



Performance-Based Bonus on the Efficacy of Public High School Teachers in the Philippines

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Abstract

In any educational system, performance-based reward is always present. Though it bears so much controversies, the government is still designing different types of rewards, bonuses or incentives to help motivate employees. The study used survey research design to evaluate the effectiveness of the Performance-Based Bonus (PBB) in improving the efficacy of public high school teachers in the Philippines. Purposively selected teachers and school heads were included in the study. The teachers' efficacy before and after the implementation of PBB was determined based on the results of the Results-based Performance Management System (RPMS) and their self-evaluation. This self-evaluation was validated by the school heads using a structured questionnaire. The results showed that teachers' self-efficacy rating was the same even after the implementation of PBB, whereas the assessment of the school heads showed a decrease in the efficacy rating of the teachers from 'Highly Proficient' to 'Proficient'. This difference was due to the problems encountered during the implementation of the PBB. However, the study proves how public high school teachers remain true to their calling as their levels of teaching efficacy remain the same regardless of the presence or absence of monetary rewards. Thus, this calls for an active involvement of all the stakeholders to help address the underlying issues connected to the PBB implementation while remaining committed to the teaching profession by improving oneself and one's overall efficacy.

Keywords: Effectiveness, efficacy, performance-based reward, public school, teacher.

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Performansa Dayalı Teşviğin Filipinler'de Devlet Liselerinde Görev Yapan Öğretmenlerin Yetkinliğine Etkisi

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Öz

Herhangi bir eğitim sisteminde, performansa dayalı ödül her zaman olmuştur. Çok fazla tartışmaya yol açsa da, hükümetler çalışanları motive etmek için hala farklı türde ödüller, ikramiyeler veya teşvikler vermeyi planlamaktadırlar. Tarama araştırma dizaynına sahip bu çalışma, Filipinler'deki devlet liselerinde görev yapan öğretmenlerin etkinliğini artırmada Performansa Dayalı Teşvik (PDT) sisteminin etkisini araştırmayı hedeflemektedir. Çalışmaya amaçlı örnekleme ile seçilmiş öğretmenler ve okul müdürleri katılmıştır. Öğretmenlerin PDT uygulamasından önceki ve sonraki etkililiği, Sonuçlara Dayalı Performans Yönetim Sisteminin (SDPYS) sonuçlarına ve öz değerlendirmelerine göre belirlenmiştir. Yapılan bu öz-değerlendirme, yapılandırılmış bir anket kullanılarak okul müdürleri tarafından da doğrulanmıştır. Araştırma sonuçları, öğretmenlerin yetkinlikleri PDT'nin uygulanmasından sonra bile aynı olduğunu gösterirken, okul müdürlerinin değerlendirmesinin ise öğretmenlerin yetkinlik derecelendirmelerinde "Çok Yeterli" den "Yeterli"ye bir düşüşte olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu fark, PDT'nin uygulanması sırasında karşılaşılan sorunlardan kaynaklanmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, bu çalışma, devlet lisesinde görev yapan öğretmenlerinin, parasal ödüllerin varlığına veya yokluğuna bakılmaksızın öğretim yeterlik seviyeleri aynı kaldığı için işlerine sadık kaldıklarına kanıtlamaktadır. Araştırma sonuçları, kişinin kendini ve genel yetkinliklerini geliştirerek öğretmenlik mesleğine bağlı kaldığını gösterip PDT uygulamasıyla bağlantılı temel sorunların ele alınmasına yardımcı olmak için tüm paydaşların aktif katılımının rol alması gerektiğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Etkililik, yetkinlik, performansa dayalı teşvik, devlet okulu, öğretmen.

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1. Introduction

Performance-based rewards have a long history in education all over the world. Within the past two decades, a number of countries had adopted pay-for-performance strategies to modify the traditional salary scales, to reward performing employees and to motivate their people. The distinguishing feature of a performance-based scheme is to reward or sanction teachers based on some forms of performance evaluation. Distinctions in performance-based reward programs lie in the assessed skills and the provided rewards. Most individually based programs use monetary rewards for high levels of performance and are usually being defined in terms of student's outcomes and teacher's skills and knowledge (Harvey-Beavis, 2003).

This performance-based reward system motivates people to perform their duty very well. It serves a physiological satisfaction as a force in human behaviour. However, there are various types of rewards, and they are particularly concerned here with the monetary rewards teachers get and the effects of such rewards on their performance. The use of monetary reward in teachers helps to keep their performance at a high level (Blair, Blair, & Myers, 1964; Salkind & Rasmussen, 2008) because rewards lead to teachers' motivation (Muguchu, 2013), retention (Munga, 2013) teacher effectiveness (Gatere, 2015) as well as classroom effectiveness (Ofoegbu, 2004). Overall, any reward motivates teachers to work hard towards students' excellence (Kataha, 2019).

Since the performance-based reward is adopted globally, the Philippines has also adopted this program known as Performance-Based Bonus (PBB). The PBB is a merit-based incentive program that recognizes and rewards exemplary performance in government. Launched by the former President Benigno S. Aquino III during his administration in 2012, the objective of the PBB program is to improve the performance and services of all Filipinos and all government offices. The Department of Education (DepEd) is one of the government offices granted with PBB.

The PBB ratings are based on the performance of each department of the government office and its employees. It is therefore based on the performance of one school and the individual performance of its teachers. The performance is categorized as best, better and good. Departments and individuals who receive a "Below Satisfactory" performance rating are not qualified for the PBB.

Government employees are entitled to receive this bonus provided that they satisfy all the requirements prescribed by the government. An inter-agency task force headed by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) is in charge to validate and process all the requirements of the DepEd employees. All schools are required to submit the liquidation reports of the Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE), the result of the National Achievement Test (NAT), governance condition transparency, the number of enrollees, the number of dropouts and repeaters, and the Results-based Performance Management System (RPMS) before they can receive their bonus.

According to Agasisti, Bonomi and Sibiano (2014), receiving teachers' incentives results in a better student performance and learning outcomes. Teachers tried hard to distil what makes quality educational systems work and found that their incentives and learning resources correlate positively with student performance. Monetary rewards do not only attract talent, but also help retain experienced and effective teachers.

Public National High School is one of the schools that comply with Executive Order No. 80 or the recipients of the PBB. The said school has enjoyed the benefits of the PBB for three consecutive

years. However, the rationale behind the granting of the PBB was not clearly manifested on the actual performance of the Public National High School in terms of the result of its NAT for the past three years. Accordingly, the school ranked number three with the Mean Percentage Score (MPS) of 51.8 per cent during the school year 2012-2013; for the school year 2013-2014, the school ranked number five with the MPS of 52.4 per cent; and for the school year 2014-2015, the school ranked number three with the MPS of 45.6 per cent. Given this scenario, the purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the PBB in improving the efficacy of the public national high school teachers in Calamba City, Philippines. Specifically, the study (i) evaluated the performance of the public national high school teachers before and after the implementation of the PBB and (ii) analysed the problems encountered by the teachers regarding the implementation of the PBB particularly in a public national high school in the country.

1.1. Significance of the Study

This study is important as it provides information and data that can be useful for developing new criteria in implementing the PBB program for every agency more specifically in public schools. The results can offer a clear and transparent status of the PBB program by knowing its effectiveness and the different problems encountered during its implementation. This may lead to an urgent evaluation of other secondary schools and other government agencies so as to know whether the identified problems are also encountered in other institutions. Thus, it can serve as a wake-up call to revisit the program.

This study is also beneficial for school heads and teachers who are responsible for the development of the students in general. The results can guide them in coming up with a comprehensive School Improvement Plan that will focus on the improvement of the school's performance in relation to the performance-based bonus that teachers and school heads receive.

Likewise, the students will be able to receive effective and efficient teaching that will result in better academic performance. Improved student academic performance equates to school effectiveness which is one of the indicators in getting high PBB.

Finally, the information gathered can also serve as a guide for future studies that may be undertaken on the effects of other performance-based rewards and incentives on the overall performance of the schools in the country and abroad.

2. Method

2.1. Research design

The study used survey research design. It involves describing the nature of a particular phenomenon that exists at the time of the study and analyses its causes.

2.2. Setting and Participants

The study focused on one of the 22 public high schools in the Division of Calamba City, Philippines. It is considered as one of the performing public national high schools in terms of sports, journalism, vocational, and theatre arts. This school has been operating since 1973. It has a total number of 1,100 students for the school year 2016-2017, with 40 teachers, one bookkeeper, a disbursing officer, one utility and a security guard.

The respondents were purposively selected former three school heads of the Public National High School when the PBB was not yet implemented. Included also were the Officer-in-Charge (OIC),

and 19 faculty members which constituted 48 per cent of a total population (N=40). These teacher respondents were chosen based on their knowledge, expertise, and experience on the PBB.

To minimise the potential risks of the participants, the researcher strictly applied the procedures to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of data. Thus, the researcher gathered informed consent from the participants and made sure that the objectives of the study were explained clearly to them.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality was addressed by assigning a code number to each respondent as they completed the survey and using only that code to indicate survey responses. This code was entered on each survey enabling the researcher to link the survey and the respondent. This link allowed the survey results to remain confidential without being anonymous to the researcher. Aggregate data reported contain no individually identifiable information. Individual teacher identities were masked by this code.

In addition, this study was approved by the University of the Philippines Los Baños ethics committee and the office of the University Research and Extension beforehand. The research plan was presented and approved, and all participants have signed an informed consent.

2.3. Instrumentation

Efficacy refers to the performance of public national high school teachers. It was measured using two structured questionnaires. The first one is for teacher self-evaluation and school heads' evaluation. It is a researcher-made questionnaire which consists of 54 items reflecting to the performance of the teachers before and after the implementation of the PBB. They are categorized under three main efficacy indicators such as (i) instructional competence of the teacher with sub-categories such as diversity of learners, curriculum content and pedagogy, planning, assessing and reporting; (ii) school, home, community linkages of the teacher with sub-categories such as learning environment and community linkages; and (iii) personal, social growth and professional characteristics of the teacher with sub-categories such as social regard for learning, personal and social growth, and professional development. It used a four-point rating scale ranging from not observed (1) to highly observed (4). This questionnaire was subjected to the validation process involving the experts in the field and this resulted to slight modification. The researcher also ran a pilot test of the survey and reviewed the internal consistency of questions by conducting the test of reliability with test-retest to a group of 15 public high school teachers who were not part of the study. The administration of retest was three weeks after the first test. Likewise, the Cronbach-Alpha method was applied and the result got a total test and retest scores (0.77 and 0.79) with a reliability factor of 'acceptable'. The second questionnaire is adopted from the Results-based Performance Management System (RPMS). The RPMS incorporates a common set of performance scorecard to serve a single source of information on the status of government performance. As one of the requirements needed to submit to the Regional Office to be eligible for receiving the PBB, it serves as a tool used by the school heads in evaluating the teacher's performance using a four-point rating scale from below basic (1) to highly proficient (4).

Another set of researcher-made survey questionnaire was also used in identifying and analysing the problems encountered by the public national high school teachers regarding the implementation of the PBB program. This was composed of 25 items using a four-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). This instrument was also subjected

to validation procedures. The Cronbach alpha coefficient (0.75) showed a reliability factor of 'acceptable'.

The authors have been personally and actively involved in substantial work from conceptualization of the study, instrumentation, data gathering leading to the writing of the entire paper.

2.4. Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means and percentages was used to describe the basic features of the data gathered in the study. Comparative analysis was used before and during the implementation of PBB. It is a technique for determining which logical conclusions a data set supports.

3. Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the PBB in improving the efficacy of the public national high school teachers in Calamba City, Philippines. The first objective was to evaluate the performance of the public national high school teachers before and after the implementation of the PBB.

The efficacy of the teachers before and after the implementation of the PBB program

Table 1 shows the mean score of the overall assessment of the teachers and the school heads in the efficacy of the public high school teachers before and after the implementation of the PBB program.

Based on the general weighted mean, of all 54 efficacy indicators, 35 items in the sub-categories were assessed by the respondents as '*Highly Observed*' before the implementation of the PBB. The survey revealed that the teachers were abiding by the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers. That is, they show fairness and consideration to all learners regardless of their socio-economic background; maintain stature and behaviour that uphold the dignity of teaching; update themselves with recent developments in education; set objectives that are within the experiences and capabilities of the learners; and align the lesson objectives, teaching methods, learning activities and instructional materials or resources appropriate to their learners. However, both teachers and the school heads perceived that all remaining indicators were interpreted as '*Observed*'. The use of community as a laboratory for learning got the lowest general weighted mean.

On the other hand, the results of descriptive statistics on the part of teachers after the implementation of the PBB showed discrepancy as the overall assessment dropped to '*Observed*'. These include all efficacy indicators except those that are relative to the *personal, social growth and professional characteristics of the teacher* in particular the code of ethics for professional teachers, which was consistently rated as '*Highly Observed*' by the respondents.

Table 1. Teachers' efficacy before and after the implementation of PBB program

Efficacy Indicators	Without PBB (2009-2012)			With PBB (2012-2015)		
	Teacher	School Heads	Weighted Mean	Teacher	School Heads	Weighted Mean
<i>I. Instructional Competence of the teacher</i>						
A. Diversity of Learners	3.33	3.91	3.62	3.44	3.13	3.29
B. Curriculum Content and Pedagogy	3.22	3.81	3.51	3.50	3.19	3.35
C. Planning, Assessing and Reporting	3.03	3.87	3.45	3.33	3.15	3.24
<i>II. School, Home, Community Linkages of the teacher</i>						
D. Learning Environment	3.47	3.89	3.68	3.67	3.17	3.42
E. Community Linkages	2.90	3.89	3.39	3.18	3.02	3.10
<i>III. Personal, Social Growth and Professional Characteristics of the teacher</i>						
F. Social Regard for Learning	3.41	3.86	3.63	3.53	3.15	3.34
G. Personal, Social Growth and Professional Development	3.45	3.90	3.68	3.61	3.26	3.43
Overall	3.26	3.87	3.57	3.47	3.15	3.31

Range: 3.51–4.00 Highly Observed; 2.51–3.50 Observed; 1.51-2.50 Moderately Observed; 1.00–1.50 Not Observed

The results on the *personal, social growth and professional development* indicators showed that the teachers truly adhered to the laws and principles provided by the code of ethics for professional teachers according to article 11 R.A. No. 7836, Philippine Teachers Professionalization Act of 1994 as amended by the Board for Professional Teachers. These include maintaining the dignity of their profession by respecting and obeying their responsibility and accountability for their performance and continuing to demonstrate competence. They used this as their guide to perform their job and more specifically to teach and inspire their students better. However, they must consider the learning that students may get around the community. This is done by allowing students to discover and experience the knowledge first-hand, instead of hearing and reading the others' experiences from the book. It provides valuable experiential learning which contributes significantly to the student's overall understanding of the real-time environment (Kolb, 2014).

Table 2 presents the summary of teachers' efficacy rating based on the RPMS. Teacher's efficacy rating before and after the implementation of PBB from School Year 2009-2015 was 'Proficient' with an overall mean 3.25 and 3.47, respectively. The finding showed that the efficacy rating of the teachers was the same even after the implementation of the PBB though the mean of the teacher's efficacy increased 3.47 after the implementation. This affirms the study of Marsh, Springer, McCaffrey, Yuan, and Epstein (2011) who found no statistically significant differences between the reported instructional practices, effort, and participation in professional development, mobility, and attitudes of teachers who received School-wide Performance Bonus Program (SPBP). Accordingly, the bonus did not affect teachers' performance.

Table 2. Teachers' efficacy rating based on RPMS

Respondents	Without PBB (SY. 2009-2012)		With PBB (SY. 2012-2015)	
	Mean	Description	Mean	Description
Teacher	3.25	P	3.47	P
School Heads	3.87	HP	3.16	P
Weighted Mean	3.56	HP	3.32	P

Legend: 3.5 –4.00 Highly Proficient (HP); 2.51–3.50 Proficient (P); 1.51-2.50 Basic (B); 1.00–1.50 Below Basic (BB)

Furthermore, a minimal increase in the value of mean indicates that the incentives given to public national high school teachers had an impact to their performance. It serves as their motivation to perform their tasks effectively and efficiently (Schaffhauser, 2015).

While this may be true, the assessment of the school heads based on the RPMS showed that the efficacy rating of the teachers decreased after the implementation of the PBB. This was reflected in the value of the weighed mean from 3.56 to 3.32, that is, from *'Highly Proficient'* to *'Proficient'*. This finding was supported by the result of objective number 2 which analysed the problems encountered by the teachers during the implementation of the PBB program.

The problems encountered regarding the PBB program implementation

Table 3 presents the top 15 indicators that described how each teacher might feel about or react during the implementation of the PBB program. These indicators served as bases for some pressing issues that the teachers encountered in the implementation process of the program. The findings revealed how the respondents experienced the problems related to compliance with the criteria for the granting of the PBB. These criteria based on DepEd Order No. 12, s. 2013 include the reports on the liquidated MOOE, the results of the NAT, drop-out rate, the number of enrolees, the number of promotion per school year and the RPMS. Accordingly, adherence to this set of criteria/guidelines resulted in increased stress as the implementation of the program requires additional and longer working hours for teachers. Harvey-Beavis (2003) confirmed that a highly politicised and sanctioning performance-based reward can increase the stress levels of teachers which can cause the opposition of the teachers to the program. When teachers are expected to work harder to achieve multiple goals, it may also increase the stress level of teachers. The attitudes of teachers depend upon the program implemented by the institution. Thus, their attitude resulted in decrease not only in terms of quantity but more importantly in the quality of teaching.

Table 3. Problems encountered regarding the implementation of PBB program

Item No.	Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1	If I would be in the authority, I would revise the criteria for the granting of PBB.	3.68	SA
2	I have experienced increased stress as a result of the implementation of PBB.	3.58	SA
3	I work longer hours as a result of the implementation of PBB.	3.53	SA
4	I have adequate administrative assistance to support my efforts in obtaining PBB.	3.05	A
5	I have adequate resources (i.e. materials, supplies) to support my efforts in obtaining PBB.	3.00	A
6	My workload has increased as a result of the implementation of PBB.	2.89	A
7	I have altered my instructional practice as a result of PBB.	2.79	A
8	I have modified my assessment methods as a result of PBB.	2.74	A
9	The PBB program is aligned with school goals in how it rewards performance.	2.74	A
10	PBB program provides an incentive for me to work harder toward improving student performance.	2.68	A
11	I clearly understand the process for calculating the amount of PBB disbursed to each Public High School in the Philippines.	2.47	D
12	The PBB program is fair in how it distributes performance pay awards.	2.42	D
13	The PBB program answers the mission of the institution of achieving high quality education.	2.11	D
14	I clearly understand the process of implementing PBB.	2.00	D
15	If you will ask me, I would rather stop the implementation of PBB in all government agencies.	1.84	D

Legend: 3.51-4.00 Strongly Agree (SA); 2.51–3.50 Agree (A); 1.51-2.50 Disagree (D); 1.00–1.50 Strongly Disagree (SD)

According to Kirunda (2004), teachers' enthusiasm to teach was low despite having performance-based reward system due to the low level of motivation accompanied by too much load, teaching, and non-teaching activities at school. Although they worked hard in the hope of getting extra incentives, the teachers did not accept them as true assessments of their classroom performance (Johnson & Papay, 2009). Teachers perceive performance pay system as arbitrary, unfair, and unclear, and it fosters awkward working environment. It does not contribute to the improvement of results by constructing clear connections between salary, motivation, and results (Lundström, 2012).

Moreover, the incentive system may in one way, or another promote unhealthy competition instead of cooperation among government employees. Also, by rating teachers according to 'good, better, or best,' may imply that some teachers and staff do not perform at all (Solomon & Podgursky, 2000). In fact, there were students who did not even know how to read even if they were already in Junior High School. In this sense, the fulfilment of the mission and vision of the school in achieving high quality education can hardly be achieved.

In addition, other problems encountered by the teachers were rooted from their lack of understanding about the process. These included the process for calculating the amount of the PBB disbursed to each public high school. They were even in doubt of its evaluation on how the distribution of performance pay awards is being done by the government unit. The aforementioned problems showed that the teachers did not really understand the nature of this so-called the PBB.

Truly, poor goal clarity and a large number of criteria restrict the teachers' understanding of the program and make the implementation difficult. Besides, explanations of how, and on what criteria teachers are assessed may be difficult to articulate. There were some concerns that the evaluation process could be seen as unfair or inadequate. This means performance-based reward is considered to be difficult to administer objectively and fairly. Thus, teacher commitment and knowledge are often a better guide for good instruction rather than observing and assessing their performance for the sake of performance-based reward (Harvey-Beavis, 2003).

Nonetheless, the incentives given to public national high school teachers are very important to support their financial needs. These keep the teachers for being optimistic about the PBB and hopeful for any development that will take place despite several issues along the way. This is particularly true in the implementation procedures which were perceived as problematic. As Benjamin Valbuena, Chairman of Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) said:

It is not true that we do not perform. In fact, we do jobs beyond what our profession as teacher calls for and in cases of abnormal situations in our place of work, we make the most out of the limited resources to aid us in our job. Our commitment is our motivation. The PBB will never be an objective system that will serve as a truthful evaluation of the performance of teachers (Umil, 2013).

4. Conclusion

The study provides clear-cut evidence how performance-based rewards have been helpful to teachers, more specifically to public high school teachers in the Philippines who received a basic monthly salary of approximately 20,000 Philippine Peso (approximately 391 USD or 347 Euro). The amount is inadequate to support their families given the rising cost of living in the country. The study somehow implies how the PBB in one way or another can help motivate teachers to perform at high levels provided that the implementation procedures are not strenuous on their part. However, the study substantiates how the public national high school teachers remain true to their calling as their levels of teaching efficacy remain the same regardless of the presence or absence of monetary incentives. Thus, this calls for an active participation of all the people in the authority to do something about the cause of these underlying issues such as clear guidelines in the implementation of the PBB system in the country.

The goal of the PBB system should, therefore, be parallel to the mission and vision of the public schools so not to be treated as an additional burden but rather a channel of not only financial blessing to public servants but ultimately for the betterment of the entire education system. Since

getting the PBB does not only depend on the individual performance but also the performance of the school as a whole, this marks a concerted effort that must be taken into account as far as the efficacy is concerned. The problems encountered during the implementation of the PBB could be addressed by:

- (i) revisiting the current set of criteria for receiving the PBB which is parallel to the mission and vision of the school;
- (ii) developing fair and reliable indicators to properly measure the performance of the school;
- (iii) training the evaluators to fairly apply the indicators prescribed in the implementation of the PBB; and most importantly.
- (iv) involving teachers and other stakeholders in the design and development of any performance-based reward since they are the main actors and ones who are to be affected in its implementation process; teachers should, therefore, be proactive in seeking ways on how they could contribute to the overall effectiveness of their schools.

By participating in school-based, and other professional organizations-initiated trainings and seminar-workshops, pursuing further studies for personal and professional growth, and development, the public high school teachers will help themselves improve their teaching performance. Teachers should also consider the learnings that students may get from the community since learning experience is not restricted from the four corners of the classroom. Letting students explore and understand the concepts by themselves through facilitating them is one of the best strategies that can help teachers to further improve their students' performance, while improving themselves and their overall teaching efficacy.

4.1 Limitation of the Study

The study was limited to the effectiveness of the PBB in improving the efficacy of public high school teachers in the Philippines. The findings of this study are highly contextual and may not be generalizable to similar academic institutions particularly in the private school setting. Thus, this calls for more research on the effectiveness of performance-based bonus and any other forms of rewards and incentives given to teachers in relation to their performance. Future researchers may expand the number of study participants and investigate the stand of various groups of educators who belong to other educational institutions. Another interesting subject of future investigation is by delving deep into the efficiency of the rewards system, implementing guidelines vis-à-vis actual procedures, with some comparative analyses from various institutions where best practices could be synthesized. The success of any institutional rewards system will be possible with continuous search for gaps and filling in those gaps to be able to achieve its ultimate goal towards educational productivity and effectiveness.

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