A STUDY OF TEACHER IMBALANCE IN JAFFNA DISTRICT SCHOOLS

KADAMPESWARAN MANIMARRPHAN

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K. MANIMARRPHAN       5338159 SHEM/M

M.Ed. (EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT)

THESIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: WIRAT KAMSRICCHAN, Ed.D.
ARISARA LEKSANSERN, Ed.D., PATREeya KITCHAROEN, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were to identify the teacher imbalance situation in Jaffna district schools, and to find out the factors affecting the problems. All provincial schools in the Jaffna district were included in this research. Questionnaires were used to collect the data within all provincial schools (405) in the Jaffna district to identify the teacher imbalance by subject and level. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with provincial (4) and zonal (10) officers, principals (5) and teachers (15) individually to clarify the reasons for teacher imbalance. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data while content analysis was employed to analyse interview data.

The findings reported that at the primary level, general teachers were balanced, while there was an imbalance English and second language teachers. Primary level had teacher shortages. At the secondary level, the numbers of teachers in all subjects were imbalanced. While the numbers of teacher in general, mathematics, science, and technical subjects were excessive, English and second language subject teachers were found to be imbalance. At the advanced level, there was no teacher imbalance found in biology & science and arts & commerce subjects; however, teacher imbalance was reported for English and other subjects. Overall, it was found that teacher imbalance was a common situation in almost all schools located in the Jaffna district. While some had excess teachers, others had a shortage of teachers. Additionally, the interview results showed that policy level and administrative factors, socio–geographical factors, and teachers’ personal factors affected the teacher imbalance in Jaffna district. The policy level and administrative level factors were political interference in decision making, lack of decision makers, trade union actions, pressure group obstacles, teacher appointment policy, teacher transfer policy, principals’ leadership styles, and teacher cadre calculation methods. The Socio–geographical factors were lack of physical resources, lack of public transportation, unavailability of teacher accommodations, lack of health care amenities, parental contributions to schools, and lower performance of students. Teachers’ personal factors, which included lack of social benefit recognition, dependent children and elderly, life security, displacement and the loss of livelihood, money-making motivation, health condition, late marriage, and being unmarried were reported as affecting the teacher imbalance situation.

KEY WORDS: TEACHER/ IMBALANCE / SHORTAGE/ EXCESS/ TIE

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