CHAPTER VIII

PLACEMENT (POSTING) AND TRANSFER

Placement means assigning a person to a post and is a stage beyond recruitment. The first placement after recruitment is called posting and subsequent placements are usually called transfers (though they are also loosely referred to as posting). There seems to have been no detailed study of transfer or even specific concentration in the area till early 1970s. The first transfer policy in Himachal Pradesh was issued in June, 1972\textsuperscript{1} and the second was in March 1979.\textsuperscript{2} These transfer policies were formulated through recommendations of committees and approved by the Cabinet.

Transfer policy can be seen as a colonial heritage as it is a more common feature in our country than elsewhere. It was used by the British for 'fear of misuse of power, a civil servant might unduly help or harm someone.\textsuperscript{3} The basic reason for transfers has always been that a long period of posting of an official in one station is not desirable as he would develop attachments and vested interests and hence would not be able to function impartially and in the best interest of the public and Government. This was of prime importance in colonial administration where the bureaucracy wielded considerable power.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1} Letter No.18-4/66 DP Aptt dated 3.5.72 from C.S., H..P.
  \item \textsuperscript{2} Transfer Policy dated 12th March, 1979, based on Narain Swami Committee Report.
  \item \textsuperscript{3} Satya Dev, "Colonial Heritage of Indian Bureaucracy", (mimeo), 1989.
\end{itemize}
TRANSFER POLICY IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

Even before the transfer policies were made and issued in writing, notings on files make it clear that in HP there was an additional reason to effect periodical transfers. This is because there are some areas in the Pradesh which are almost completely cut off from the rest of the state or other states for a long period of time during the year. There are areas which are less difficult or areas which are more preferable than others. This is because of the hilly terrain of the state and because of the stage of development in different parts of the Pradesh. Certain areas are connected by road, others are not; there is water supply scheme in some villages and none in others; there is a dispensary or primary or middle school in some areas and not in others. If officers or officials were not transferred at all or transferred very rarely it would not be fair to those who are posted in difficult areas or less preferable areas. The transfer policy also takes into consideration the claims of the category of employees which needs special consideration like women, retired personnel and handicapped employees. It also takes into account the time of transfers keeping in view the education of employees' children along with its effects in the area in which they are working. The main features of both the transfer policies and with their implementation are described below.

Posting of officials or officers in the home district

Generally officers cannot be posted to their home districts or where they have landed property. The idea behind this is that
those postings which wield power and authority and can influence the impartial running of government, should not be allowed to be filled up by officers who may be having contacts in the area. Home district has been defined to include a place where a government servant has immovable property. The idea behind this appears to be that when an officer or official has landed property at a station he may get influenced in the interest of his property and long term plans to stay in that place. It is recognised that there would be no harm in posting lower level officials who may not be able to wield power in their home districts.

According to the 1972 policy, officers of Indian Administrative Service, Himachal Administrative Service, other State Civil Services (for example, a tehsildar in Revenue Service), Development service (for example block development officer) and State Police Services (for example D.S.P.) were not to be posted in their home districts. Also all district level officers - Naib Tehsildars, Assistant District Industries Officers, police officers; inspectors; sub-inspectors and prosecutors, range officers and senior auditors would not be posted to their home districts. Class III officers (except those mentioned above) and class IV government servants could however be posted to their home districts. By and large the principle in the 1979 policy remained the same except that Excise Inspectors were added to the list of those who would not be posted to home districts as it was noticed that they do exercise influence on liquor vendors or excise collection.
It can thus be seen that class IV employees and class III employees (except those like Sub-Inspectors of Police, Excise Officers and Forest Range Officers who are quite important from public dealing point of view) in Himachal Pradesh who cannot influence the working in the areas, were to be posted in their home districts. In fact it was stressed that as far as possible class IV employees should be posted near their residence. Handicapped persons, as per the 1979 policy, were also to be posted at a place of preference or nearer to their residence.

It was specified that special consideration would be given to cases of working couple. It is laid down that government would attempt to post husband and wife together though 1972 policy stated that it could not be claimed as a matter of right. The 1979 policy specified that where it is not possible to post the wife near the husband’s place of posting, she should at least be posted near her in-laws place of residence.

Unmarried women, widows, wives, brothers and children of personnel serving in Indian armed forces were also, as per 1979 policy, to be posted at a place of their convenience. The 1979 policy also recognised the need of the retiring personnel to be near their place of residence and specified that retiring persons would get one out of 2 or 3 stations of their choice on their last posting before they retire.
The policy is clear. It shows firmness and has an element of consideration. However, in implementation it is seen that a small percentage of employees within this category do get posted to their home districts by approaching those who wield power. In a random survey, undertaken amongst the range officers (forest class III) and sub-inspectors (police class III), the general opinion was that 18 per cent of employees do get posted to their home districts by using administrative or political influence. Using influence and getting postings means that for favours granted there would be reciprocity of which there is scope within our system. Regarding couple cases though from amongst the couples who were studied (in our sample survey) and preferred to have a posting together, 65% got a posting together. This however was not possible in all cases. Out of the remaining 35% in about 20% cases the men wanted postings in important areas but vacancies for their wives could not be found there. A survey showed that perhaps it would be possible to post more couples together if they would also not insist on a station of their choice. In 10% cases the women preferred to remain with the children in the school where they were studying and they did not want to shift. This is because they feel settled in a place and transfers are associated with disturbance in their daily lives, in their routine working and specially in the children’s education. Some of them do not mind men being posted out in pursuit of their careers, but by mutual agreement they themselves prefer to remain undisturbed.
GRAPH K

POSTING OF COUPLE CASES

POSTING TOGETHER

NOT POSTED TOGETHER

NOT POSTED TOGETHER

WOMEN WANTED

ADMINISTRATIVE CONVENIENCE

DID NOT WANT
Tenure of service - maximum and minimum period of stay

Minimum and maximum period of stay is specified as 3 to 5 years in both the policies. However, exceptions are made in cases where condition of duty is difficult, like guards of bridges, treasuries or barriers (where period fixed is six months) and constables in police department (where it is 2 to 3 years). It was also specified that for the categories like Class IV employees, teachers, professors of schools and colleges, staff dispensaries where no public dealing is involved, it is not necessary to define the tenure of stay or service at one place. In the case of teachers, however, it is specified that they should not be transferred before completion of 3 years in any case.

The logic behind this policy as it emerged during interviews of Chief Secretaries and Secretary Personnel is that 3 years have been considered the approximate period in which a person can implement his plans, and show results also. The period of 5 years as the maximum tenure has been prescribed because it is felt that if an officer or official stays for too long a period in his place of posting, he develops contacts and hence cannot remain impartial.

There are diverse points of view on this issue. Whereas one school of thought feels that prescription of maximum tenure is a heritage of the British regime which is based on mistrust the other feels that since government servants are also human
beings and can acquire emotional attachments, it is necessary that they are transferred. Having a time limit also binds a person to plan and implement the scheme and ideas within the time frame. After three years some kind of bias as well as a partial attitude tends to set in as far as the attitudes of the employees are concerned. Again those who have good postings from the point of view of accessibility to the headquarters, or are located in municipal areas or district headquarters with necessary facilities of schooling for their children, do not want to be shifted out at all. However, those who are in difficult areas or who are away from their families or from the seat of power are restless and do not want to complete even the minimum tenure in their place of posting.

In every session of the legislative assembly of Himachal Pradesh, some questions are asked about transfers. When the government cannot give the answers within the specified period, they become assurances for the next session. Assurance No. 158/86 showed that 12,525 transfers were made by the government from 1st April, 1985 to 18th February, 1986, which included 3428 on requests and 295 on complaints in education department alone.

In 1985 assurance no. 102/85 was given regarding the number of transfer during 1.5.85 to 5.6.85 where the stay of those transferred was less than 3 years. The number of transfers was as large as 2034. The reasons given for these transfers is 'administrative grounds' or 'public interest' which really concealed a great deal of vested interests according to some
members of the legislature assembly. There are quoted cases of employees in Himachal Pradesh being transferred six times a year or going to a place to join only to learn of cancellation of transfer orders on reaching there.

Tenure in difficult areas

Himachal Pradesh has some difficult snow-bound areas. Few of these, specially in Lahaul & Spiti district, are cut off from the rest of the country for over six months in a year. Though an official gets some extra allowances for being posted there, these are meagre and an employee does not feel compensated for the hardship. Thus, the transfer policy in Himachal Pradesh necessarily has to look into postings in difficult areas. The 1972 policy specified two years of posting in these areas except when the official has stayed back out of choice. After 3 years of stay he would also be given a choice for his next posting (one out of three of stations of choice) apart from home district or where he had acquired immovable property (unless this condition is specifically relaxed by the government). The 1979 policy specified that efforts should be made to give an officer or official a difficult area as the first posting and in case he has not been posted there before, he should be posted there now. The tenure was fixed for three years after which he would get a station of his choice (out of 5 places of his choice). It was also clarified that those over 50 years of age (45 years as per 1972 policy) should not be posted to difficult areas. In the 1972 policy it has been specified that on
transfer, charge should be handed over without waiting for a substitute except in difficult areas where a substitute must be waited for. A differentiation was made in this case as it was seen that the posts in difficult areas often remained vacant due to the fact that the person whose order for posting in difficult area is served, got it cancelled.

Assembly questions were raised on this issue and it was found that in the year 1976 a post had remained vacant in Pangi for over five years as the officials who were posted there got it cancelled. Hence it was specified that in difficult areas the charge would be handed over only on the joining of the substitute. In answer to an assembly question, Government admitted that in Karsog subdivision itself from Jan., 1986 to August, 1986, 3 gazetted and 17 non-gazetted officers/officials were transferred without substitute. Karsog is notified as a difficult area and these transfers were ordered in contravention of the Government policy. This of course, had its own problem. Once the substitute does not join the tenure of the person who has done his normal tenure in difficult area gets extended due to no fault of his. This situation arises due to the fact that the person transferred has political or other influences.

A list of difficult areas specified in 1972 policy is attached at Annexure XI. With the development of Himachal Pradesh, the list has been reduced and the areas now considered

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4 Joginder Singh from Chief Minister on 20.11.86, Question No. 544.
difficult are Pangi (sub-division) in Lahaul and Spiti district and Pooh sub-division.

The reason of specifying that an attempt should be made to post an employee initially in the difficult areas is that in the earlier part of one's career, there are less liabilities such as of children going to higher schools or colleges. Hence it is less problematic to serve in difficult areas. This policy, however, has not been implemented at all. 95% of the employees who were interviewed were of the opinion that influential employees avoided postings to difficult areas completely. Employees interviewed apprehended that if they do go to a difficult area on posting there was no guarantee that they will be pulled out after completion of the tenure of two winters and three summers. An assembly question of 20.11.86 showed that there were as many as 1666 employees working in tribal areas of the State who had completed their tenure of two winters and three summers upto March, 1986 and had not been transferred out. 5

Procedure laid down for transfer

Sometimes when transfer orders are issued it is specified as to who will move first and who will move next to complete a chain of transfers. But as already stated in the 1979 policy it was laid down that movement would take place without waiting for a substitute and this would enable quicker implementation and not upset the whole chain because one member did not move.

5 Unstarred question No. 539, dated 20.11.1986.
Due to various reasons, whether it is vested interests, convenience or getting used to a place, officers or officials do not like to be transferred even after completion of tenure and hence apply for long leave or get their transfers cancelled or give medical certificates. The 1972 policy specified that the controlling authority should ensure that the government servant is not allowed any type of leave (except medical) and that he is relieved from the station and the charge is handed over to the officer or official nominated by the next senior officer. He is to be allowed full joining time, advance pay and transfer travelling allowance to facilitate his joining at his new place of posting and also so that he may not give the reason that he could not join due to the reason that he did not have enough money for expenses on his transfer. This was reiterated in the 1979 policy. It was also clarified that the employee can be relieved in absentia even on leave and thus his pay should not be drawn at the place of his previous posting except on cancellation of his transfer orders. This became necessary as even after transfer, salary of many employees continued to be drawn from the post he was transferred out from.

Under Fundamental Rules when transfers are made on requests or personal interests, no travelling allowance or daily allowance is supposed to be paid. However, candidates usually approach through politicians for transfer and the orders show ‘public interest’ in order to enable the government servant to draw his TA & DA. The largest departments in Himachal Pradesh are the departments of PWD and Education and their transfers are in large
numbers and generally always in 'public interest'. The Secretary Education, in an interview, expressed his anguish when he learnt that even for transfers which the Director Education (head of the department) felt were genuine, he asked some politician to write a letter to the education minister to be able to take the case to higher authorities. In the assessment done at national level, Himachal Pradesh is accepted as one of the well administered states. Yet if we look at implementation of transfer policy this cannot be proved. In a starred assembly question asked by a lady member of the house regarding transfers in PWD, the following information was given.

TABLE VIII.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total No. of transferred wef 1.5.84 to 22.8.84</th>
<th>Total number of officers/officials</th>
<th>% of tran class w Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class I 174</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II 483</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III 6423</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class IV 1775</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The period under consideration is 4 months and shows how and what a large percentage of employees are transferred, specially at higher levels.
GRAPH I.

TRANSFER IN PWD IN 4 MONTHS (1.5.84 TO 22.8.84)

CLASS I 23.3 %
CLASS II 19.3 %
CLASS III 11.5 %
CLASS IV 1.4 %
The employees feel that "getting transferred frequently is highly demoralising. Politicians do not understand the trauma such transfers inflict upon the employees and their families."6

Another assembly question replied to on 20.11.86 by the chief minister intimated that the total number of transfers ordered by various departments in the year 1986 (upto 15th July) were 5913. (This did not include information relating to Secondary Education, Personnel I and Public Works Department which are very large departments). Transfers are often cancelled and that too on political requests and sometimes administrative reasons.

Thus transfers are made in large numbers and not only on due to reasons laid down in the policy alone. Such a large number of transfers and that too prior to completion of tenure means that people are transferred even before they can translate their ideas into action. The Administrative Reform Commission had commented that ‘frequent shifts in the present context interferes with development work which needs continuous innovation and identification on the part of the programmes that an officer is charged with by the community he serves’. Civil servants engaged in development administration should not be rotated from location to location frequently. It has been stated that their tenure should be long enough to instill confidence and establish constructive relationship required to get a programme

going and to keep it going.\textsuperscript{7} In Himachal Pradesh in the recent years realisation of this point has come about and in the Education Department where frequent transfers directly affect the results of students, transfers had thus been banned for two years.

Time Schedule for transfer

In the 1972 policy it was specified that transfer should be made during April and May keeping in view that the education of the children of the employees is not affected by transferring them in mid season. However, in cases where there are winter closing schools, transfers were allowed in the month of June. It was specified that transfers should be well planned. However, in the case of death, retirement and promotion or long leave, exceptions could be made with the prior approval of the Government. In the 1979 policy the period of annual transfer was specified as 15th April to 15th May and exceptional transfers allowed only in cases of promotion, retirement, death, resignation, suspensions, long leave, creation or discontinuation of a post, implementation/completion of special programmes. Mutual transfers could, however, be affected without violating the rules for postings in different areas. Mid-term transfers could only be affected with the prior approval of the head of the department, according to the policy. However, in actual practice

\textsuperscript{7} ARC, Report of the Study Team on Personnel Administration (Personnel Staffing of Public Sector Undertakings & Personnel Management), Delhi, Manager of Publications, (Govt. of India 1976, p 148-149.)
mid-term transfers go to the Minister or Chief Minister also. Departments are supposed to prepare, in advance proposals of transfers for the whole year in the beginning of the year including vacancies likely to arise due to promotion and finalise them before the prescribed 'transfer season' is over.

It was also clarified in the 1979 policy that two officers in different ranks (immediate superior-subordinate positions) of one department, like Tehsildars and Naib Tehsildars, Superintendent of Police and Deputy Superintendent of Police should not be transferred together so that some continuity is maintained and knowledge of the area is retained in each department.

By and large the time schedule for transfer adhered to correspond with the summer closing schools of children. Usually a general ban on transfer is issued in July. It is lifted generally between April 15 to May 31 and sometimes extended by two to four weeks. Any transfer order issued after these dates are supposed to be put up to the Chief Minister after filling up the prescribed performa and stating reasons for delay.\(^8\) However, sometimes it is delayed a little and instead of June, it gets done in the month of July. This covers about 80% of the transfers - 20% being done during the rest of the year.

TRANSFERS DURING SEASON

OFF SEASON: 20%
Categorisation of stations

The 1972 policy also specified the categorisation of stations on the basis of climate, accessibility, cost of living, educational facilities, availability of civic amenities like piped water supply, dispensaries and so on. Taking these factors in view, the policy specified that officials should normally be transferred to stations as under:

(A) to (B)
(B) to (C)
(C) to (D)
(D) to (A)

However, though the classification was done, this was never implemented. In the 1979 policy it was decided that the details of transfer index card should be filled by each department giving details of qualifications, training, scales and earlier posting. However, no department implemented the same. This area of the transfer policy remained untouched except that ‘categorisation of stations’ exercise was done but it has never saw the light of the day as it was felt that it would take away patronage. In fact politicians and officers themselves are unaware of the transfer policy. Some of them had not even heard about specifications or the categorisation of stations. In our survey employees responded as follows.
WARENESS OF TRANSFER POLICY

CLAIM AWARENESS
A TRANSFER POLICY

CLAIM AWARENESS OF CATEGORISATION OF STATIONS

CLAIM KNOWLEDGE OF TRANSFER POLICY

90
32
4
TABLE VIII.2
Awareness of transfer policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aware of a transfer policy</th>
<th>Knowledge of transfer policy</th>
<th>Aware of categorisation of stations</th>
<th>Total no. of employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These responses indicate that 90 out of 118 employees were aware that a transfer policy existed. However, only 32 of these had any knowledge of its contents. Only 4 knew about the categorisation of stations.

Transfer on complaints

The 1979 policy also specified that in case of complaints against the officers or officials, an enquiry on the complaint would be conducted and completed within a month. If, on this preliminary enquiry some truth is found in the complaint/allegation then the incumbent would be transferred immediately. The transfer in such cases will be to a place at a distance of not less than 20 miles. However, transfers are often made on complaint, without any enquiry being conducted. This is because Government has laid down in its policy and notings on files that transfer should not be considered as a punishment. Yet most employees are discouraged on being transferred on a complaint where they feel it is not their fault.
Special training and appointments

The policy of 1979 also specified that when an officer goes on special training or on study leave or otherwise he should be appointed on the post of his specialisation so that the Government could take full advantage of his specialisation or training. Even otherwise the educational qualifications and experience of officers or officials are kept in view at the time of consideration of the transfer of the official or officer.

In 432 cases of training gone into, of officers and officials of different levels it was found that in 428 cases Himachal Government did not effect transfer of officers in areas where specific training was acquired. Officers or officials may have been trained in the area of agriculture and may be posted in personnel. A more detailed analysis of why officers undertake such training would be dealt in the chapter on training.

POWERS OF TRANSFERS

According to the transfer policy, powers of transfers are vested in the officer incharge in case of class IV employees, the Regional Officer or District level officers for class III employees (where they are appointing authority), Sub-divisional Officers for patwaris, kanungos and other office staff within the subdivision, Head of Department for lower level of class II and State Government for higher level of class II and class I. However, it is noticed that transfers are never done by the authority vested with the powers to do so. The Sub-divisional
officers, for example, never transfer the patwaris. These are made by the Deputy Commissioner and are approved by the Revenue Minister before issuance of orders.

IMPLEMENTATION

Transfer policy is one policy which is implemented more in the exception that in the rule. To begin with transfer proposals are made in the months of March/April by taking into account the number of people who have completed their tenure and also those who have been recommended by members of legislative assembly or by ministers. Some times those who have made a request for transfer are taken into account. However, no written proposals are put up till they are discussed with the concerned minister at state headquarters. Till recently, the period of stay was not very material - nor was the number which were transferred involving a large expenditure from the exchequer in terms of payment of travelling allowance or daily allowances. During the period April 1, 1985 to June 15, 1985, it was intimated by the Directorate of Primary Education that as many as 2549 transfers were ordered. In answer to another question, it was stated that upto 15th July, 1986, 5913 transfers were ordered. Education (Secondary) Personnel I and Public Works Departments were, however, not included in these figures.

In the difficult areas, the Himachal government has found it even more difficult to implement the transfer policy. This is because of the fact that almost no one wants to be posted in

10 Question No. 836/85 & 839/85 asked by Jagdev Chand, MLA2
11 Jagdev Chand from CM dated 20.11.86
a difficult area and people use patronage to avoid being posted there.

In our survey the following details were revealed

**TABLE VIII.3**
Postings to difficult areas and use of patronage for such transfers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total No</th>
<th>Employees who have been posted to difficult area</th>
<th>Employees who have opted for difficult area</th>
<th>Employees who have got their difficult area posting cancelled</th>
<th>Employees who have used pressures for their transfer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From these data we learn that only 18 out of 118 employees had ever been posted to the difficult areas. This is understandable as the difficult areas are small in number. Only 4 had ever opted for difficult areas, perhaps because of domestic or other considerations. We do learn that 21 of the employees had got their posting to difficult areas cancelled. The role of patronage in placement and transfer is apparent from the fact that 94 of the employees 118 admitted having taken advantage of it.

P.S.Bhatnagar and G.B.Sharma undertook a survey of tenures of collectors in Rajasthan. They came to two conclusions, that

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is, that political stability leads to quicker transfers and that
the tenure of collector is larger in developed districts and
shorter in backward districts. Their data showed postings in
advance districts as follows:

TABLE VII.4
Tenure of Collectors in Rajasthan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months</th>
<th>No. of collectors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-8</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-12</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-36</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44-48</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This shows that most Collectors are dislocated even before they are able to acquaint themselves with the barest minimum problems of the district.

TABLE VIII.5
Tenure of Collectors in Himachal Pradesh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months</th>
<th>No. of collectors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 - 12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 24</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 - 36</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 - 40</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 44</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44 - 48</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, in contrast, the tenure of Collectors in Himachal Pradesh was far more stable.
TENURE OF COLLECTORS
IN RAJASTHAN & HIMACHAL PRADESH

MONTHS

IN RAJASTHAN

IN HIMACHAL PRADESH
Another problem pointed out in the field is that frequent transfers inhibit and retard the build-up of a team. Kuldeep Mathur in his study of IRDP functionaries has pointed out the transfer of any one of the team and as DC, BDO, Project Officer of IRDP or his other Assistant Project Officer hinders the progress of development.13

Department of Education

The Department where transfer policy has been violated in the worst possible manner and also caused a lot of harm is in the department of education. Here teachers were transferred ruthlessly so much so that arts teachers were posted against science teachers’ vacancies (and hence students could not learn science) quite often. Sometimes two teachers continued for long periods of time against a single post in a preferable area and the salary of one of them was drawn from a place where the post remained vacant. The Secretary Education was interviewed. He said that when he took over he found he was spending 60% to 70% of his time on transfers as once a politician’s request was sent to the head of the department for comments it did not come back for a long period. He observed that the results of the students were very poor. He found that often he was forced to issue transfer orders without even examining the case on the politician’s or minister’s instance. He took the Chief Minister’s

13 Kuldeep Mathur, Bureaucratic Response to Development, Delhi, National Publishing House, 1972. IRDP (Integrated Rural Development Programme is a Scheme to develop economically poor sections of the population in the villages.
support in getting orders issued that he would be allowed to examine and put up a case before orders were issued. As a second step, to stabilise the department and the examination results, he could get a ban on transfers imposed on the department for 2 years. This annoyed the minister who viewed this as a politician’s domain. The Secretary Education prescribed rotation of A, B, C and D category of stations. This categorisation of stations was based on institutional facilities available. In category A were areas where there were district schools and block schools, category B where all institutions were on motorable roads and within 3 KMs of a motorable road, category C where educational institutions were situated at a distance of more that 3 KMs of a motorable road but less than 10 KMs of motorable head point and category D the institutions beyond a distance of 10 Kms. of motorable head point or as specified by the government. Depending on previous postings - the weightage of which would be given at 1 time, 2 times, 3 times and 4 times to A, B, C, D and multiplied by number of years spent there, a coefficient would be derived to determine the individual’s next posting. This would be worked out by a computer and hence the individual who has managed to get good places of posting due to some patronage and an individual who did not get good postings due to lack of influence and patronage would go through a fair levelling-out exercise. A format was proposed on which an individual’s biodata would be collected and the computer would tabulate and suggest rational transfers. However, when the case went to Department of Personnel, the advice given was that
"administrative convenience should be placed above all" This was most surprising in the sense that this was the first time someone was trying to implement the policy prescribed by the Department of Personnel itself. Yet to most officers it was the expected response as in the environment they work transfer had become an expected part of the system of patronage and almost a spoils system. The Secretary himself was transferred before he could take up the case again and the computerisation of transfer of the Education Department was put in a cold storage. An interview conducted by a journalist with an agricultural inspector stated 'Believe me the minister in the Pradesh have nothing else to do than to transfer employees. It is so disgusting and yet we are all helpless'. He said that people with the right political connections have managed a single station for as long as 10 to 15 years. 'The transfer rules are only applicable to those who have no political god father'. The correspondent went on to say that senior IAS officer do not resist political pressures as they fear that by doing they might invite transfer orders themselves. He also said that it is widely known that a number of members of legislative assembly are charging 'fees' for getting transfer or cancelling them. 14

PLACEMENT

Transfer includes placement which is different from recruitment and appointment. One problem of placement is also highlighted in the conflict of generalists and specialists. In

14 Express News Service September 25, 1989.
Himachal Pradesh heads of the Departments are usually technical people i.e. the specialists and the Secretaries to the Departments are the generalists. Based on the British system our generalists are supposed to have 'a mental discipline, a way of thought and an angle of vision' based on selection in an examination and a variety of experience - specially field experience. However even the ARC recognised 'examination and experience apart, it can surely not be the case that specialists are all incapable of displaying the broad administrative vision necessary for senior management.' A specialist on the other hand has begun to be loosely referred to all existing civil services other than the IAS, says Maheshwari. However, he goes on to say that specialists are those who are recruited to the civil service on the basis of their specialist qualification. There is generally a demand from specialists for posting from within their service as Secretary to the government. HP Government posted a Chief Engineer from Public Works Department as Secretary, PWD, in the years 1977 to 1979 and 1987 to 1989 and the Chief Engineer, Electricity Board has been the Secretary since 1981. Thus a survey was done of 24 engineers in PWD and 12 engineers in the Electricity Board. The responses are tabulated below.

### TABLE VIII.6
Preference of technical employees with regard to posting of Secretary from specialists or generalists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualities as administrator score 5/4/3/2/1</th>
<th>Preference for Technical/IAS as Secy</th>
<th>Reasons if IAS is preferred</th>
<th>Reasons if Secretary is preferred</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engineers Marks</td>
<td>To avoid bias</td>
<td>To avoid more competent</td>
<td>To avoid bias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWD Engineers (24 interviewed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 5 18- IAS</td>
<td>16 2 5 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 3 6 Chief Engr.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>6 2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 1</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity Board (12 interviewed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 4 7 IAS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 2 5 Technical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The survey data revealed that out of 24, 2 graded the Chief Engineer, PWD, as an excellent administrator and gave him the maximum score; 15 graded him as good, 6 as fair and one of them said he was not a good administrator. On the other hand, 10 engineers of electricity board out of the 12, graded the Chief Engineer as a very good administrator and 2 of them as fair. Yet despite of their relatively good grading, a vast majority i.e. 18 out of 24 preferred to have a generalist secretary and only 6 prefer a technical secretary. The reason given by 16 out of these 18 was that it avoided bias. Only 2 said that the IAS officers were more competent. It is also notable that 5 of the 6 who preferred technical secretaries said that it was due to some kind
of loyalty as they belonged to the department and only 1 said that it was because he was more efficient.

Similarly 7 of the electricity board engineers who preferred IAS officer said it was to avoid bias. 3 out of the 5 who preferred technical said it was because he belonged to the department and only 2 said that it was because he was more efficient.

It has also been seen that technical experts can be good administrators in some public sector undertaking/autonomous bodies. Their strength lies in knowing the ins and outs of their organisation. But this can also becomes the weakness of some technical heads. This is because of the fact that an unbiased and objective view cannot be maintained. As a human being one tends to carry forth subconscious impressions. On the other hand the very fact that officers know everything about their department and want to come forward in policy making should be kept in mind and encouraged.

Another area of conflict is at the field level - more appropriately at the District level. Here there is more a clash of ego rather than any specific dispute. In the district, each Department functions independently but a minimum degree of coordination for the purpose of planning and monitoring is necessary. The obvious role of coordination falls on the Deputy Commissioner. However, because of the tendency to post younger officers as Deputy Commissioners the result is that those from the departments like PWD, Electricity Boards and Forest who
have many more years of service have an ego problem. The question of seniority and of geographical jurisdiction come in. The fact that even in cases where the direct responsibility is of the District Magistrate, like law and order, the Superintendent of Police seems to be withdrawing into a separate world, leads us to the basic question of whether the post of Deputy Commissioner is necessary. It is sometimes envisaged that with a separate development department coming up, perhaps a revenue service is all that will be required. However, to tackle the placement policy it is felt necessary to post senior officers as deputy commissioners. Usually senior officers do not want this posting as they want to be in more stable jobs and at state headquarters where there are better facilities of education for the children.

More and more specialisation also seems to be coming in. Even the Fulton Committee appointed in 1986 in Britain recommended skilled managers. They did not advocate "the philosophy of immature or generalist or all-rounder, that is the administrative class which held a dominant position in service. Other countries who have a colonial heritage such as ours e.g. Singapore and Malaysia have also developed specialisation within the administrative class, like personnel, finance, economic and management. The chief secretaries conference in India in 1976 also recommended specialisation in a few areas such as regulatory and development administration social service administration and economic administration.
CONCLUSION

Transfer is an area which effects personnel immensely. However, this should not be so, particularly in a system of rank classification where salary is the same on any post (though some perks, for example, car, rent free house or good house may be different). The transfer allowances too are not adequate to compensate for the expenditure and disturbance involved (resettling in another station) But over and above all, it is demoralising if it is done as a punishment for not doing something against one's conscience. Yet as a system, it is necessary to avoid concentration of power or misuse of power due to vested interests. In Himachal Pradesh consciousness of the existence of a transfer policy is recent - in most other states it is not there as yet. However, transfers are generally done from to one place to another or one post to another and unlike some other countries transfers from one service to another are not prevalent. It is felt that consideration to those who do not have patronage would go a long way to make the transfer policy meaningful in Himachal Pradesh. Also it is felt by some officers that as recommended by ARC\(^{17}\) the government may look at posts "involving activities connected with development and the management of programmes, continuance of officials in the same place should be a rule and transfer an exception".

\(^{17}\) ARC, Report of the Study Team on Personnel Administration (Personnel Staffing of Public Sector Undertakings & Personnel Management), Delhi, Manager of Publications, (Govt. of India 1976, p 148-149.