

PROBLEMS FACED BY THE SCHOOL TEACHERS DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

Dr. K. Kavitha Maheswari¹, R. Gayathri²

Assistant Professor¹, Student², Department of Social Work,

Shrimati Indira Gandhi College, Trichy

Email : kavithamaheswari@sigc.edu

ABSTRACT

COVID -19 has created its impact in all walks of life, to prevent and control the spread of infection, social distancing, lockdown, various other precautionary measures are also taken by the respective governments for the welfare and benefit of the public. Education system underwent a drastic crisis during the lockdown period. Online classes by using internet facilities reached every corner of the country. It made the educational services possible during curfew. One of the major stakeholders of the educational services namely the teachers came across lots of stress and strain along with positive lessons during this period. Especially the teachers working in private school teachers faced challenges which they have never experienced before. Some of them given up their job and went for hunting other sources of livelihood and the remaining struggled to fulfil the family commitments as well as the problems of health, network/data issues, rural domicile and other academic related problems. This descriptive study is an attempt to know the problems and challenged faced by the school teachers during lockdown. A self-prepared interview schedule was used to collect details of socio- demographic condition, economic, social and health issues faced by the teachers along with the issues related to online classes taken under work from home criterion. Totally 50 teachers working in a Trichy based private school were taken as sample by using simple random sampling. The major findings of the study will be discussed in the full paper.

KEYWORDS: Teachers, social problems, health issues, economic problems and online class issue

INTRODUCTION

COVID -19 has created its impact in all walks of life, to prevent and control the spread of infection, social distancing, lockdown, various other precautionary measures are also taken by the respective governments for the welfare and benefit of the public. Education system underwent a drastic crisis during the lockdown period. Online classes by using internet facilities reached every corner of the country. It made the educational services possible during curfew. One of the major stakeholders of the educational services namely the teachers came across lots of stress and strain along with positive

lessons during this period. Especially the teachers working in private school teachers faced challenges which they have never experienced before. Some of them given up their job and went for hunting other sources of livelihood and the remaining struggled to fulfil the family commitments as well as the problems of health, network/data issues, rural domicile and other academic related problems.

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, students were forced to attend school from home, which had a tremendous influence on all countries throughout the world. Almost all countries developed online learning systems, both online (using internet applications, TV, and radio) and offline, within a few months of the COVID-19 Pandemic starting (printed books, modules). Changes in the educational system in Indonesia during the SFH period as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic have had an effect on teachers, students, and parental' learning activities (Cheng, 2020). Impacts on educational tactics and techniques were among them. Modifications in instructional methodologies, technology readiness for teachers in integrating online learning, support, and the motivation of teachers, parents, schools, and government engagement were all mentioned in the context of Indonesia. As a result, SFH must be well-established in order to meet learning objectives (Guo & The epidemic has had an impact on students' mental health as well (Cachón-Zagalaz et al.,2020), since teachers have been under a lot of stress since the beginning of the crisis.

According to recent studies, teachers experienced stress during lockdown as a result of needing to adjust (in record time) in order to conduct online lectures (Besser et al.,2020). As a result of the increased effort caused by home teaching, this stress is frequently accompanied by symptoms of worry, depression and sleep disturbance.

According to a recent Arab study, this crisis has prompted instructors to experience issues that are commonly associated with pandemic situations, including as anxiety, depression, domestic violence, and divorce, all of which limit their capacity to teach effectively (Al Lily et al., 2020). During the pandemic, a research in three Chinese cities looked at the incidence of anxiety among teachers and found that 13.67 percent of them were nervous, with women being more apprehensive than males and older instructors being more symptomatic (Li et al.,2020).UNESCO identified some confusion and stress among school teachers as being one of the negative and adverse consequences of school closures, due to the unexpected abruptness of such measures, uncertainty about their duration, and a lack of familiarity with virtual education using technical advancement with digital devices and electronic gadgets. The unpleasant never experienced professional emotions associated with the depletion of capacity and psychological resources has long been an issue of frequent discussion among education professionals, policy makers, and researchers.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Aim of the study

To study the problems faced by school teachers during COVID-19 lockdown.

Research Design

There searcher adopted the descriptive research design concerned with describing various characteristics of the study population pertaining to their socio-economic condition, problems and challenges in their work exclusively during lockdown when they did work from home by taking online classes.

Universe

The universe of this study constituted of women teachers working in a Trichy based private school. There were 61 women teachers constituted the universe of the study taking classes ranging from KG classes to XII standard.

Inclusive Criteria

Only women teachers were included in this study.

Sampling technique:

Since the universe is finite in nature, the researcher has adopted the random sampling technique to select the respondents from the universe by using lottery method. 50 respondents were selected as sample from the universe.

Tools for data collection:

A self- prepared questionnaire was used to collect data covering socio-demographic variables, details on online classes, problems encountered by the respondents during lockdown including familial, personal, economical, physiological and emotional issues and their work life balance. The socio demographic information covered the details like age, religion, marital status, education, socio-economic background and income.

Pilot study:

Before starting data collection, the researcher analysed the feasibility of conducting research and to know the availability of the women teachers and their acceptance, the researcher conducted a pilot

study to have some preliminary information about the selected universe. The topic chosen was discussed with the school authorities and women teachers and got permission to conduct research over there. From this the researcher could get some idea about the universe which in turn helped to prepare questionnaire on the specific data related to the research requirements and the process of data collection.

Pre-test:

Pre-test is defined as a study, which is done in the initial stage of the project in order to find the reliability of the questionnaire used for the respondent's response. The tool of this study is administered with 5 women teachers in the selected school to know its suitability. After pre-test there was no change taken place in the tool. Hence the pre-tested respondents were included in the sample.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings on personal details

More than half (60%) of the respondents belong to the age group of 31-40. Nearly 3/4th (72%) of the respondents completed U.G B.ED. A little less than 3/4th (74%) of the respondents are married. Nearly 3/4th (72%) of the respondents having 1-5 members in their family. More than 2/3rd (68%) of the respondents have children. Less than half (46%) of the respondents have two children. More than half (54%) of the respondents are from nuclear family. A little more than 3/4th (76%) of the respondents earn RS-30,001-60,000 as their normal monthly income. More than half (54%) of the respondents reside in the rented house. Exactly 2/3rd (66%) of the respondents live in concrete house.

Findings on problems faced by the respondents

More than half (62%) of the respondents experienced stress due to online class. More than half (64%) of the respondents felt that their working environment was safe. Nearly 3/4th (74%) of the respondents like their job. A little more than half (52%) of the respondents have less than 4 years of experience. Exactly 2/3rd (66%) of the respondents experienced internet network issues during online classes. More than half (68%) of the respondents informed that students are not satisfied with their online classes which was expressed by their feedback because they expected in person presence of teachers to have lively experience. More than half (64%) of the respondents felt that their family responsibilities affected by their work from home. They expressed that family interference in work and work interference during the execution of family responsibilities were unavoidable while engaged in work from home condition.

More than half (66%) of the respondents found themselves not spending quality time with their family member during work from home by taking online classes. They told that taking classes along with other associated academic responsibilities made them to feel engaged throughout the day and timebound work was not there when the official work is carried out at home. A little more than half (52%) of the respondents found difficulty and interference in their children's online class due to their online classes.

Nearly 3/4th (74%) of the respondents are not satisfied with their salary during covid-19 because they are given with reduced and deducted salary throughout lockdown. Majority (82%) of the respondents experienced recharge and data insufficiency problems due to continuous classes and a greater number of hours to handle. More than half (64%) of the respondents were given with 50% of their salary. Nearly 3/4th (74%) of the respondents opined that their job and salary was very use full during lockdown even though they had lots of problems. It was because they compared themselves with the people who lost their job and became unemployed during lock down. They also were of the opinion that some thing is better than nothing as compared to their salary. They were given with the reduced salary which was very useful to them for their survival as their spouses also were suffered because of lockdown.

Less than half (42%) of the respondents found difficulty in transportation to reach their school when they asked to come to school during lockdown due to the unavailability of proper transportation facility as well as there was no person to drop them to school. Less than half (42%) of the respondents felt isolated when they are at school on their turn during lockdown. At that time schools insisted to make certain percent of their teachers to come to school in person and carry out their work at school. Majority (82%) of the respondents underwent economic crisis due to lockdown and they struggled with their reduced salary. They were able to fulfil their basic requirements with their meagre salary, used their savings and were not able to save anything. More than half (64%) of the respondents experienced job stress due to their new job experience which they never experienced before.

More than half (58%) of the respondents were of the opinion that men earn more than women. A little more than 1/3rd (38%) of the respondents are the single earning member in their family. Nearly 3/4th (74%) of the respondents felt that they have more work burden during work from home that was because of the imbalance between their work and personal life. More than half (60%) of the respondents' family members infected and diagnosed with covid-19 which impacted a lot on them during lock down, they suffered physically, financially, psychologically without any social support due to the severity of the disease. Less than half (44%) of the respondents' family members underwent home quarantine for treating the infection.

More than half (54%) of the respondents had eye problem, head ache and its associated nausea and drowsiness due to continuous online classes using the electronic gadgets hours together. Less than half (46%) of the respondents were of the opinion that students were inattentive during online classes, no proper control over class as everyone was away from each other. Maintenance of discipline was an issue during virtual classes, students' response especially from adolescent students was not at appreciable state. Majority (80%) of the respondents opined that they were waiting for offline regular conventional classes. They liked the traditional classroom ambience with the one-to-one teacher – student interaction, physical presence and usual joy and fun along with the full salary.

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 is a pandemic disease which not only impacted on the physical health of the people worldwide but it affected all aspects of human life namely social, economic, psychological and emotional. This was the new experience which was experienced by global population. Academic arena faced huge challenges as like other walks of life. Both the ends of education system suffered. With all the extreme hurdles of loss of life of the significant family members, financial crises, pressures arose from work from home, issues related to digital devices and gadgets on physiological and psychological impacts were the experiences which were entirely new and never wanted to come across in life again. Though lock down taught us so many things in the education system, virtual platform paved way for uninterrupted flow of educational services, at the same time the new normal system of teaching taught lots of new skills and lessons as take aways also. To live in the smart and dynamic world, human beings have to adopt certain revolutionary changes made by the nature to make themselves as the survival of the fittest.

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