

The problems of Teachers Working in Primary Schools – A Survey

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ABSTRACT

Education is regarded as a potential instrument of individual development as well as social upliftment. It is intimately related with the National Development and positively correlated with productivity and quality of life. It has been recognized that Human Resource Development through Education, will result in better, health and Family Welfare and facilitate poverty alleviation. This is because Education is considered the best investment in Human Resource Development. It was given a place of pride and an important role to play in national reconstruction and social well being. However providing primary education in remote and rural areas is very difficult. This paper focus on the problems that are confronted by the teachers in enrolment, retention and quality ensuring.

Keywords: Education, Human Resource Development, enrolment, retention, quality ensuring

1. INTRODUCTION

Education according to Pestalozzi is the natural, harmonious and progressive development of man's innate powers. According to Swami Vivekananda, "Education is the manifestation of divine perfection already existing in man" and it should aim at man making, The Education Commission (1964-1966) summarizes the Indian concept of Education as "Education according to Indian Tradition, is not merely a means to earning, a living or it is only a nursery of thought or a school for citizenship. It is initiation into the life of spirit, a training of human souls in pursuit of truth and the practice of virtue; it is a second birth "dvitiya jahnmam" — education for liberation. Education is a cornerstone of economic growth and social development and a principal means of improving the welfare of individuals.

Various surveys were carried out globally to assess the importance of education and the difficulties faced in implementation of the policies for educating the students in rural areas. Das [1,2] worked on the comparative study of educational wastage and stagnation at elementary level in urban and rural areas of Assam. Various surveys and studies are presented in [3-10] focusing on the need for compulsory education in various states and India in particular. Training requirement for primary education, policies devised for education in India, development of education in India focused and suggestions were given for improving the standards in rural Indian schools and the need and requirement of primary education was stressed upon.

In [11] Clarke and Prema presented a case study of the primary district education in India reported that the impact of the international donor supported district primary education programme on the thinking and actions of 234 primary school teachers in South India was influenced by four cultural constructs "openness to regulation", "sense of duty" and views on social hierarchy and knowledge acquisition. Teachers were receptive to new methods presented in in-service training, but essential characteristics of traditional classroom practice changed little. In [12] an analysis on Modern Indian education and its problems were highlighted. Chaturvedi [13] focused on the role of universities in universalisation of element education. In this paper the focus is on the problems that are being faced by the teachers in rural and remote areas.

2. IMPORTANCE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

The Primary Education is the foundation. The word "primary" means the first importance. Hence primary education is nothing but the first importance in education that should be given to young children below the age of the 14. Primary Education occupies a significant place in the educational reconstruction of a developing country. At this stage the Child receives formal education for his Physical, Social, Mental, Emotional and Intellectual Developments.

A. Historical Perspective of Primary Education

Indian Education System is the oldest in the World and has different peculiarities which are not found anywhere in the World. The mankind is slowly, gradually and successively progressing towards a civilized State of affairs. But as far as the process of Education is concerned, it is gradually, changing, adopting itself to the needs of the society. The Education System of today is the result of this gradual development and progress of human beings.

In India the ancient education emerged from the Vedas. The Primary Education in Vedic period was given at Gurukulas. They were situated at, in the lap of nature in the calm and serene atmosphere of the Hills and Forests. The aim of Education was the development of Physical, Mental and Moral Faculties of the Students.

3. PRIMARY EDUCATION UNDER FIVE YEAR PLANS

To improve the primary education in India, the government had launched various programs under five year plans. The various schemes and programs that were introduced during the five year plans is presented in brief.

First Five Year Plan (1951-1956)

Under the First five year plan it was planned to open new schools, reform old schools and convert the existing ordinary schools into basic schools.

Second Five Year Plan (1956-1961)

Under the Second five year plan the Government had the two fold task before it firstly, it wanted to expand the existing facilities and secondly it wanted to convert the Primary Education into Basic Education. The third problem was to remove the reasons and causes that brought out the slow Progress In Primary Education in the First Five Year Plan. In this regard it had to stop the stagnation and wastage existing in the fields of Primary Education.

Third Five Year Plan (1961-1966)

In the Third five year plan the number of basic Schools was increased and some ideal basic institutions were established in the urban areas. The greater attention was paid to train the teacher for Basic Education up to the age group 6-11.

Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-1974)

In the Fourth Five Year Plan, emphasis was given on Education of drop-outs and several measures were envisaged to gain the objective.

Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-1979)

In the Fifth Five Year Plan, very high priority was given to the Directive Principles of State Policy free and compulsory education was to be provided for all Children up to the age of 14. In pursuance of this policy all states introduced free education for children in the age group 6—11. Beside adequate provisions were made for additional enrollment in terms of teaching Personnel and construction of classroom especially in backward areas.

Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-1985)

During the Sixth Five Year Plan period programs were reviewed at the time of determining the location of new primary and middle schools. New Educational institutions were planned to open with a primary base. multi-admission system was adopted and a condensed course of informal education was introduced for those Children, in the age group of 9 to 14 years who have never been admitted in the school or who left the School before becoming literate.

Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990)

The main thrust areas in the Seventh Plan were:

1. Achievement of VEE
2. Provision for high quality and excellence of education in every district of the country and
3. Efforts were planned to increase enrollment and to reduce dropout rate

Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-1997)

During the Eighth Plan, a modified National Policy on Education (NPE) was presented. The new policy proposed to enlarge the scope of "Operational Black Board" from two classrooms and two teachers to three classrooms and three teachers. The target of free and compulsory education up to 14 years was revised. The new policy proposed to launch a mission to achieve this goal by the turn of the century.

Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002)

In the Ninth Plan also the programs of Primary Education were given top priority. The Ninth Plan approach paper proposed the directions of National Policy on Education was carried out and that 60% GDP was earmarked for education and 50% of it for Primary Education. The targets for the Ninth Five Year Plan were fixed under three Board parameters like Universal Access, Universal Retention and Universal achievement.

Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007)

In the Tenth Plan (2002-2007) period highest priority was given to Primary Education. The Tenth Plan targets in respect of Elementary Education are Universal Access, Universal Enrollment, Universal Retention, Universal Achievement and Equity. The strategies and interventions planned during the Tenth Plan are programs for achieving VEE, gender specific programs, mid-day meal scheme, quality improvement, teachers education, strategy for dropouts, strategy for early childhood care and education (ECCE), Community participation, synergetic partnership with the private sector and convergence as a strategy for optimum utilization of resources.

Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2016)

In the eleventh five year plan, strengthening the education sector covering all segments was the main criterion. It is through universal literacy, access to education and knowledge-based industrial development that India will believably march ahead to join the front ranks of the great nations of the world overcoming the challenges of ensuring that everyone has an access to education and skill building in their activity.

4. ALL INDIA SAMPLE SURVEY FOR DROP OUT RATES (2015)

Although the government has introduced many schemes and programs the enrolment in primary classes was not satisfactory due to various reasons and the drop out of the enrolled students from the primary school couldn't be stopped completely. In rural areas the drop out was a major concern. The study aims at providing estimates of grade-wise repetition and dropout rates, cohort dropout rate, completion rate as well as transition rate from primary to upper primary based on the data of 2012-13 and 2013-14. This study was also expected to provide information on other indicators such as rates of transfer between schools and mainstreaming of children from Alternative and Innovative Education Centers to schools. The study was conducted in all the 21 major states of the country. The study was commissioned to Development and Research Services. The sampling design was prepared centrally and a sample of schools in all 21 states was drawn, tools were developed, field tested and finalized at national level. In all these activities RESU was actively involved and provided advice and help to the agency at every stage.

Data was collected from a sample of 8,016 schools with total enrolment in these schools being 10,69,417. Data was collected on grade wise enrolment and retention of students for two years 2012-13 & 2013-14. Information on school leavers as well as of students remaining absent for over 15 days, was obtained from each school and the homes of these children were visited to verify whether these children were still in the educational system or had dropped out. In all 47,095 households of school leavers and 5,386 households of students who were absent for over 15 days were visited. The percentage of students who were absent for over 15 days was only 0.51%. The study estimated percentage of school leavers as well as percentage of dropouts amongst school leavers (2012-14) on the basis of visits to the homes of school leavers. Cohort drop out rate was also computed from the data on school leavers for the years of 2012-13 & 2013-14 by the Reconstructed Cohort method.

However, since the dropout rates were found to be very low in some states, a committee of experts was appointed to examine the soundness of the methodology and veracity of the findings. The committee found the methodology adopted for the study quite satisfactory but in view of the large difference between dropout rates given by this study and the dropout rates from other sources of data, recommended that a repeat survey in a sub-sample should be conducted for validation of the findings of this survey.

5. SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a Government of India's flagship program for the achievement of universalization of elementary education. In this paper SSA refers to the project run by Government of united Andhra Pradesh and

Telangana to ensure universal enrolment, retention and achievement in school education as a part of Rajiv Vidya Mission (RVM) supported by the Central Government.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is an effort to universalise elementary education by community-ownership of the school system. It is a response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country. The SSA programme is also an attempt to provide an opportunity for improving human capabilities to all children, through provision of community-owned quality education for improving human capabilities to all children, through provision of community-owned quality education in a mission mode. Apart from SSA the Government introduced Right to Education (RTE) act. The main aim of Right to Education is to provide free and compulsory primary education. Its aim is also to provide increasing access to learning opportunities at secondary, technical and higher levels. It was visualized that under the RTE Act, the process of teaching and learning would be stress-free and to provide a child friendly learning system, which is at once relevant and empowering.

Over the years, the RTE act has shown promising developments. About 3.5 lakh schools were started in the last decade and 99% of India's rural population now has a primary school within a one kilometre radius. As per survey in 2014 84.4% schools now serve the mid-day meals, 48.2% schools have proper and functioning toilets for girls and 73% schools have available drinking water. The enrolment of girls has shown slight increase from 48.12% in 2009-10 to 48.19% in 2014-15 at the elementary level. For boys, the enrollment at primary level is now 52%. However a 55% decline in dropouts is also reported in the age group 6-14 years.

CONCLUSION

Education is regarded as one of the main instruments for the overall development of not only the individual but also the society they live, the state and the country they live and the world as a whole. However, in rural areas of developing countries the governments are finding it very difficult to enroll the children in the primary school. By some means if they are successful in enrolling the child in the schools the retention and ensuring quality education is still not up to the required levels. As can be observed from various studies the rural and the poor children are in need of attention even after nearly seven decades of independence. This is observed from the initiatives taken by the government during its previous five year plans which focuses on primary education. The teachers of these schools find it very difficult to enroll and retain these students and then provide them quality education. One of the measures to overcome these problems is to organize awareness programs on the importance of education not only to the students but more importantly to the parents of these students.

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