

Teachers who account for about 30% of the variance. It is what teachers know, do, and care about which is very powerful in this learning equation.

The following pie-chart illustrates the relative influences of the above sources. When I review the initiatives of the previous Ministries of Education up to a couple of years ago, and when I review the policies in so many New Zealand schools, I note that the focus of discussions are more about the influences of the home, and the structures of schools. We have poured more money into school buildings, school structures, we hear so much about reduced class sizes and new examinations and curricula, we ask parents to help manage schools and thus ignore their major responsibility to help co-educate, and we highlight student problems as if students are the problem whereas it is the role of schools to reduce these problems. Interventions at the structural, home, policy, or school level is like searching for your wallet which you lost in the bushes, under the lamppost because that is where there is light. The answer lies elsewhere – it lies in the person who gently closes the classroom door and performs the teaching act –the person who puts into place the end effects of so many policies, who interprets these policies, and who is alone with students during their 15,000 hours of schooling.

Percentage of Achievement Variance

