



Socio-Economic Problems of Lower Primary Government Schoolteachers with Special Reference to Senapati District of Manipur

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Abstract

This article is a part of a dissertation work for Master in Education and looks at the socio-economic issues of teachers working in the government primary school in Senapati district of Manipur. While teachers in secondary and higher education enjoys a fair share of prestige and economic status in the society, primary-teachers especially lower primary teachers suffered many socio-economic challenges. The study uncovered the pathetic condition of lower primary school teachers, despite government's efforts to qualitatively improve it. Not only secondary sources, but primary source of data using questionnaires have been used in this study.

Keywords: School teachers; lower primary school; government schools; Senapati; Manipur

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Introduction

Like any other states, Manipur also has one of the biggest organised system of Education in North East Region. The report of education commission (1964-66) envisaged that education is a force which is very much necessary for a rising generation so that the new generation may be fully equipped with the talent and skills towards the changing society (NCERT, 1964-66). In 1971-72, almost 33 percent of the state of Manipur were educated. Thereafter, the state paid much attention for the improvement of education especially the primary education. As per the Article 45, "The state shall endeavour to provide within a period of the years from the Commencement of this constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years". There are a number of problems which hinder the progress of educational development. The status of the socio-economic conditions of teachers is one of them. To improve competence programme, we have to organise our education system in such a way that the socio-economic status of teachers should be alleviated to a higher level. The status of a teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of a society, it is said that no pupil can rise above the level of its teachers. The Government and the community should endeavour to create conditions which will help to motivate and inspire teachers on constructive and creative lines.

Socio-economic problems are countless and constitute the care of the aspect of welfare of any section of the society. For centuries together, these problems were never taken seriously and the image of the teacher was idealised in such a manner that he was devoid of any needs and wants. The Guru was considered to be a supreme being without any economic wants and social needs.

The pay grades and other emoluments of teachers have been the lowest as compared with other professions and Services. Social status of a profession depends to a considerable extent on the economic position it offers (AGRAWAL, 1969). With the changing society, teachers have also changed and the Professions which once enjoyed superior status and prestige are lowered down in their status. The teacher is the architect of future generations and a custodian of democratic values now has to strive for earning recognition for himself and his profession. "We are painfully aware of the fact that the social status of the teacher, their salaries and general service conditions are far from satisfactory. But we are convinced that the present mood of frustration of Teacher's to be removed and Education becomes a genuine nation building activity, it is absolutely necessary to improve their status and their conditions of service (Secondary Education Commission, 1952-53)

A number of studies have been carried out with regard to primary school teachers in India. Singh, L.C. and Bhatnagar, T.N.S. (1966) Arora, A. et al. (1969) Sharma, R.C. (1970) Gonasalves, F. (1989) Sharma, H.N. et al. (1991) Singh, L.C. et al. (1992) have conducted studies related to primary school teachers. They have explored the various issues influencing primary teachers in their job related and socio-economic related factors.

Brief history of educational development in Manipur

The educational position and its development during the year 1946 just prior to independence are small and limited. There were few number of schools. 89 lower primary schools, 7 upper primary schools, 6 middle schools, 5 high schools and only 1 college were there having 14,109 pupils in the primary stage of education, 3926 pupils in middle and high schools and 40 students in the college.



The Darbar member were functioning as the Head of Department. The members could execute educational policy and programme only with the approval of the Maharaja. There were no separate establishment of education. The darbar member was assisted in his day-to-day work by a D.I. As a matter of fact, there was only one D.I in Manipur with two S.I's and two Inspecting pandits.

Development after independence

Educational Institutions in Manipur after independence had come to a sudden change due to changing political set-up and the resultant administrative re-organisation. The old order was no more and the new education was in the process of evolution. A full-fledged legislative assembly of 40 elected members was set up. Accordingly, the education minister became the head of Education Department. The Assembly was dissolved while Manipur was finally integrated into the Union of India on 15th January, 1950.

After that dissolution a significance change took place in political set-up in Manipur. A council of Advisors was appointed for Manipur by the Government of India on April, 1953 and term as Manipur "Council of Advisors" for progressive realisation of the democratic ideals of a National Government through association of a people's representative with the administration of the state. The changes in the political set-up brought a remarkable change in the set-up of educational administration and expansion of Educational Institutions. Such as, the Chief Commissioner was the Head of the Education assisted by an Advisor and one Inspector of school. The total number of students from primary to college level was 38,601 only.

During the year 1957-1967 Manipur was under the regime of Territorial Council. After the establishment of the territorial council, the Manipur administration and territorial council exercised control over the educational activities

of the state. All the Government schools were placed under the council and hence the administrative units – one under the council and another under the administration came into existence. During the period the Minister of Education was the Head of Education assisted by Secretary Education and the Director of Education. The total number of Institution from primary to college level were 1285 having 1, 12,130 students.

Progress of primary education in Manipur

The report of Education Commission 1964-66 indeed projects that education is a force which is very much necessary for a rising generation so that the new generation may be fully equipped with the talent and skills to adapt themselves with the changing society. After Manipur became a part 'C' state when the constitution of 1950 came into force, the progress of Education since the attainment of independence and the setting up of a popular Government made liberal provision for the development of education within a short span of its life. Primary/Elementary progressed rapidly after 1947-48 in Manipur.

In the field of Primary Education the number of schools in 1892-93 was only 1. At the time of merger only 11.4% (percent) of the population of the whole state was educated. In 1975-76, the number of schools rose to 3466 thus there was an overall increase of about 8 times during the period. Almost 33% (percent) were educated as the state took up the features of a welfare state like other states of Indian union during this time. Number of students enrolment in primary school in 1892 was only 113 which rose to 2,54,163 in 1975-76 resulting in a manifold increase in the number of students and it includes an enrolment of 1,50,509 boys and 1,03,654 girls. In 1947 there were 507 teachers in the primary schools but in 1972-73 the total number of primary school teacher rose to 7,496 which shows a rapid increase in the number of teachers. According to the latest census prepare

by the statistics and planning section of Directorate of Education(s) the number of Government primary schools in the state under Education Dept. is 1235 and the number of Government primary school teachers under the state Government is 12,430.

Statement of the problem

This study is meant to find out the status of Socio-Economic Problems of Lower Primary Teachers of government schools in Saitusub-division, Senapati district in Manipur.

Objectives of the study

- 1) To study the problems of Lower Primary school Teachers with respect to professional aspects such as salary, discipline, status etc.
- 2) To find out the problems of Lower primary school teacher's in connection with the social regards, lack of supervision and investigation from the Government side.

Hypothesis

In the light of the above objectives, it is assumed that there is the socio-economic problem faced by the Lower primary school teacher's. The problems are not due to the Trained and Untrained qualification of the teacher's.

Their pay scale is very low when compared with other professions and there is less regards from the society to lower primary school teachers.

Delimitation of the study

The present study is limited in its scope for lack of time and unavailability of Data. It included only the socio-economic problems of the lower primary school Teacher's. Therefore, its implication is also limited to the ten (10) L.P Schools located in the said sub-division and the data will be solely collected from the twenty one (21) L.P teachers' of the said school's. The

result of the study, therefore, is totally dependent upon the Data which will be taken up.

Methods

The present study falls within the purview of descriptive survey. The researchers also has taken the advantage of Historical method to understand the brief idea of development of education in Manipur.

Population and Sample of the study

All the government lower primary school teachers in Senapati constituted the population of the study. Sampling was carried out by Random sampling method using lottery method to pick schools. 10 schools were randomly picked from a pot containing all the names of the government lower primary schools in Saitu-Gamphazol sub-division. After obtaining the required names of schools, two teachers from each school was selected to administered the tools with. For the purpose better dicision one more teachers was also added among the sample. Thus, the sample of the study consisted of the 10 L.P School's located within the said sub-division and the data is primarily collected from the 21 L.P Teacher's of the said school's.

Tools

Self-developed Questionnaire and Interview schedule were used for the collection of Data.

Data analysis and interpretation

The Data collected and tabulated is analysed and interpreted with the help of simple statistical techniques called percentage.

Discussion on the major findings

Social aspect

There are 3167 Primary schools in Manipur according to the Planning and Statistics Section of Directorate of Education (S) 2010-2011. The present study is conducted within the



purview of Z.E.O²Kangpokpii.eSaitu Sub-division which consists of 10 Government L.P. Schools. Most of the Teachers that are surveyed are well qualified. Sixty six point seven percent (66.7%) are Graduate. Twenty eight point six percent (28.6%) are Intermediate Teachers followed by four point seven (4.7%) as Post-Graduate Teachers.

About Eighty point nine percent (80.9%) of the Teachers attend Social functions, festivals and other ceremonies that are very much prevalent in our society and which are non-negligible. Attending such ceremonies and festivals entails a huge amount of expenditures to be spent on the part of the teachers whose incomes are never sufficient for all these societal obligations. While at the same time, sixty one point nine percent (61.9%) also attend meetings called by Local clubs, Government or NGOs³. But in spite of all these odds sixty six point seven percent (66.7%) of the teachers believed that they must take a keen role in the social organisation and activities for the betterment of the society.

Eighty five point eight percent (85.8%) of the teachers involve themselves in social literacy programme. It simply put forth the view that these teachers believe that they could contribute to the welfare of the society by imparting Quality based Education which is in fact the need of the hour.

Proper and successful education of a child demands team work, mutual co-operation, co-ordination between Teachers and Parents. Teachers also will remain handicapped without full co-operation of the parents. Parent's role is also very important in the Teaching Learning process. Further, Parents-Teachers Association is an indispensable organisation in modern educational systems but most of the schools do not have Parents-Teachers Association as found in the responses of the teachers. Only Forty two

point nine percent (42.9%) has Parents-Teachers Association in their schools.

Social status of a profession depends to a considerable extent on the economic position it offers. With the changing society, teachers have also changed and the professions which once enjoyed superior status and prestige are lowered down in their status. Forty seven point six percent (47.6%) of the teachers agree that Teacher's status is not high in the society as it formerly used to be.

Seventy six point two percent (76.2%) of the teacher still agree that Teaching profession is one of the noblest profession and sixty six point seven percent (66.7%) also agree that Teachers should act as a Social Engineer thereby moulding our society and giving it the desired required shapes and structures to be a complete society. Hitherto, Teacher plays a great role in the transformation and reformation of the society by imparting Quality based Education than any other professions.

School is a unit of social structure. It is the place where the students are trained for their all-round developments to become responsible individuals in the society. One's health has a great impact on one's academic achievement. So, schools should take up steps to keep their students healthy. In this aspect, only forty two point nine percent (42.9%) of the schools have taken up health campaign programmes.

Data shows that majority of the schools do not witness any interference from any political block in the day to day school activities.

Only Forty two point nine percent (42.9%) of the teachers practice family planning while the majority of the teachers do not practice it. Lack of Family Planning might be due to various factors like community obligations, religious obligations or economic factors.

Most of the teachers do not preside over local meetings. It simply shows that they are not

²Zonal Education Officer

³Non-Government Organisations

getting due recognitions and respect from the social environment i.e Society. Only thirty eight point one percent (38.1%) are sometimes invited occasionally to preside over a local meetings while the majority have never been invited to preside over such local meetings.

Economic aspect

For effective execution of duties and responsibilities in Teaching Learning process, teachers should be free from various tensions and anxieties. They should have a sound financial status. Data obtained from the Teacher shows that most of them (71.4%) cannot get their salary regularly and 95.2% of them are not satisfied with the present salary given by the state government.

As Professor C.T. Ford, New Zealand Educational Institutions has expressed as – “Teachers are not receiving salaries comparable to those paid in other professions. The salaries are too low to enable teachers to achieve the level of cultural attainment desirable for those charged with guiding and training youth. Higher salaries for teachers are basis to any programme of improvement in the profession”.

But in spite of getting a meagre income, sixty one point nine percent (61.9%) of the teachers are satisfied with the present job as a Teacher. Owing to meagre salary ninety five point two percent (95.2%) of the teachers are not able to bear the maintenance of their family with their salary coupled with the high price rise on every commodity. The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) has rightly said “We are painfully aware of the fact that the social status of the teacher, their salaries and general service conditions are far from satisfactory. But we are convinced that the present mood of frustration of teachers are to be removed and Education becomes a genuine nation building activity, it is absolutely necessary to improve their status and their conditions of services”.

71.4% of the teachers do not have any other sources of income other than their

monthly salary. It simply shows that the entire maintenance of their family solely depends on the meagre salary they receive which is not sufficient.

As regards to the condition of their house, ninety five point two percent (95.2%) of the teachers are not satisfied with the type and conditions of their house. They also spend a large amount of money as fare to go their school. Seventy one point four percent (71.4%) of them spend money on fare to go to their school.

Promotions are a great source of moral boosting to any employee and it enhance them economically and socially. Hence, fifty two point four percent (52.4%) of the teacher expect promotion in their career.

Eighty point ninety six percent (80.96%) of the teacher do not get any residential accommodation facilities from the Government. Providing residential accommodation facilities to any Government employee is the duty of a responsible Government. Hence, adequate accommodation facilities should also be provided to the teachers.

Most of the teachers do not own any two wheeler or any other vehicles. Only thirty three point three percent (33.3%) of the teachers owned two wheeler or any other vehicles.

Providing a proper education facilities to the children is a dream of any responsible parents but owing to their meagre salary only nineteen point four percent (19.4%) of the teachers are able give their children's a proper education while the majority of the teachers are not in a position to give their children a proper education.

Seventy one point four percent (71.4%) of the teachers used gas/stove for cooking purposes and sixty six point seven percent (66.7%) of the teachers do not subscribe to any newspaper/magazines.

Insurance policy are a good investment for any Government employee but owing to less

income and other various reasons only twenty three point eight percent (23.8%) of the teachers have joined the Insurance Policy which is not a healthy and encouraging trend. They should be encouraged to joined Insurance policies.

Conclusion

As observed from the discussion above, it is concluded that Lower Primary Government School teachers in this part of the world enjoyed some prestige in the society as a teacher a decade before. But this situation is no longer valid fully as Lower Primary Government teachers do not enjoy such honourable status in the society anymore. This situation is mainly due to two reasons. One is due to the changing attitude of people toward teaching profession in the primary level of education. There is alsodecreasing moral and discipline among the people. Decreasing respect and honour for a teacher increases due to the wrong ideas and interpretations of freedom. And the second but the most important criteria that brought down the state of teachers in the society is due to financial constraint.

Suggestion

It is high time that the state government take stock of the decreasing trend of status of primary teachers by increasing motivational incentives and salary packages. However, only financial incentives cannot uplift teachers' status. They also must work to earn the respect of the society through their unquestionable contributions. A change of attitude of teachers toward self-respect or self-esteem need to be cultivated among the teachers themselves. As this study is limited to a small area i.e. Saitu sub-division, Senapati district of Manipur due to limited time and resources, the result of the study may not be generalizable up to the expected extent. A comparative study may be carried outbetween districts. The study may also be extended to the other stages of education such as secondary and higher education.

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