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'Problems of Women Teachers Working in Rural Haryana, India'

Economics

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ABSTRACT

Teaching as a profession is largely considered as easy, safe, comfortable and compatible to women in India. This is why more and more women are entering in teaching profession. It is generally agreed by the intellectuals, policy makers, social workers and educational planners that women teachers are instrumental not only in increasing enrolment of girl students but also in leaving a positive influence on their retention, performance and personality development. Scholars believe that presence of women teachers in schools is increasingly important as they perform an instrumental role in facilitating girls' education. Women teachers are positive role models as well as important motivating factors for patriarchal communities and parents to enrol girls in schools. But our women teachers working in rural areas are facing number of problems. This present study focuses on analysing the problems of the women teachers working in the rural primary schools in Haryana. The Study is limited to the personal as well as professional problems as depicted by the women teachers themselves to the researcher during the course of interviews. There are number of problems like lack of transport facilities, lack of toilets, staff rooms, lack of staff, lack of child care facilities in the school etc. etc. with whom women teachers encounter on the daily basis. The major problem reported by all the women teachers is that apart from teaching, number of other duties is also assigned to teachers like population surveys, voter card preparation, and mail delivery to district offices. Paper concludes with special measures to be taken for the personal as well as professional development of the women teachers working in rural areas.

KEYWORDS:

Women, Teacher, Rural, School, Job, Housework.

INTRODUCTION

We are in an era of gender sensitization and women empowerment. The status of women in different societies, countries, and religion will be different. There are various constitutional and judicial provisions in favour of women in India. The Constitution of India has several provisions to safeguard the status of women .The main provisions are given in the articles 14, 15, and 16. Article 15 (3) says that "Nothing in this article prevent the state from making any special provision for women and children". There are significant constitutional amendments also to ensure status of women. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments (1992) give 33% representation to women in Panchayats and Nagar Parishads and 30% headships to women in these bodies at the village, block and district levels in rural areas and in towns and cities.

Though there are so many special provisions the position of women even in a cent percent literate society is not so promising. Even in service sector, women are facing variety of problems. The changes in family structure from joint family system to nuclear family system fired up problems of women to a great extent. The problems of employed women will vary with the nature of job, sector in which she is working, and family setup. Fairly large proportion of teaching community is comprised of female teachers, which is one of the major service sectors chosen by women in the state. Hence a study of this type is attempted to realise the problems of female school teachers.

THE PRESENT STUDY

We are in an era of gender sensitization and women empowerment. The status of women in different societies, countries, and religion will be different. What are the real problems of women? Do their problems understood correctly? Problems of women are less addressed or overlooked many times. What special provisions and rights are set apart for the welfare of women both nationally and internationally? And how far those contributed to welfare of women?; etc., are some important questions need to be answered before analyzing the present status. Though the number of women engaged in different occupation is increasing, the proportion is far lower than men. Majority of women are employed in informal sectors and less paid or sometimes unpaid. There are only few sectors in which women are equally paid.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The major objectives of the study were as follows:

1 To study the personal and household problems of the women teachers working in rural areas
2 To study the professional problems faced by the women teachers in the study area.
3 To suggest some measures to solve major problems of the women teachers.

METHODOLOGY

Methodology of the study followed the procedure of descriptive research, in which existing status of female teachers in Kerala was thoroughly analysed. The problems of female school teachers were identified using the tools such as a questionnaire, and an interview schedule. Document analysis was done for identifying provisions for women in the Constitution of India, Judicial safeguards, and recommendations of various committees and commissions for the welfare of women. The investigator also conducted discussion with experts to gather relevant information about the status of women in India and Kerala Tools & Sample: The tools used for the study were questionnaire and an interview schedule. A questionnaire was developed by the investigator on various aspects related to the personal, familial and professional problems of lady teachers working at school level. An interview schedule was also prepared to gather relevant information which should supplement the data obtained through the questionnaire. The sample of the study comprised of 400 school teachers teaching at primary, secondary, and higher secondary level in Kozhikode, Wayanad, Kannur and Kasaragod districts of the state of Kerala. Since the population size is very large the study was limited to the representative sample. Purposive random sampling technique was used to select the sample. Due representation was given to locale, type of institution, teaching experience, and nature of institution. Interview with forty eight teachers belong to primary, secondary, and higher secondary levels was conducted to gather relevant information to supplement the data obtained through the questionnaire.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The main findings of the study are as follows

1 Majority of female teachers working in different levels are facing Personal problems, Familial problems, and Professional problems; and the problems faced by them are more or less similar in nature regardless of the level in which they are teaching.
2 Among the personal problems health related problems are more prevalent. Majority of the respondents skipped breakfast daily, and do not get time for simple exercises, relaxation, and unable to engage in any recreation activities. Most of them do not get time to read news papers daily.
3 Majority of teachers at higher secondary section, opined that wearing saree is inconvenient for teaching Among the familial problems, cooperation of family members was identified as the major problem area. Majority of respondents do not get cooperation from spouse and children in family and house hold matters so that they themselves should complete all those works after return from school. Majority expect support from their spouse in house hold works, and in supervising studies of children, but the support available is only marginal.

4 Huge syllabus, very high pupil-teacher ratio, unnecessary emphasis on clerical works related to documentation of evaluation, Evaluation of fairly large number of students, loss of working days, the tension caused by the existing system of education, lack of enough reference materials, inadequate support from colleagues and head of the institution, inadequate in-service training, etc. are the major professional problems of majority of teachers.

5 A teacher of science subjects in some school have to instruct, evaluate, and grade up to 500 or more pupils at secondary level. The number of pupils may have increases up to 1500 in the case of teachers teaching Music, Needle work & Physical education. This is really impractical to evaluate and grade such a large number of students by a single teacher.

6 Reference facilities in school and time available for reference is very limited as opined by most of the respondents. Most of the teachers have an average of 24 periods of work load per week for direct teaching along with innumerable other duties.

7 Though not remarked as a problem almost all teachers disagree with the practice of assigning only letter grades in SSLC certificate. Most of them advocate that either marks or grade points should be given along with letter grades.

Suggestions

The female teachers regardless of the level of teaching, facing personnel, familial, and Professional problems, which heavily influence their physical as well as mental health. A person suffering from physical and mental stress may not be able to engage in creative activities. Since, woman is the pivot of every family, and thereby society, it is necessary to alleviate their problems in a time bound manner. Since the problems faced by lady teachers at different levels such as primary, secondary, and higher secondary are mostly alike a comprehensive approach should be necessary to solve those problems. The health problem among most of teachers is due to improper food habits and lack of exercise and relaxation. These unhealthy habits would lead to increased stress, both physical and mental, and may cause irreparable damages to any of the important body systems even by early forties. Since a working person must have to strive for the family as well as for the institution, adequate support is essential. So extensive support from family members is essential to reduce the pressure of double work of school and home at the same time. The sharing of responsibility should be begin from family itself. There are some works, that children alone could do beautiful. Train them in doing so, and encourage them to engage in all household responsibilities as they are growing. Cooperation from spouse is all the most crucial for providing holistic support to a woman. So, opportunities to make them aware about personal problems and development of consensus are essential. Teachers should be properly trained in time management also, which will help them to find time for breakfast, relaxation, exercises as well as for official works. The educationists, planners and administrators, must develop urgent plan to eliminate those problems facing by teachers, which is essential for quality enhancement of school education. A very high teacher pupil ratio is suggested as a problematic situation. Team teaching is an effective alternative to eliminate this problem. But it needs necessary preconditions such as transformation of curriculum in an integrated manner and change form period system to hour system. The former enable, for example presence of a language teacher and science teacher in the same class at a time and the latter will help to reduce the workload of teachers per week. Unnecessary documentation is another important area, which should be renovated, because it taken away the time for preparation and instruction. Qualified persons may be appointed to school at the time of entry of data in the evaluation profile of pupils. Another alternative is complete computer based system of evaluation.

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