

An Investigation into Teaching-Learning Environment and Teacher's Mental Health in Single Teacher Lower Primary School of District Kokrajhar, Assam; India

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Abstract:- The study sought to find out teaching-learning environment in single teacher school and its affect on psycho—physical side of teacher in Vernacular Lower Primary stage in Kokrajhar District of Assam, India. The objectives that lead the study were single teacher school, multi-grade teaching and teaching-learning environment. The target population of the study was 37 single teacher schools cum headmasters of District Kokrajhar of Assam, India. A sampling of Purposive Sampling technique was used to select the single teacher schools from District Kokrajhar in between 2015-17 academic year. The study employed School Survey Method and a structured interview schedule as well as open interview was used as tools of the study. The data gathered was analyzed by the way of descriptive method of research. The study found out that the teaching-learning environment in school with insufficient staff is chaotic and the teacher suffers from unsatisfaction and physical and mental stress due to over work load which stretched their mental capability and greatly curtailed their teaching skills to be effective teacher to produce good students. The study concluded that a chaos teaching-learning environment and over working load stressed teacher physically and mentally which results ineffective teaching learning process in Lower Primary (LP) stage. The study recommended that required teacher should be recruited in every LP school to solve problems of teaching-learning process aroused by multi-grade teaching in single teacher school.

Keywords:- Single teacher school, Multi-Grade teaching, Teaching-Learning process, Mental Health, effective teaching.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is the most important factor of individual as well national development. It plays a significant role in the process of continuous reconstruction of human development. To improve human quality to provide towards national development by economically, politically, technologically and socially the quality improvement in education has utmost importance from the very beginning of elementary stage. The elementary education is the first and most important stage of children's formal education which is given in the stage of formative period of human development that covers 5/6 years to 13/14 years of age. Hence quality primary education is very important to be provided to learners so that they can carry and

continue their higher classes of school education and stands a pillar for higher level of education. Since independence Indian government has been constituted Educational Committees and adopted so many policies like Total Literacy Campaign, National Literacy Mission, Operation Black Board and Sarva Siksha Abhijan (SSA) and measure to increase retention and decrease drop-out rate like- Mid-Day Meal, Free Text Book, Free School Uniform and other services of Drinking water, separate Toilet for boys and girls. But till today after seven decades of its independence Indian Government is spending much more in Universal Access and quality dimensions received little importance. The central government had compromised for universal Access and therefore quality improvement issues are lying unnoticed. Of course in last few years along with Universal Access some development in Government programs has been seen for quality improvement of elementary education. Realizing needs of quality education the Government has adopted some new programs and changes strategies of SSA as it is the vehicle of implementation of policies in elementary stage of education. Furthermore SSA followed revised curriculum of NCERT, adopted RTE Act, 2009 and following 1:30 Pupil-Teacher Ratio, reformed evaluation system, developed School Monitoring Format, prepared Academic Calendar and effort has been made for teacher training. More than all since last few years organization of the quality enhancement program "Gunotsav" has been seen in schools of Assam. Still in elementary education stage there is the Shortage of teachers and very surprising that in 2.68% schools (only LP) single teacher has been running classes of Five Grades (I to V, excluded nursery class) and unwritten more schools have two teachers only who engaged Multi-Grade Teaching. Because for multi-Grade teaching learners gets low opportunity time to learn, teacher had to bear over work load, which results ineffective teaching environment and pushing teachers to do with physical and mental stress. Unless and until teachers are physically and mentally sound the effective teaching can't take place. Hence this study tried to focus the problems of single teacher school in Kokrajhar District.

A. Background of the study

It is unfortunate to say that in State Assam of India due to lack of available human as well as material resources still in this 21st century too people had to think about basic amenities of school learning. In elementary school stage only 2.8% schools have average number of school building and among

these only 54.82% school buildings (Primary only) were in good condition. (NUIPA, 2015-16). From the NUEPA Analytical Table -2015-16 it is revealed that 24.37% schools were running in single class room and 30.42% schools in two rooms, that too also excluding nursery section. Again in District Kokrajhar of Assam 32.0% schools have only single class room and 11.7% schools were managed classes of five grades only with single teacher. (District Elementary Education Report Card, DISE; 2012-13). In such situation of teaching-learning process small children creates chaos environment and teacher had to suffer from psycho-physical stress compromising his talent and teaching skills. Hence this study has tried to focus the burning problem of Lower Primary schools in District Kokrajhar.

B. Significance of the study

Among many influencing factors teacher and teachers' effectiveness is the most important factor of quality education. In Lower Primary (LP) stage teacher need to be emotionally controlled, physically and mentally strong, skilled in using methods and intelligent in management and organization of all the human as well material resources. But, can we imagine an effective school only with single teacher among all five grades students with physical and mental capability? Therefore, the study has a great significance specific in Kokrajhar District and Assam and India in general in today's context of developing country like India.

C. Limitations of the study

The study is limited with 37 sample single teacher schools and the content coverage in the study was teaching-learning environment and problem faced by teachers in relation to Multi-Grade teaching and over work load in single teacher vernacular LP school in Kokrajhar District of Assam, India.

D. Objectives of the study

1. To know teaching-learning environment and affects of insufficient teacher in learners' learning in single-teacher school, 2. To understand teachers' physical and mental stress aroused from over work load in single teacher school and 3. To suggest some measures.

II. METHODOLOGY

The targeted sample of the study was every headmasters cum teachers of 37 single teacher vernacular LP schools that purposively selected from five educational Blocks of District Kokrajhar, Assam. The study employed the school survey method of research and used information sheet and the interview schedule as tools for data collection. For qualitative data analysis descriptive statistics in percentage has been employed and descriptive method for interpretation and discussion has been used.

A. Analysis and discussion of data

Before analysis of data some important and related facts in relation to school education in lower primary stage are necessary to understand the problem of this study.

B. Break-up of School hours

According to the departmental Academic Calendar, Government of Assam school hours for Lower Primary and Upper Primary stage is distributed as follows-Total time period 6.30 hours (9.0 am to 3.30 pm)- Morning Assembly-15 minutes, Mid-Day-Meal-35 minutes, short break- 15 minutes and -5.25 Instructional hours.

C. Mid-Day-Meal

To reduce school drop-out children, increase the retention rate decrease students' absenteeism from school and attract poor students to school the Government of India introduced Mid-Day-Meal program to provide one free meal every day and help children's nutrition in elementary stage.

D. Early Childhood Care and Education

The early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is a full integration of child care and pre-primary education that implemented after recommendation of National Policy on Education, 1986 and implementation of RTE Act, 2009 a Integrated Child Care and Development Scheme of Indian Government which is generally under the Ministry of Social Welfare. In 11th five year plan (2007-2012) the scheme is come into force. In the strategy of SSA in 12th plan the scheme has been given interest. But no clear strategies have taken for teacher appointment and now it is running in LP school as pre-school education.

The analysis of the study is based on school survey (2015-17) and interview to headmaster, observation during school visit, and observation and experience of the investigator since long. A systematic analysis and interpretation has been made as below-

E. School hours actually the teacher and student has

Very few schools were found started the school in 9.00am and no more schools were found stay after 1.30pm. Hence the actual average time of school stay for student is 4 to 4.30 hours (9.00/9.30am to 1.30/2.00pm). If average time stay is subtracted by one hour for morning assembly, Mid-Day-Meal and short break left three or three and half hours are the instructional time.

F. Multi-grade-Teaching

It is observed that Multi-Grade teaching is very challenging work performed by teacher in single teacher schools. Six grades teaching (including pre-school) at a time is difficult to use proper technique of teaching and using teaching aids. In Multi-grade teaching it is very difficult to pay attention both for teacher and student. So the teaching and learning without attention is ineffective.

G. Opportunity time for learning

In three and half hours of instructional time single teacher have to manage six grades. But a teacher can't pay attention to more than two or three grades in same time, so time passes for students of other grades without class work. In average three and half hours school stay time students gets scope to learn two or three subjects in classes (if one hour for each subject) at school in a day.

H. Teachers' work load

In three and half hours stay time if the teacher takes two or three classes of all grades his work load is about 12 to 18 classes per day including pre-primary class. From the point of span of attention of work more grades teaching at a time for long period is one kind of physical and mental hazards for a teacher.

I. Office duty, preparation of salary Bill and others

A teacher of single teacher school had too run office works and prepare salary bill. In that day the teacher of single

teacher school had to close the school. It too reduces the working days and opportunity time of learner.

J. Mental Health of teacher

Metal health is an important aspect of one's total health, a psychological condition that is characterized by mental peace, harmony and adjustment. It contributes to our physical health, social effectiveness, working capability, balance personality, emotional control and feeling secured.

Here five items were included in headmaster's interview schedule to know the problems of mental health in relation to professional duty of teacher in single teacher school for this study. In the headmasters' schedule very simple questions were put and asked to response as 'Yes' or 'No' to be ticked on and 'No' responses of which is the influencing factor of mentally unhealthy teacher. The response of teacher is shown in table No.-A in percentage.

school	Item	Statement of the items	Response	
			Yes	No
37	1	I can finish syllabus of all grades in time	00%	100%
	2	I'm satisfied with my duty to students	00%	100%
	3	I din't feel Psycho-Physical stress after works	00%	100%
	4	I'm comfortable to manage all classes till the last	00%	100%
	5	Im happy with my job.	00%	100%

Table 1.

Sources: School survey 2015=17.

Feeling Dutifulness and satisfied with his duty, feeling comfort physically-mentally with management of school and works and to be happy with his job are the contributing factors of mental health, but the data in table-1 revealed that all headmasters cum teachers in single teacher schools responded negatively 'No' against all items. It means the teacher is not satisfied with his or her job and thus not mentally healthy in relation to his job.

III. DISCUSSION

Teaching-Learning process is affected in Single teacher schools because for multi grade teaching resulting less opportunity time of learning for student, over work load of teacher. The Academic Calendar prepared by Department of Elementary Education, Government of Assam is not useful and the headmaster too can't prepared and follow daily class routine for daily classes in single teacher schools. Adding Pre-school section and Mid-Day-Meal in Lower Primary school increases duty of LP school teacher. It must be mentioned that due to lack of clear guide line and poor supervision classes of pre-school section is not done properly in many schools and the study revealed that the Angonawadi teachers were not taking classes in every school regularly. Hence it is now extra and compulsory duty of teacher. The classes are taken

haphazardly by the teacher one after another period and from one grade to another without planning for class room teaching. Along with class works teacher had to manage office duty and prepared salary Bill. More of above teachers in single teacher schools had to manage Mid-Day-Meal marketing and so on. The haphazardly done works of teacher is seriously affects in attention and understanding the lesions of students' learning and mental health of teacher.

A. Findings, Conclusion and recommendation:-

• **Findings**

Teaching-Learning process is affected in Single teacher schools. The Multi-Grade-Teaching and less actual school stay time results less opportunity time of learning for student. Over work load and chaotic class room environment affects in teachers' mental health.

• **Conclusion**

Teacher is the most effective factor of teaching-learning process. Other influencing factors of learning like students' participation, discipline in class room, learners attainment all are affected if and when teacher is not effective. Unless and until the teacher is physically and mentally healthy teachers' teaching skill and capability does not works properly.

- *Recommendations*

Problems in relation teaching-learning process aroused due to less number of teacher in single teacher and two teachers schools should be fulfilled by recruiting required numbers of teacher in LP school Stage.

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