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Management of teachers

The management of primary teachers in South Asia: a synthesis report

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Working Document

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The management of primary teachers
in South Asia:
a synthesis report

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Introduction

In the present context of budgetary constraints, it seems hardly realistic for most developing countries to aim at further expansion and a more equitable provision of formal education irrespective of the costs involved. Making sure that the teaching staff available be allocated and used in the most efficient way and that additional staff requirements be met in a cost-efficient manner has become a priority objective. At the same time, proper staff allocation, utilization and promotion can help enhance the quality of education.

Not only from the system perspective, but also from the view of the individual teacher, satisfactory staff management is of crucial importance: the morale and commitment of teachers depend indeed to a large extent on the ways in which their recruitment, initial training, posting, in-service training, transfer, promotion, appraisal, administrative and professional supervision are administered.

Education policy-advisers, managers and researchers from India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka came together at the IIEP/DSE Sub-regional Workshop on *The management of primary teachers in South Asia* with the aim of analyzing the present condition, organization and policies of primary teacher management in these countries; monographs on the State of Madhya Pradesh/India and on the three other countries mentioned had been prepared beforehand and constituted the main basis for the discussions. The Workshop furthermore explored possible ways of improvement, particularly with regard to the management of teacher provision, allocation and utilization.

This paper summarizes the main results and conclusions of both the country monographs and the Workshop: *Section 1* presents major recent trends and challenges in the provision and utilization of primary teachers in the participating countries. Subsequently, some relevant policies and measures which have been adopted over the past few years in order to address crucial problems in this area are outlined (*Section 2*). *Section 3* deals with the existing organization and practices of teacher management, some of which are presumed to be generating or reinforcing problems of staff provision, allocation and utilization. However, some promising initiatives, which deserve to be outlined, have been taken recently. *Section 4* devotes special consideration to the issue of decentralization. The paper finally produces a set of conclusions and suggestions for improvement (*Section 5*). Contained in the *Appendix* is the Inaugural Address by Professor W.A. Warnapala, Deputy Minister of Education and Higher Education of Sri Lanka.

Section 1

Current trends and challenges of primary teacher provision and utilization

This section tackles the central question as to what extent primary teachers in India/Madhya Pradesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are provided where needed and if they are ‘utilized’ in an optimal way. In this report, ‘optimal teacher utilization’ means the use of teachers in a way that responds to both the needs and constraints of the education system and teachers’ own capacities and aspirations.

A glimpse at the demographic, economic and educational context

India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka belong to the so-called ‘low-income countries’ with a predominantly rural population. Their GNP/capita in the 1980s and 1990s has been increasing on average, but remained significantly lower than that of most of their south-east Asian neighbours. Some non-negligible variations among the four countries are worth mention (see *Table 1* and *Graph 1*): in Sri Lanka the GNP/capita was notably higher than in the three other countries, and over the period 1985-95 the annual GNP growth rate exceeded the rate of population growth. A reverse trend is noted for Pakistan, whose population was growing faster over that decade than the economy of the country. With a GNP/capita of only US\$200 and a population increase exceeding the pace of economic growth, Nepal also faces severe resource constraints. In India the situation in this respect seems to have

slightly improved: although remaining at a modest level of GNP/capita the country attained an average rate of economic growth that was higher than the increase of its population. However, it should be noted here that the economic situation of Madhya Pradesh – the State of India on which the analysis and discussions were focused – is more critical than that of most other parts of the country, Madhya Pradesh being one of the economically – and also educationally – most backward Indian states.

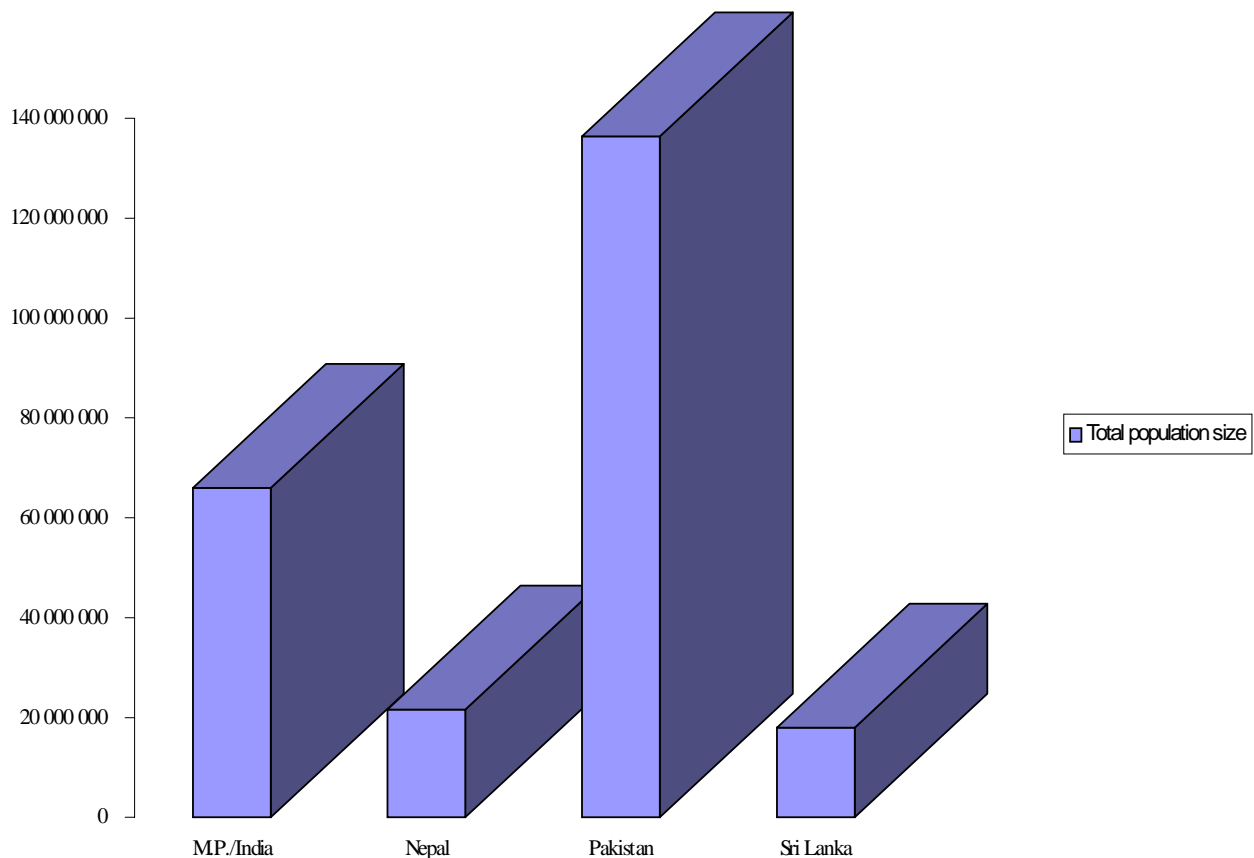
Table 1. Basic indicators

Country	Total population (1995)	Average annual population growth rate (1985-95)	% urban population (1992)	GNP/capita (\$) 1995	Average annual growth rate of GNP (1985-95)
India	929,005,000	1.9	27	340	6.1
Madhya Pradesh	(1991) 66,000,000	n.i.	≅ 20	n.i.	n.i.
Nepal	21,456,000	2.7	10	200	2.4
Pakistan	13,625,700	3.0	34	460	1.2
Sri Lanka	17,928,000	1.1	28	700	2.7

n.i. = No indication

Source: UNESCO, Teachers and teaching in a changing world, World Education Report, 1998.

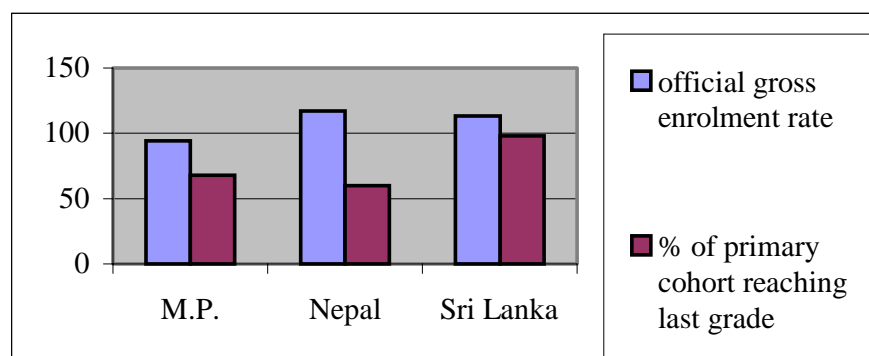
Graph 1. Size of total population of Madhya Pradesh (MP), Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka



In all four countries, governments have been liberalizing the national economies and have adopted policies of growing budgetary austerity in the public sector. In such a context low-cost strategies have to be found to rise to the persisting challenges of educational provision. Improvement of *internal efficiency and quality of education* constitutes a common concern (see the respective percentages of the primary cohort reaching the last grade indicated in *Table 2* and *Graph 2*); but the extent to which the objective of universal primary education for all has been attained varies considerably from one country to another. As indicated in *Table 2*, the level of adult illiteracy is

still very high in Nepal, Pakistan and India compared to that of Sri Lanka. In terms of *enrolment in primary education* also, significant variations can be observed: with a gross enrolment ratio in primary schools of 77 per cent, Pakistan is rather far from having attained full coverage at this level. Although Nepal and Madhya Pradesh record gross enrolment ratios of close to or more than 100 per cent, the net enrolment rates indicate that a significant proportion of the corresponding age group remains out of primary school. In Sri Lanka (for which the net enrolment ratio was not available) the group of out-of-school children at this level is reported to be considerably smaller, but nevertheless existent and even growing recently. Primary education continues to face serious problems of internal efficiency: again with the exception of Sri Lanka, drop-out rates from primary education remain significant, particularly among girls in the rural areas. In Nepal, Pakistan and India/MP, therefore, increasing the share of female teachers in areas with low girls' enrolment, as well as improving the quality of teachers, constitute major challenges for teacher provision in the near future.

Graph 2. Enrolment and educational attainment in Madhya Pradesh (MP), Nepal and Sri Lanka*



* Comparable data on Pakistan were not provided.

Problems and challenges of staff provision

Over the next decade, the challenges of insufficient enrolment in, and/or early drop-out from, primary education remain to be faced in all four countries, although to various degrees. The Governments of Pakistan and Madhya Pradesh/India are planning for a further expansion of the primary teaching staff. The public authorities of Madhya Pradesh also pursue their policy of universal primary education. At the same time, they have acknowledged very clearly that it will not be possible to finance the planned expansion of enrolments solely from public resources; new strategies for lowering the cost of the teaching force have recently been adopted in this state of India, which will be presented in *Section 2*. In Nepal, on the other hand, enrolment increase at primary level is expected to remain very moderate over the coming years, although Universal Primary Education (UPE) has not been reached yet; in any case, the government is planning no expansion of the teaching staff. Sri Lanka – where primary enrolment is relatively high (although declining) – has recently adopted a policy of progressively reducing the number of primary teachers, since the existing pupils/teacher ratios are relatively low when compared to those of other countries of the sub-region.

Considering the persisting limitations of public education budgets, one of the crucial questions to be addressed in all four countries is how to optimize the provision of teachers, particularly in distributing and utilizing the existing staff in a more efficient way.

Everywhere, certain efforts have already been made with a view to *rationalizing the utilization of primary teachers*: multigrade teaching has become a common strategy of improving the utilization of primary teachers in the remote and sparsely populated areas, where the number of pupils in one grade is often far below the national pupil/class norm. Unfortunately, the main prerequisites for multigrade primary education of decent quality – namely adequate teacher preparation for multigrade teaching and consequent reorganization of schools and teaching – are generally not given.

Table 2. Educational indicators

Country	Estimated illiteracy rate of adults		Gross enrolment rate in primary (1997/1998)	Duration of primary cycle (number of years)	% of pupils in private primary schools	Public education expenditure/as % of total government expenditure	% of primary cohort attaining last grade (1997/1998)
	Male	Female					
Madhya Pradesh	41.6 (1991)	71.1 (1991)	94 (official) 73 (actual/survey)	5	30***	17 (1996/1997)	68 (estim.)
Nepal	59.1*	86.0*	117 NER***: 79 (b) 69 (g)	5	8	13.2 (1995)	60
Pakistan	50.0*	75.6*	77	5	n.i.	n.i.	n.i.
Sri Lanka	6.6	12.8	114 (b) 112 (g)	5	2*	8.1	98*

* Source: UNESCO, Teachers and teaching in a changing world, *World Education Report, 1998* (figures for 1995).

** Including non-formal education

*** Net Enrolment Rate

n.i. No indication

(b) Boys

(g) Girls

In order to respond to the rapidly growing pupil enrolment in the highly populated urban areas, without increasing teaching staff costs at the same scale, other measures, such as double-shift teaching (the same teacher teaching one class in the morning and another one in the afternoon) have been adopted in certain cases.

Imbalances in teacher allocation

Sub-optimal allocation of teachers nevertheless remains a widely observed problem. Teacher/pupil ratios still vary to a large extent between urban and rural areas and among different regions or provinces, as indicated in *Table 3*; *variations of pupil/teacher ratios* are reported to frequently be even more impressive among schools within the same region or district. Very often schools located in the remotest or least popular areas are facing particular difficulties in filling *vacancies*. In the State of Madhya Pradesh, more than one out of three primary schools operate with a single teacher; only one rural school out of five has more than two teachers; furthermore, one teaching post out of six is reported to remain vacant into the academic term over many months – mainly due to delays in the recruitment processes.

At the same time, certain schools are ‘over-staffed’ in the sense that they employ officially or ‘unofficially’ more teachers than they would be entitled to, given their actual level of pupil enrolment. Such a phenomenon of ‘*overstaffing*’ is noted not only in the cities and attractive areas, but also sometimes in rural schools. This is partly due to a lack of refinement of national staffing norms: in Sri Lanka, for example, the national regulations stipulate the posting of at least one English teacher in addition to the teacher covering the other subjects, even for those primary schools which could make do with a single teacher, considering their very low level of pupil enrolment and the fact that they do not cover the complete primary cycle. As was pointed out in the case of Madhya Pradesh, the ‘overstaffing’ of certain primary schools is sometimes a result of unreliable information on, and monitoring of, pupil enrolments and actual school staffing, leading to errors in

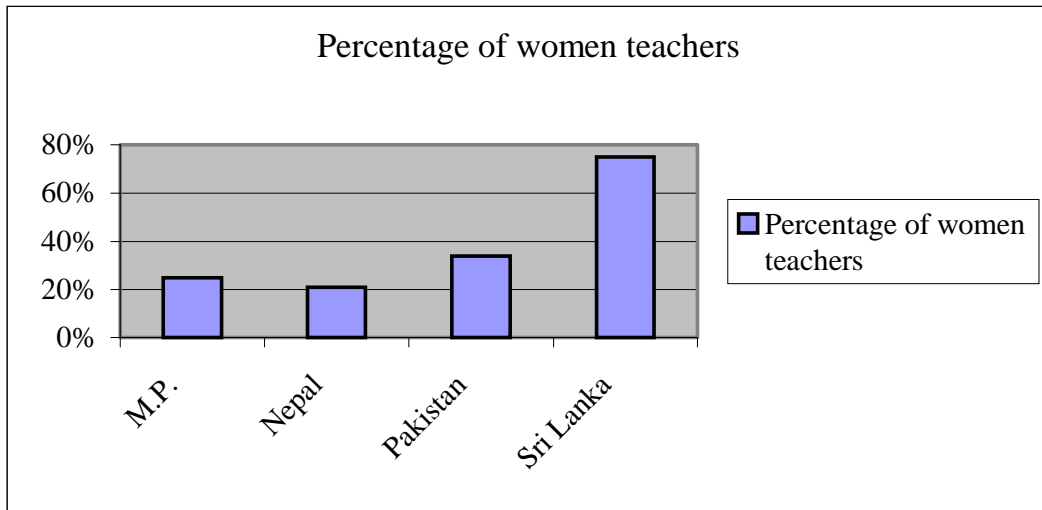
the planning of teacher requirements – a problem which will be looked at in more detail in *Section 3*.

Imbalances in the geographical distribution of teachers continue to exist not only in quantitative but also in *qualitative respects*: with the exception of Sri Lanka – where women constitute three-quarters of the primary teaching staff – all countries studied record particularly low percentages of *female teachers* in certain provinces and, more generally, in the remote rural areas, although a certain number of measures (mentioned in *Section 2*) have been taken to address this problem (see: *Table 4* and *Graphs 3* and *4*).

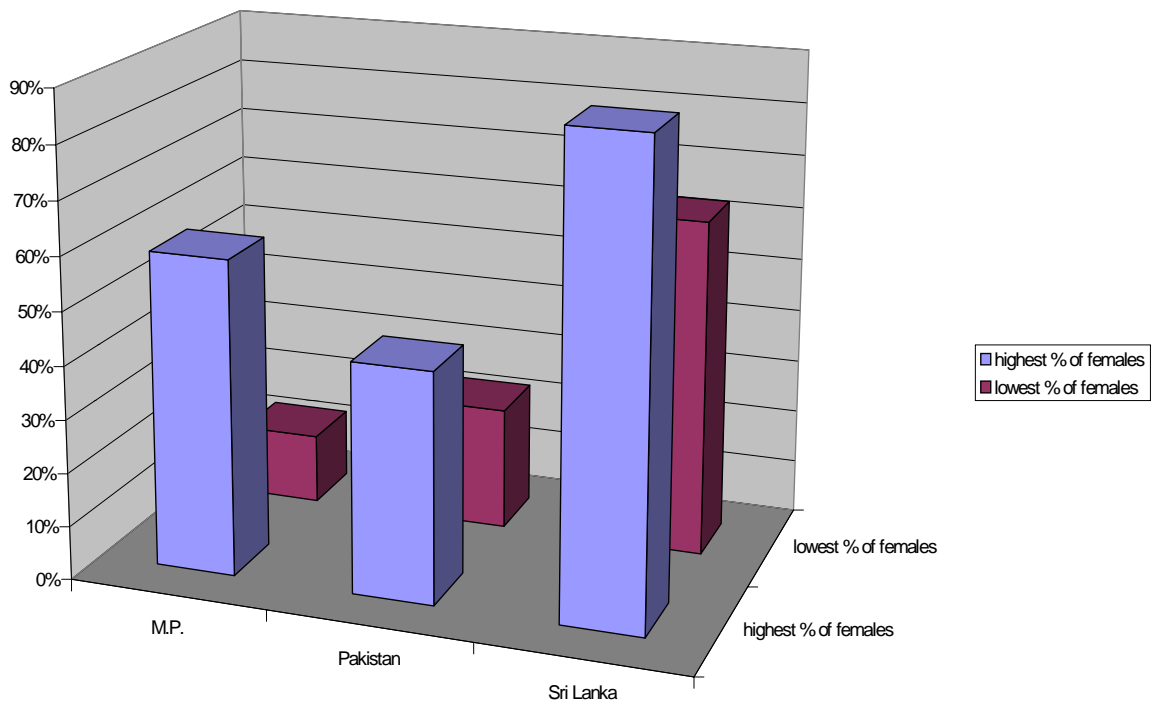
Qualitative inequalities in the distribution of teachers also persist with regard to their qualifications: although almost all primary teachers in the four countries do possess the minimum level of *academic qualifications* required – which is the completion of grade 10 – a large number of them are not provided comprehensive *initial teacher training*. An exception is Pakistan, where some 98 per cent of the tenured teachers are reported to be professionally qualified (however, many of the female teachers who have been recruited in remote rural areas over recent years often received some training of short duration only). In Sri Lanka, some 40 per cent of all primary teachers were untrained in 1996; in Nepal this figure presently amounts to 54 per cent. In Madhya Pradesh, the qualification profile of the presently serving primary teachers is 50 per cent of qualified teachers with graduate and postgraduate diploma among the ‘traditional’ state-employed assistant teachers, 40 per cent among the newly established category of district ‘shiksha karmi’ teachers respectively, to teachers in ‘alternative schools’* of whom only between 10 and 20 per cent possess the mentioned qualifications, the majority having received some short-term training only.

* ‘Alternative schools’ comprise the non-formal education centres run by the state government, as well as primary schools administered within the framework of special projects.

Graph 3. Women teachers at primary level



Graph 4. In-country variation of percentage of female primary teachers (by district/province)*



* See further details in Table 4. Comparable data for Nepal were not provided.

Table 3. Some indicators of primary teacher utilization

Country	Teacher/pupil ratio (official norm)	Variation of actual teacher/pupil ratios	Teacher absenteeism (rate of absenteeism)	Multigrade teaching
Madhya Pradesh	1:40	1:24 – 1:45 (rural districts) 1:13 – 1:46 (urban districts)	15% (sample survey)*	Yes
Nepal	1:50 Terai 1:60 Hills 1:30 Mountain	1:27 – 1:46 (variation of regional averages)	14% (survey)**	Yes
Pakistan	1:40	1:80 (urban districts) 1:10 (rural districts)	16% (survey)***	Yes
Sri Lanka	1:25	1:26 - 1:48 (variation of regional averages)	about 11%	Yes

* Survey (unpublished) quoted in *Improving primary teacher provision through better management: the case of Madhya Pradesh, India.*

** Survey (unpublished) quoted in *Improving primary teacher provision through better management: the case of Nepal.*

*** Survey (unpublished) quoted in *Improving primary teacher provision through better management: the case of Pakistan, with special reference to the North-West Frontier Province.*

Table 4. Profile or primary teaching staff

Country	% females	Qualification/Training	
		Minimum requirements	Actual qualification + training
Madya Pradesh	25% Urban: 59% Rural: 13% Assistant teachers: 31% Shiksha karmi: 43%	Assistant teachers: Higher secondary + pre-service training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Below higher secondary: 24% ➤ Graduate + Postgraduate: 53%
		Shiksha karmi: Higher secondary + selective examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Below higher secondary: 1% ➤ Graduate + Postgraduate: 40%
		Alternative + NFE* teachers: Higher secondary or High school + 30 days INSET**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Below higher secondary: 10-18% ➤ Graduate + Postgraduate: 18-20%
Nepal	21% (public) [46% in private schools/urban]	EGS***: Higher secondary or High school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Below higher secondary: 3% ➤ Graduate + Postgraduate: 12%
Pakistan	34% (23-43% according to district)	SLC****: (10 years of schooling) Exam + pre-service training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Below SLC: 4% (68% of whom are trained) ➤ SLC: about 70% (44% are trained) ➤ Graduate + Postgraduate: about 6% (about 40% are trained)
Sri Lanka	75.4% [88.4% in Western Province] [62.7% in Eastern Province]	Matric***** + 9-month teacher training course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Below matric (especially in rural areas)
		'O' level + pre-service training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Primary teachers fulfilling official qualification norms: 59.2% ➤ 'O' level + 'A' level without training: about 30%

* NFE: Non-Formal Education.

** INSET: In-Service Training.

*** EGS: Education Guarantee Scheme.

**** SLC: Secondary Leaving Certificate.

***** Secondary Leaving Examination

Trained teachers with advanced-level academic qualifications are reported to be generally concentrated in the urban areas, while teachers with low levels of academic qualification, training and experience tend to be recruited or assigned to posts in rural schools. In Pakistan, Nepal and – although to a lesser extent – Madhya Pradesh, the percentage of under- or unqualified staff is particularly high among female teachers in rural schools. However, certain efforts have been made over recent years to address these disparities through special training projects focusing on teachers in the disadvantaged areas.

Sub-optimal use of teachers

Not only the allocation, but also the actual use, of primary teachers was found to be far from optimal: *teachers absenteeism* is estimated to be relatively high in all of the countries analyzed. In Sri Lanka more than 10 out of 100 primary teachers were found to be absent when *ad hoc* surveys were carried out; similar surveys recorded rates of absenteeism of 14 per cent in Nepal and 16 per cent in Pakistan and India/Madhya Pradesh (see *Table 3*). These figures only provide an idea of teachers' attendance at school. As pointed out in the monograph on Madhya Pradesh, teachers' actual presence in the classroom has been observed to be even significantly lower than the school attendance rates; this is sometimes due to the various non-teaching tasks (e.g. managing community affairs) that they are requested to fulfil.

Unfortunately, country-wide or state-wide detailed and reliable information on the extent and the main causes of this problem is not available. Teacher absenteeism goes unreported in most cases. According to survey data mentioned in the study on Madhya Pradesh*, absenteeism tends to increase with the level of formal qualifications held by the teacher, the status as permanent teacher, the number of teachers posted in schools and the distance between school and the teacher's home.

Even where teachers are regularly present, their potential often remains partly untapped because they do not receive the necessary training and support:

although training schemes of different types and duration are mushrooming – particularly in the framework of externally financed education projects – *in-service training* is not yet provided in a systematic and regular manner to all teachers. Decision-makers do not even have a comprehensive database or knowledge of who has received what kind of in-service training.

The provision of regular and competent supervision and advice constitutes another open challenge. In all four countries, the provision of a decent level of professional supervision and support encounters at least three major obstacles, to which we shall return in *Section 3*: the insufficient number and regularity of intervention of external supervisory and support staff; the lack of administrative power of local (zonal or cluster-level) support staff; the lack of authority and training in supervision characterizing headteachers.

As indicated in *Table 5*, supervisors are, on average, in charge of too large a number of teachers or schools to be able to do their job properly. The situation can be particularly bad in certain areas with actual supervisor/teacher ratios higher than average, together with very serious transportation problems, with the result that supervision is almost non-existent in certain districts and certain schools (e.g. rural girls' schools in Pakistan).

Last, but not least, optimal provision and use of teaching staff also depend on appropriate incentives to become and behave as a 'good teacher'. In the following we shall look in particular at the present status, remuneration and career of primary teachers.

Teacher status, remuneration and career

In South Asia, as in many other parts of the world, there has been wide public debate about the uncertain – or even decreasing – *status of teachers* over recent years. One of the trends which has contributed to a growing

* *Source*: DPEP Bureau of Education, Government of India, Draft document (unpublished), 1998; quoted in: A. Sharma, *Improving primary teacher provision through better management: the case of Madhya Pradesh, India*, 1998.

diversification – albeit not necessarily to deterioration – of the teacher status is the recruitment and employment of non-tenured teachers by the local communities or non-governmental organizations. However, the number and legal status of these teachers coexisting alongside the ‘conventional’ tenured teachers, varies from one country to another. In Sri Lanka the group of ‘volunteer’ teachers who are servicing mainly the tea plantations and remote rural areas – on a part-time basis and without any formally guaranteed remuneration – has remained quite restricted (given their generally weak training background, the government has not encouraged the development of this teaching cadre). In Pakistan, the number of community teachers has been growing, particularly in the remotest areas, but remains very nominal in comparison with the mainstream tenured teaching staff. In Nepal, some 28 per cent of all primary teachers are ‘temporary teachers’, i.e. they have been recruited on an *ad hoc* temporary basis in order to respond to the immediate educational needs of the local communities and are waiting for their integration into the corps of tenured teachers. The diversification of teacher status has been pushed much further in the case of Madhya Pradesh, where different types of local teacher cadres have been established besides the ‘conventional’ assistant teacher (employed and deployed by the state government) – a cadre that the government of Madhya Pradesh decided to phase out. At present, already one out of eight teachers (private sector not included) are non-tenured and employed by the local community or school. Some further explanations about the objectives and modalities of the recent diversification of teacher employment status in Madhya Pradesh are given in *Box 1* below.

Table 5. Control and incentives – crucial issues

Country	Supervision	Control/Sanctions/Promotion	Disciplinary action	Individual grievance redressal	Career prospects
Madhya Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 1 ADIS*/80-100 schools [1 cluster co-ordinator/10-12 schools – no formal administrative power] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Headteacher: no senior post, no controlling + supervisory power ➤ District/local bodies: main power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ District Education Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Legal provision: in Code of Conduct ➤ Litigation against government = growing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Very low: 1 promotion after 30 years of service
Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ø 1 supervisor/25 schools ➤ Ø 1 supervisor/140 teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Headteacher: right of recommendation only ➤ District Office: main power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Political interference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Political interference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Very low: only 1 out of 10 posts/district: for promotion
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ norm : 1 LC***/15 [1:13-1:147] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ State/province 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ State/province 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Political interference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Very low
Sri Lanka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ø 1 supervisor/58 teachers [1:13-1:127] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No systematic evaluation ➤ Some control + evaluation by SLTS** and supervisors (zonal level) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provincial Office ➤ Central MOE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ n.i. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Few opportunities for upgrading

* ADIS: Assistant District Inspector of Schools.

** SLTS: Sri Lankan Teaching Service.

*** LC: Learning Co-ordinators.

Box 1. Diversification of primary teacher status in Madhya Pradesh

1. Formal primary school teachers

Under the policy conducted until 1994, formal school teachers are employees of the state government and constitute a permanent district cadre. They are recruited directly by a district-level committee headed by the district collector. All these teachers are transferable. Since 1995, this policy has been replaced by the Shiksha Karmi policy. There are 211,718 primary school teachers presently, of which about six-sevenths are government teachers, i.e. recruited under the former policy.

2. Shiksha karmis

Delegation of powers to panchayats* has created a new kind of teacher called the *shiksha karmi*. The shiksha karmis constitute a district cadre of teachers controlled by the panchayats. A shiksha karmi is appointed initially on probation of three years, extendable up to five years for a particular school so that he serves in that school for the full probation period. During the probation period the shiksha karmi is not transferable. Subsequently, they are of secure tenure and transferable. The new policy of shiksha karmis has been implemented on a full-scale basis for all fresh recruitments since 1997. In 1998, 26,697 shiksha karmi teachers were recorded in Madhya Pradesh.

3. Non-Formal Education (NFE) teachers

The Non-Formal Education (NFE) scheme, a central government scheme, provides part-time education to children who cannot avail themselves of regular full-time formal schooling. The NFE teachers are referred to as instructors and receive an honorarium of Rs.200/- per month. They are expected to be local residents and are appointed by the block panchayat on the proposal of the village panchayat. There are 34,080 NFE instructors recorded for as many NFE centres. This scheme is under revision because the actual attendance and quality of the instructors has been subjected to much criticism.

4. Teachers of the Alternative Schools (AS)

Alternative schooling is a system started under the District Primary Education Programme that provides primary education to children in the 6-14 age group.

There are 5,384 such schools, with two teachers per school, one of which has to be female. The teachers have to be local residents. The appointing authority is the village panchayat, which locally advertises teacher posts. Qualifications for teachers are higher-secondary passed and, in the case of women, to be relaxed to 8th grade passed if need be. Teachers undergo a 21-day induction training course and a 12-day recurring training course. AS teachers, of which there are 10,768, are not transferable.

5. Gurujis of the Education Guarantee Scheme

Since 1 January 1997, the innovative programme of the Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) has been under way. Under the EGS, if a community is without a schooling facility within a kilometre and 40 children of school-going age (25 in the tribal areas) demand a school, then the government guarantees to provide a school within 90 days of the demand. There are 19,289 EGS schools and as many teachers, called *gurujis*. The teacher must be a local resident. The minimum educational qualification for a guruji is higher secondary, which can be relaxed up to high school if a local person with a higher-secondary qualification is not available. The local community proposes a panel of names for the guruji to the village panchayat, along with the demand for a school. The village panchayat forwards the demand and the proposed panel to the block panchayat and, after approval of the block panchayat, appoints the gurujis. Gurujis are not transferable.

The availability of teachers in remote schools has improved considerably thanks to the Shiksha Karmi policy and the above-mentioned Alternative Schooling Schemes**. The rate of teacher transfer has been reduced at the same time. Teachers under alternative schooling programmes are, furthermore, reported to be more stable in their post and more committed to their work, especially because of their anchorage in and supervision by the local community.

* Panchayats are elected bodies at sub-district (village; block) and district levels which were vested in 1994 with decision-making powers and budgets for operating educational programmes and managing teachers and district educational personnel.

** See: A. Sharma, *op.cit.*

In the four countries studied, there is still wide debate on the question as to what extent recent changes or diversification of the employment status of teachers affect their professional satisfaction and/or the quality and equality of educational provision. In the case of Madhya Pradesh, non-tenured schoolteachers are said to be less often absent, more committed and more stable in their job than their colleagues who belong to the tenured district cadre. Such improvements, however, may be due to their closer interaction with the local community rather than to the fact that they can be hired and fired more easily. There is some common evidence in all four cases, indeed, that – irrespective of their specific status – locally recruited teachers, with academic qualifications sometimes below the average, have not only contributed to a better quantitative provision of teaching staff in remote areas, but also proved to be no less – if not more – committed and performing than their more qualified colleagues. However, the ‘quality’ of teachers – in particular their absenteeism and lack of commitment – continues to raise serious criticism. Several variables are commonly quoted to be causing or reinforcing these two problems: the mediocre level of teacher remuneration and the low social status which is often considered to go along with it; lack of career prospects and other incentives; insufficient mechanisms of accountability and other weaknesses characterizing the organization and practices of teacher management. Leaving aside the organizational factors – which will be dealt with in *Section 3* – we shall take a look at some of the major features of the existing systems of remuneration and incentives.

The average monthly *salary* of a primary teacher varies quite significantly from one country to another, as indicated in *Table 6*. An ‘assistant teacher’, i.e. a government teacher recruited under the pre-1994 policy in Madhya Pradesh and, to a slightly lesser extent, a primary teacher in Sri Lanka, are obviously better paid than a primary teacher in Pakistan, the average salary of a Nepalese primary teacher ranging in between. Besides the aforementioned monthly salary, teachers – except the newly recruited shiksha karmi and local teachers in Madhya Pradesh – also receive certain

allowances (housing allowances; remote-area allowances, medical allowances etc.) which are often quite substantial. In the case of Pakistan and Nepal, for example, the total amount of these allowances can attain the equivalent of an average monthly salary. However, in Pakistan as well as in Nepal, primary teachers are reported to be unable to ensure their family's subsistence solely from the remuneration of their teaching job and are forced to have a second job. The central question emerging here is to what extent teaching service regulations, as well as the organization and timetables of teaching, could and should adapt to this reality.

Teachers' satisfaction with their job is reported to be generally low in Madhya Pradesh/India (where a comparison of government and 'alternative' teachers was not available in 1998), Pakistan and Nepal. The picture appears to be different in Sri Lanka: recent survey data indicate that a majority of primary teachers in this country have entered the teaching profession because of their interest in working with children; more than half of them consider their own status as being as decent as that of a secondary teacher*.

However, everywhere the lack of promotion opportunities and other incentives for good teacher 'performance' is widely criticized. Apart from the annual or other automatic salary increments which do not have any significant impact on teacher performance, there are hardly any incentives for teachers to show a high level of attendance, commitment and performance on the job: promotion from one category/grade to another is generally linked with further training and higher levels of formal qualification and only to a minor extent to job performance. Moreover, opportunities for this type of promotion are relatively rare: primary teachers in Pakistan and Nepal are reported to have extremely few real opportunities for promotion, with the result that most of them will be promoted only once, or never, in their

* Survey (unpublished) quoted in: Lal Pereire; Wilfred Perera. *Improving primary teacher provision through better management: the Sri Lankan experience*. Colombo. 1998. (Working document).

professional life. The same has been true for the ‘assistant teacher’ in Madhya Pradesh; at the same time, new regulations concerning the conditions and career of the different types of newly recruited local teachers have not been established in Madhya Pradesh. The situation of teachers in Sri Lanka is slightly different, to the extent that there is a rather differentiated scale of categories (called ‘classes’) and grades to which primary teachers can get promoted – after having undergone in-service training (of 150 hours, 300 hours or more depending on her/his previous level of qualification) and competitive examinations. In addition, professional performance reviews are held for those applying for the highest promotional posts. However, the scarcity of promotion opportunities obviously constitutes a major source of dissatisfaction among primary teachers everywhere. There do not seem to exist simple solutions to this problem. Either promotion opportunities are few and slow to come in the career of a primary teacher – with the result that their incentive effect on the teaching staff is very modest; or significant changes in the structure and pace of promotions have to be made which entail considerable expenditures.

In brief, one could conclude this first section of the report with the following remarks: (a) all four countries have addressed (at least to a large extent) the problem of quantitative supply of primary teachers; (b) geographical inequalities in the distribution of qualified and experienced teachers are presently persisting, although the problem has been attenuated by the abundance of graduates in many quarters. Moreover, (c) widespread phenomena of teacher absenteeism and lack of commitment continue to jeopardize the actual delivery and quality of education, particularly in the remote or underprivileged areas; they indicate that the management of teaching staff available is still far from being optimal from both the system’s and the teacher’s perspective. Significant improvements of primary teacher provision, allocation and utilization have been made, however, thanks to a certain number of policies and initiatives, the most relevant of which will be sketched out in the following section.

Table 6. Status and remuneration of primary teachers

Country	Average Salary (monthly)	Status	
		Tenure	Full time/part time
Madhya Pradesh	<i>Assistant teacher</i> : Rs.5,000	Secure tenure	Full time
	<i>Shiksha karmi</i> : Rs.2,300	Secure tenure after 3-year probation	Full time
	<i>Alternative</i> : Rs.1,000	On contract	Full time
	<i>EGS Gurujii</i> : Rs.500	On contract	Full time
Nepal	<i>NFE instructor</i> :Rs.300	On contract	Part time
	~ Rs.2,700	All teachers: tenured	All teachers full time
Pakistan	~ Rs.1,700	All teachers: tenured	All teachers full time
Sri Lanka	Data for 1995 Minimum (untrained): Rs.2,710 Maximum (Graduate + professional qualification): Rs.4,260	All teachers tenured, except volunteers	All teachers full time, except volunteers (part time)

Section 2

Some promising policies and initiatives

The first policy area considered here is *cost-efficient supply of teachers*. Pakistan and India are – like many other developing countries in the world – expecting growing pupil enrolments and, as a consequence, continuing pressure on the provision of primary teachers over the coming years. Pakistan has been, and still is, trying to address this challenge by increasing the class size in urban areas and the number of multigrade classes in the rural ones; however, there are obvious limits to staff rationalization through multigrade teaching and further class-size increase in the future.

Under certain conditions the teacher employment policy and initiatives which have recently been taken in Madhya Pradesh seem to be more promising: as mentioned before, all primary teachers who have recently been, and those who will be, recruited in this State of India (except those operating under alternative schooling schemes) belong to the ‘shiksha karmi’. The new teaching cadre is paid less than half the salary of that of a traditional teacher. Furthermore, shiksha karmi teachers do not receive the special allowances from which the latter category of teachers benefits. The Shiksha Karmi policy has enabled the government of Madhya Pradesh to recruit a substantial number of primary teachers with less than one-third of the cost that would have been incurred in continuing the recruitment of ‘assistant teachers’. The government expenditure on teacher remuneration has been further reduced through the recruitment of local teachers for alternative schooling projects, since the salary level of these teachers is still lower than that of the shiksha

karmi (see *Table 5*). Until now, this experience appears to have been successful also with regard to its impact on educational provision: the primary teaching staff has been expanding rapidly and teacher provision in remote areas has been considerably improved. Even teacher attendance does not seem to have suffered from the reduction of teacher remuneration. However, at the time when the monograph on Madhya Pradesh referred to here was prepared, the reported policy change and new initiatives were too recent to allow the conduct of a comprehensive assessment of their impact on *qualitative* aspects of educational provision (such as pupil performance and retention; teaching-learning practices, etc.). Two major factors – which may not be given in other contexts – made the adoption and implementation of this policy possible: the abundance of secondary graduates among which teachers could be recruited (even in predominantly rural districts), and the absence of attractive alternative employment opportunities for these graduates.

Increasing the share of women teachers in the remote areas has been another declared concern for policy-makers, not only in Madhya Pradesh (where the government has reserved 30 per cent of posts for women) but also in Nepal and Pakistan. In order to reach this aim the Nepalese government stipulated at the end of the 1980s that each primary school should have at least one female teacher, and that recruitment of new teachers should apply positive discrimination for female candidates. Indeed, between 1989 and 1996 the share of women primary teachers increased from 13 per cent to 21 per cent. In Pakistan, the shortage of female teachers has been attenuated through a set of measures, presented in *Box 2*.

Box 2. Combined measures for increasing the share of women teachers in Pakistan

The policy which has been conducted in Pakistan in order to enhance the share of female teachers included, in particular, the following measures:

- multiplication of general secondary and teacher training colleges in the rural areas and promotion of female enrolment in these institutions;
- development of distance teacher training courses;
- lowering of eligibility requirements for recruitment of women teachers.

In addition, the government has run a particularly promising programme which links the opening of a school with the condition that the local community identifies a female candidate having completed lower secondary to fill at least one of the teacher posts to be created in the new school; the women teachers thus recruited are employed by the school. In the province of Balochistan, for example, this programme has had a demonstrably positive impact on overcoming the shortage of female teachers in the remote and rural areas and, eventually, on the schooling of girls in these locations.

In many quarters attempts have been made to *address geographical imbalances in the distribution of teachers* not only via the above-mentioned local recruitment and employment of teachers, but also through special incentives, e.g. ‘remote area allowances’, and sometimes through mandatory posting of newly-trained teachers to the less attractive schools. These strategies have helped to attenuate the quantitative shortage of teachers in the remote areas; they were not appropriate, however, to combat persisting phenomena of excess staff and of concentration of the most qualified and experienced teachers in the privileged urban areas. With regard to the latter, Sri Lanka has started adopting some specific measures that are worth mentioning here. A transfer and promotion policy has been introduced which

requires all teachers to serve in a ‘difficult’ (called ‘congenial’) school for a certain minimum period (four years for ‘difficult’, three years for ‘very difficult’ schools). Another major step has been taken with the Sri Lanka Teacher Deployment project, which expects all provinces which were found to have excess staff (according to the staffing norms laid down) to elaborate a ‘staff equalization plan’; those provinces with excess staff which, in actual practice, do not submit and implement such a plan, will not receive the necessary funds to cover their entire salary expenditures; on the contrary, provinces which are understaffed would be allocated additional funds, according to the project. Until now, however, the implementation of this project has faced considerable resistance from the provincial administrations and schools.

Another strategy of innovation which could contribute to enhancing the utilization of teachers relates to multigrade teaching: only a few attempts have been made, in practice, to develop a clear-cut comprehensive multigrade education policy which could help both to contain the expansion of the teaching staff and to improve teachers’ and pupils’ performance. Almost everywhere, teacher training programmes, school- and classroom-building norms and teaching-learning materials are geared towards a primary structure composed of five separate grades. Teachers, therefore, tend to be more effective when operating within this structure rather than in a multigrade context. The recent integration of a module on multigrade teaching into initial teacher training courses here and there, does not fundamentally change this picture. In any case, the provision of one teacher per grade is generally upheld as a medium – or long-term objective of the official education policy.

The ‘alternative schooling’ (AS) project – which already concerns 5,384 schools in Madhya Pradesh – breaks with this conventional graded approach to primary education and uses instead a non-graded multi-group method for organizing the teaching-learning processes (see *Box 3*). Teacher requirements could be redefined, and pupil-centred learning at the same time be promoted, thanks to this approach to primary schooling.

Box 3. Optimizing the use of teachers through alternative non-graded schooling

In 'Alternative Schools' (a scheme run in several states of India by a non-governmental organization based in the State of Rajasthan), learners are organized in groups according to their learning pace and ability. Teachers are trained accordingly and innovative teaching and learning materials are being used. At the same time, inter-school teacher reallocation and co-operation within this system have also been improved. This new pedagogical and organizational approach to primary education has made it possible to manage a large number of learners of heterogeneous ages and learning levels with only two teachers.

However, the generalization of a non-graded organization of teaching-learning processes, as it is sketched out above, would require wide-stretching reorganization of the existing school systems and substantial change in the prevailing mental concepts of learning.

Some improvement in the allocation and use of teachers can also be obtained without such major structural changes, in making the structures and tools of staff management more efficient and effective. Both the monographs and the workshop discussions did, in fact, point out that, to a significant extent, the presently existing problems of inadequate teacher allocation (over- and under-staffing; unequal distribution of experienced teachers and female staff, etc.), absenteeism and lack of commitment are due to shortcomings in the existing systems of planning and administration. *Section 3* will, therefore, take a look at the strengths and weaknesses of these systems in Nepal, Pakistan, Madhya Pradesh/India and Sri Lanka.

Section 3

Managing the supply and deployment of primary teachers

Irrespective of the particular forms and degrees of structural decentralization in the four countries (to which we shall return later), all of them are reported to have serious weaknesses in at least two of the following critical areas:

- procedures and practices of planning of annual teacher requirements;
- information systems underpinning teacher allocation and management;
- control, supervision and incentive mechanisms reinforcing ‘good’ teacher management.

Procedures and practices of planning

Phenomena of over- and understaffing of schools and delays in the posting and transfer of teachers late into the school year are at least partly due to considerable shortcomings in the procedures and practices of staff planning. In Nepal central decisions on (annual) *teaching post allocation* are taken *on the basis of irregularly collected enrolment figures and staffing needs estimations* – not of systematic annual planning of staff requirements – with the result that there is often a mismatch between post allocation decisions and schools’ actual needs. In India/MP, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, on the other hand, a formal procedure for the planning of annual teacher requirements has been applied over many years; nevertheless,

shortcomings are frequent at each of the main stages of this planning process, namely: (a) the collection of data on pupil enrolment, staff and vacant posts at school level; (b) the calculation of staff entitlements per school at intermediate administrative (district or block/zonal) level; (c) the final decision-taking on post allocation at the provincial/state or central level.

- (a) In all four countries it has been noted that the *data on enrolments, teaching staff and/or vacancies transmitted from the schools to the intermediate (block/sub-district and district) levels are often distorted*; in particular, pupil enrolment figures are frequently ‘inflated’ by headteachers in order to obtain additional teaching staff (high rates of absenteeism among those already posted reinforce such practices). Since educational offices at the intermediate levels generally lack the necessary means and incentives to undertake regular cross-checking of such data, post allocation decisions are often taken on an erroneous basis. In the case of Pakistan, the determination of vacancies is, furthermore, said to be done very early in the current school year, with the consequence that subsequent changes of the situation – i.e. attrition or additional attachment of teaching staff – are not taken into account when decisions on staff allocations for the next school year are made. In India/Madhya Pradesh, improvements have been made in the planning procedure by building into this process assessments of actual pupil enrolments and actual teacher allocation at different moments before the beginning of the next school year. In actual practice, however, the problems of erroneous planning data have not been generally addressed because of lack of adequate monitoring.
- (b) Another source of inadequate post-allocation decisions lies in *erroneous staff entitlement calculations*. The monograph on Sri Lanka points out the fact that many education officers at intermediate levels have great difficulties in calculating the staff entitlements, either because they do not have the official regulations, or because they do not understand how to apply them. Other countries also report on such errors in staff

entitlement calculations – be they made by accident or not – and underline the general lack of verification of the latter. The need for more effective monitoring and for better guidance and training of management staff at the intermediate administrative levels clearly emerges.

- (c) All four countries report on phenomena of *political interference* in post and staff allocation decisions – irrespective of the degree of administrative decentralization existing ‘on paper’: Nepal is presently trying to combat political interference at local levels in attributing major responsibilities in teacher management to a newly-established autonomous national body. In other cases, Madhya Pradesh/India for example, the participation of local actors (parents and school management boards) in school management – especially in alternative schooling projects – is a possible means of counterbalancing political interference ‘from the top’.

Which mechanisms of ‘checks and balances’ are most effective to combat political interference in teacher management actually depends, to a large extent, on the specific context, in particular the already existing distribution of formal and informal decision-making powers within the administrative system. A few general conditions for improvement in this respect are nevertheless sketched out in *Section 4*.

Information base for teacher management

The countries studied within the IIEP project have made efforts over recent years to set up computerized information systems for educational management purposes. However, in most cases these Educational Management Information Systems (EMIS) are located at central or, as in the case of Pakistan, at state/provincial level. Intermediate-level, i.e. mainly district and sub-district, offices either have to manage with the help of manual teacher records (as in Nepal) or *ad hoc* collected and processed teacher-related information (Pakistan), or they have to rely on the management information which is processed and returned to them from the central level, as in the case of Sri Lanka.

Information for teacher management at district, sub-district and school level is not only rarely processed in a systematic way and less quickly available than at central level; its content is also generally ill-adapted to the particular management tasks and constraints that educational administrators at this level have to face. There is more and more evidence and wide recognition of the fact that appropriate information bases are urgently needed where most of the management tasks actually have to be tackled, i.e. at the school and (sub-) district levels. In the case of Madhya Pradesh, an EMIS has been developed in the framework of a special project, the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), for the purposes of local and district-level management of primary education. One of the main challenges henceforth lies in the generalization and the adaptation of this information system to the needs and constraints of the district education offices of the mainstream public administration – so that it can be used for the management of all schools and teachers in Madhya Pradesh.

Everywhere, efforts will have to be made to improve at the same time the reliability and validity of the data that the new or changed databases for teacher management contain. In Sri Lanka, a promising attempt is presently being made to address this problem and enhance the quick availability of the relevant information at block (i.e. formerly district) level through several measures, which are sketched out in *Box 4*.

Supervision and school-based management and control

In all four countries, the provision of a decent level of teacher supervision and support encounters at least three major obstacles: the insufficient number and regularity of intervention of external supervisory staff; the lack of administrative power of local (zonal or cluster-level) support staff; the lack of authority and training in supervision characterizing headteachers.

As indicated in *Section 1* (see also *Table 6*), supervisors are, on average, in charge of too large a number of teachers or schools to be able to do their job properly.

**Box 4. Enhancing management information systems
at decentralized levels in Sri Lanka**

The strategy which was recently adopted by the government for improving information systems for educational management at decentralized levels combines various measures, among which the most important are the following: (a) instead of feeding back data from the central EMIS to the zonal databases, a set of relevant information collected at school level will be directly entered into the latter; (b) zonal databases are in the process of being computerized and a network of databases is being established between the different zonal and provincial educational offices of the country; (c) systematic sample cross-checking of the data entered into these decentralized databases will be carried out; (d) educational administrators at the decentralized levels will be trained in data entry and use.

The new system of cluster-based supervision within the framework of the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) in India/Madhya Pradesh, which has some similarities with cluster projects started earlier in Sri Lanka, constitutes a promising attempt to address the problem in organizing supervision, as well as professional support as close to teachers and schools as possible. Cluster co-ordinators only have to cover 10-12 schools (instead of the 80-100 schools that the Assistant District School Inspectors have to supervise, on average, according to the existing system); they are trained as trainers and supervisors, in addition to their qualification as teachers. The cluster system is reported to have improved teacher supervision in ensuring advice services more regularly and of better quality. The major weakness persisting at this stage, however, relates to the fact that school clusters and their co-ordinating staff do not have any formal administrative power. As a result, teachers and headteachers do not feel accountable to cluster co-ordinators and the latter are not in a position to regulate teachers' behaviour in an effective way.

As it has proved difficult in many quarters to enhance significantly the provision of external teacher support and supervision, educational specialists and policy-makers in South Asia are presently showing increasing interest in the possible ways of strengthening 'school-based management'. Implementing this concept seems difficult, however, to the extent that school heads/headteachers neither have the professional training nor the formal authority and social status required to exert supervisory and management functions in an effective way. In Madhya Pradesh, Nepal and Pakistan, staff nominated at the head of primary schools are not prepared for their new functions - except in Sri Lanka, where a teacher sits for an examination and receives special training before being promoted to the post of a principal or that of a head of the primary section of a school combining primary and secondary. In Pakistan, Nepal and Madhya Pradesh, the post of a headteacher is furthermore reported to function as a simple teacher post, with some additional administrative tasks, and to hardly attract competent teachers. Salary increments for headteachers are non-existent or, as in the case of Nepal, too nominal to have any motivational effect on this cadre of the teaching staff.

One of the crucial challenges related to more 'school-based' teacher supervision, management and support, therefore, lies in a well-balanced, comprehensive approach to strengthening the administrative capacity and power of the school level in these areas of staff management. The experience of Sri Lanka with innovations in teacher supervision, monitoring and support is instructive in this respect. As outlined in *Box 5*, and as will be further explained in the following sub-section on *Decentralization*, school-based or 'close-to-school' provision of supervisory and support services can certainly help improve teachers' behaviour and classroom practices in many cases. Besides careful appropriate preparation (through training etc.) of school principals (or section heads in large-sized or integrated schools) and/or cluster-co-ordinators, advisers, etc., however, certain mechanisms of 'external' supervision are necessary to ensure a minimum of transparency, quality control and objectivity.

Box 5. Sri Lanka's experience in the area of advice supervision

1. *Master teachers*

Sri Lanka introduced the Master teacher scheme (now Master teachers are called in-service advisers) way back in 1970 and was one of the first countries to do so. The role of the in-service advisers (ISAs) has been subject to change on many occasions. At present, their official role and functions vary and are rather ambitious:

- (a) to conduct in-service seminars in subject content and methodology of teaching; improvisation and development of teaching aids and materials;
- (b) to make school visits, which:
 - help the teachers to upgrade their teaching competences, and the master teacher plays the role of friend, philosopher and guide, to increase their confidence,
 - assist in team supervision programmes,
 - follow-up team supervision programmes;
- (c) to provide information on the availability and use of teacher guides in schools to the relevant authorities;
- (d) to assist in designing pupil-evaluation programmes;
- (e) to organize school-based teacher development projects;
- (f) to generate low-cost equipment for classroom teaching.

In actual practice, however, ISAs restrict themselves mainly to examining the correspondence between official norms and actual practice in the following areas:

- (a) lesson notes prepared by teachers;
- (b) continuous assessment of students' progress;
- (c) the coverage of syllabus;
- (d) the use of exercise books according to the accepted norms; corrections and marking; techniques for student motivation, etc. Most teachers complain about the ISAs' lack of time and competence, which strongly limit the actual impact of their intervention.

2. *In-school supervision over recent years*

The lapses in external supervision, the trend towards decentralization and more institutional accountability have contributed towards the strengthening of in-school supervision. Yet, again, most schools do not plan their internal supervision and often suffer from a lack of in-school capacity (in particular: insufficient competency of the principal) to organize and improve supervision and advice services.

3. *Steps taken to improve staff monitoring*

The 'Reforms in General Education' adopted in 1997 give more authority and responsibility in managing schools and teachers to the school principal and the school management council (SMC); these measures are combined with new instruments and mechanisms for external control and transparency. Some major features of this reform programme are outlined below:

- * **Teacher Record Book.** A Teacher Record has been issued to all the teachers. It could be used by the teacher until he/she retires from service. The principal will enter records annually in the Teacher Record Book based on the performance appraisal. Other achievements and comments by external supervisors could also be entered in the Teacher Record Book, which should assist in teacher management at school and zonal levels.
- * **Appraisal for promotion.** Those who will be promoted in the Sri Lanka Teaching Service (SLTS) will have to go through a professional review. The entries in the Teacher Record Book will be examined in doing so. In addition teachers' performance will be assessed by an *independent team* during the SLTS professional review.
- * **Training for improved supervision.** In order to enhance progressively in-school supervision, measures have been taken, since the mid-90s, to promote positive teacher attitudes towards supervision and (self-) appraisal and to develop supervision and advisory skills of principals in the framework of initial and in-service training programmes.

Section 4

Decentralization of teacher management

Not only in Sri Lanka but also in the three other countries studied here, ‘decentralization’ – in the sense of devolution of decision-making power to the school, local and/or intermediate administrative levels – has been tried out as a strategy for improving the provision, utilization and management of teachers. The degree of decentralization in this area presently varies, however, from one country to another. As emerges from *Table 6*, the devolution of teacher management functions to the intermediate administrative levels presently seems to be most advanced in the State of Madhya Pradesh/India, where almost all responsibilities relating to teaching staff management, except post allocation, have recently been devolved to the sub-district levels – i.e. the block, village and school level. Pakistan ranges at the other end of the ‘decentralization scale’: although the district and sub-district levels are in charge of certain tasks such as collecting and recording information for staff planning and management of teacher appointment, the final decisions on their recruitment, appointment, posting and possible disciplinary action still lie in actual practice with the provincial/state office.

In between these two extremes, Sri Lanka and Nepal have adapted and adjusted a certain number of measures of decentralization of educational management since the late 1980s. In Sri Lanka, the provision and maintenance of facilities and equipment for all schools other than national schools, and the appointment of principals, were handed over to the provincial administration; the zone as an administrative unit comprising several former ‘divisions’ (or districts) was created just below the provincial level and endowed with teacher

allocation, supervision, in-service training and other major quality-improvement functions. At the end of the 1990s, increasing disappointment with the actual effects of the various decentralization measures taken so far had been voiced. In particular, these measures had not apparently engendered the expected improvement of teacher performance. Besides the aforementioned standardized forms of school-based and external control of teacher performance, the strengthening of management capacities at school level – rather than at intermediate administrative levels – is, henceforth, considered as the most promising avenue for making the use of resources and the management of teachers more efficient and effective.

The recent experience of Nepal concerning decentralization of teacher management functions shows some similar features: from the beginning of the 1990s, all relevant teacher management responsibilities, except post allocation, were progressively being devolved to the education district offices; certain participation rights in decision-making on teacher recruitment and transfer were also given to the newly-created school management committees. This administrative setting, however, seems to have exacerbated – rather than attenuated – the complaints about political interference in teacher management matters, as further explained in *Box 6*, and eventually led to the establishing of a national teaching service commission which is supposed to control teacher appointments and transfer in an independent manner. A possible explanation for this evolution in Nepal is that the power of the school management committees has actually been too limited to counterbalance abusive interference in teacher and school management on behalf of local or national political pressure groups.

Box 6. Stumbling blocks in the process of decentralization of teacher management: the case of Nepal

During the 1990s, district education offices in Nepal were devolved the authority for teachers' and headteachers' permanent appointments, transfer, promotion, deployment and redeployment of teaching posts within the district; decreasing and increasing aid to schools, etc. School Management Committees were also given a growing say in the area of teacher management, e.g. in decisions on teacher transfer. However, it turned out that in actual practice these measures did not attenuate political interference in administrative decision-making, but rather generated an imposition of 'top-down' and local pressures on staff and other management processes. In response to the growing complaints of teachers and their associations, the government established a 'Teacher Service Commission' at central level for the control of teacher appointments and transfer.

To a large extent, the decentralization of management, particularly the devolution of responsibilities to the school level, has been hindered by a lack of clarity and internal coherence of the decentralization measures taken: the actual influence of school management committees on teacher management has remained limited since they do not have access to financial resources and also because their members are not elected representatives of different stakeholders.

In Pakistan as well, inconsistencies in the devolution of power are reported to have hampered the successful implementation of the few timid attempts that the country has made to decentralize certain teacher management functions. Thus, teacher selection responsibilities were, on the one hand, devolved to district committees; but, on the other hand, representatives of the provincial, i.e. state, level were designated to be members of these committees. This has created a margin of manoeuvre for the provincial officials who, in actual practice, continue to control and influence teacher recruitment. However,

decentralization of teacher management has not only been jeopardized by 'half-hearted' administrative reforms. It has also been hampered by a widely stated lack of actual management capacities at the district and sub-district levels. Initiatives aimed at training district and sub-district education officers in teacher management and other areas of administration are scattered in Pakistan and Nepal. In India, some efforts in this direction have been made within the framework of the DPEP. Beyond the framework of this project, however, management training of sub-district education officers is not being organized in a systematic way; at the same time, the number of people who need such training is growing exponentially, to the extent that management responsibilities are devolved to the village and school levels. In Sri Lanka, a growing number of in-service training programmes relating to school management and supervision were carried out in the late 1990s. A major criticism that continues to be voiced in this country, however, and which constitutes a major hindrance in most countries of the sub-region, is that these programmes are insufficient, mainly because they are not part and parcel of a coherent and integrated strategy, combining training, incentives and other measures for enhancing the management capacities at decentralized levels.

Section 5

Conclusions and suggestions for improvement

A rather large array of suggestions for improving the management of primary teachers – in particular with regard to their allocation and use – were put forward at the end of the Workshop. *Table 7* provides a synoptic view of (1) the current policies which were found to be promising or addressing the major challenges in the area tackled, and (2) the avenues for further improvement that participants suggested needed exploring.

In brief, the suggested policies and measures of improvement concern four major dimensions of human resource management: (a) the legal and regulatory framework of teacher administration; (b) the information system for management; (c) the distribution/devolution of management responsibilities; (d) training and incentives for management staff.

(a) Legal and regulatory framework

Correct teacher management practices – as well as the teacher's own satisfaction with the way in which they are managed – have proved to depend everywhere to a large extent on clearly stated, widely known and well-protected individual and collective rights and duties of the teaching staff. Yet, although some attempts at improvement have been made, the situation in this area – particularly the procedures for redressing grievances – still leave much to be desired in the four countries studied. The further development of an adequate legal framework (a 'Teacher Charter' or 'code of conduct') and of well-functioning mechanisms of control and defence of teachers' rights and duties – including the development of independent Teaching Service

Management Bodies and of delimited and accountable community participation in teacher management – therefore emerges as one of the major avenues for future action.

(b) Information systems for teacher management

Decisions relating to teacher management, like those in other management areas, can hardly be effective and implemented efficiently if they are not based on a system of information that is reliable, responding to the objectives and constraints of the management system to be served, and of easy use for managers. In the countries analyzed a certain number of governmental and non-governmental initiatives have actually been taken in this direction over recent years. However, at the intermediate and local levels of educational administration, where many teacher management tasks are increasingly being tackled, adequate and well-functioning information tools for monitoring and management purposes are still largely missing; the design and establishment of such simple and functional management information systems for the intermediate and micro-levels is considered to be another major imperative for the future.

(c) Devolution of responsibilities

Many factors – in particular the geographical remoteness of certain areas, the ethnic, social and/or cultural diversity of the population and/or the necessity (for financial and/or social reasons) to mobilize the contribution of local communities to educational financing and teacher recruitment and/or employment – have led the governments of all four countries analyzed to take steps towards the devolution of at least some teacher management responsibilities to the local or intermediate levels of administration. Although some significant positive effects of increased community involvement and district- and sub-district-centred management on the retention and commitment of teachers in the rural areas are being reported, phenomena of continued political interference from the top, or of local politicization of staff management decisions have been observed. This was found to be partly due to inconsistent

devolution of powers; coherent planning and implementation of decentralization measures can help avoid such drawbacks. The replacement of top-down political interference by local pressures on teacher management, on the other hand, can hardly be considered as an improvement. Limits to arbitrary local management need to be fixed, as mentioned above, through the establishment of country-wide valid norms and standards and through mechanisms of 'checks and balances' ensuring accountability for management practices across the different levels. There is an obvious need for more systematic organizational analysis and consultation before taking major decisions on the reform or reorganization of teacher management or, more generally, human resource management in the education sector.

(d) Training and incentives for management staff

Besides politicization, another major reason for which the impact of decentralization on actual teacher management has not been as significant as it was hoped initially, relates to the fact that education officials to whom new management tasks have been devolved do not have the necessary training nor any special incentive to do their job properly. The Workshop discussions clearly pointed out the need for massive and appropriate management training of education officials at the district and sub-district levels, particularly in the areas of monitoring staff, assessment and management information systems. Last, but by far not least, it appeared of prime importance to establish effective systems of incentives for good teacher management. Since hardly any significant policy or initiative has been taken in this area until now, much imagination, work and political will shall be required for the design and actual setting up of these crucial management tools.

**Table 7. Primary teacher management in South Asia
Major challenges – current policies – avenues
for the future (a summary view)**

Major challenges	Main policies/initiatives (1)	Effects* and/or cost implications* of (1)	Future avenues for improvement (2)	Expected effects** and/or cost implications	
A. <i>Attract and retain qualified young people in the teaching profession</i>	(1.1) Increase of teacher salaries (Sri Lanka)	(1.1) Significant increase of expenditures on teacher salaries	(2.1) * Development and application of a 'Teacher Charter' (including Code of Conduct) * Improving mechanisms for redressal of individual and collective grievances	(2.1) * Enhanced social status and attractiveness of the teaching profession * Higher degree of teacher satisfaction with management	
	(1.2) Local employment of teachers (Madhya Pradesh)	(1.2) * Lower rates of turnover/transfer * Rapid filling of vacancies	(2.2) Promotion and national regulation of community involvement in teacher employment	(2.2) * Higher rates of staff retention * Possibility of containing expenditure on teacher remuneration	
B. <i>Address teacher shortage in remote areas</i>	(1.3) Local recruitment of teachers combined with lowering of qualification requirements (Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal)	(1.3) Effects: * See A2 * Lowering of relative expenditure on teacher remuneration	(2.3) * Maintain and support local recruitment of teachers * Improve multigrade teaching and reorganize schooling accordingly	(2.3) * Potentially lower increase of public expenditure on teacher salaries * Improved quality of multigrade teaching	
	(1.4) Special allowances for teachers in remote areas (Pakistan, Nepal)	(1.4) (Moderate) increase of expenditure on teacher remuneration	(2.4) Promoting education in remote areas within integrated rural development policies		
	(1.5) Mandatory service in remote schools for beginning teachers and as a condition for promotion (Sri Lanka)	(1.5) Has contributed to filling temporarily vacancies in remote schools			
	(1.6) Severe limitation of teacher transfer (Nepal)	(1.6) * Significant reduction of actual teacher transfer * Massive teacher opposition to this measure			

<p>C. Increase the share of women teachers</p>	<p>(1.7) Application of female quota in teacher selection and recruitment (Pakistan, Madhya Pradesh, Nepal)</p>	<p>(1.1) Actual increase of share of women teachers</p>		
<p>D. Address quantitative imbalances in teacher distribution</p>	<p>(1.8) Financial disincentives for areas with teacher surplus /incentives for areas with teacher shortage (Sri Lanka)</p>	<p>(1.8) Opposition against implementation of disincentive measures</p>	<p>(2.5) *Improving the information base on teachers, their allocation and utilization at local and intermediate levels</p> <p>(2.6) *Improving staff planning through: ➤ simplification of forms for data collection; ➤ simplification of forms for calculation of teacher requirements; ➤ devolution of planning and management responsibilities to intermediate and micro levels</p> <p>(2.7) Developing special incentives for good (teacher) management practice</p>	<p>(2.4) Increased transparency of actual staff allocation and utilization: ➤ more precise planning of post and staff allocation; ➤ quicker response to inadequate teacher utilization</p> <p>(2.5) Short-term increase of expenditure on management training for education officers at intermediate/micro levels</p> <p>(2.6) Higher motivation of administrators at different levels to manage properly</p>
<p>E. Reducing teacher absenteeism and lack of commitment</p>	<p>(1.9) Community participation in school + teacher management (Madhya Pradesh; to a lesser extent: Pakistan)</p> <p>(1.10) Performance-based teacher assessment (Sri Lanka)</p>	<p>(1.9) * Lower rates of absenteeism in Madhya Pradesh * Local political pressure on teacher management in Pakistan</p>		

* Listed here only when reported as such in written or oral workshop contributions.

** Only the main effects and cost implications discussed at the workshop are mentioned.

Appendix
Enhancing the role and management
of primary teachers

Keynote address by Professor W. A. Wiswa Warnapala,
Deputy Minister of Education and Higher Education

It is indeed a pleasure to inaugurate this sub-regional workshop on *The management of primary teachers in South Asia*, which has been sponsored by the International Institute for Educational Planning, and the very fact that it is being held in Sri Lanka is of current importance as we ourselves, as a nation, are presently engaged in a process of educational reforms, and in focusing attention on the enhancement of the role of primary teachers. In any system of education, primary education assumes a fundamental role, and it is of special significance in a developing system as it becomes the cornerstone for both social and economic development.

(...)

This workshop, as I understand, has been organized to focus attention on the improvement of teacher provision and utilization through better management, and this means that the available resources need to be used more efficiently through a better management of the system. In South Asia, educational resources, though available in plenty, remain under-utilized, and this deficiency is largely due to a wide variety of economic and social reasons which, in a way, could be related to a common heritage of problems, one being the structures associated with the colonial legacy. In the post-colonial period, depending on the nature of the system of education which countries in South Asia inherited at independence, certain vital changes were made to improve the quality of education through schemes of professional development of teachers; but these schemes were not interlinked to a comprehensive system

of professional development of teachers. In the period immediately after independence, countries such as Sri Lanka and India adopted policies, programmes and projects with a view to reaching, through better administrative and management methods, a satisfactory compromise between the existing teacher provision and the qualitative teaching staff requirements.

That, in fact, is the major problem facing the countries in the region engaged in educational reforms. In this context, Sri Lankan educational reforms need to pay special attention to the issues of teacher training, recruitment and deployment policies. In the past, especially in relation to these, no proper positions were adopted and this was primarily due to the absence of comprehensive structural changes in the entire system of education. It is now realized that *ad hoc* changes, without proper planning, may not serve the purpose in a highly technologically-oriented world. I, therefore, commend the International Institute for Educational Planning for taking steps to bring together policy-makers, senior officials and researchers from India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka to examine the issues relating to planning and administration of education in general, and of the teaching staff in particular. This kind of workshop, with a focus on sub-regional issues, will provide an opportunity for the policy-makers to exchange knowledge and experience on matters pertaining to primary teacher provision in South Asia. It will give the key actors an opportunity to find ways and means of improving the management techniques in the sphere of primary education in this part of the world.

In my view, the South-Asian countries, which underwent colonial domination for several centuries, can progress only on the basis of a scheme where resources are allocated to the most cost-effective inputs. Most countries in the region significantly improve educational effectiveness by properly re-allocating the funds and also by pumping additional resources into the primary education sector. This is what we propose to do in our package of reforms as well, and such a policy innovation is essential at the very initial stage of the reform. Sometimes, countries facing political and economic

problems as, for instance, Sri Lanka with its massive war expenditure, find it difficult to maintain the existing level and quality of educational services. In such a context, the available educational resources demand extremely careful management and administrative systems that, once in place, could deliver quality education.

Why is it necessary to emphasize teacher education?

It has been remarked: 'if you educate a boy, you educate one individual. If you educate a girl, you educate the whole family and if you educate a teacher, you educate the whole community'. This, in my view, is the philosophy that should guide the deliberation of this international workshop.

In my view, a sound programme of professional education of teachers is essential for the qualitative improvement of education. From the very beginning, the perception of the Sri Lankan teacher was that of a non-professional man; teaching was viewed as a job opportunity and this very attitude impeded the professionalism that should be unique to the teacher. In the ancient tradition, the teacher, because of his social prestige in the community and perceived wisdom, commanded respect. This kind of acceptance later disappeared from the educational scene with the expansion of the profession. In the given context, where special achievements have to be counterbalanced with progress in human values, teacher education has now assumed great social importance.

What is teacher education?

It is the knowledge and skills which are relevant to the life of a teacher, as a teacher. A course in teacher education should make an attempt to re-shape the attitudes, re-model the habits and, in a way, re-constitute the personality of the teacher. He/she needs to be converted into an intellectually committed person to the profession, whose ethics he/she must learn to perfect and pursue with dedication. Any teacher education programme must remain close to the society and, in the Indian context, the Kothari Commission pointed

out that the teacher education system in India suffered from three types of isolation:

- isolation from university life;
- isolation from schools;
- isolation from one another.

Most importantly, it suffered from the isolation from society, and this isolation, in the view of the Kothari Commission, makes teacher education incomplete, valueless and worthless in a developing country which is in perpetual search of quality education. In Sri Lanka – I think that this is common to all countries in the region – an average teacher seeks immediate and short-term benefits from a job and employment, but does not think of his/her real professional career and contribution to the community. He/she tends to play the role of a classroom hero but does not aspire to be a community teacher.

In the ancient Sri Lankan setting, his/her role was that of a community elder whose advice was sought on all matters, social, economic and cultural, in the small close-knit village society. Today his/her role is that of a person interested in classroom routine and not that of a rational human being who sees both good and evil.

This, I think, is due to the absence of values in teacher education. In this period of massive scientific and technological developments, teacher education, in the course of time, adopted more and more scientific and analytical concepts and ignored the holistic human values that make the individual complete. Education, like any other social service, has become ethically neutral, and consequently the student finds no purpose or true meaning in life through education.

(...)

I would like to devote my attention to a quotation from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who, delivering the Moulana Azad lecture in 1959, stated the following:

“Can we combine the progress of science and technology with the progress of the mind and spirit also? We cannot be untrue to science because that represents the basic fact of life today. Still less can we be untrue to those essential principles for which India has stood in the past throughout the ages. Let us then preserve our path to industrial progress with all our strength and vigour and at the same time remember that riches without toleration and compassion and wisdom may turn to dust and ashes”.

His view was that teacher education must be based on balanced education, where both spirituality and science would become equally important.

(...)

All this means that teacher education, in the given context in South Asia, needs to be made responsive to the new needs of society; it needs to be re-oriented in its aim and approach, curriculum and content.

Future role and management of teachers

It is accepted that the status of the teacher reflects the sociocultural ethics of a society, and government and the community should make an attempt to create conditions which will help motivate and inspire teachers on constructive and creative lines.

Teachers must be given the freedom to innovate, to devise appropriate methods of communication and activities relevant to the needs and capabilities of the community. It is here that all policies pertaining to recruitment, training, pay and promotion, and deployment come into play. In the United Kingdom, under the present Labour Government, the system is guided by three Rs: Recruit, Reward and Retain – in other words, recruitment of teachers has to be on the basis of merit, objectivity and conformity with the functional requirements of the existing system of education.

The pay and service conditions of teachers have to be commensurate with their social and professional responsibilities and need to be linked to them in order to attract talent to the profession. Acceptable guidelines have to be formulated to ensure objectivity in the deployment and transfer of teachers, and this, in my view, is one of the difficult and sensitive areas within our system.

All types of pressures, including political interference, have operated in this area and no rational deployment policy could be developed because of the existence of these pressures. Courageous decisions, guided by good political skill, are necessary in our system to defeat this trend, and the teacher associations must learn to play a significant role in upholding professional integrity, enhancing the dignity of the teacher and in curbing professional misconduct. In our country and culture, as in yours, the teacher used to be held in great honour and respect, and was considered as a fountain of all knowledge and as a representative of great ideals.

It is this status which needs to be restored for the creation of a better society in our part of the world.

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