

Improving Teacher Management and Development: Key Themes for State-Level Reform

Summary

Teacher qualifications, recruitment, deployment and other factors in teacher management and development systems seldom predict effectiveness to raise student achievement. An initial challenge is to condense the complex array of policies, systems, functions and information sources into a common conceptual framework for teacher management and development. In doing so, education managers can ensure qualified teachers are trained, recruited, deployed and supported to focus on quality teaching that raises student performance.

Consultative reviews in three states in India have identified common themes that impact upon effective teacher management and development. This information note provides a brief description of challenges at state level and explores solutions that states may adopt to provide a coherent framework to improve teaching quality and learning outcomes.

A coherent policy framework

Strong policy and legislative support is necessary to provide guidance and direction to teacher management and development. A clear framework aligns functions and responsibilities around identified goals and objectives. Where this is not evident, teacher management and development systems lack the clarity, direction and resources to address weaknesses and target performance.

Integration of data on teachers

The availability and accuracy of data on teachers is often constrained by the existence of parallel data systems operating within the state and at national level (U-DISE) that are not always compatible and do not compare data sets directly. To improve effectiveness, Human Resource Management Information Systems (HRMIS) require reform to provide consistent information through common platforms.

Teacher and school performance and monitoring

Teacher and school appraisal and performance monitoring is not universally linked to instruction in the classroom. Processes for monitoring teacher and school performance support professional development, thereby improving teacher performance, student achievement and learning outcomes. Clear policy guidance and improved coordination at all levels focuses resources, inspectors and principals on improving instruction and identifying support needs.

Lack of specialist teachers

States often experience shortages of teachers in core subjects due to large numbers of teachers that are not qualified in any particular subject. Correlating data on teacher qualifications in specialist subjects, if available, with learning achievement data (NAS) provides a useful basis for reform strategies. Prioritising instruction in core subjects at secondary level and reviewing the number of elective subjects available for students is a key component in raising achievement levels.

Distribution of teachers across schools

Rational distribution of suitably qualified teachers across schools is commonly found to be uneven with some districts, particularly in rural areas, experiencing extreme shortages whilst others are over-supplied. Improving information on teacher distribution through HRMIS is a critical first step to addressing teacher distribution whilst deployment and transfer policies can focus resources and incentivise teacher distribution in under-served areas.

Solutions to improve Teacher Management and Development

Conducting a state-level review of TMD

States should consider conducting a comprehensive review of teacher management and development policies, systems and practices. Focusing on teacher recruitment, deployment, transfer, inspection and professional development, state level reviews can provide an analysis of strengths and weaknesses and the basis for system strengthening and development of a coherent policy framework.

Human Resource Management Information System

HRMIS systems are a key area where integration and streamlining of data systems can improve the evidence base for decision making. In some instances, states may need to establish an HRMIS system where none exists. Elsewhere, developing plans to integrate different data systems, align data sets and capture, and provide common platforms to access data are seen as key objectives for the reform of HRMIS.

Teacher and school performance monitoring and support

Initial tasks to improve teacher performance monitoring and support include conducting a review of policies and practices to generate a better understanding on the structure, content and frequency of inspection and support systems. The study provides the basis for the development of a school quality monitoring framework, using indicators including school provisioning, governance and student outcomes.

Teacher distribution and rationalisation

An analysis of the distribution of specialist subject teachers across schools can bring greater policy and practice coherence to this area, assisting in informing teacher training as well as deployment. Aligning this analysis with data on the numbers of students in each class across the state enables planning to be based on real and projected numbers. Where data is unavailable, the analysis can sample schools in districts to provide representative data.

Further research and initiatives

RMSA-TCA is developing further support and resources for states in developing and improving their teacher management and development systems. It will be making these resources available for all states on the www.rmsaindia.org website. These include:

- Guidance on Conducting a State-Level Review of TMD
- Documentation of support to three states (Assam, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh)
- Best Practice Resources and Case Studies
- Facilitating study visits to share best practices.