

Examining Teacher Autonomy in Curriculum Delivery and its Effects on Student Achievement – A Critical Review

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Abstract:- World autonomy refers to the ability of an individual to control his own behaviour and not be influenced by outside control. It also refers to self-rule. Autonomy is considered the most essential issue nowadays in the education system. Autonomy is essential for the teachers' learners and policymakers in order to bring the desired output through the teaching-learning process as the primary stakeholders, such as the teachers and the learners are directly participating in the process. It is necessary to have autonomy for them the most. Here the investigator has gone through over 30 research documents collected from various open sources and meta-analysed it. The objective of the study is, to study the influence of teachers' autonomy on pupils' achievement at the secondary level. In order to study that, the investigator has analysed the collected reviews of related literature based on three questions such as, what is the status of the autonomy of school teachers at the secondary level? What is the level of autonomy enjoyed or available to school teachers at the secondary level? and how does teachers' autonomy influence pupil achievement? The investigator found that autonomy is most important in the teaching-learning process and nowadays school teachers are enjoying autonomy to some extent. Teacher's autonomy has a positive correlation with learners' achievement levels.

Keywords:- Autonomy, Learning Achievement, Teaching-Learning Process.

I. INTRODUCTION

In general, the term "autonomy" refers to freedom from outside influence or control. It can be interpreted in a variety of ways depending on the situation, but regardless of how it is interpreted, an autonomous person is someone, who manages their own affairs, makes decisions that are in their best interests, and is not subject to external interference or control. The concepts "autonomy" and "self-regulation" are both derived from the Greek words "auto" and "logos," respectively. As a result, an autonomous individual has the ability to control his or her behaviour, make independent decisions, and is not subject to outside control. So, autonomy is what some philosophers refer to as "self-rule." (Wall, 2003; Chodosh, 2017) Nevertheless, the definitions of autonomy vary from one field to another.

Different backgrounds lead to various interpretations and applications. For instance, most psychologists define autonomy as the progressive independence that a kid develops over time, whether it be moral, physical, social or psychological. Conversely, philosophers like Kant connect the idea of autonomy to ideas like liberty, freedom, the human six rights, etc.

The majority of academics, in contrast, speak about student and teacher autonomy, as well as its interactions and uses in education, when they talk about autonomy because they approach it totally through the same lens that they use to research education. As a result, depending on the situation, the use of the notion of autonomy has produced considerable variance and is also widely acknowledged in other fields. In addition to the different meanings, it has been observed in the literature that a number of concepts have been used interchangeably in place of autonomy, which furthers the confusion. Empowerment, separateness, agency, individuality, and many more are examples of such words (Bentle & Anderson, 1991). When examined in further detail, the literature demonstrates that these words have several uses. For instance, Bandura coined the term "agency" in 1989, which describes the freedom to act voluntarily or on one's own initiative. He also uses the phrase "emotional autonomy," which he defines as a child's growing independence as he or she matures and becomes less emotionally attached to his or her carers. (Sternberg & Silver Berg, 1986).

The researcher has critically reviewed related studies from this field carried out in India and abroad in order to analyse the current situation, and influencing factors of students in higher education.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Objective-

- To study the influence of teachers' autonomy on pupils' achievement at the secondary level.

B. Research Questions-

The analysis relied on a systematic evolution of over thirty of over 30 empirical evidence-based studies, including thesis dissertations, theses and published publications. The studies were obtained from university library open sources from the full-text collections of EBSCOhost, Elsevier, JSTOR, Google Scholar, ERIC, as well as SAGE.

The researcher attentively examined and investigated the available material to get answers to the following questions.;

- What is the status of the autonomy of school teachers at the secondary level?
- What is the level of autonomy enjoyed or available to school teachers at the secondary level?
- How does teachers' autonomy influence pupil achievement?
- *What is the status of the autonomy of school teachers at the secondary level?*

According to **(Frinkin, Matthew, Post, and Robert et al., 2009)**, there are four fundamental aspects of academic independence. Such as freedom of study and publishing, freedom of intramural speech, freedom of extramural speech and freedom in the classroom which teachers must practise to succeed as leaders. Freedom to decide which approaches are optimal for the learner to use in order to get the intended teaching-learning outcome **(Normaw, 2005)**. **(Sen, 2000)** Autonomy must also be taken into consideration, as must the method used to obtain freedom in the teaching-learning process. According to **(Bivins, 2006)**, autonomy is fundamentally a virtue that calls for freedom from outside influences and a world in which decisions are made based on internal motivations rather than external pressures. According to **(Sankaran and Joshi, 2016)**, since the value of autonomy is becoming more widely recognised, higher education will soon undergo a change. **(Balkar, 2015)** Teacher autonomy is a political issue that is closely linked to decision-making. Teacher autonomy is viewed as a process that benefits the system as a whole, according to **(Lamb & Reinder, 2003)**. According to **Dickinson**, learner and teacher autonomy are inherently intertwined and qualify as processes. **(Unknown author, 2013)** His or her piece captured his or her agony and annoyance at being a part of a system that prevents him or her from enjoying his or her career, innovating by using his or her skills and creativity, and making his or her own judgements on teaching. **(Dale, 2012)** Since teachers are qualified to teach, there shouldn't be any questions about their knowledge, making teacher autonomy a crucial and evident requirement for them. **(Strong, 2012)** The current situation calls for greater autonomy for both administrators and teachers. **(Balcikanli, 2009)** proposed that teacher autonomy should be present throughout all stages and levels of teaching. **(Kelly, 2009)** The author argues that having independent instructors is crucial for creating a positive learning environment as opposed to an authoritarian one that is mechanical. **(Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007)** Additionally, it helps teachers collaborate with students, administrators, and other teachers to find solutions to real-world issues that arise while teaching in the classroom, making teaching a more humane and enjoyable activity. According to **(Normaw, 2005)**, teacher autonomy is crucial to reducing teacher stress. Additionally, the instructors ought to have the autonomy to decide what is best for the welfare and development of their pupils. **(Strong, 2012)** In terms of developing the curriculum, secondary teachers had more freedom. On a broad and very general level, autonomy is related to social justice and human rights, according to

(Rayza and Vieira's, 2014) pedagogy as well as in order to result in more dialogic, empowering, and negotiating modes of teaching. **(Walker, 2010)** Simply giving teachers autonomy is insufficient; they also need to be able to use it, and teachers should be more involved in processes for making decisions on policies that pertain to education. Only little academic control over instructors is acceptable, and **(Chaudhary, 2008)** strongly opposes direct supervision of teachers by superiors and the restriction of their academic independence. **(Adamson and Linda, 2012)**. The analysis revealed significant gaps in autonomy in the management of staff and the distribution of resources. **(Ratnam, 2007)** The current work environment in schools not only discourages but also severely limits teacher autonomy. **(Franklein, 1988)** defines alienation as a lack of autonomy. According to **(Seeskin, 2001)**, when we tie individuals to accept things without reason or thought, we gravely undermine the individual's liberty. **(Balkar, 2015)** Teacher autonomy is a political issue that is closely linked to decision-making.

- *What is the level of autonomy enjoyed or available to school teachers at the secondary level?*

(Adams, 2008) has presented an excellent taxonomy of the levels of autonomy, that the author refers to as the range of autonomy. He classifies them as follows: AL0: a wholly non-autonomous individual. AL1: Significantly non-autonomous. AL2: Semi-autonomous AL3: Uncertainty AL4: Moderately independent: Extremely self-sufficient in terms of psychological, educational, economic, and other resources. **(Wermke, Rick, and Salokangas et al., 2019)** However, German instructors are more autonomous and perceived as less regulated than Swedish ones. **(Department of Education of the United States, 2015)** However, the research findings may be taken as indicating that teacher autonomy has fallen since a higher percentage of instructors reported low or moderate degrees of autonomy rather than high levels. **(Moomaw, 2005)** There was no substantial variation in teacher autonomy between elementary and secondary schools. **(OECD, 2011)** This study suggests that there is a requirement for responsibility and liberty to coexist in order to achieve high performance.

- *How does teachers' autonomy influence pupil achievement?*

(Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007) strongly advocate for greater autonomy for teachers while also stating that certain areas require government standardisation in order to promote equalisation of chances and implementation of equal access to education for everyone, preserve social order, and so on. To boost achievement among pupils, the authors advocate for more autonomy for educators in their classrooms. According to **(Dvorak, Urbanek, and Stary, 2014)**, parental school choice autonomy resulted in a boost in the number of pupils attending the schools as well as an increase in staff stability, but school heads were sceptical of any improvement in pupil achievement. **(Steinberg, 2014)** decision-making should be in the hands of principals as they are the ones who deliver educational services to students. autonomy can be given to principals such as budget, curriculum, instruction, assessment, calendar, etc. Schools in which the teachers

were given more autonomy had higher achievement scores of students.

III. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Secondary education is considered the most important part of one's life. It is also considered a period of stress and strain. Though the children in this stage are going through the adolescence period they are easily distracted which further affects their future. Individual difference is a proven thing, which exists in everyone. Teachers are the one who directly deals with the learners so teachers are considered to be the best method and they should have the autonomy to deal with the learners. So, teachers must have the amount of autonomy by which he or she can modify and adapt various methods of curriculum transaction evaluation methods in order to achieve the learning outcomes.

The autonomy of teachers at the secondary level must be taken into consideration (Bivins, 2006, Sankaran and Joshi, 2016, Normaw, 2005, Sen, 2000). Teacher autonomy is viewed as a process that benefits the system as a whole as the current situation calls for greater autonomy for teachers and proposes that teacher autonomy should be present throughout all stages and levels of teaching. (Kelly, 2009, Lamb & Reinder, 2003, Dickinson, Unknown author, 2013, Dale, 2012, Strong, 2012, Balcikanli, 2009). Teacher autonomy is crucial to reducing teacher stress and they ought to have the autonomy to decide what is best for the welfare and development of their pupils. (Normaw, 2005), (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). Autonomy has been classified into wholly non-autonomous individual, significantly non-autonomous individual, Semi-autonomous individual, moderately independent and extremely self-sufficient in terms of psychological, educational, economic and other resources. (Adams, 2008, Wermke, Rick, and Salokangas et al., 2019, Department of Education of the United States, 2015, (Moomaw, 2005, OECD, 2011). Schools in which the teachers were given more autonomy had higher achievement scores of students. Thus, the autonomy of teachers in the classroom has positively impacted learners' achievement. (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007, Dvorak, Urbanek, and Stary, 2014, Steinberg, 2014)

Especially in the secondary stage, the teacher acts as a friend to the learners, so that they can be comfortable as well as friendly with them, as it is considered a very critical stage of one's life, one must have a friend and a guide as a teacher. That is why a teacher must have an adequate amount of autonomy and less rigidity in transacting the curriculum, evaluating the learners and suggesting remedial measures.

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