

THE PROBLEMS FACED BY TEACHERS IN GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS : DISTRICT PATIALA , PUNJAB .

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ABSTRACT

Teachers have always played a very essential role in every successful person's life. They are vital for the development of any country or any individual, but in the last decade teaching has become a 'not so easy' job. Teachers have been facing various kinds of problems in their workplace. In this research, the researcher has tried to capture the grievances faced by the teachers of Government Primary School Teachers of Patiala, Punjab. The hypothesis of the study is that the teachers of government primary schools of Patiala, Punjab face multiple problems in their day-to-day lives, which hampers their teaching performance in various ways. The study is descriptive and the information is collected through interview-schedules, circulated through head-teachers of such primary schools. The interview-schedules have been filled manually. The data has been put into a tabular and a pie-chart form. The study does prove the hypothesis and it is true that the teachers face a lot of problems that hamper their teaching performances.

INTRODUCTION

India is famous as a knowledge hub around the world; all thanks to our teachers. Education plays a vital and a crucial role in the development of a country. Teachers are nearest to their subjects and developments within. Quality education and high literacy percentage are fairly related straight to the schooling received in primary schools. Thus, primary education is vital in producing a sensible and an educated population. Primary school teachers have an essential role in every society, nation as they are the foundation and prime agency of propagating and promoting education. Teachers are the most important part of any education system and their role cannot be paralleled. The government too facilitates education promotion and brings about legislations the Right to Education (RTE) Act in 2009 which guarantees free and compulsory education to all children aged 6-14 years of age.

In India, we have diverse types of schools; schools that follow International curriculum, schools that trail the central syllabus and schools that follow the state curriculum. A state government school is the one which is possessed and managed and administrated by the government itself. The teaching as well as the non-teaching staff is appointed by the government itself. The literacy rate in Punjab is roughly estimated at 69.7% (2016) and Punjab has a total of 19,825 number of schools out of which 13,238 are primary schools and the rest are middle and high schools. But in the last decade, the teachers of government primary schools are facing various kinds of problems. The newspapers (Patiala, Punjab) often have these infamous headlines about the problems faced by government schools and teachers.

In this project, the major problems faced by the teachers in government primary schools, especially in District of Patiala, Punjab, are discussed that directly or indirectly affect the quality of education in these government schools. The various types of problems that the teachers face and hamper their performance in teaching the students are discussed in this study. A group of schools is examined, the head-teachers/ head-masters are interviewed to take a closer look at some serious problems that they face generally, but go unnoticed. India being a developing country, the problems of the teachers especially the teacher of government primary schools, need to be addressed with prompt action on part of the government for education is vital in the development process of any nation.

The teachers work their best, so as to provide the best possible education to their students but they also need co-operation on the part of the government also. As for the tree to give fruits, the roots must be healthy enough.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

This study is devised and designed to study the problems faced by teachers of government primary schools of Patiala, Punjab, particularly. It is a universally proven fact that teachers especially the teacher of primary schools are the most potent factor for change. If the teachers are free of any unnecessary things to do, unnecessary paper-work, etc. they would be able to focus better on the education of children. If the government primary school teachers had only the work of teaching, undoubtedly, the students from government schools could compete with students from private schools and ace. There are a number of teachers at primary level government

schools, which the government is not addressing. Sympathetic towards the problems and current situation of the teachers of government primary schools, the study is the researcher's contribution in helping these unsung heroes of our nation: our teachers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Henry incorporates the extensive range of effectiveness and assistances and contributions made by educators. He remarks, "*A teacher affects eternity. They can never tell where their influence stops*" (Farooq, 2017)

Zafar establishes that the primary educational system could not make satisfactory advancement and improvement due to issues like politicians, state bureaucracy. The primary educational system was intentionally neglected in the country. This piece of information, originally from Pakistan, is as relevant in India. Various newspaper clippings, articles prove the fact. (PIQC, 2019)

The study conducted by Dr Muhammad Sabil Farooq (2017) gives an account of the problems faced by teachers in government primary schools. The study verifies that about 70% of school teacher believed that the Government had no interest, whatsoever, in the affairs of the teachers and the education department. It was also concluded that the officials at district level had no interest in the problems faced by the teachers. (Ibid)

The research conducted by Muhammad Hashmi (2016) too proves that the government was ignorant towards the problems faced by the teachers and the education sector, which makes the situations and circumstances difficult for teachers.(Ibid)

K. Tejaswani & M. Lalitha Sridevi explored the fact that the difficulty of procuring funds from the government or private organizations for providing basic amenities for the infrastructure and maintenance of the school. The researchers also concluded that extensive modifications must be bought in Government orders, regarding primary level education in India. The researchers also suggested that the government should also take necessary measures to ensure that government schools have a fair chance to compete shoulder-to-shoulder with the private schools.(Tejaswini and Sridevi, 2012)

The newspaper clipping from the Hindustan Times (2019) stated that the head teacher of a primary schools states that many schools in Agra are without cleaners. The teachers either clean the school premises themselves or hire a person wholly on their own expenses to clean the school premises. The head-teacher claims that there was no other option than to clean the premises herself for the sake of her students(Hindustan Times, 10 November 2012).

The Better India, also calls one head-master as One Man Army, as the head-master started the day by cleaning the toilets, followed by maintaining the school lawn and then sweeping the class rooms. In the report, it was seen that apart from lack of teachers the government school and non-teaching staff to maintain their premises.(The Better India, 21 Nov 2018)

Another Hindustan Times clipping from 2019, says that many schools in districts of Ferozepur and Fazilka are either running with fewer teacher than sanctioned posts, without teachers or in some cases local volunteers are helping out the regular teacher for very small amount of money. It also states that the teaching staff is dealing with issues like maintenance of school infrastructure and premises.(Joshi, 2019)

Urvashi Bali & Anjali Mehra, mention in their research paper that according to RTE along with basic amenities for the students, the school must also have a dignified separate room for head-teacher and there also has to be one teacher for every classroom. In a primary school, the required number of teachers is 5 as per the classrooms,(Bali and Mehra, 2016) which is not the case in reality but just in papers.

The conclusions drawn by Schwab and Schwab (1975) stated that due to continuous stress and performance pressure of additional jobs, teachers are facing problems like anxiety, nightmares, headaches, hypertension and many more serious conditions which surely affects their performance.(Schwab and Schwab, 1975)

RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the various problems faced by the teachers of government primary schools in Patiala district, Punjab, India?

HYPOTHESIS

The teachers of government primary schools of Patiala, Punjab face multiple problems in their day-to-day lives, which hampers their teaching performance in various ways.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Nature of the Said Study- The study done is of a descriptive nature. The data is collected by the researcher, through an interview schedule from the head-teachers of government primary schools of district of Patiala, Punjab.

Sampling- The researcher has used the snowball technique for sampling for the study. The sample of 20 head-teachers of Government Primary schools will be selected and will be given interview schedules to complete the given study.

Procedure of Data Collection- The nature of the data is primary. The researcher has formulated an interview schedule for 20 head-teachers of the Government Primary schools of Patiala, Punjab to collect primary data for the study. The interview schedule consisted of 14 questions, some being objective in nature (yes/no mark) and rest being objective in nature. The researcher visited these schools and got the interview schedules filled from the head-teachers of government primary schools, and also observed the schools, their functioning and their condition.

DATA ANALYSIS

This paper is meant for the analysis of the data collected for this study. The data obtained through the interview schedule has been presented, tabulated, made pie charts and graphs of and analysed in this paper.

S. no	No. of respondents (schools)	No. of regular teachers
1	1	1
2	3	2
3	7	3
4	4	4
5	5	5 or more
total no. of respondents- 20		

Table 1: No. of regular teachers in government Primary Schools (Patiala, Punjab)

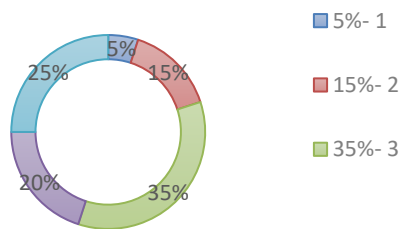


Fig 1: Regular teacher in government primary Schools

Discussion

The above table and the pie chart (fig.1) show the number and percentage of regular teachers in government primary schools. 5% or 1 school has only one regular teacher, 15% or 3 schools have 2 regular teachers only, 35% or 7 schools have 3 regular teachers, 20% or 4 schools have 4 regular teachers appointed. Only 25% or 5 schools have 5 or more than 5 regular teachers.

	A	B
1		No. of schools (respondents)
2	Government owned	17
3	Rented	2
4	Others	1
5	total no. of respondents- 20	

Table 2: the no. of schools that are government owned, rented or Sourced by others

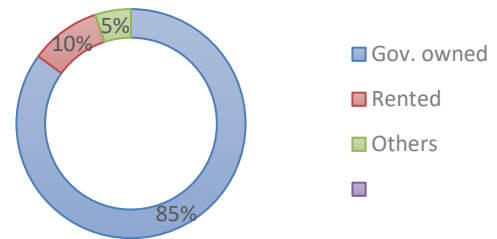


Fig. 2: ownership of school building 1

Discussion

The above table shows that 17 of the 20 respondent school buildings were government owned, 2 were rented, and 1 was running in a Dharamshala, gratuitously given. Fig. 2 shows the percentile depiction of the table: 85% schools were government owned, while 10% were rented and 5% were sourced by other ways.

	A	B
1		No. of schools (respondents)
2	had clerical staff	0
3	did not have any clerical staff	20
4	total no. of respondents- 20	

Table 3: the no. of clerical staff in schools

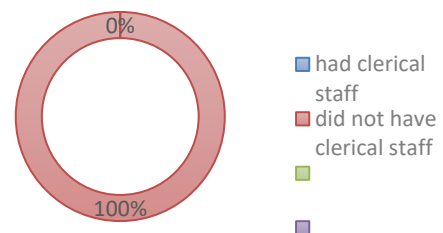


Fig. 3: clerical staff in schools 1

Discussion

The table and fig. no. 3 show the number and percentage of clerical staff available in government primary schools, respectively. Surprisingly, 0% or 0 schools had any clerical assistance, 100% or all the 20 respondent schools had no clerical staff for doing paper work, maintaining registers and other crucial paper work.

A	B
	No. of respondents that did the paperwork
Teachers	14
Head- teachers	5
Volunteers	1
total no. of respondents- 20	

Table 4: who did the paper work/register work in place of clerks in schools?

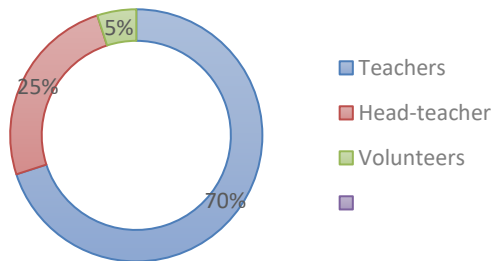


Fig. 4 1

Discussion

Table and Figure no. 3 show that who does the paper work / register works in the place of clerks in these schools. In 14 or 70% schools, the teachers, in 5 or 25% schools, the head-teachers and in 1 or 5% schools, the volunteer did all the crucial paper work/ register work of all the important matters like: mid-day meals, record of student data, student attendance, all the online work, maintaining records of school, UDISE, etc.

A	B
	No. of respondents (schools)
Had government appointed sweepers/ cleaners	0
Had appointed the sweeper/ cleaners at their own expense	19
Other	1
total no. of respondents- 20	

Table 5: data of cleaners/ sweepers appointed to clean the schools

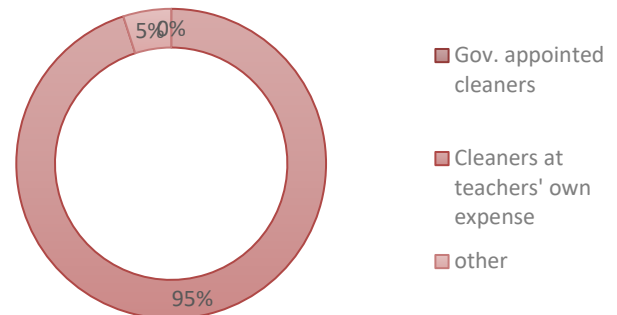


Fig.5 1

Discussion

Table no. and fig. 5 show the data of cleaners/ sweepers appointed to clean the schools. Surprisingly, 0% or 0 schools had any kind of helpers/ cleaners appointed or provided by the government. A whopping 95% or 19 respondents of the 20, had appointed sweepers/ cleaners at teachers' own expense. Only 1 school i.e. only 5% of the respondents had a cleaner/ sweeper paid for by some other source (the Dharmshala owner, in this case).

A	B
	No. of respondents (schools)
Had government appointed helpers for pre-primary students	0
Did not had gov. appointed helpers for pre-primary students	19
Other	1
total no. of respondents- 20	

Table 6: the no. of helpers for pre-prim 1

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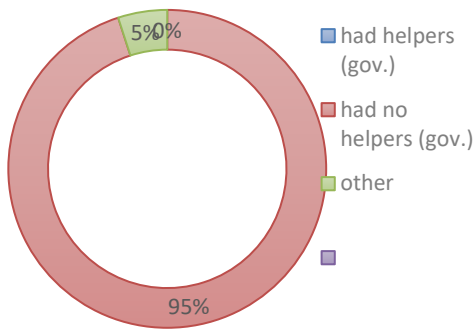


Fig. 6 1

Discussion

Table no. and fig. 6 show the data of the helpers in the respondent government primary schools. 0 schools or 0% had any government appointed helper for pre-primary children. 19 schools or 95% did not had any kind of helpers for pre-primary children. Only 1 school or 5% of the respondents had an ‘Anganwadi’ helper for the pre-primary children.

respondents, the teachers’ pay the bills, collectively. In 8 schools or for 40% respondents, the government paid the electricity bills. In 3 schools or for 15% respondents, the government pays the bills only sometimes and rest of the times, the teachers’ pay for it collectively. In 2 schools or 10% respondents, there were other sources for paying the electricity bill, like the Panchayat, the owner of the school building (Dharamshala owner).

	A	B
1		No. of respondents (schools) who paid for necessities like chalks, registers, stationery, etc.
2	Teachers collectively	14
3	Paid from the gov. grants	2
4	Sometimes from the grants, other times the teachers themselves	4
5	total no. of respondents- 20	

Table 8: who pays for the necessities like stationery, registers, Chalks etc in the schools?

	A	B
1		No. of respondents (schools) who paid for electricity bills
2	Teachers collectively	7
3	Paid by the government	8
4	government pays sometimes only	3
5	Other	2
6	total no. of respondents- 20	

Table 7: who pays for the electricity bills in the schools

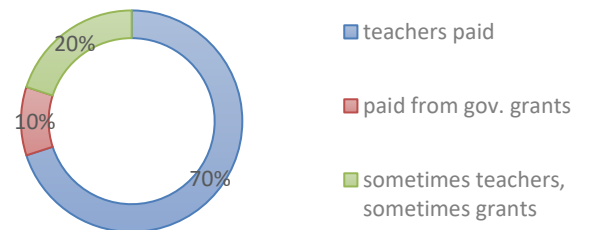


Fig. 8 1

Discussion

The above table and chart shows the data about who pays for stationery, registers, chalks (things needed by teachers) in the schools. In 14 schools or 70% respondents, the teachers collectively paid for all the stuff at their own expense. In 2 schools or 10% respondents, it was paid for, from the government grants. In 4 schools or 20% respondents, sometimes it was paid for by the head-teacher or sometimes from the left-over grants.

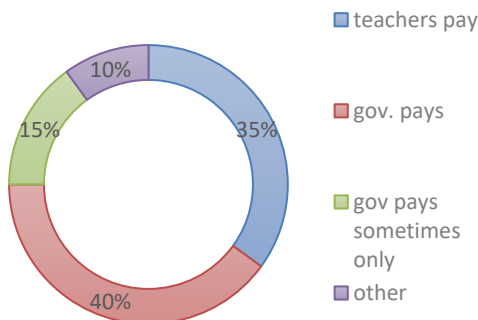


Fig. 7 1

Discussion

The above table and figure (table and fig. no. 7) shows the data of who pays the electricity bills in the respondent government primary schools: in 7 schools or 35%

	A	B	C
		No. of respondents (schools) who paid for mid-day meal groceries	No. of respondents who paid for necessities like handwashes, soaps, sanitation products, etc.
1	Teachers collectively	0	16
2	Paid from the gov. grants	20	2
3	Sometimes from the grants, other times the teachers themselves	0	2
4	total no. of respondents- 20		

Table 9: who pays for the mid-day meal groceries and necessities like hand washes, soaps, toilet cleaner, sanitation products etc?

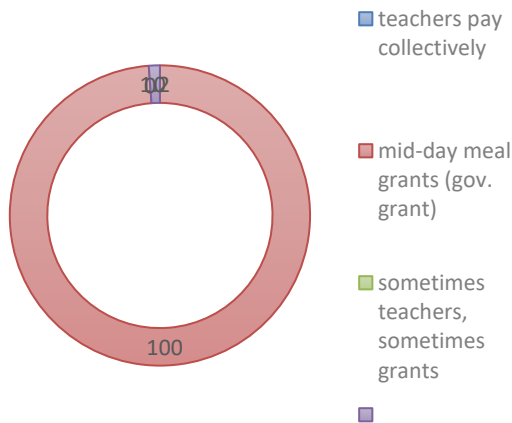


Fig. 9.1: No. of respondents about who paid for the mid-day groceries

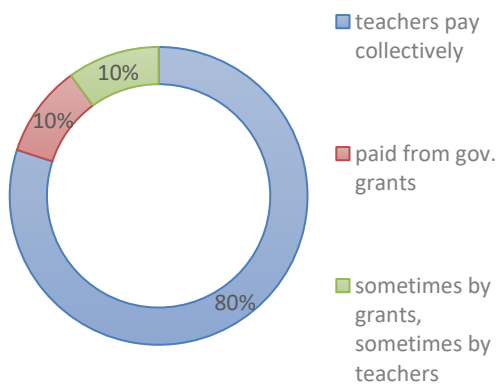


Fig. 9.2: No. of respondents about who paid for soaps, handwashes, toilet cleaners, other sanitation products, etc

Discussion

The above table (table no. 9) and figure (fig. 9.1) shows the no. of respondents who paid for the mid-day meal groceries, prepared for the school children. It shows that in all of the 20 schools i.e. 100% respondents, the mid-day meal groceries were paid for by the government itself.

The table no. 9 and fig. 9.2 show the no. of respondents who paid for other necessities for school like, hand wash, toilet cleaners, soaps, sanitation products, etc. In 16 schools or 80% respondents, the teachers themselves paid for all these products. In 2 schools or 10% respondents had the expenses of all this stuff paid from the government grants. In 2 schools or the other 10%, the expenses for all these products were sometimes paid by teachers on their own expense and sometimes by leftover Gov. Grants.

DATA INTERPRETATION

On the basis of data analysis, done in the previous chapter, the researcher arrives at the following findings.

Findings

1. Only 25% of the respondent schools had 5 or more than 5 regular teachers appointed. The rest 75% do not even have 1 regular teacher: 1 Class ratio.
2. For 15% of the respondent schools, that did not have a government owned building, the government did not provided for the rent. The rent was either paid for by some non-profit organisation or the owner had lent the space gratuitously.
3. Surprisingly, 100% of the respondent schools had no clerical staff or assistance at all.
4. From all the respondents, in 70% respondents' schools, the teachers divided all the register work, online form filling, UDISE records, attendance records, other important school records, among themselves. In 25% of the respondent schools, the head teachers did all of this clerical work and only in 5% respondents, a volunteer was trained for this clerical work. The teachers did all this work along with teaching the students.
5. 95% of the respondent schools had no cleaner or sweeper, appointed by the government to keep the school premises clean. 5% of the respondents had an 'Anganwadi' aid to help cleaning the school premises. The 95% of the respondents had appointed sweepers/ cleaners at their own expense for keeping their school clean.
6. 95% of the respondent schools had no helper for the students of pre-primary classes, at all. Only 5% had an 'Anganwadi' aid to help taking care of the pre-primary kids.
7. In 35% of the respondent schools, the teachers collectively paid for the electricity bills of the schools at their own expense. In 40% of the respondent schools, the government paid for the electricity bills of the schools. In 15%

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of the respondent schools, the government only paid sometimes for the electricity bills, rest all the times the teachers themselves paid for the electricity bill. In 5% school respondents, the owner of the building, paid the electricity bills.

8. In 70% of the respondent schools, the teachers themselves paid for the necessities like school registers, chalks, stationery, etc. In only 10% of the respondent schools, the government paid for these expenses. In the rest, 20% the teachers paid for the expenses whenever there were no leftover grants.

9. In all the 100% respondent schools, the mid-day meal groceries were paid for by the government itself. 80% of the respondent schools paid for other necessary things like hand washes, toilet cleaners, other sanitation products, etc.

10. In the 'other remarks' section too, the respondents have registered some of the problems that they face. 40% of the respondents say that the expenses of mid-day meal groceries is not provided for the pre-primary students and they either had to adjust them, or pay for their expenses themselves. 25% of the respondents also say that there are many other expenses like school maintenance, functions and meetings held, competitions, for which they pay and are never reimbursed or compensated. 5% of the respondents also quoted that this interview schedule, must be directed towards the officials because of whom, they face such problems.

CONCLUSION

From the above study, it can be safely concluded that the teachers of government primary schools of Patiala, Punjab, do face multiple problems. Hence, it can be safely said that the hypothesis is proved. The teachers of the government primary school are not even appointed in full number and ration. From the study, it is quite clear, that the ratio in most of the schools is not even 1 regular teacher per 1 class (standard). When the teachers are forced to look after and teach more than 2 classes at a time, it definitely does hamper their performance on a whole.

The government primary schools also do not have any government appointed sweepers/ cleaners or helpers for children studying in pre-primary children. The schools also do not have any clerical staff. In the researcher's conversation with the head-teachers, they revealed that they had a lot of registers to maintain and paper work to do; attendance registers, daily-mid day meal reports, monthly school certificates, UDISE forms, admission forms, cash books, etc. The teachers are forced to adjust for such staff themselves. The teachers also have to look after the mid-day meals being cooked in the school itself. The teachers, having no other options, have to multi-task, which does hamper their teaching; in both aspects: in teaching and in giving time to their students. When we compare government schools to private

schools, these are some of the aspects where most of the government schools lack.

The teachers also help in the functioning of the schools in monetary aspects. According to the done study, 95% of the respondents had to pay for the sweepers/ cleaners at their own expense, 35% regularly and 15% occasionally paid for the electricity bills of the schools, 70% paid for the overall stationery needed in the school and 80% of the respondents paid themselves for necessities like hand washes, toilet cleaners, sanitation products, etc. The teachers also talked about various other expenses for which they are never reimbursed or compensated. In addition with putting in physical and mental efforts, the teachers also put in monetary help for functioning of the schools. The teachers are forced to pay themselves for all these expenses, as they do not get any help from the government's part and when they do not look after such issues, they are reprimanded and questioned by the officials. The official government page of government primary schools (OGD,2014) does talk about clean washrooms and hand wash facilities, etc. but there is no mention of employees or funds to take care of the same. This is another important aspect where the government schools are weaker than private schools.

The teachers of government primary schools of Patiala, Punjab do face a lot of problems, which the government either totally neglects or side-lines. This could be one of the many reasons why the students of government schools underperform than the students of primary schools or why do the parents wish to enrol their children in private schools rather than government schools. The job of the teachers, is only to teach and to educate the students. The other unnecessary baggage of work on their shoulders will obviously affect their performance while teaching. Most of the teachers, in a conversation with the researcher, pointed out that for making a smart school, the basic amenities must be provided for first. Most of them believed that the foundation must be strong for a strong building.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the research/ study conducted, the researcher would like to put forth the following recommendations:

1. With the appointment of more regular government teachers, clerical staff, sweepers/ cleaners, the burden on the teachers will lessen and also job opportunities will increase.
2. Giving teachers less burden, will let them focus more on children and their studies and the government primary schools will be able to freely compete with private schools.

3. When the teachers are less burdened, the quality of education will improve and the number of admissions in government schools will automatically increase.

4. The government and the officials must start reshaping the system, from the ground level, understanding the everyday problems faced by the teachers.

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