is 163.73 out of the highest possible score of 190. Considering the importance of a sense of responsibility as the key to teaching, efforts should be made to uplift teachers' sense of responsibility from high to very high. There is a need for collaborative efforts by teachers, teacher trainees, teacher educators, headmasters, educational institutions and governments. Concerning the second objective, statistically, no significant difference was found between female and male teachers concerning their sense of responsibility. However, the mean score of the female teacher is slightly higher than the male counterparts. It can be interpreted that women are no more lacking behind in any field, rather they are ahead in the process of societal betterment. Concerning the third objective, it was observed that both pre-service and in-service teachers have the same level (high) of sense of responsibility.

Statistically, no significant difference was found between pre-service and in-service teachers although the average sense of responsibility score is higher for the pre-service teacher group. It can be interpreted that the pre-service teachers are having a good sense of responsibility and enthusiasm towards the teaching profession. It is a great sign for a society that having prospective teachers with greater enthusiasms, readiness and responsiveness. Concerning the fourth objective, the study revealed that teachers who belong to both rural and urban areas have the same (high) level of sense of responsibility. Therefore, it can be interpreted that teachers' locality or geographical belonging doesn't have any impact on their responsiveness and dutifulness. Finally, the study revealed distinction in scores amongst the dimensions in which the highest score is found in the dimension of 'relationship with students' (4.83), and the lowest score is found in the dimension namely 'evaluation'. It is clear from the results that teachers' sense of responsibility can be influenced by different factors and situations.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Teachers are considered the main sources to develop and lead a sound educational system. Teachers' positives attitude, selflessness, and professionalism are of utmost importance for better teaching performance and they can build a higher sense of responsibility among teachers in their profession. The study has resulted in a high level of sense of responsibility among teachers towards their profession and demographic variables like gender, types of service, locality, etc have proved very less influence on the sense of responsibility. The present study included eight (8) dimensions of sense of responsibility and it included prospective teachers, teachers from college and higher secondary level. Further studies can be conducted by the academicians by collecting more specific dimensions in this regard and with the inclusion of a large sample. For uplifting the level of

responsiveness amongst teachers, it is important to maintain a feedback register/form in educational institutions to evaluate their progress in terms of student evaluation, professional growth, teaching methods and techniques and so on. Every teacher needs to understand the connection between their sense of responsibility and overall educational outcomes. If teachers can build a greater sense of responsibility, the teaching-learning process will be much more effective and it can lead in a socially progressive and sustainable way.

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