CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 FINDINGS

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6.1 Findings

Major findings based on working conditions of government and private unaided school teachers

Working conditions of Government school teachers

1. By and large government school teachers seemed to be at peace with their lot. Of all respondents only one wished he had another career, preferably in the media.

2. On deeper analysis it was found that many of them had a lot of genuine complaints. Several schools lack basic requirements such as airy and spacious classrooms and adequate furniture like benches, desks, tables. A good number of schools did not have playgrounds worth the name, enough urinals or toilets, not to speak of running water, let alone hygienic drinking water.

3. There were not many schools with adequate number of reasonably furnished staffrooms, common or section-wise. Paucity of staff for daily upkeep including sweepers and cleaning staff was keenly felt by many, irrespective of their station, rural or urban. Urban schools faced stiff competition from private schools at primary and secondary levels. Higher secondary schools were better off for two reasons: one, they had a more qualified and experienced staff and two, evaluation at certification level was a lot easier and lenient.
4. Already cramped for space, these urban schools had department offices like District Education Office (DEO), Assistant Education Office (AEO), resource centres etc. housed in their premises. A 129 year old school in a flourishing municipal town in Kottayam district complained that it had no separate classrooms or staff rooms for the Higher Secondary section.

5. A model school in Thiruvananthapuram bewailed of all round wants – not enough toilets, not enough taps for running water, no hygienic drinking water, not enough playing areas and worst of all utter lack of maintenance. The library with an enviable collection of good books and a computer wing (being a model Information Technology (IT) school) has no librarian or a qualified computer instructor! The government Higher Secondary School section has no administrative staff to support the principal, with the result that the teachers multi task, as attendants, librarian, computer technician, besides their basic duty as teachers.

6. Too much bureaucratic interference was another handicap pointed out by a fair number of teachers. A central Travancore teacher sarcastically said, “we are stringently monitored and made to report the monthly growth and yield of plants in our school vegetable garden. If only the agriculture department staff were so meticulous in their monitoring, Kerala would not have had food scarcity.”

7. Pinpointing the major impediments in the healthy growth of government schools a good number of teachers specified lack of timely financial assistance, lag in infrastructure development,
absence of adequate transportation facilities of their own, when many private schools have buses of their own. Red-tape was the villain, as usual, in time bound infrastructure development of government schools.

8. Want of English medium divisions was the main reason why even government school teachers would not send their children to schools where they teach or other government schools nearby. But unfortunately there were not enough students in a class in most government schools to start an additional division for English medium. A vicious cycle, indeed.

**Working conditions of private unaided school teachers**

On the question of working conditions private unaided schools have a definite edge over their government counterparts.

1. Having cropped up only in the 1980’s, and most of them much later, the private schools are often established in walled campuses (96.2%)

2. Private schools most of them having concrete roofs have much better infrastructure than government schools according to a huge response of 85% teachers.

3. At least 86.3% private unaided schools have more than three acres of campus with provision for at least two or three play grounds.

4. Nearly hundred per cent of schools have electrified cross ventilated classrooms with adequate number of desks and benches for students and tables and chairs for teachers. This is a unique feature of private
unaided schools in comparison with government schools which face a
dearth of such important infrastructural facilities that aid the optimum
functioning of educational institutions.

5. Eighty four per cent had provisions for safe drinking water whereas
only 66% government schools depend on well water.

6. Around 95% of the private unaided school classrooms have adequate
number of lights and fans.

7. In private unaided schools while 71.6% of government school
teachers rated the condition of teachers toilets as good the
majority of government school teachers rated the condition of
teacher toilets was average.

8. A clear pointer to disparity in service and working conditions is job
satisfaction. While only less than two per cent of teachers in
government sector appeared dissatisfied. 18.5% private unaided
school teachers would rather leave the job for want of job
satisfaction. The other 81.5% apparently would stay put because of
scarcity of job opportunities commensurate to their qualification.
Service Conditions of private unaided school and government school teachers

1. As regards, the service conditions government teachers leave their unaided counterparts gasping far behind, especially in the matter of job security. While 98% of government teachers are permanent only 58% of private unaided school teachers can claim any sense of permanence in tenure. The rest of them are either on contract or temporary.

2. The chances for promotion of private unaided school teachers also hang in the balance, favourites of the management getting the nod more often than not. In the government it causes no heartburns to the incumbent.

3. Regarding workload, while in government schools it is evenly distributed private teachers find themselves with odds heavily loaded against them.

4. It is on the question of salary that the private unaided school teachers find themselves dealt sorely. While 74% of private school teachers collect the minimum salary between Rs 3000 and Rs 7000 only 5.6% government teachers collect a minimum salary of between Rs 8000 and Rs 12,000.

5. Similarly, while no private unaided school teacher collects a salary above Rs 30,000 about 50% of government school teachers collect salary ranging between Rs 27,000 Rs 39,000.
6. In matter of other benefits like Provident Fund, Insurance and annual increment private unaided school teachers find themselves short-changed as opposed to government teachers who get all benefits as per the government prescribed norms. For instance with regard to annual increment, while 45.7% of private unaided school teachers collect a minimum annual increment ranging between Rs zero and Rs 250 and none of the government teachers got such a low increment. The minimum annual increment ranging between Rs 250 and Rs 500 was received by 25.9% government teachers. Maximum increment received by a private unaided school teacher was between Rs 751 and Rs 100 (7.4%) whereas among government school teachers, the maximum annual increment was between Rs 1001 and Rs 1250 which was received by 16.7%. The wide disparity exists mainly because the temporary / contract teachers in the private unaided schools do not generally receive any annual increment.

7. The picture is hardly different in the matter of Provident Fund (PF). While 16.7% private unaided school teachers did not respond to the question, while a majority of 63.6% private unaided teachers and 5% of government school teachers claimed the minimum PF amount between Rs zero and Rs 1000. Maximum PF claimed by 2.5% private unaided school teachers was between Rs 3001 and Rs 4000 whereas the maximum PF claimed by government school teachers (20%) was between Rs 9000 and Rs 10,000.

8. The percentage of private unaided teachers covered by Insurance was none too encouraging. From the private unaided school teachers 46.3%
said they did not know the amount and 26.5% saying they did not receive any insurance, 19.1% paid insurance premium between Rs zero and Rs 100, 6.2% between Rs 101 and Rs 200, 1.2% between Rs301 and Rs 400 and .6% between Rs401 and Rs 500. Meanwhile among government school teachers 50% paid insurance between Rs Rs3001 and Rs 400 , 30% paid between Rs 401 and Rs500 and 20% paid between Rs 500 and Rs 600.

9. Regarding summer vacation salary, while all the government school teachers get their full salary, among private unaided school teachers only 72% collect full salary during summer vacation and 8% do not get any summer vacation salary at all.

10. Apart from it all, in the matter of maternity leave there was no uniformity between and within the private unaided school. While some private unaided schools provide one month’s leave and some two, the maximum granted by private managements is four and that too very seldom. Some managements pressurize their teachers to go on a year’s leave and join the following year. Preferential treatment is the norm in private unaided schools. In contrast all the government school teachers avail of maternity leave as per norms.

11. On the question of working conditions private unaided school teachers have a definite edge over their government counterparts. Having cropped up only in the 1980’s and most of them much later, these private schools, often established in walled campuses (96.2%) are much better off infrastructure wise with 85% having concrete roof for their buildings. Most of them being schools affiliated to CBSE have an
area close to three acres with provision for one or two playing fields (86.3%).

12. Their classrooms built according to CBSE specification are airy and spacious. They are well furnished with benches and desks for students and tables and chairs for teachers (nearly 100%). 84% private unaided school have provision for safe drinking water whereas only 66% of government schools depend on well water.

13. Around 95% of the private unaided school class rooms have light and fans. 71.6% of private unaided school teachers rated the condition of their toilets good while the government school teachers rated the condition of toilets as average. The number of student toilets in government schools was insufficient and their condition not satisfactory while in private unaided schools the number of student toilets was sufficient and their condition satisfactory.
Secondary findings – based on variables other than service and working conditions of government and private school teachers

1. The teachers in private unaided schools appeared keen to respond only on assurance of confidentiality which was not the case in government school teachers.

2. The practice of collecting donation for appointment in private unaided schools which was rampant a few years ago is now dwindling owing to the dearth of competent candidates and surveillance of the government authorities.

3. Career growth prospects are limited, only rarely does a teacher get to become even a Vice Principal. Often they end up being a department head or head of a section, primary for instance. Principals post is usually filled up from outside, or only from favourites in the managements good books. All the same they are not free from fear of demotion.

4. A high percentage of private unaided school teachers are looking out for other jobs offering better emoluments. The turn over ratio in private school is alarmingly high as 33%.

5. The already heavy workload is enhanced by Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation (CCE). Neither the government nor CBSE seems to acknowledge this aspect.

6. A few managements magnanimously offer free or subsidized teaching to wards of teacher or those belonging to indigent backgrounds.
7. Private unaided school teachers feel that they don’t get the same respect their government counterparts get.

8. There is little scope for dynamic teachers’ unions in private unaided sector because more than 90% teachers are ladies, who have little time and energy to spare for organising effective resistance against the injustice meted out to them.

9. Very few private unaided schools give insurance cover and provident fund to their teachers.

10. Some private managements who see schools as a profitable business venture freely use caste, communal or political cards to maximize their profits.

11. A few private managements hike fees frequently without effecting any rise in the teachers’ salary.

12. Private unaided schools provide better facilities to students to survive in the face of stiff competition.

13. Some enlightened private managements supervise teaching and offer helpful hints to teachers to improve. Some of them send their teachers for in-service courses to improve their skills. They organize smart classes from class eight onwards.

14. A few private managements cut down on their teachers’ salary or downsize their strength to keep afloat.
15. On the question of health, physical and emotional, 90% to 95% of teachers in both government and private unaided sectors give themselves a clean chit. Probably an encouraging reflection on the socio economic and health parameters of the teaching community.

16. Quizzed about self perception of their output, a good percentage of teachers, both in government and private unaided schools claimed that they are making the best use of methodology in every stage of teaching process - introducing the topic, use of blackboard, interaction, evaluation, assignments, remedial teaching etc. This could be a result of the introduction of Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation (CCE), introduced by CBSE and government schools.

17. Most of the private unaided school teachers preferred a government job to their current job as there is insecurity in the present job in contrast to the better social status and pay package received by the government school teachers.

18. Some private unaided schools have a non political staff council whose president and secretary are elected by teachers. There is less scope for unions as majority teachers are female who would keep off than take membership.

19. Since government policy is in favour of privatisation, managements gain legitimacy to their money power and political clout.
20. Unaided schools provide better facilities to students. That is why they get more students in this competition between private unaided and government schools.

21. The grading system has only led to the deterioration of standards of education in government schools. Activity method of learning English is not well received either.

22. Some private schools arrange remedial classes on every first Saturday and another day is set apart for micro teaching for weak students every week.

23. In private unaided sector some new entrants into the field of education are struggling to make both ends meet, because of the large costs on salary, infrastructure, donations they have to give to religious and political organizations etc. So the easiest thing they do is charge high fees and limit the salary of teachers. The new schools also face competition from neighbouring schools with better infrastructure. Among the new entrants only those schools owned by managers who are super rich and have other business ventures thrive. The idealistic middle class managers who only want to impart good education to the community find it hard in this rat race.

24. Both government and private school teachers welcome competition as it offers scope for enhancing the standard of education.
25. An encouraging finding derived from the response of both government and private unaided school teachers is the social respect and dignity that the position of a teacher holds irrespective of the pay packet.

26. Another healthy finding was that almost 98% of government teachers voiced their opinion that private school teachers are under paid and should be paid the same salary as the government teachers.

27. Some government school teachers said that it is time unions started thinking on those lines of increasing efficiency.

28. Government school teachers vouch that the Panchayat members do not interfere with the day to day academic activities as it is likely to vitiate the harmonious functioning of a school.

29. The government school teachers’ response was varied on the question of private schools being a threat to the existence of government schools. Some said it was not a threat as long as a school is performing well. Others said it’s a threat as government schools don’t have maintenance grant and adequate facilities. Yet others said HS / UP section of Government schools faces threat but HSS does not as there are very few HSS private unaided schools. Some opined that the absence of English medium was driving many away from government school. “If we perform we don’t have to fear. There was comparative downfall in government schools some years ago. But now government schools are improving.” the government school teachers sounded positive.
30. The government school admission system is open, academic and financial background of students don’t weigh heavily. This might be the reason that makes the government school teachers say, “We do acknowledge that education is the right of a child and our social commitment is unmatched.”

31. On the question of computers in government schools, the government selected model Information Technology schools have three or four smart classes while many others were deficient in that respect.

32. There is no library in some government higher secondary schools. Though some schools have about 5000 books they are not utilized properly. Some other schools have no library worth the name. Some government schools come up with innovative ways to deal with the absence of librarians. They put a teacher in charge of library who circulates some 40 books among students. And each student can keep the book for a term or two.

33. There were instances where government takes over land of the government schools to set up department offices.

34. According to Herzberg’s two factor theory, private unaided school teachers unlike their government counterparts are likely to be prone to dissatisfaction because hygiene factor such as poor pay may have a significant influence in de-motivating the morale of teachers.

35. Even though there exists proven theories for enabling organised workers to get an equitable share by way of salary and perquisites, it is not
practically applicable in the case of private unaided school teachers. The reason is precise that they are insecure in their present employment and are aware of the fact that they can continue on their present job only at the mercy of the management.

36. It was found that the bargaining powers of private unaided school teachers, as against that of the government school teachers, are limited as they are very much scared of the possibility of managements terminating their services. Another factor that reduces the bargaining power of private unaided school teachers is that their bargaining is decentralised, as the bargaining process is often confined to individual schools (units) and not for the whole private unaided education sector. As per the union bargaining theory when bargaining is decentralised there is greater chance for less wages, uncertain employment conditions and unemployment. The wages and other employment conditions of government school teachers unions are far better as they employ a centralised bargaining.

36. Equity theory based on humanitarian concern is often overlooked while deciding the service and working conditions of teachers in private unaided schools as the private unaided school managements are aware that coercive demands from teachers are a remote possibility.
6.2 Recommendations

1. A separate labour fund should be established from which labourers are given their salary. Each management or entrepreneur can contribute to the labour fund.

One should not ignore the reality of recurrent economic crisis and the paraphernalia of problems they cause on 99 per cent of mankind except the one per cent corporate and super rich. Economic crisis leads to closure of businesses leading to large scale retrenchment and eventually anarchy. First thing managers do when a company is losing profits is cost cutting. The easiest means of cost cutting is possible in less unionized laisse faire economy ensured through hire and fire policy. Businessmen say that a major chunk of their expenditure is spent on salary and pensions.

So taking into consideration the human right to work and life at the international level laid down by United Nations Human Rights Charter and at the national level Indian constitution, the policy makers and governments must bring out a fund for the welfare of workers around the world. This can be used for the needs of the worker in terms of his health, education, housing, food etc.

2. Taking cue from The ILO’s (International Labour Organisation) recently redefined mission based on ‘Decent work Agenda’ which includes decent homes, food, education, the right to organise, and social programs to protect workers when they are elderly, disabled or unemployed, the political masters should start providing social security schemes like health insurance,
housing and public distribution of essentials which will lead to a better quality of life to all citizens and workers in private and unorganised sectors.

3. The large income disparity between government and private school teachers should be bridged as private school teachers unlike the government school teachers are employed on a consolidated salary without any allowance. The pay scales of private school teachers should be revised in line with the pay scale of teachers in government and aided educational institutions. A set of rules for payment of dearness allowance, house rent allowance etc. corresponding to the government schools should be implemented.

4. The schemes for the welfare of teachers all over India which are being operated by the National Foundation for Teachers' Welfare (NFTW) should be extended to private unaided school teachers also.

5. Labour Policy Highlights of the Kerala government like a unified and consolidated legislation for social security schemes for workers in the unorganised sector, social security cards, modern medical facilities for workers, rehabilitation packages for displaced workers etc. should be extended to the private unaided school teachers.

In this situation the state government should make necessary amendments in the respective labour laws and extend protection to private teachers. But as this is a cumbersome and slow process a viable alternative would be for the state government to go in for a comprehensive legislation to protect the private school teachers as well.

6.3 Conclusion

The government and the community should endeavour to create conditions which help motivate and inspire teachers on constructive and creative lines.

“It is urgent to restore the dignity of school teaching as a profession and provide more incentives for qualified teachers and committed teachers. Non teaching official duties such as electoral activities should not be allowed to interfere with the teaching process”. writes Sam Pitroda, chairman, National Knowledge Commission in the article ‘For Better Schooling Nationally.

Though the private unaided sector provides considerable employment, all is not well with the condition of its employees. The great number of individuals seeking employment in unaided educational institutions acts much as a reserve army of the unemployed. Their depressing wages and confounding working conditions impede their professional and creative development and hence of all society.

Where an institution is community or government owned unlike private owned there is more or less equitable power sharing between the different players – teachers, students and managers. The feeling of common
ownership enhances a spirit of right consciousness but it was found that at least in some cases there is watering down on the duties.

If a system or educational institution does not interact with its social, political, and economic environment and receive fresh inputs (resources to produce goods and services) it will weaken and cease to exist (entropy). This is what is happening in government sector as opposed to private sector. Open system needs to interact with the socio economic and political environment to survive. Most government units tend to be more closed and slow to accept change. Incidentally it is worth mentioning in this context that Punjab has replaced Kerala (The Hindu, 25 July 2012) as the best in the composite educational development index (EDI) among the top three States along with Puducherry and Lakshadweep.10

10 The ranking study “Elementary Education in India: Progress towards Universal Elementary Education” based on the data from 1.36 million schools across 35 states is conducted by the National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NEUPA). While Punjab jumped four places to be among the top three states in Computing Educational Development Index (EDI), improving from seventh position last time to third position, Kerala has gone down to fifth with Tamil Nadu moving up to the fourth rank. In Kerala, the overall number of teachers per school has declined though the average number of class rooms per school has remained the same. The pupil-teacher ratio has declined from 32 to 30. At the primary level, Kerala has improved its position in terms of access and infrastructure, from rank 8 to go up to 4; but has dropped in teacher index and outcomes index. Variables used in EDI -
(1) Access - Percentage of Habitations not Served, Availability of Schools per 1000 Child Population, Ratio of Primary to Upper Primary.
(2) Infrastructure - Schools/Sections, Schools with Student-Classroom Ratio > 40, Schools with Drinking Water facility, Schools with Common toilet, Schools with Girl’s toilet.
(3) Teachers - Percentage of primary schools with Female Teachers, in schools with 2 and more teachers and more than 15 students etc.
In an organisation where all units work in unison greater synergy is produced than where the different units work independently (Systems theory). The study leaves us with an inescapable conclusion that the community and the government should systematically endeavour to create conditions which would help motivate and inspire teachers on constructive and creative lines because no other segment of service sector has the burden of nation building lying so heavily on them. The fulcrum of educational framework which is geared to the fullest development of the latent potentialities in every child being the teacher, it is imperative that the teacher finds unimpeachable self respect and healthy motivation.

It is the need of the hour that a congenial educational environment be maintained in the state as a whole. Educational development of the state depends on the quality of teachers. If attractive service and working conditions do not prevail it is likely to undermine the motivation of teachers which in turn would affect the development of the state in general and education in particular.

(4) Outcomes - Gross Enrolment Ratio – Overall, Participation of Scheduled Castes and Tribe Children, Percentage SC /ST Population (2001 Census) - Percentage SC and ST Enrolment, Gender Parity Index in Enrolment , Repetition Rate, Drop-out Rate , Percentage of Appeared Children securing 60 per cent and more marks etc.
6.4. Scope for Further Study

1. Comparison of service and working conditions of teachers in government schools and private unaided schools in north Kerala.

2. Comparison of service and working conditions of teachers in government and private unaided schools of Kerala to those in other states in India.

3. Analysing the service and working conditions of teachers with a view of framing policies in the education sector.

4. Comparison of service and working conditions of teachers to other occupations.