

A Study of Problems of a Head Teacher of Rural Primary Schools

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Abstract – India is known as ancient Guru Worlds. In our society, all teachers have a reputation. By midday or until the beginning of modern times, we can say more or less the same situation. With time changes, teachers face many internal and external problems. Primary education is the foundation of education and, compared with primary schools, primary schools are very close to the community. Community participation in the administration of primary school is therefore more important. The head teacher of primary school takes care of numerous other responsibilities. The present generation of learners is one of the most important concerns of educators around the world, and particularly in India. As a nation with about 28 million youth, India is relatively young each year. Over 50% of the population is under 25 years of age, and over 65% are under 35 years of age. By 2020, an Indian average age is expected to be 29years, whereas China is expected to be 37years and Japan to be 48years. The high youth population in India, however, will not help the economy unless universal education throughout India is achieved. India is currently faced with the major problem of improving the quality of urban education through all pedagogical innovations, while rural students and their education continue to be largely ignored. Education deserves a much better look, particularly when the problem is so many - the attitude of teachers, the absence of teachers and the poor quality of teachers - with 65% of the population living in rural India. Since we know the scenario of rural schools, we need to reflect on these principles that we can transfer from our practice to other people. We should concentrate on the main problems of head teachers and make some good suggestions. Theoretics, principles and practices, pedagogy not applications in the education system need to be established in research not evaluation. Only head teachers can change the school environment in a sustainable way.

Key Words – Head Teacher, Rural Primary Schools, Problems, Attitude of Teachers, School Environment

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INTRODUCTION

This study describes the roles and responsibilities of the Primary School Director and is based on a serving Head Teacher's personal experience. The recent government initiatives seem to have been accepted as part of the academic discourse and influenced the management and leadership of educational establishments, offering school leaders opportunities and challenges. The study focuses on the fact that the impact of these opportunities and challenges is no greater than in primary school management. It is a popular misunderstanding that running an elementary school is much easier than running a large school. In a primary school, of course, there are numerous benefits, including easier communications, but the nature of the post itself makes it essentially very complex and difficult to do successfully. However, this study suggests that the role of head teacher in primary education is problematic, because the position includes not only the full spectrum of ordinary head

tevery duties but also a major responsibility for a class of children. To many, a vision of a tiny one- or two-teacher establishment in Victorian buildings where students can go to school would be evoked by the term "primary rural primary school." Indeed, while some schools continue to match this description, there have been many changes and many rural primary schools have been modified, extended, or reconstructed considerably. Scholars and staff are more likely than their urban counterparts to travel to school (Galton and Patrick, 1990). children are organized into four classes in the school on which this study is based. Including the head teacher, there are four full time teachers, who are responsible for 18 children. The head teacher is assigned to "administration" for half a day a week. 60% of school children live outside the village where they live, a lot of traveling from the nearby town, but many more live in the surrounding villages and some even travel across the border of the county. The study therefore mainly argues that

the lives of primary school teachers and the activities of the head teachers of these schools often differ from the one dear to contemporary myth. In recent years, many of the central government initiatives have placed an increasing burden on head teachers and this burden is not felt more than in elementary schools. The remainder of the study tries to explore the pressure the heads of such a school are facing, but it notes that the leader of such an institution has certain advantages.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sharma's (2011) investigation aimed at studying the relationship between characteristics possessed by teacher and teacher effectiveness with a view to predicting teacher success. Teaching aptitude appeared to be sound predictors of teacher effectiveness.

Chhaya (2014) investigated into certain psychological characteristics of effective school teachers. Study was conducted on 80 effective and 100 ineffective Primary teachers. The findings were that (i) effective teachers had significantly better personality adjustment and more favourable attitudes towards teaching than ineffective teachers (ii) effective teachers did not show significantly more interest in teaching than ineffective teachers. (iii) effective teachers were not extrovert than ineffective teachers.

Kaul (2014) analyzed the personality traits of popular Primary teachers and arrived at four factors namely, striving self-confidence, ability and perseverance and calmness. In another factor analytical study on the intellectual and personality correlates of teacher effectiveness.

Goel (2018) Extroversion as a key teacher efficiency factor has been reported. He found that extrovert teachers had a greater classroom exchange than introverted teachers using the Flanders Interactive Analysis System. The extrovert teachers had a big transition from the pupil's response towards the categories of teacher louange. All seven interaction models of critical teaching comportment appeared to be extrovert teachers while only the first four models of teaching compliance were available to introvert teachers. In conclusion, it can be said that extraversion's personality dimension is important to the behavior of the teacher.

Mutha (2010) has tried to recognize that effective teachers differentiate between attitudinal, motivational and personality factors. The main findings of the study were that the effectiveness of the teacher was significantly linked to sex, professional training, nature of education and revenue.

Blalock (2015) In the case of more effective and less effective teaching achievement records, attempted to examine differences in student control and self-concept in a sample of forty teachers in a rural school

system. No significant differences in teaching efficiency at the end of the year were shown by the results.

Hal Scott (2015) conducted a study on the background variables of people employed and the use of those variables in selecting effective teachers in the replacement of a sample of 206 teachers. The findings indicated that the identification of potentially effective substitute teachers is distinctively influenced by one variable, that is, pedagogical.

Hayman (2015) carried out a study in a sample of 100 teachers to investigate the link between teaching motivation and teaching efficiency. The findings show that there is an important connection between the level of self-actualisation and the effectiveness of the teacher. The teacher, which had the highest motivation, self-actualization, was therefore concluded to be more effective teachers.

Christensen (2016) studied in an example of 35 teachers to determine the efficient characteristics of teaching staff at the University of Idaho. The findings indicated that the performance in a pedagogical strategy course by an associate professor is not related to the effective educational features shown during the practice.

Cosper (2016) studied A random sample of leaders and public school teachers in the United States to establish the relationship between planning and the teacher performance. The findings showed a link between the efficiency of the teacher and the planning practice of the teachers as reported by the teachers.

Baughn (2017), an authority of eight unified school districts in Orange Country California to identify the teacher evaluation standards by school districts and determine whether the teacher efficacy standards reflect the teacher efficiency research results. The results indicated that the extent to which evaluators use teacher effectiveness research findings is not associated with their experience and training.

Noerrlinger (2017) carried out a study to study the student feedback and the factors that may influence the teacher on a sample of 19 principal students, 76 teachers and 1,500 students. Results have indicated that primary students can provide reliable teacher efficiency information. Students agreed with the directors and related more teachers to personal interests, school management, introduction, practice guidance, and independent interactions significantly higher than inefficient teachers, the feedback of students on teacher effectiveness and the age, sex, level of experiences, ethnic origin and educational level of the lecturer was found.

Stark's (2017) assessed whether placing the Tax Career Ladder Level 11 in the Independent School of San Antonio on a sampled of 337 teachers has a

significant impact on teacher efficiencies and the professional development of teaching teachers. The results show that 11 professors with more than 20 years of experience are more effective in school and teachers provide support to individuals more frequently than teachers who have less than 15 years of experience.

Aligarh, Gupta (2018) In a sample of 46 science teachers and 298 arts teachers from the 39 intermediate college in the district of tried to study the intelligencia, adaptation and personality needs of effective science and arts instructors. In the 11-15 years of experience after this, they were found more effective and the effectiveness of the teacher was also found to be associated with teachers' age. In the 30-39 year age group, they were found to be most effective; their effectiveness then decreased further.

Minicucci (2018) examined the existence of any relationship to teacher satisfaction or efficiency rating of background characteristics that are available before employment. The results reveal that few of the teacher's backgrounds are: educational level, hereditary status, birth rank, socio-economic level of childhood, maternal, father's education, teaching choices, afterschool relationships, and reports on teacher satisfaction.

Prakasham (2018) attempt to compare teacher effectiveness forces across sexual differentiation and territorial variation, both in different types of school organizational environments and at various levels of teaching competency. The sample consisted of 800 teachers and 92 directors of 120 public authorities, private non-Christian and Christian schools of Raipur and Bilaspur districts. Teaching classes IX, X and XI. The results indicated that urban school teachers in an industrial area were significantly superior to professors who worked either at semi-urban schools or schools in non-industrial areas, who worked both with academic competence and with teacher efficiency.

THE PRESSURES ON THE HEAD OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The management of primary schools is increasingly, but is still inadequate. Most of this research has focussed on the quality of primary school curriculum and not on the role of the head. PRISMS were researched mainly by Galton and Patrick, and were funded in primary school through the DES over three years from the start of Spring 1983. Galton and Patrick were researchers in this field. This study included colleges with fewer than 100 students or four full-time teachers; although up to 120 students and seven full-time teachers were increased. This may be the latest large-scale study on elementary rural schools, but it was written before the major changes that LMS and the National Curriculum brought. Recent work has rightly highlighted the problems faced by the Leader and the importance of creating support networks for schools (Dunning, 1993) (Lomax and Darley, 1995).

Southworth's important study (2004) examined a leadership context in primary, medium- and large-scale elementary schools and analyzed the challenges facing school head teachers of less than 150 pupils, which are an interesting contradiction to Galton and Patrick, since Southworth was naturally able to analyze all the dramatic changes involved. The results of South value can best be synthesized with the words of one of the head teachers in his study, who noted that "divers – rich, diversified, split" work of head teachers in primary schools (Southworth, 2004: 31). In Scotland, further extensive research was done under the auspices of the Scottish Council for Research in Education, which also identified the difficulty of the teaching director and a small number of employees performing various tasks (McPake, 1998).

This article would support the notion that the greatest challenge in the running of a primary school is the invariably head teacher. The budget allows for only a minimum of non-contact time for administrative tasks, including the introduction of Local School Manager (LSM). However, given the rural character of the county with its large number of primary village schools, primary school leaders are usually given time to spend at least 75 per cent of their time in their own school. This time for non-contact varies from county to county: Naturally, in recent years, the inevitable duality of functions between teaching and management has been exacerbated by increasingly independent, local institutions in schools.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE BUREAUCRATIZATION OF THE HEAD TEACHER'S ROLE

The advent of the Education Reform Act means that the time and energy spent by managers on the school budget can be significantly reduced, as well as the generation of earnings and the new employer/employee relationship with staff (Ball, 1994, p 86). This is not true more than at elementary school because it is a grave mistake to think that in primary school there is less administration than at a large school because both have the same amount of paperwork. In fact, in its 1991 annual report the senior chairman of the HMI recognized management and administrative duties in the curriculum leadership of all schools as beginning to "take their toll" (DES 1991). In the course of the study school the connection with staff in general and in particular with the school official is limited to breaks or snack times, e.g. during the assembly (a reason for having other teachers take Assembly as a matter of routine). The School Manager must therefore bear greater responsibility for everyday affairs and therefore it is vital that the head and the administrator have a good relationship. Regular management issues must be addressed in the school on a schedule, usually weekly basis. This is felt, as it is difficult to retain a discussion over a period of time, allows for a lack of

reflection and consideration of important issues. But there appears to be a small amount of scope, especially in budgeting when difficult options are to be discussed, for concentrated considerations at key times in the administrative cycle. Other problem times to be noted include admissions when it is necessary to take the right decision, usually during the spring. In an increasingly complex and difficult situation this can be particularly difficult if an appeal is the outcome of a wrong decision.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE TEACHING HEAD

It is therefore not surprising that recent commentators noted that increasing pressure from management and administration is diluting the role of heads and deputies in managing the curriculum (Webb and Vulliamy, 1996). Such tensions are exacerbated in primary schools by the fact that head teachers can probably have a very large teaching role. In many cases, parents have also chosen to attend such schools positive and may drive some distance to allow their child to attend; therefore, they have high school expectations and are willing to pressurize the employees and the head if their child feels they have not received the attention they feel the child deserves. Thus, it is difficult to fulfill the role of the teaching leadership not only because of the time and energy constraints but also because of the stressful requirements of any class. However, there are other curricular problems inherent in it. The very nature of a primary school means there are few teachers: thus every teacher must coordinate different areas to cover the entire range of subjects in the national curriculum (McPake, 1998). This requires a lot of work simply in terms of reading documents, working schemes and writing policies, but, if you want to play your part efficiently, you need to involve your coordinators in monitoring and evaluating the classroom. It is essential to promote and maintain curricular links with other schools, and again this falls to the topic manager. This with one subject, much more with several, is difficult and time consuming. There are of course less classes to be monitored, but there is still a range of age and capacity to be covered, so the responsibility is just as high. The unavoidable lack of expertise deepens human resource problems by putting the few existing staff under great pressure.

PROBLEMS OF MANAGING STAFF

Recruitment of staff in a Primary school can be challenging. Less effective teachers cannot be 'carried' by supportive colleagues; no one else will be teaching the same age group and there are no Year Group Leaders. As Galton and Patrick acknowledge:

"An unsatisfactory teacher (is) Difficult to 'hide' on a Primary staff"

Dealing with a failing teacher is one of the most difficult problems a Head encounters and all the more so in a Primary school for the situation will impinge on

the whole staff. In a Primary school all teaching staff, of whatever level of effectiveness and, therefore, it can be difficult for Primary schools to employ a Newly Qualified Teacher who may not have the required breadth of experience. It is also difficult to recruit good male teachers in Primary schools and anecdotal evidence seems to suggest that this is because promotion is more difficult to attain as there are fewer scale posts. Hence the staff of a Primary school is likely to comprise older married women, and if there is a male teacher, he is more than likely to be the Head.

THE PROBLEM OF THE ORGANISATIONS OF CLASS GROUPINGS

One important feature of all primary schools is that they group children vertically. In fact, primary schools have no option, except vertically organized classes with groups in a single class of two or three years. This is not for educational but practical reasons: there are simply not enough children every year to form a class, so different ages have to be combined in each class. Due to pupil numbers, various key steps in the classes may also be necessary. The introduction of the National Curriculum with its particular requirements for every key phase, especially in subject areas such as historical and geographical, was particularly challenging. With the lower requirements of the revised curriculum orders, the position has improved somewhat, but more demands such as the literacy hour have meant new challenges for vertically grouped classes. Classes usually include several different ages in primary school. Naturally, such measures have considerable advantages. Lighter, younger children face a challenge to work with older students; older children with less able skills can work with younger children without losing self-confidence or moving classrooms. "Experience has led me to share with John Barrett that the vertical grouping of children and teachers is a major benefit" Anne Waterhouse states. Children of primary age need stability and time and space to develop in their own speed. This opportunity is offered by vertical grouping. It also gives flexibility to distinguish siblings or improper friends if needed." Aquarius (Aquarius 1991)

However, while many parents tend to approve these arrangements and appreciate their flexibility, some find these arrangements of concern. In fact, mixed age classes can be much more demanding for the classroom teacher to consider a much broader age and skills. One way to address this is by using an a literacy and numeracy setting system, and this actually seems to work. Arrangements must, however, make it possible that the children progress at different rates, so that all children are always appropriately grouped together, must build on systematic, ongoing assessment. Therefore, groups must be fluid and enable constant movement and change.

SATs presented new challenges and problems for primary schools. Due to the mixed age classes, it is fundamentally difficult to test specific year groups. One way to tackle these challenges is for the teacher to simultaneously test all year-round groups much more effectively by introducing the SATs for the years 3, 4 and 5. The staff must adopt this decision as a policy matter and integrate it into the entire policy on school assessment. Naturally, the introduction of SATs has led to greater challenges as far as the League Tables and SATs are concerned. There are often very few kids in primary school who takes SAT, which makes every pupil 'worthy' much higher, perhaps 20%. Since the League tables record results as percentage, achieving high scores may be very challenging for a primary school in a few years. In any case, because of the very primary figures, the results may fluctuate significantly from year to year. This is exacerbated by the fact that parents may have chosen primary education because of learning difficulties, that primary schools are more beneficial and that any child with particular learning problems will have negative impacts on the results of SATs. Indeed, it is so serious that certain schools do not refuse to allow a child with recognized problems. This problem is not unknown.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE "SCHOOL BUDGET"

As noted above small schools, primary school sizes have traditionally benefitted. However, the trend towards larger class numbers was introduced with the introduction of LMS and this also affected primary schools. Theoretically, LMS has given schools more budgetary flexibility. But in reality, when employees account for 90% to 95% of the total budget, flexibility is difficult. LMS has other far-reaching consequences, of course, because money traditionally held centrally was transferred to schools. Because this transfer is usually assigned according to the number of the pupils, the primaries are the less they receive. In particular, one means by building cluster arrangements in the area with other primary schools, primary schools try to resolve the problem of providing sufficient resources, especially with rarely-used equipment. Such a cluster can provide valuable aid not only in resources, but also in terms of training of staff and governors, evaluation and moderation of student work and extracurricular participation such as matches in games.

The formulation of liaison networks or "cluster arrangements" is one way to tackle the problems in obtaining appropriate resources that are common among primary schools (Lomax and Darley, 1995). The school has formed a classroom arrangement with three other elementary schools to share training days, visits to theaters and an annual home visit. This not only makes the costs acceptable, but also allows the kids to mix with the other kids of the same age who go to elementary school with them. It is worth noting that LEA funds are formally being used by a "Rural Schools project" to facilitate and encourage such arrangements, and support Peripatetic teachers in

going to the schools in the program as well as working regularly with groups of children. The system also financed numerous resources, including a minibus for transporting pupils to PE, if the hall or area were not available in their own school. Unfortunately, the project concluded with LMS.

CONCLUSION

Despite all the problems outlined in this study the role of head teacher in a Primary school is undoubtedly unique and rewarding. The greatest strength of the Primary school lies in the quality of relationships that can be developed between staff and children, staff and parents, parents and governors etc. Indeed, to most Heads of Primary schools, and probably of all types of schools, the position is not a job but a way of life; we must nonetheless note that the head teacher's role is complex in any school and none more so than in the Primary school. The increasing bureaucratization of the role of the head teacher which has been brought about by national legislation has led to an exacerbation of the division between head teacher as chief executive and head teacher as leading professional which was identified in the seminal work. Quite naturally it is in Primary schools, where the fault lines of this division have always been the most evident, that the pressures of these often conflicting demands are felt the most keenly. This study is intended to describe the roles and responsibilities of the Primary school head and is based on the personal experiences of a serving head teacher. It seems an accepted element of academic discourse that recent governmental initiatives have impacted on the leadership and management of educational institutions in such a way that they have offered both opportunities and challenges for school leaders. It is the central contention of this study that the impact of these opportunities and challenges has nowhere been greater than in the leading of Primary schools. It is a popular misconception that running a Primary school is considerably easier than running a large one. There are, of course, many advantages in a Primary school, including easier communications, yet the nature of the post itself makes it in essence a most complex and difficult task to perform successfully. This study suggests, however, that there are specific problems of fulfilling the role of Head teacher in a Primary school for not only does the position involve the full range of normal Head teacher duties but it may also include a major responsibility for a class of children. To many, the term "Primary rural primary school" would conjure up a vision of a tiny, one- or two- teacher establishment housed in Victorian buildings where pupils can walk to school. In fact, although some schools do remain which match this description, much has changed and many rural Primary schools have been substantially modified, extended, or rebuilt. Both pupils and staff tend to have greater distances to travel to school than their urban counterparts. In the school on which this study is

based there are children on roll organised into four classes. There are four full-time teachers including the head teacher who has responsibility for reception children. The head teacher is allocated one half day per week for "administration". 60% of the children attending the school live outside the boundary of the village in which it stands, a number travel from the nearby town but many others live in neighbouring villages, and some even travel from across the county border.

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