

Problems of women teachers in Cuddalore district

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Abstract

The present study focuses upon the problems women face in one particular profession of all professions, namely, teaching. As said earlier, teaching is the most favorites of all professions women generally show interest in. It is because, as seen before, women are born teachers as the genetic evidences support. It comes naturally to them. They are naturally tuned up for it. It becomes them as they are made for it. Yet these women teachers have their own quota of problems to face in their daily professional routine. The subject of the study was working women teachers from 103 primary and middle schools in Cuddalore Block in the age group 25 to above 50. 200 primary & middle school women teachers scattered over 105 schools (primary & middle) in this area were selected randomly for investigation. All the teachers investigated were private and government employee teachers.

Keywords: problems of women teachers, investigation, Cuddalore, government

Introduction

Women's role in the development of their countries is being increasingly recognized all over South-East Asia. At this an economic back-ground study is of much help to understand the indispensability of certain measures to which women becomes a part. Most of the countries in the South-East Asia including India are predominantly agricultural, and greater part of their populations is concentrated in the rural areas and is dependent upon the soil for their livelihood. Land holdings are generally small and most farmers live at subsistence level, and produce just enough for their own consumption needs. Cash incomes are low. Irrigation facilities are meager, and crops are mostly dependent on the monsoon. Money needed by the farmer for cultivation purposes and other social needs is borrowed from the money - lender whose rates of interest are so exorbitant that the capital borrowed can seldom be repaid. All these factors put together have been responsible for wide spread rural indebtedness in the region.

Co-operative credit societies for developmental activities in the agricultural field got up one by one. Soon women participation started. Industrial thrift and credit, and consumer's co-operatives are some of the prominent fiscal supportive agricultural enterprises. Women also involved themselves in savings activities which were primarily family budget oriented which soon helped them supplementing family income. Consumer co-operatives, community development work are other areas of interest for women.

One interesting fact about such activities is that such interests soon attracted the attention of producers and manufactures and business men who, appreciating their interests and abilities, invited them to educate consumers in the merits and use of their products like cooker and cuisine products. Media also encouraged them and invited them to conduct demonstration shows and sessions paying for their efforts. This led to lend women an ideal image as teachers. This could be said in a

modest way the beginning of women emerging as public teacher. (Women Education, P.208)

The specious innate ability to teach combined with public demand made women consider they apt to take up teaching as a profession for themselves. This, in a generalized way, is the not well-defined history of South-East Asian women emerge as teachers. Thus women began to tread the road of the long history of the teaching profession. Before entering into an analysis of women teachers and their association with the teaching vocation it is of much use to be aware of women empowerment which has had its impact both in private and public national life. It is interesting to note the following facts. Women who work in the public environment continue to exercise their role as educators. Officials, business women, politicians, spiritual leaders, university researchers, motivate other women with their exemplary professional performance and can alter their expectations from life and open up possibilities for decision-making, even if only in their own homes.

Involvement of women in public life such as educators is an element that transforms the status of women, as well as family relationships, the socialization of children and the organization and division of work. The presence of women in the public area has profound effects on traditional practices, attitude and values on a rigid division of work along gender lines and on stereotypes derived from this division. (Women as Educators, P.63) Yet this picture is not all that bright. Women empowerment carries with it certain problems which women face in their everyday professional life.

The present study focuses upon the problems women face in one particular profession of all professions, namely, teaching. As said earlier, teaching is the most favorites of all professions women generally show interest in. It is because, as seen before, women are born teachers as the genetic evidences support. It comes naturally to them. They are naturally tuned

up for it. It becomes them as they are made for it. Yet these women teachers have their own quota of problems to face in their daily professional routine. They have many problem-challenges which they ought to face while they carry on their career and have to overcome them successfully so that they do justice in fulfilling their professional obligations. The problems are related to physical, occupational, familial, social and psychological aspects.

The aim of this chapter is to place on record the quotations and views given by great educationists and academicians on the study of problems of women teachers and their outcomes Kumarasamy, T and Salivahana sarma, P (2005). Made a critical study of the professional, familial, social and economical conditions of women teachers working in primary schools of great Bombay municipal corporation Samant (1976) Conducted a study on the working condition of the married women teachers in the primary schools of Assam with reference to Sibsagar district Thakur (1978) [16]. Conducted a study on the role interaction of married working women). Hemalatha and Suryanarayana (1983) [20]. Made a sociological study on transitory status images of working women in modern India. A 20 percent samples of professionals from teaching, clerical work, medicine, telephone operating, nursing and technical work in the city of Pune was selected Ramanathan and Usha (1984) [24]. Study about role commitments and conflict of women workers of Thailand had 645 women teachers selected randomly Saitu's (1984).Conducted a study on working mothers to examine the role of conflict and adjustment patterns of working mothers in the teaching profession Itishree (1998) [1].

Materials and Methods

Need for the present study

In the present era, Indian women constitute an important segment of the total labour force that causes national development. Exposure of women to formal education and participation in paid labour force bring change in their role and status. Today women are in a situation where they have to take multiple roles and responsibilities. Tradition has assigned home maker responsibilities to women such as cooking, cleaning, washing, child-rearing, entertaining visitors etc. and

to men such as bread-winning, holding authority and power and status – all done on gender basis.

The cultural conditioning customs, rituals, traditions and the very agencies of socialization in our society force women to accept that women are inferior to men in diverse ways and the prime aim of their life is to bear, rear and look after the home. Her reputation ratios to the extent she excels in these virtues. She is not differentiated from her non-working sisters. She is torn between work and home. She is a victim to dual roles. Adjustment is always one way and her husband has no such bother. Meanwhile she is answerable to her employment duties and responsibilities.

This study on the problems of working women teachers in Chidambaram Union, Cuddalore District is empirical in character based on primary data collected from the ground. As such the questionnaire method was followed for the present study. The required details were collected by distributing the questionnaire to the women teachers working in this area. Accordingly, the procedures adopted constituted the following steps: Selection of the area, Selection of the sample, Selection of the methods and tools, developing the questionnaire, Reliability of the tools, consolidating, organizing, elaborating and critically analyzing the data.

The subject of the study was working women teachers from 103 primary and middle schools in Cuddalore Block in the age group 25 to above 50. 200 primary & middle school women teachers scattered over 105 schools (primary & middle) in this area were selected randomly for investigation. All the teachers investigated were private and government employee teachers.

General Objectives

The general objectives of the present investigation are to study the

Physical problems, Occupational problem, Familial problems, Social problems and, Psychological problems of women teachers in Cuddalore block.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this investigation are to study the physical, familial, occupational, social and psychological problems of working women with respect to (Tabel: 1)

Table 1: Limitation of Studies

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Age | below 30yrs, 31-40 yrs, 41-50 yrs, above 51 yrs |
| Community | OC, BC, MBC, SC/ST |
| Educational qualification | Male/Female / Both |
| School, College | First and rest of the generations |
| Co-workers | below 5 yrs, 6-15 yrs, 16-25 yrs, above 25 yrs |
| Generation of the respondents | below 5 yrs, 6-15 yrs, 16-25 yrs, above 25 yrs |
| Years of experience | below 5 yrs, 6-15 yrs, 16-25 yrs, above 25 yrs |

Area and population

The total area of this district is 657.60 sq.km. (2001) of which the Chidhambaram Union is a slice occupying 357.60 sq.kms (2001). This union has a population of 89,439 (Male 4456, Female 44879) as against the district total 9, 35,686 (2001).

Schools and Teacher population

The union has 103 private and government Primary and Middle schools. The teacher population has grown steadily

over the years. Now about 350 primary & middle school teachers are working in Cuddalore Block, among them 238 are women teachers.

Profile of working women teacher's respondents

1. Age

There is a statutory limit in practice either for minimum or maximum age for a woman teacher in private and governmental service. There is variation of women teachers in

the present study, ranging from below 30 years to above 50 years. The details of percentage distribution of working

women teachers by the age group are furnished below: (Table 2)

Table 2: Working women Teachers by Age group

| Age Groups (years) | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Below 30 | 28 | 14 |
| 31 – 40 | 152 | 76 |
| 41 – 50 | 8 | 4 |
| Above 50 | 12 | 6 |
| Total | 200 | 100 |

It can be observed from Table 3.1 more than 76% of the respondents were in the age group of 31- 40 years. A meagre 14% of the women teachers were in the age group of below 30

years and a meagre 6% of the women teachers were in the age group of above 50 and very low 4% were in the age group of 41 – 50.

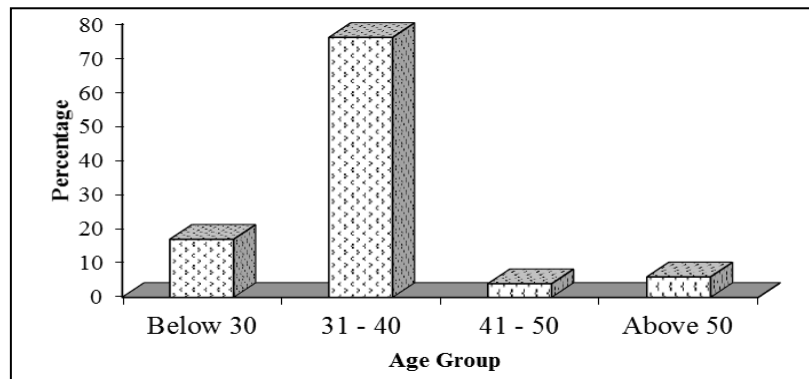


Fig 1

2. Community

Table 3: Distributions of the respondents according to Community

| Community | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------|-----------------------|------------|
| OC | 20 | 10 |
| BC | 116 | 58 |
| MBC | 26 | 13 |
| SC/ST | 38 | 19 |
| Total | 200 | 100 |

The above table indicates that women belonging to BC were about three-fifth and they were more in employment than the other communities. The OC and MBC respondents were

nearly equal in number and were below the fifth each. SC/ST respondents were one-fifth (Table.3).

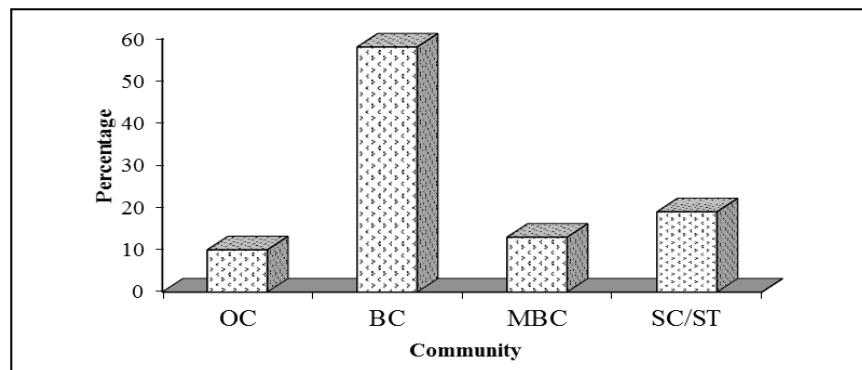


Fig 2

Educational background

For the present study, the women teachers who had completed secondary school education and women teachers with college

education working in primary and middle schools in Chidham baram Union area, were considered.

Table 4: Education level of the Respondents

| Educational Backgrounds | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| School Level | 126 | 63 |
| College Level | 74 | 37 |
| Total | 200 | 100 |

It can be observed from the above table that out of the total respondents, nearly three – fifths of women teachers had

secondary school level education and about two-fifths of the women teachers had completed college education (Table 4)

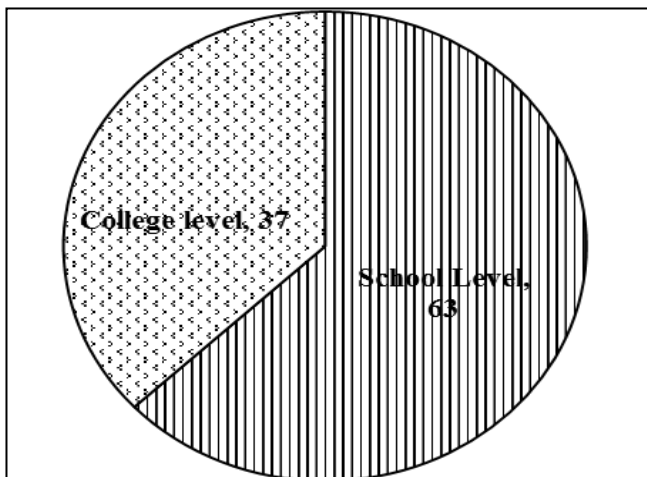


Fig 3

4. Co-Workers

The colleagues of the women teachers may be men, women or

both. The rapport and relations with them may enhance the working capacity.

Table 5: Sex of the Colleagues

| Colleagues | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Male | 30 | 15 |
| Female | 44 | 22 |
| Both | 126 | 63 |
| Total | 200 | 100 |

It can be observed from the above table that nearly one-seventh of the respondents had male colleagues. Nearly two-sevenths of the women teachers worked with female colleagues and nearly four-seventh of the respondents had

both male and female colleagues. It shows that the traditional taboos are slowly loosening the grip over Indian working women (Table.5)

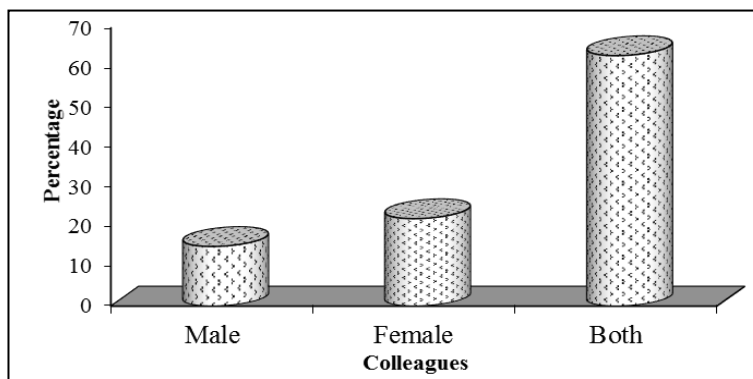


Fig 4

5. Generation category of the Respondents

Table 6: Generation category of the respondents

| Generation Category | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| First | 134 | 67 |
| Rest | 66 | 33 |
| Total | 200 | 100 |

The above table shows nearly more than two-thirds of the respondents were the first generation women teachers and a

little more than one-third were the rest of the generation. (Table 6)

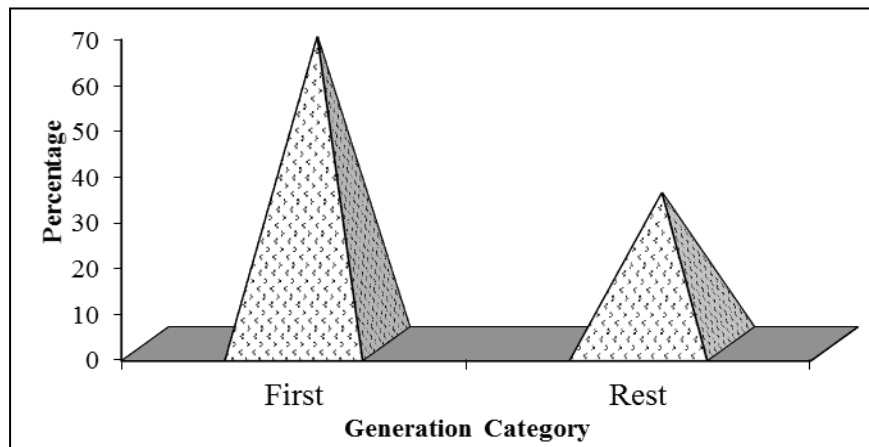


Fig 5

6. Years of Service

To understand the problem of working women teachers from different angles, the experience in the present occupation is

also an important factor. The full particulars of the experience of women teacher respondents in the present employment are given below.

Table 7: Experience of the respondents in the present employment

| Years of Experience | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Below 06 | 68 | 34 |
| 06 – 15 | 116 | 58 |
| 16 – 25 | 12 | 6 |
| Above 25 | 4 | 2 |
| Total | 200 | 100 |

It is clear from the above tabling that more than two-fourth of the teachers were having 6-15 years of experience. More than one-third of the women teachers had an experience below five years in the present employment and a meagre percentage

(6%) had an experience between 16 to 25 years and a very low percentage (2%) of women teachers had an experience above 25 years (Table 7)

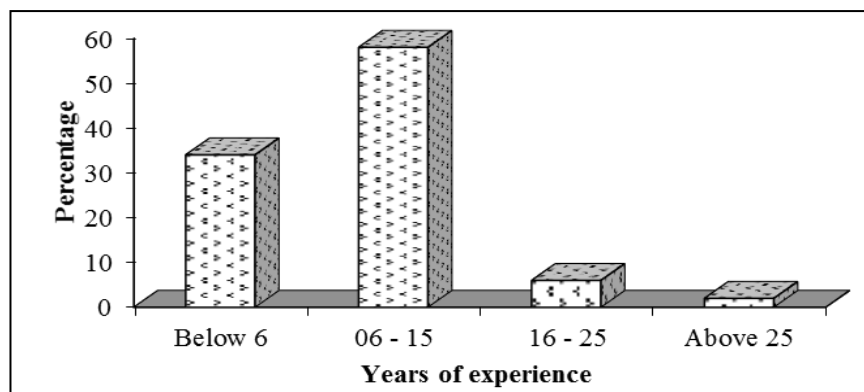


Fig 6

Result and discussions

In this chapter, the outcome of the study is discussed. The problems of working women teachers are in fact multifarious and of multidimensional nature. These problems are basically of five types namely physical, occupational, familial, social and psychological. These problems are studied in terms of age, community, educational, qualification, co-workers, generation and years of experience of the respondents. As per the objectives, the findings are presented below:

Educational level and Problems of women Teachers

The respondents were classified on educational level as school and college education. Regarding psychological problems teachers of school level educational qualification faced more problems than their counterparts. On the whole, there was no significant difference in physical, occupational, familial and social problems between the two categories.

Community and problems of Women Teachers

Women teachers such as OC, BC, MBC, SC & ST were taken for study. There was significant difference among SC & ST and other community respondents with respect to physical problem while no such significant difference was noted regarding occupational, physical, social and psychological problems.

CO-Worker and problems of Women Teachers

The respondents taken for study had female or both male and female colleagues. There was no significant difference indicated between the mean scores of the sub-dimensions of the problems regarding physical, psychological and social with reference to co-workers and significant difference was manifested regarding familial and occupational problems. Respondents having female co-workers felt more occupational and psychological problems.

Generation and the Problems of Women Teachers

Generation here refers to the first generation or more than one generation of women teachers. There was no significant difference between the mean scores of the subcomponents regarding physical, occupational, familial, social and psychological problems with respect to the first generation or with the rest of the generation.

Years of experience and the Problems of Women Teachers

The working women considered for the study had years of experience in their present job as below 5 years, 6-15 years, 16-25 years and above 25 years. It was inferred that there was significant difference between the mean scores of the subcomponents of the different types of problems: physical, occupational, and familial problems with reference to years of experience.

The results revealed that there were no significant differences with respect to social & psychological problems. In general, as the respondents gained experience they encountered the problems of all categories.

Conclusion

The above findings pertaining to the problems of women teachers in Cuddalore Block enabled the investigator to arrive

at the following conclusions: Age, and independent variable inference the problems of the women teachers. The magnitude of the problems varied with the age. The higher the age the greater was the intensity of the problems. This is in concordance with the findings of Yogarani (1995)^[26] & Buella (2001)^[17]. It was exposed that problems of all categories were found with all age groups. Concerning the classification of the community the SC & ST groups occupies the lowest rung of the social stratification ladder, even after very many years of independence. The Governmental polices helped only a microscopic minority of this category to throw off the shackles of social discrimination and have social vertical mobility. As to the educational level of the respondents considered for this investigation, ie. School and college level, significant repercussions were identified. Teachers who have completed school studies grappled with more problems of all types than their counterparts. Regarding the co-workers of the respondents of this investigation, the female colleagues were found to be the troubleshooters in the work spot. A major section of the women teachers, taken for the study seem to be the first generation. With reference to years of service and problems of working women irrespective of the number of years of service, whether less or more, all the respondents encountered problems from different angles. It may be concluded that problems of any nature are inherent for women teachers in different scores.

Recommendations

There are various teacher-career improvement programmes organized at Central Government and State Government levels for elementary and middle school teachers. Such programmes concentrate only on the teacher-taught and teaching methodologies. But there are no specific efforts taken to holistically study the various crippling problems of the teachers that handicap total performance in the class-room environment. Efforts should be taken to organize down-to-earth programmes by highly qualified and trained professional resource personnel to make teachers become aware of their personality inadequacies and of those pertaining to physical, occupational, familial, social and psychological aspects for continual corrections.

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