Teacher Survey — Supplemental Learning: Executive Summary — US

PREPARED FOR: BYJU's Future School

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RESEARCH METHOD

The survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of BYJU's Future School between August 13-19, 2021 among 501 pre-kindergarten to 12th grade teachers (defined as adults ages 18+ in the US who are employed full-time as teachers in public or private schools). Data were weighted where necessary by school level, community type, region, and student enrollment to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, The Harris Poll avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected among panel members who have agreed to participate in surveys. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to be invited to participate, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

REPORT NOTES

The teaching landscape for this survey included:

- pre-K/elementary (63%), middle (24%), and high school (22%)

Different learning types are mentioned throughout this report. They are as follows:

- **Visual or "spatial" learners** (i.e., like diagrams, drawing out concepts, charts, and processes. They learn by looking at visual concepts, creating them, and watching other people create them)
- **Auditory or musical learners** (i.e., like to hear solutions and examples explained to them, and may gravitate towards music subjects and group learning as a way to understand information)
- **Verbal learners** (i.e., might have a preference for reading and writing, word games, and poems. Verbal learners know the meanings of a broad category of words, can use them effectively, and actively seek out new words to add to their repertoire)
- **Logical or mathematical learners** (i.e., good at pattern recognition, good with numbers, predisposition towards grouping and classification)
- **Physical or kinesthetic learners** (i.e., commonly called "hands-on" learners, kinesthetics prefer to physically engage with the materials of the subject matter)
- **Social or interpersonal learners** (i.e., show preference towards groups and collaboration. Some, but not all, will gravitate towards leadership within a group)
- **Solitary or intrapersonal learners** (i.e., can be visual, auditory, physical, verbal, or logical learners. Some of the qualities often associated with this type of learner include independent, introspective, private)

TEACHING PROFILE

A wide array of teaching modes and learning styles comprised the 2020-21 classroom

During the 2020-21 school year, the teaching landscape was comprised mostly of experienced teachers (72%) who had worked in the profession for at least a decade.

Throughout the school year, about 1 in 2 teachers at some point taught their classes in-person only to students in the classroom (48%) or virtually (49%), and often it was a blend (47% in-person with live virtual concurrently and 38% in-person with asynchronous virtual learning). During the past year, teachers covered a variety of subjects, most commonly the core topics like reading/language arts (63%), math (63%), science (57%) and history/social studies (46%), and they had a mix of learners in their classrooms, in order of prevalence:

- physical or kinesthetic learners (89%),
- visual or "spatial" learners (87%)
- verbal learners (85%)
- social or interpersonal learners (82%)
- logical or mathematical learners (80%)
- solitary or intrapersonal learners (76%)
- auditory or musical learners (72%)

EXPERIENCE WITH LEARNING GAPS (AND IMPACT OF PANDEMIC)

No surprise, the pandemic triggered more passive teaching and exacerbated learning gaps

The majority of teachers (70%) agree that it is difficult to meet the needs of certain types of learners in a traditional classroom. And while learning gaps are thought to occur for all students regardless of what type of learner they are (87%), teachers generally believe these gaps are more noticeable with certain types of learners than others (78%). According to most teachers, physical or kinesthetic learners (71%) and social or interpersonal learners (70%) are the most inclined to experience a learning gap. Teachers also observe that over school breaks, students face setbacks more in some subjects than others, in particular reading/language arts (80%) and math (78%).

Thinking about the last year, most teachers are emphatic that the learning gaps were even more pronounced than usual due to the interruptions of the pandemic (90% agree, 56% strongly agree). There is universal consensus among teachers that effective learning happens in a variety of ways, both in and out of the classroom (99% agree, 76% strongly agree) and that students benefit more from an active learning environment (95% agree, 58% strongly agree). However, the restrictions of COVID-19 forced teachers to engage students in more passive learning than active learning (91% agree, 55% strongly agree).

CURRENT CONSTRAINTS

Lack of resources stands in the way of best practice

At the school level, a large majority of teachers feel that limited resources prevent a cutting-edge curriculum from being offered (78%) and that a lack of resources/time to engage in one-on-one learning hampers students' ability to get the individualized attention they need to reach their full potential (93%). In fact, only one-third to one-fifth of teachers[1] say the current curriculum at their school strongly prepares students for the future in: music/band (35% very adequately), art (34%), computer science (27%), engineering (21%), and robotics (19%). Over the past 3 years, many teachers say their school has reduced (32%) or eliminated funding (15%) in these areas, and almost all teachers (88%) feel sustained cuts to arts programs, in particular, hinder a child's ability to be creative when learning.

[1] Percentages for each are among teachers who say their school offers the subject

As far as their own ability to help each student reach their individual potential, the primary constraints according to teachers include: the classroom size/population (78%), the ability to provide one-on-one/individualized instruction (63%), and a focus on standardized testing (60%). Due to COVID-19, most teachers feel an extra burden to bridge the learning gap that students experienced, but over 3 in 4 (77%) don't feel like they have the needed resources to do so.

SOLUTIONS FOR LEARNING GAPS

Supplemental learning may be the answer, especially for certain students and in certain subjects

While most teachers feel learning gaps are typically overcome once students are back in school, regardless of whether they take advantage of supplemental learning (57%), the vast majority (93%) see clear and diverse benefits to supplemental learning programs including: strengthening students' knowledge and skills (70%), providing students with the opportunity to explore subjects that may not be available to them in more traditional school settings (69%), and exposing students to new and different learning tools that aren't provided in standard classrooms (69%). Teachers also overwhelmingly agree that supplemental learning programs can be used to reduce learning gaps (91%). Over 8 in 10 feel that learning gaps caused by school breaks can be prevented (84%) – and the specific learning gaps caused last year by COVID-19 can be mitigated (84%) – through supplemental learning programs that provide enrichment exercises. According to teachers, the key parts of supplemental learning programs (that are critical to ensure that students don't fall behind) are wide-ranging, but the most commonly cited are an activity-based curriculum (73%) and one-on-one attention (71%).

One-on-one supplemental learning programs, in particular, receive extremely positive feedback. Almost 9 in 10 teachers (89%) have a generally favorable perception, and over one-quarter (28%) feel very favorably. Teachers largely believe that one-on-one supplemental learning programs provide a richer learning experience than classroom instruction alone (83%), keep kids engaged in areas of learning that are of interest to them (96%), and are a great way for parents to enhance their children's in-class learning (90%). Moreover, according to teachers, one-on-one supplemental learning (78%) is one of the most effective programs/activities to help minimize learning gaps, along with tutoring (80%). Nearly all teachers (91%) say one-on-one instruction is crucial for students to learn and grasp concepts that they might otherwise struggle with, and the majority think parents should consider one-on-one supplemental learning programs as a good alternative to summer school programs (82%) and to fill gaps in their children's learning rather than holding their child back (84%).

Over three-quarters of teachers (76%) are likely to recommend that parents and students consider using one-on-one supplemental learning programs as part of a comprehensive learning curriculum, and almost 1 in 3 (29%) are extremely/very likely. From most teachers' perspective, all learners can benefit, but the programs are most effective for solitary or intrapersonal learners (82%), visual or "spatial" learners (70%), and logical or mathematical learners (69%), and least relevant to social or interpersonal learners (50%). Teachers also generally feel that core subject areas like math (84%), reading/language arts (80%) and science (62%) can be aided the most by taking advantage of one-on-one supplemental learning.

RESEARCH SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

Learning gaps and program benefits can differ by type of learners

- While learning gaps are thought to occur for all students regardless of what type of learner they are (87%), teachers generally believe these gaps are more noticeable with certain types of learners than others (78%).

- According to most teachers, physical or kinesthetic learners (71%) and social or interpersonal learners (70%) are the most inclined to experience a learning gap.

- From most teachers' perspective, all learners can benefit, but the programs are most effective for solitary or intrapersonal learners (82%), visual or "spatial" learners (70%), and logical or mathematical learners (69%), and least relevant to social or interpersonal learners (50%).

Supplemental learning programs seen as ways to overcome gaps, with some subjects aided more

- Teachers also observe that over school breaks, students face setbacks more in some subjects than others, in particular reading/language arts (80%) and math (78%).

- Teachers also generally feel that core subject areas like math (84%), reading/language arts (80%) and science (62%) can be aided the most by taking advantage of one-on-one supplemental learning.

- Over 8 in 10 feel that learning gaps caused by school breaks can be prevented (84%) – and the specific learning gaps caused last year by COVID-19 can be mitigated (84%) – through supplemental learning programs that provide enrichment exercises.

- Nearly all teachers (91%) say one-on-one instruction is crucial for students to learn and grasp concepts that they might otherwise struggle with, and the majority think parents should consider one-on-one supplemental learning programs as a good alternative to summer school programs (82%) and to fill gaps in their children's learning rather than holding their child back (84%).

Besides bridging learning gaps, learning programs can be part of a comprehensive learning curriculum

- While most teachers feel learning gaps are typically overcome once students are back in school, regardless of whether they take advantage of supplemental learning (57%), the vast majority (93%) see clear and diverse benefits to supplemental learning programs including: strengthening students' knowledge and skills (70%), providing students with the opportunity to explore subjects that may not be available to them in more traditional school settings (69%), and exposing students to new and different learning tools that aren't provided in standard classrooms (69%).

- Teachers largely believe that one-on-one supplemental learning programs provide a richer learning experience than classroom instruction alone (83%), keep kids engaged in areas of learning that are of interest to them (96%), and are a great way for parents to enhance their children's in-class learning (90%).

- According to teachers, one-on-one supplemental learning (78%) is one of the most effective programs/activities to help minimize learning gaps, along with tutoring (80%).

- Over three-quarters of teachers (76%) are likely to recommend that parents and students consider using one-on-one supplemental learning programs as part of a comprehensive learning curriculum, and almost 1 in 3 (29%) are extremely/very likely.