

Problems and Prospects of Pre-Primary School Teachers in Arunachal Pradesh

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Abstract : *Teacher performance is one of the most crucial inputs in the field of education. The success of educational reform depends largely on the quality of teacher. The status and conditions of teacher has direct bearing on the quality of education. Teachers are to organize teaching-learning situation and to perform teaching-learning tasks. They are expected to plan, organize and manage teaching-learning process efficiently and effectively. Teachers must be provided with opportunities for professional development so that they can discharge their responsibilities in schools. Teachers' personal quality, educational qualification, professional training, economic condition, available facilities and opportunities, and the place s/he occupies in the school as well as in the community bears a significant contribution to the reconstruction of education for development. In this paper an attempt has been made to identify the problems faced by pre-primary school teachers in Arunachal Pradesh. An Inventory prepared by the investigator was administered to 128 teachers. The study revealed that there is a need to provide the essential educational infrastructure for pre-primary school teachers and to ensure their continuous professional growth for the qualitative and quantitative development of pre-primary education in Arunachal Pradesh.*

Keywords: *Quality Teacher Education, Professional Development*

Pre-primary education is as an important component of formal system of education. It is found in practice that pre-primary classes are downward extension of primary education, which is otherwise called as nursery or Kinder Garten (K.G) education. There was no record of any pre-primary school before 1971, although there had been a record of primary schools in Arunachal Pradesh at the time India got independence from the British. It is also clear that pre-primary education in the state is not confined to the formal schooling but covers the non-formal settings practiced in Anganwadi centres. Formal system of primary education, Anganwadi centres through ICDS and ECCE centres under SSA programme are significant source for the development of pre-primary in the state. There is a huge enrolment of children in these centres and the coverage is wide due to the involvement of the state and central government in the form of several schemes and programmes. Teacher performance is one of the most crucial inputs in the field of education. The success of educational reform depends largely on the quality of teacher. The status and conditions of teacher has direct bearing on the quality of education. Teachers are to organize teaching-learning situation and to perform teaching-learning tasks. They are expected to plan, organize and manage teaching-learning process efficiently and effectively.

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Although a good numbers of studies on pre-primary education have been taken up in various part of the country, the present study trying to understand the existing condition of pre-primary school teacher would be of immense importance in the context of Arunachal Pradesh. Moreover, the pre-primary education has gained currency at the researchers and other Governmental and Non-Governmental agencies in the wake of universalisation of Primary Education as pre-primary education can be a supportive strength as well as link to primary education. Hence, the researchers are prompted to take up this important area of education that would throw light on an important aspect of pre-primary education in Arunachal Pradesh. It is also hoped that the outcomes of the study can be useful to the administrators and policy makers as reference tool for the future educational development of the state.

Objectives of the Study

The present study was conducted with the following objectives:

- i. To study the educational problems of pre-primary school teachers in Arunachal Pradesh.
- ii. To study the socio-economic problems of pre-primary school teachers in Arunachal Pradesh.

Methodology

Design

Descriptive survey method was used to examine the problems of pre-primary school teachers in Arunachal Pradesh.

Sample

The sample constituted 128 pre-primary school teachers drawn from 16 districts of Arunachal Pradesh by using stratified random sampling technique.

Tool Used

An Inventory was prepared by the researchers to study the educational and socio-economic problems faced by the pre-primary school teachers of Arunachal Pradesh. The inventory consists of 20 statements requiring answers from the respondents in 'Yes' or 'No'.

Data Analysis

After collection of data from the sample of respondents, the responses were scored individually. Simple statistical tool like percentage was used to analyze the data.

Results of the Studys

The responses of Pre-Primary School Teachers to the statements depicting their problems or prospects are presented in table-1 as follows:

Table 1: Educational and Socio-economic Problems of Pre-Primary School Teachers in Arunachal Pradesh (N=128)

Sl.No	Items	Percentage (%) of teachers Agreed
1	I am professionally trained	35* (27.34 %)
2	I attended summer course /short term in service training	39 (30.47 %)
3	My workload too heavy	37 (28.91%)
4	There is library facility in the school	49 (38.28 %)

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5	There is a separate reading room for teachers	49 (38.28 %)
6	I participated in seminars, conference, workshops, etc. to upgrade my knowledge	29 (22.66%)
7	Our school subscribes newspapers	44 (34.38 %)
8	There is computer with internet connection in the school	32 (25 %)
9	I used school computer for my academic purpose	34 (26.56 %)
10	Sufficient teaching aids is available in the school	36 (28.13 %)
11	I used audio visual aids in my class room teaching	13 (10.16 %)
12	I got salary in time	96 (75 %)
13	I enjoyed leave when I need	65 (50.75 %)
14	There is provision of maternity/paternity leave in the school	73 (57.03 %)
15	I am provided quarter by the institution	42 (32.81 %)
16	I feel recognized and respected by the society as a teacher	109 (85.16 %)
17	I feel satisfy with my present service condition	87 (67.97 %)
18	I get cooperation from the parents and students to carry out my duty	108 (84.38 %)
19	I have good relation with my colleagues	112 (87.5 %)
20	I take over all the workload due to lack of sufficient staff	49 (38.28 %)

** Figures outside the parentheses indicate number of respondents agreed to the statements*

Results

The results pertaining to different aspects of professional growth of teachers are presented as follows:

Professionally Trained

Responses to statement number one revealed that 35 teachers agreed to the statement. This implies that only 27.34 % of teacher respondents are professionally trained whereas majority of them are untrained. Thus, the study affirmed that majority of teacher respondents teaching pre-primary classes are professionally untrained

Attended Summer Course /short term In-service Training

Responses to statement two revealed that 39 teachers agreed to the statement. Thus, the study reveals that 30.47 % of the teachers attended summer course/short term course in-service training programme. The study affirmed that some in-service training programmes were conducted and it is yet to be attended by majority of the teacher respondents.

Heavy Workload

Responses to the statement three revealed that 37 teachers agreed to the statement. This study reveals that 28.9 % of the teacher respondents found their workload too heavy. However, majority of teachers did not find their workload to be too heavy and they are comfortable with it. Thus, the study affirmed that teacher workload is not a problem to majority of the teacher respondents.

Library Facility in School

Responses to the statement four revealed that 49 teachers agreed to the statement. This implies that 38.28 % of teacher respondents reported to have library facility in their school which is an essential

educational infrastructure for the qualitative improvement of education. But, it is also indicated that majority of the schools where the sample teachers are teaching, are without any library facility.

Separate Reading Room for Teachers

Responses to the statement five revealed that 49 teachers agreed to the statement. This showed that 38.28 % of teacher respondents reported to have separate reading room in the school whereas majority of teachers reported that they are not provided separate reading room. Thus, the study affirmed that reading space in the school for teacher is one problem indicated in the present study.

Participated in Seminars, Conference, and Workshops

Responses to the statement six revealed that 29 teachers agreed to the statement. This implies that 22.66 % of teacher respondents reported to have got the opportunity to participate in seminars, conference, workshop, etc to upgrade their knowledge. But majority of the teacher respondents reported that they have not attended any seminars, conference, workshop, etc to upgrade their knowledge. Thus the present study affirmed that majority of teacher respondents did not get the opportunity to upgrade their knowledge by participating in seminars, conference, workshop, etc

Subscription of Newspapers by the School

Responses to the statement seven revealed that 34 teachers agreed to the statement. This indicated that 26.56 % of teachers reported to subscription of news paper by the school regularly whereas majority of the teacher respondents did not agree to have subscribed news paper regularly by the school. Thus the present study affirmed that majority of the school failed provide information of the day-to-day happenings to the school community through news paper.

Computer with Internet Connectivity in Schools

Responses to the statement eight revealed that 32 teachers agreed to the statement. This implies that only 25 % of teacher respondents reported to have computer with internet connection in the school. This affirmed that majority of the school failed to provide computer with internet connection which is a source of information and knowledge.

Use of School Computer for Academic Purposes

Responses to the statement nine revealed that 34 teachers agreed to the statement. This shows that 26.56 % of teacher respondents reported to have used computer of the school for their academic purpose whereas, majority of the teachers did not agree with the statement. Thus, the study affirmed that majority of teacher respondents did not utilize the school computer for their academic work but the reason for this is to be ascertained.

Availability of Sufficient Teaching Aids in Schools

Responses to the statement ten revealed that 36 teachers agreed to the statement. This reflects that only 28.13 % of teacher respondents agreed to have sufficient teaching aids (both audio and visual) in their school for use. Thus, the study affirmed that in majority of the school sufficient teaching aids (both audio and visual) is not available for use.

Used Audio-visual Aids in Classroom Teaching

Responses to the statement eleven revealed that 13 teachers agreed to the statement. This shows that only 10.16 % of teacher respondents are not using audio visual aids in their class room teaching. This implies that majority of the teacher respondents did not use audio visual aids in their class room

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teaching. Thus the study affirmed that teaching aids was not commonly used by the teacher respondents in their classroom teaching.

Salary Drawn in Time

Responses to the statement twelve revealed that 96 teachers agreed to the statement. This shows that 75 % of teacher respondents reported to have got their salary in time. This affirmed that majority of teacher respondents did not face the problem of getting their salary in time.

Enjoyed Leave when Needed

Responses to the statement thirteen revealed that 65 teacher agreed to the statement. This reflects that 50.75 % of the teacher respondents have enjoyed leave as and when they needed whereas half of the teacher respondents did not get leave when needed. Thus, it is affirmed that getting leave is found to be partially the problem of teacher respondents in the present study.

Provision of Maternity/paternity Leave

Responses to the statement fourteen revealed that 73 teachers agreed to the statement. This reveals that 57.03 % of teacher respondents are aware of the provision of maternity/paternity leave whereas half of the teacher respondents are not aware of the provision of maternity/paternity leave in the school. Thus, the study affirmed that different leave rule is functional in the pre-primary schools covered in the present study.

Provided Quarter by the Institution

Responses to the statement fifteen revealed that 42 teachers agreed to the statement. This shows that 32.81 % of the teacher respondents were provided quarter for their accommodation. The study affirmed that majority of teacher respondents were not provided quarter by the governing authority of the school.

Feel Recognized and Respected by the Society

Responses to the statement sixteen revealed that 109 teachers agreed to the statement. This implies that 85.16 % of teacher respondents felt to have been recognized and respected by the society. Thus, the study affirmed that majority of teacher respondents are satisfied with their status in the society.

Feel Satisfied with Present Service Condition

Responses to the statement seventeen revealed that 87 teachers agreed to the statement. This implies that 67.97 % of teacher respondents felt satisfied with their service condition. This affirmed that majority of teacher respondents are satisfied with their present service condition.

Cooperation from Parents and Students

Responses to the statement eighteen revealed that 108 teachers agreed to the statement. This implies that 84.38 % of teacher respondents agreed to have received cooperation from the parents and students to carry out their duty. This affirmed that majority of teacher respondents are not facing any problem with the students and their parent to carry out their duty as a teacher.

Have Good Relation with Colleagues

Responses to the statement nineteen revealed that 112 teachers agreed to the statement. This implies that 87.5 % of teacher respondents have good relation with their colleagues. This affirmed that majority of teacher respondent do not have problem with their colleagues.

Heavy Workload

Responses to the statement nineteen revealed that 49 teachers agreed to the statement. This implies that 38.28 % of teacher respondents are found to take over all the workload of others due to lack of sufficient staff. However, majority of the teacher respondents did not find their workload too heavy. This affirmed that teachers are not overburdened due to lack of sufficient staff.

Discussion

It is evident from the results of the study that majority of the teacher respondents were professionally untrained and at the same time they did not attend short term/summer course in-service training. It was also indicated that majority of them did not get the opportunity to upgrade their knowledge by attending seminars, workshops and conferences. Moreover, several problems are also indicated relating to educational infrastructure like lack of library facility in the school, no provision of separate reading room for teachers, no regular subscription of newspaper, absence of computer facility with internet connection in the school, lack of audio-visual aids and no provision of quarter by the institution were indicated in the findings of the present study. However, there are also some positive indicators of the condition of pre-primary teachers which may be noted as getting of monthly salary on time, enjoying leave when needed, being recognized and respected by the society as a teacher, satisfaction with their service condition, receiving cooperation from the parents and students to carry out school work, maintaining good relations with colleagues and being comfortable with their workload are the positive aspect of pre-primary school teacher evident in the present findings. On the basis of these findings it may be concluded that the teacher respondents are not facing serious problem in relation to salary, leave, recognition in the society and workload but they do face the problem of lack educational infrastructure and other facilities. This implied that there is a need to provide the essential educational infrastructure for pre-primary school teachers and ensure their continuous professional growth for the qualitative and quantitative development of pre-primary education in Arunachal Pradesh.

The state of Arunachal Pradesh has 11 DIETs, one State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) to meet the requirement of teachers training and educational researches in the State. There are 4 (four) B.Ed. colleges in the state. Considering the huge number of untrained teachers (46%) at secondary level and understaffing of SCERT in the state and, it has become a difficult task to provide information regarding recent trend of teaching methodology and other aspects of education. However, state is taking resource support for training purposes from national level institutes like NCERT New Delhi, RIE Bhubaneswar, NERIE Shillong, SCERT Assam and DERT Meghalaya. State is deputing 30 nos. of untrained teachers of secondary level for B. Ed course at Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar every year. The situation at higher secondary stage is quite satisfactory as state has only 4 % untrained teachers. However, the professional development of pre-primary school teachers is a great concern in the state.

Educational Implications

The findings of the study have immense implications for educational practice. The major ones are as follows:

- i. Insufficient number of qualified teachers to take care of young population is expected to hinder the growth and development of pre-primary education in the state. Efforts are to be directed towards the training of teachers who are the service providers at the pre-primary level. Separate teacher training institution for pre-primary school teachers in the state may be initiated by the government.

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- ii. More opportunities need to be given to the pre-primary school teachers to attend seminars, conferences, workshops, and training programmes to upgrade the knowledge and to keep abreast with the changing knowledge and skills. The participation of teachers in these academic activities will contribute to their professional development.
- iii. State government have not laid down any norms for pre-primary teacher's qualifications, remuneration, or guidelines. Qualification requirements exist only for educators working in formal system of education. Therefore, it is recommended that government should formulate clear outlines and objectives for pre-primary education in the state.
- iv. The study revealed that there is lack of educational facilities in pre-primary school centers. Therefore, it is important to provide adequate educational facilities for effective classroom teaching which would enhance the effectiveness of pre-primary school teachers.
- v. Lack of accommodation for the teacher has also been revealed from the findings of the study. Thus, provision of residential quarters for all the teachers need to be constructed.

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