Status of Elementary Education in Senapati and Chandel Districts of Manipur, India

Kimthianbiak Neihsial
Department of Education, R.K. Mahavidyalaya, Kailashahar, Unakoti, Tripura – 799 277

Abstract: This paper is an attempt to find out the status of elementary education in Senapati and Chandel districts of Manipur. Information regarding physical facilities, enrolment pattern and profile of teachers were collected from 90 elementary schools comprising of 90 headmasters and 500 teachers. It revealed the poor functioning of elementary schools with respect to the physical facility available, enrolment pattern and profile of elementary school teachers. Inadequate classroom infrastructures, pathetic school building conditions, lack of safe drinking water, and toilet facilities were observed in many elementary schools situated in the interior parts of the two districts. Student’s enrolment was not so impressive especially in government management schools due to the poor functioning of elementary institutions. The study also revealed the existence of a huge backlog of untrained teachers in both the districts under study. This article also highlighted some suggestions for the improvement of elementary education in the two districts under study in particular and the entire hill districts of Manipur in general.

Keywords: Chandel. Elementary Education. Senapati. Status.

1. Introduction

Status means standing or situation at a particular time [3] and therefore, it is flexible in nature. The status of education depends on how the state runs the educational institutions in the country. The quality of providing education in the past and present stages depicts the status of development at present and future generations. The better in quality of imparting education, the higher in attainment of educational status and the faster in development take place. Elementary education plays a very important role in developing the physical, mental and social growth of a child. Good educational system depends upon the quality of elementary school. The foundation of good citizenship training laid during the formative stage in the elementary school helps the child in the later stage. Therefore, an effective elementary education is highly needed for the development of society and nation.
classrooms, laboratory and lavatory facilities, benches and desks, blackboards and dusters [4]. Besides, majority of the school teachers at the elementary level are untrained [5]. There is discrepancy between the hill and valley districts in respect of physical infrastructure facilities, availability of qualified or trained teachers, enrolment pattern, etc. This has an adverse effect on the quality of elementary education in the hill districts where the basic infrastructure facilities and adequate teaching staff were found lacking.

2. Objectives of the study

1. To find out the status of elementary education in Senapati and Chandel hill districts of Manipur with respect to; a) Physical infrastructure available b) Enrolment status of student c) Profile of elementary school teachers.

2. To make suggestions for the improvement of elementary education in the two districts under study.

3. Methodology

A descriptive research method was adopted for the present study. A sample of 90 elementary schools/headmasters and 500 elementary school teachers have been selected by following simple random sampling technique for the purpose of study. A separate set of questionnaires for headmasters and teachers along with a set of interview scheduled for education officials was developed and employed by the investigator to collect the necessary data.

4. Results

4.1. Physical facilities

4.1.1. School Building

The study revealed that 93.33% schools owned a building although the physical conditions of the elementary schools in the two districts under study were far from satisfactory. The remaining 6.67% schools conducted their classes in a rented building. Dilapidated school building conditions without proper fencing was observed in most of the elementary schools in the two districts. It was also observed that only 32.14% of the elementary school buildings were pucca type while 39.30% were semi pucca and 28.56% were kaccha types. Further, 73.33% of the school headmasters were not satisfied with the condition of their school buildings. 44.45% headmasters also stated that they faced problem in organising co-curricular activities owing to paucity of space.

4.1.2. Classrooms and its furniture

The present study revealed that there were 94.44% elementary schools having separate classrooms for all standards, while the remaining 5.56% schools conducted classes in a large room without partition. However, the conditions of the classroom partitions were quite unsatisfactory. Classroom partitions were made of bricks in 33.33% schools, plywood in 11.11% schools, mud in 10.00% schools, bamboo in 6.67% schools and temporary partition such as removable tin and plywood in 33.33% schools. Majority of the schools did not have sound proof partition between the classrooms posing disturbances for the teachers as well as students.

4.1.3. Teaching Staff room, Headmaster’s room, Non-Teaching Staff-room, Office and Computer room

Table 1 shows the types of furniture provided in the elementary school classroom. All the sampled elementary schools under study provided benches and desks in their classrooms. 82.22% elementary schools provided black or white board, 53.33% and 45.56% elementary schools provided chairs and tables respectively. And, only 11.11% elementary schools provided cup-boards. The study showed that there was shortages of furniture in the two districts under study as some of the elementary schools were running without blackboard, chairs, tables and cup-boards.

Table 2 revealed that majority (75.56%) of the elementary schools were provided with teaching staff room. However, only 36.67% elementary schools provided headmaster’s room and 28.89% schools...
provided office room. 4.44% elementary schools provided non-teaching staff-room, and 17.78% schools provided computer room. It was also revealed that there was shortage of rooms for different staffs in most of the elementary schools. And in this age of technology where computers are the basic requirements for students there was no computer facility in majority of the elementary schools in both the districts under study. 

4.1.4. Accommodation

Accommodation in the present study consists of teacher’s quarter and student’s hostel. The availability of these facilities was very scarce in both the districts under study. Teacher’s quarter was available in 6.67% elementary schools while hostel facility was available in 12.22% elementary schools.

4.1.5. Toilet, Drinking Water and Electricity facilities

Table 3: Showing the provision of drinking water, toilet and electricity facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toilet</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27.78</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>72.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking water</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>51.11</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>48.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26.67</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>73.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the meagre condition of the availability of the different facilities at the elementary schools in the two districts under study. Unfortunately, only 27.78% elementary schools were provided with toilet facility, 51.11% elementary schools had safe drinking water facility, and 26.67% elementary schools had electricity connection in their classrooms. Under such circumstances teachers as well as students faced enormous difficulty as they usually depend on the nearby houses especially for toilet facility.

4.1.6. Library Facility

Library facility was almost nil in the elementary schools of Senapati and Chandel hill districts. There were only 12.22% elementary schools with library facility, out of these 4.44% schools belonged to government management and 7.78% schools belonged to private management schools

4.2. Enrolment pattern

4.2.1. School Admission

Majority, i.e. 80.00% of the elementary schools in Senapati and Chandel districts admitted students on first come first serve basis. 16.67% elementary schools conducted written test or interview for admission, while only 3.33% elementary schools admitted students on merit. Further, 56.67% of the elementary schools conducted students’ admission in the middle of the academic session although specific timing for school admission was given.

The investigator also observed that there was no uniformity in the standard of minimum age of children for admission to elementary schools in both the districts.

4.2.2. Enrolment Position

Status of student’s enrolment is one of the most important factors indicating the quality of any institutions. The study revealed that the position of student’s enrolment increased every year in 63.33% of the elementary schools. It remained constant in 23.33% schools and decreased every year in 5.56% schools. However, student’s enrolment was not consistent in 7.78% elementary schools.

Enrolment of students was highest in private management schools followed by government schools, and government aided management types. Regarding reservation, 64.44% elementary schools provided reservation for physically challenged children.

4.3. Profile of teachers

4.3.1. Educational Qualifications

Table 4: Showing the educational qualification of teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Qualifications</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matriculate</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI-XII</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>27.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>61.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Graduate</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows that majority (61.20%) of the elementary school teachers in the two districts under study were Graduate followed by Class-XII (27.20%). There were 8.40% elementary school teachers who had completed their Post-Graduation and 3.20% of them were matriculate.

4.3.2. Teaching Experience

The percentage frequency of elementary school teachers in the present study decreased as the duration of teaching experience increases. The highest percentages, i.e. 49.20% were found to have 0-5 years of teaching experience. This percentage declined to 21.20% teachers having 6-10 year’s experience, 12.60% teachers having 11-15 year’s experience, 8.60% teachers having 16-20 years of experience and 8.40% teachers having 21 or more years of teaching experience.

4.3.3. Trained and Untrained Teachers
Table 5: Showing the distribution of trained and untrained teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trained*</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>20.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untrained</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>79.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes BEd. and D.El.Ed.

Table 5 reveals that the percentage of untrained teachers at elementary schools in the two districts under study was quite high registering 79.60%. On the other hand, the percentage of trained teachers was only 20.40%, of which 11.2% were Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) and 9.2% were Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.). The presence of such a huge number of untrained teachers hampered the quality of elementary education in the two districts under study.

4.3.4. In-Service Training Facilities

In-service training facility is a must for school teachers to develop better teaching skills and techniques as well as to orient them with the changing concept and curriculum. Unfortunately, the study revealed that only 42.23% of the elementary schools in the two districts provided in-service training facilities to the teachers.

4.3.5. Recruitment of Teachers

Regarding recruitment of teachers, the government department played an important role in recruitment of teachers as 75.55% of the elementary school teachers were recruited by the government department, while 15.55% teachers were recruited by Managing committee, and only 8.90% teachers were recruited by the school authority.

It was also observed that 37.00% of the respondents were not satisfied with the process of teacher’s recruitment stating that it was influenced by politicians and bureaucrats.

5. Monitoring system

The feedback gathered from the School Inspectors revealed that the system of monitoring and evaluation in the two districts under study was not satisfactory. Majority (58.00%) of the school inspectors reported that there was no specific timing for conducting school inspection. This suggests that there was no proper or regular inspection of elementary schools by the concerned authority. It was observed that the school inspectors faced several problems and difficulties while carrying out school inspections due to non-availability of vehicle and TA/DA from the state government. The school inspectors also expressed their dissatisfaction with the present status of elementary education due to poor physical infrastructure and irregularity of teachers.

6. Suggestions for the improvement of elementary education in two districts under study

In view of the present findings based on the status of elementary education in Senapati and Chandel districts, the investigator would like to suggest the following measures for further improvement of elementary education in the two districts under study.

6.1. Physical facilities

- The concerned authority should provide proper school building with adequate furniture in order to attract more children.
- Adequate classroom with proper partition as well as teaching and non-teaching staff-room should be provided to each school. Besides, a large hall should be provided for conducting co-curricular activities.
- Quarters should be constructed for teachers who are posted to different places to avoid irregular attendance.
- Library, reading room, computer sets, laboratory for practical classes, etc. should be made available.
- Facilities like safe drinking water, separate toilet for boys and girls, electricity and ventilation should be provided.

6.2. Enrolment patterns

- Under age children should not be enrolled to avoid giving unnecessary trouble to the teachers.
- Favouritism of private management schools over government schools should be checked by adopting quality education at government management schools.
- All schools should provide reservation of seats for physically challenged children.
- Student’s admission should not be based on social pressure, religious sentiments, status of parents, etc.

6.3. Profile of teachers

- The concerned authority should provide in-service training facility to all the elementary school teachers in order to remove the huge backlog of untrained teachers at the elementary school level of education.
- Recruitment of teachers should be conducted based on the performance in the exam or interview without the interference of bureaucrats and politicians.
- Parents/community should give full cooperation to the teachers for the development of elementary education.

6.4. Monitoring and evaluating system
1) Uniform and systematic pattern of monitoring and evaluation should be followed.
2) TA/DA as well as vehicle should be provided by the state government for carrying out the work of school inspections.
3) Training programme for the inspecting staff should be made compulsory by the concerned authority. 
4) Education officers should have self-dedication, sincerity and co-operation to accelerate the progress of elementary education. 

7. Conclusion

The present study observed that some schools were running even without the basic requirements such as blackboards, chairs and tables. Dilapidated school building without proper fencing was reported in most of the elementary schools. However, all the sampled elementary schools were found provided with benches and decks, although there was shortage of chairs, tables, cupboards etc. Facilities such as drinking water, toilet, library, and computer were found very unsatisfactory in majority of the elementary schools. Lack of competent and trained teachers hinders the quality of elementary education which in turn, indicated the unfair recruitment procedure. Favouritism of private management schools over government schools by parents, and lack of co-operation from the community/parents hurdles the progress of elementary education. Besides, lack of systematic monitoring and evaluating system also contribute to the drawback of elementary education in these areas. Under such circumstances the quality of elementary education is badly affected in the hill districts of Manipur. Now, it is in the hands of the state government, administrators, community, student and civil societies to work out on how to tackle the issues and solve these problems immediately without any delay.

8. References