# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, IT AND MANAGEMENT

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# PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS: AN ANALYSIS OF PLANNING FUNCTION.

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## ABSTRACT

*There is an increasing awareness around the world for incorporating professional management into traditional public services hitherto dominated by the governments to achieve resulted pro rata to the investments. Similar trend has been encompassing the school education sector. Many countries have been initiating reforms to facilitate school based management. It would be appropriate to analyze the prevailing practices of school management in the context of similar reforms being initiated in India. This paper is an integral part of the doctoral dissertation – 'A study of Management Practices of Secondary Schools'. The main objective of this paper is to explore the prevailing planning practices in school management in terms of the three major components of planning – academic, infrastructure and financial planning. A sample of 188 secondary schools – about 34% of the population in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh in India, was selected through stratified sampling technique. The primary data was collected through self designed questionnaire and interview schedules. Chi-Square Test and simple percentages were used to analyze the data with the help of SPSS-17. The findings reveal that the planning function is centralized at the higher levels of administrators. Even though liberty prevails in some areas such as instruction planning, the public school managements are not utilizing the provision while some private school managements are excelling in that area. The study suggests the policy makers to facilitate planning at school level to ignite the reforms on a faster pace to turn around the sector for efficiency and accountability.*

## KEYWORDS
School  Basaed Management, Professional Management, Planning Function, Academic Planning, Financial Planning.

## INTRODUCTION

f-late, professional management has been extended to more traditional areas of service management to achieve better results. School Based Management (SBM) is one such experiment in the area of education sector. Many countries – developed as well as developing, have been benefitting from such management oriented reforms in education sector ensuring fast development. India also has witnessed a phenomenal educational development since Independence. The public expenditure on education has gradually been increasing from a slightly less than 0.8% of the GDP during 1951-52 to about 4.02% during 2001-02 and 3.57% of the GDP in 2006 -07, aiming at meeting the targeted expenditure of 6.0% of the GDP (GOI,2004) as early as possible, as recommended by the Kothari Commission in 1966. However, as Kingdon (2007) observes, the story of India's educational achievements is one of mixed success. On the down side, India has 33% of the world's illiterates and is home to a high proportion of the world's out of school children and youth. On the positive side, it has made encouraging progress in raising schooling participation and emerged as an important player in the worldwide information technology revolution and thus emerged as a knowledge hub.

School management reforms, being practiced in many countries, are challenging the conventional education governance structures aiming at increasing school autonomy and empowering localized decision making. It aims to strengthen incentives for schools to deliver services that are responsive to the needs of the communities they serve. Advocates of this innovative system of school management point-out a wide range of potential benefits. They argue that the devolution of decision-making authority to schools can facilitate and enhance participation – a core strategy in the Dakar Framework for Action (2000).  A stronger parental voice and more participation in school management will lead to greater incentives for education providers to offer more efficient services. Moving decisions away from remote planners and closer to those working at the schools who know much about the learners and their educational needs, as well as about local values and realities, is seen as a route to a more responsive system.

The origins of school management reforms can be traced to the United States in 1980s and Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom in 1990s. Similar programs have also been adopted in some developing countries viz. Latin America and South Asia, though sub-Saharan Africa also figures with increasing prominence. In India also, many committees on education and specifically, school education, have referred to the aspect of school management reforms. Indian government has been making efforts to implement these recommendations through some reforms. By strengthening the management aspects through reforms, at both the organizational as well as institutional level, the school education sector can be improved on par with the developed economies. Raju (2006) recommends autonomy not just for the private institutions and the self financed institutions, but also for the institutions which are under the government either fully or partly financed by the government. The type of autonomy should ensure that the stakeholders are protected, particularly the students, against dilution in quality. Concerning autonomy, the law must delegate the necessary decision making power to the institution – for changes in curricula and teaching methods, for internal self-governance, for interaction with other organizations nationally and internationally and for economic transactions. It is also very important that accountability must follow autonomy.

## PLANNING FUNCTION IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

While speaking about professional management, planning obviously should be the starting step. It is the most basic and critical function of management, regardless of the type of organization being managed. Modern management argues for sound planning in small and relatively simple; large and more complex organizations and in nonprofit organizations such as educational institutions. The difference between a successful and an unsuccessful organization lies in their planning. Institutional planning provides the structure and mechanism for the development of an institution by effective utilization of the available resources.

Without long-term planning, it will be difficult to achieve sustained growth in education sector. Decentralization is one of the major trends in educational management in recent years. Among the many such reforms that have been undertaken, the introduction of school-based management is one of the most critical developments. The implementation of such reform is increasingly advocated in different parts of the world as a way to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of schools (Abu, 1999). With the introduction of a system of professional management in England and Wales in 1988, schools are now operating in a radically improved context in which responsibility for strategic planning has been delegated from local education authorities (LEAs) to individual schools. Giles

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(1995) suggests that if schools are to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the ongoing reforms, a thorough review may be needed by the governments of their existing *laissez faire* attitudes towards planning.

In India, the Education Commission, 1964-66 emphasized that the effectiveness of any educational system is affected to a great extent by proper planning, particularly at institutional level. The components of planning in school management can be interpreted, in broader terms, as academic planning, infrastructure planning, and financial planning. During the last few decades, the importance of micro level and district level planning has been accepted by the Indian educational administrators. The present paper attempts to analyse the three aspects of planning function in school management at secondary level being practiced by the school heads. This article is an integral part of the research study – 'A Study of Management Practices of Secondary Schools.'

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It has been widely felt that Indian school system has continuously been failing to produce results in consonance with the resources allocated. The education sector in India has not yet fully internalized the developments in the field of management and continues to look at educational planning, administration and organization as aliens. The 'Challenges of Education', the 'National Policy on Education - 1986', the 'Program of Action – 1992' and many subsequent documents and reports brought this mutual exclusivity into focus and emphasized the need for professionalization of educational management. These reports realized that success in implementation of the National Policy on Education would be a function of its management process. According to Jean Drèze and Gazdar (1997), 'the most striking weakness of the schooling system in rural Uttar Pradesh is not so much the deficiency of physical infrastructure but the poor utilization of the existing facilities. . It is, in fact, important to note that in the context of development of India, the management of services sector assumes not only importance but is central to the development process itself. Education as a critical service sector and the agencies of education, a critical face of this angle, has been suffering from lack of professional management.

A study conducted by the Centre for Civil Society, New Delhi, in 2005 (Singh, 2006), stressed that the major problem lay not in the level of financial allocations, but rather in the organizational inefficiencies, lack of accountability and mis-utilization of funds. The effectiveness of education depends largely on how well its units of service are managed. Education can be made more relevant to the user through incorporating professional management at school level. The National Knowledge Commission of India (2009) has proposed to encourage decentralization, local autonomy in management of schools, flexibility in disbursal of funds to improve quality and generate accountability, improving school infrastructure and revamping school inspection with a greater role for local stakeholders. Karpade, Ashok and Meghanathan (2004) made 'an extensive study of successful school management in India: Case studies of Navodaya vidyalayas' and found that successful schools adopted systematic and participative management system in running day-to-day activities of schools. The study also revealed that people in managerial positions were delegated autonomy but also made them responsible for successful completion of the tasks. The study observes that by following systematic management process, the heads of schools could set higher and higher goals for themselves and for their schools and achieve them with team work and efficient managerial practices.

As India is progressing in achieving the goals of accessibility and enrolment in school education, this is the time to shift concentration towards the management issues for making the system result oriented. Better models of management can be derived for Indian school system by analyzing the school based management practices followed around the world. Thus, concentration on management of schools serves as a tool for 'turn around' of school education sector in India.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The principal objective of the study is to study the planning procedures adopted at the select secondary schools.

## HYPOTHESIS

That the selected schools are able to develop systematic plans, both academic and non academic, for their development.

## METHODLOGY

Stratified sampling has been utilized to draw the sample from the finite universe of 557 secondary schools operating under four major types of management in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh in India. The sample has been made largely representative by selecting 188 secondary schools accounting for around 34% of the population and representing 49 out of a total of 50 mandal administrative units. The primary data is collected through self designed questionnaire and interview schedules from the Headmasters / Principals of the select secondary schools. The data is analyzed through Chi-Square Test with the help of SPSS version 17, to establish the consistency of the responses.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Each institution has personality of its own and must develop itself to optimize its full potential. It is in this context that each school should have a development plan. It must essentially be developed by its stakeholder's viz., the Principal or Head Master, the teachers, the parents and the local community with the main intention to plan for optimization of the potentiality of the institution and improve the quality of education. Each school is considered, instead of a simple agency for providing educational service, as an independent entity with individually defined specific goals or objectives. The educational institute or school stands at the centre of the concept and serves as the basis for scientific management practices. The planning function at the school level is analyzed in terms of three components - academic, infrastructure and financial planning.

### 1. ACADEMIC PLANNING

The core of educational service is the attainment of academic goals. Educational planning without considering the academic aspects is a mere skeleton without life. Hence academic planning is of high priority in school management, since it constitutes the very purpose of a school's existence. In view of the diverse nature of the Indian society, academic planning needs a great attention. The principal subcomponents of academic planning are: curriculum, instruction and evaluation. It would be appropriate to explore these three subcomponents to find out the nature of academic planning in school management.

#### a. CURRICULUM

The term 'curriculum' is one of the most ambiguous terms in the present-day educational discourse in India. The curriculum is the plan for the implementation of educational aims. The success of any school system lies in careful planning of curriculum in the school year and in the evaluation of student performance. The curriculum should give balanced importance to all aspects and integrate them with each other in a planned manner. Curriculum planning enables a school to monitor the coverage, continuity and development of desired knowledge, skills, understanding and values across the stages of schooling. Curriculum planning not only focuses on what topics to be taught, but also on the skills that students require within specific subjects. A brief survey of the present-day class rooms would be enough to convince a keen observer that the most marked features of most of our educational practices in schools are a dull routine, bored teachers and students, and rote learning. Despite several policy documents, curricular frameworks, and pragmatic approaches mentioning the need for further decentralization of curricular material development, at least up to the district level, there has rarely been any effort to facilitate this.

The Education Commission (1964-66) highlighted the poor quality of the text books owing to the lack of research related to their preparation and production. The limited view of the 'curriculum' was manifested in the 1988 document 'National Curriculum for Elementary and secondary Education: A Framework.' The reluctance of the system to allow for true plurality and flexibility in the curriculum was most clearly evident in Professor Yash Pal lead National Advisory Committee's report 'Learning without Burden' presented in 1993 to the Government of India. Even though the notions of curriculum and syllabi existing in the three National Curriculum Frameworks (1975, 1988, and 2000) are more or less similar, they failed to emphasize a clear connection between the concerns, aims, and curricular content. Mehdi (1988) investigated the instructional, developmental and social aspects of curriculum at secondary stage in Delhi schools and

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found that the curricula in various subjects and the evaluation techniques were not conductive for the attainment of intellectual, social and developmental objectives. Sinha and Tripathy (2005) found that: many concepts included in the syllabus and textbooks are repetitive; many unwanted materials have been included; children are not given a chance for "learning to learn"; there is no scope for giving new information in the curriculum; and the whole curriculum of science for Classes IX and X has become mechanical, a process of passing information from teacher to students through textbooks. The findings of the study regarding the curriculum aspect are discussed hereunder.

- **DISCUSSION**

All the schools are following the curriculum designed by the respective governments through the apex bodies like NCERT at the national and SCERTs at the State levels. Even though, the SCERTs are designated a constructive role in designing and updating State specific curriculum, the APSCERT is not that much active. The school heads hardly have any role in designing and revising the curriculum. The syllabus is not updated regularly and there is unanimous demand from all schools regarding the necessity to update the curriculum from time to time. The schools do not have freedom to deviate from or modify the prescribed syllabus in view of the students' socio cultural environment. All the schools demand for a category-wise representative mechanism in development and modification of syllabus.

Regarding the appropriateness of the present curriculum, the data pertaining to the perceptions of the school heads is tested by Chi- Square Test to establish consistency (Table-1).

**TABLE-1: HEADMASTERS' PERCEPTIONS REGARDING THE PRESENT SYLLABUS (CROSS TABULATION)**

| Category | | The perceptions of the school heads regarding the appropriateness of the present curriculum | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Very much inappropriate | Inappropr-iate | Neither appropriate nor inappropriate | Appropr-iate | Very much appropriate | |
| Government | Count | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| | % within category | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | .0% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 2.4% | 1.6% | 4.3% | 2.5% | .0% | 2.1% |
| | % of Total | .5% | .5% | .5% | .5% | .0% | 2.1% |
| Local Body | Count | 18 | 36 | 12 | 28 | 19 | 113 |
| | % within category | 15.9% | 31.9% | 10.6% | 24.8% | 16.8% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 43.9% | 56.3% | 52.2% | 70.0% | 95.0% | 60.1% |
| | % of Total | 9.6% | 19.1% | 6.4% | 14.9% | 10.1% | 60.1% |
| Private Aided | Count | 4 | 12 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 26 |
| | % within category | 15.4% | 46.2% | 23.1% | 11.5% | 3.8% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 9.8% | 18.8% | 26.1% | 7.5% | 5.0% | 13.8% |
| | % of Total | 2.1% | 6.4% | 3.2% | 1.6% | .5% | 13.8% |
| Private Unaided | Count | 18 | 15 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 45 |
| | % within category | 40.0% | 33.3% | 8.9% | 17.8% | .0% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 43.9% | 23.4% | 17.4% | 20.0% | .0% | 23.9% |
| | % of Total | 9.6% | 8.0% | 2.1% | 4.3% | .0% | 23.9% |
| Total | Count | 41 | 64 | 23 | 40 | 20 | 188 |
| | % within row | 21.8% | 34.0% | 12.2% | 21.3% | 10.6% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 21.8% | 34.0% | 12.2% | 21.3% | 10.6% | 100.0% |

Source: Survey responses.

**TABLE-2: CHI-SQUARE TEST RESULTS**

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 26.682** | 12 | .009 |
| N of Valid Cases | 188 | | |

* 0.05 - Significant;     ** 0.01 - Highly Significant;     *** 0.001- Very Highly Significant.

As the responses of the Government schools are equally distributed; the majority of Local Body schools (32%) felt 'inappropriate,' followed by around 25% who said 'appropriate' where as about 11% rated it as 'neither appropriate nor inappropriate.' Among the Private Aided category, the majority (46%) rated the curriculum as 'inappropriate' where as the major part (40%) of the Private Unaided schools felt 'very much inappropriate', closely followed by around 33% as 'inappropriate'. Thus, the majority of the Local Body and the Aided schools coincide with the total sample's majority opinion saying that the present syllabus is 'inappropriate.' The dominant opinion of the Private Unaided schools stood alone saying 'very much inappropriate'. The Chi Square value (26.682), as observed from Table-2, is highly significant at 0.01 level.

**b.    INSTRUCTION**

The Education Commission (1966) remarked that the primary purpose of education is to provide with the widest opportunity to develop learner's potentialities to the full. Successful schools are organized around student learning.  NCERT has always been recommending child centered and activity based learning in conformity with the international trends and rich empirical evidences. Given the curricular outlines of the central and state level apex bodies, the schools should be able to plan and spell out the curriculum in detail through different instructional methods, suitable to the local conditions. The planning exercise must eventually focus on the overall development of the students. What type of students do the school wants to produce should be forecasted so that specific instructional plans are generated to achieve this goal.

In the area of instructional planning, the research work of Gangopadhyay (1991) on class IX students in the subject of history proved that the method of lecture, explanation, questioning and using the feedback was most effective. Narain (1992) compared various methods of teaching such as large-group lecture-demonstration and small-group laboratory methods and found that neither of the methods is superior in teaching all aspects of science exclusively. Mujumdar

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(1989) applied the principle of cybernetics in teaching-learning process. Jana (1989) studied the pupil growth and personality development under the nurturing effect strategy and found it to be effective over the traditional strategy. Ashraf's case study (1988) of some schools in Delhi revealed that about 28.57% of the schools in the sample had innovative practices in classroom. Sharma (1991) compared the effect of various modes of classroom teaching involving video-based instruction, teacher discussion, demonstration and self-experimentation on the achievement in science of the secondary level learners and concluded that video-based instruction was most favored while self-experimentation under the guidance of the teacher was found to be least effective of all the models. Singh(1990) surveyed the availability and use of teaching aids in middle and secondary schools of Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh and concluded that Kerala is making maximum use of the teaching aids with teachers adequately trained on those aids. Singh, Ahluwalia and Verma (1991) found that students who were exposed to Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) in mathematics scored higher than those taught through the conventional method. Kalimuthu (1991) compared the students' performance receiving through video-viewing and through traditional teaching and proved that the group instructed through video gained more and learnt more concepts than the control group. Joshi (1987) found that the secondary school TV programmes in science were of poor quality; run of the mill; and have not changed over the years. The study is aimed at finding out the nature and practice of instructional methods being followed at the sample schools.

- **DISCUSSION**

The instruction planning in all types of schools is scheduled basing on the Academic Calendar supplied by the concerned district educational administration. The Private Unaided schools are clearly showing the difference as 87% of them are preparing the instructional plans well in advance of the commencement of the academic year and regularly ensuring its implementation as per the schedule for each subject. However, all the schools have 'freedom' in designing suitable teaching methodologies. However, only 25% of Government and 40% of Local Body and Private Aided schools are experimenting with new methodologies while all the Private Unaided schools are doing the same. Regarding the nature of teaching aids utilized in the instruction activity at schools, <u>Figure-1</u> represents the situation.



Fig-1: Type of teaching aids utilised in schools.
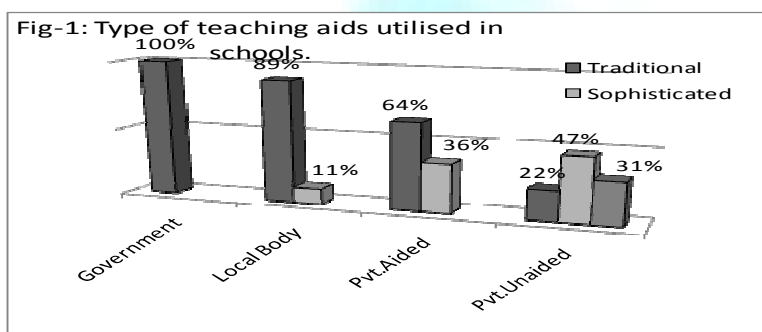
Source: Survey responses.

The schools under the Government and Local Body managements are mostly depending on traditional teaching aids such as maps, charts, specimens, science labs and around 36% of Private Aided schools are utilizing the sophisticated aids like audio-visual, overhead projector, interactive blackboards, in addition to the traditional ones whereas 78% of the unaided schools are employing the sophisticated as well as digital aids such as educational CDs, animated programs, large LCDs and conducting some experiential exercises and other innovative aids prepared by the senior subject teachers. There is a consensus among the respondents that the instruction planning at schools must aim at overall development of the students. But, unfortunately, many of the public sector schools were not able to design specific programs aimed at this objective, as evident from <u>Figure – 2</u>.



Fig-2: Schools planning for overall development of students.
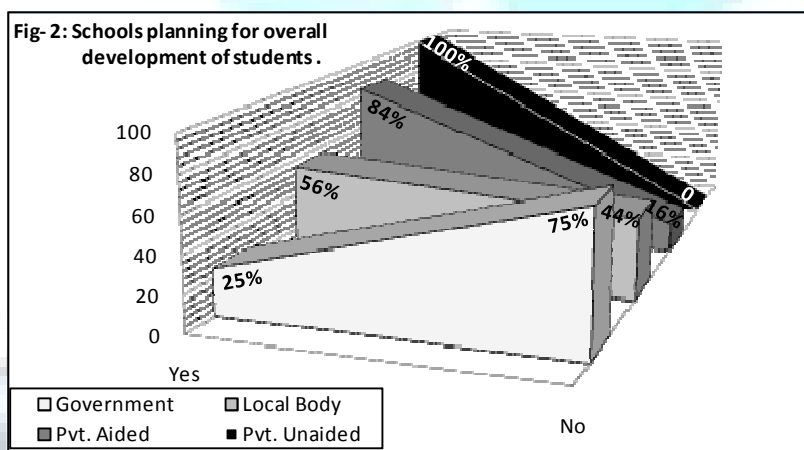
Source: Survey responses.

Around 50% of Local Body and 80% of the aided schools are able to implement some programs for overall development of the students. A sort of ingenuity prevailed only in case of private unaided schools in this respect. Those who disagreed, say that aiming overall development of students is not possible in the prevailing set-up of centralized academic planning.

**c.    EVALUATION**

In view of generating a meaningful report on quality and level of individual learner's progress, it is necessary to assess each child's learning. A systematic collection of the ways the learning has improved and grown, the material produced, and ideas articulated should be incorporated into the student's evaluation report along with the marks obtained, if that is felt necessary. Thus, the purpose of examination must be an evaluation of well-defined and sensible achievement levels at all stages, and not the test of meaningless transient memory       (Eklavya, 1985). As long as it stresses on simple recall and the exact repetition of the contents as stated in the textbook, all innovations will be of no use.

As Socrates noted, 'Education is not the filling of a vessel but the kindling of a flame.' But the examination system forcing students to memorize a plethora of facts, from an unattractive dry-as-dust textbook is unlikely to keep them attending. The Indian school board exams, though fairly reliable on tests of narrow textbook content, are rarely valid tests of desired competencies and broader curricular objectives (NCERT, 2006). The main purpose of examination as envisaged by the Education Commission (1964-66) and reiterated in the National Policy on Education 1986, is to help determine and gradually raise standards of

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attainment: as such it should be constructed as a powerful instrument for improving the quality of education in general and that of improving teaching-learning in particular. While the basic philosophy behind examination is laudable, its alternative effects on students' cognition remain a concern.

Humphry (1988) describes examination distress as being nearly universal, due in part to society's examination consciousness. While, under some circumstances, examination pressure promotes excellence by increasing attention and motivation (Bernard, 1990) in many academic situations, it detrimentally affects student well-being and performance (Ghose, 2001). At this moment, the National Focus Group on Examination Reforms (NCERT, 2006) proposes that a school based continuous and comprehensive evaluation system be established in order to: reduce stress on children; make evaluation comprehensive and regular; provide space for the teacher for creative teaching; provide a tool for diagnosis and for producing learners with greater skills. Moreover, it is recommended that each school should be given freedom in evolving a simple and suitable scheme of evaluation for its students, involving its teachers and owned by the teachers. Dave (2005) opines that there was an urgent need to strengthen school-based evaluation system giving adequate emphasis on the cognitive, non-scholastic and value content of education.

- **DISCUSSION**

The public examination system is common to all categories of schools as prescribed by the government. Under the present system, the focus is more on Grade X compared to other classes. The students of other classes, especially in public sector and aided schools, are promoted based only on attendance. There are significant differences in the success rates of students as could be seen from the data given here for the past three consecutive years. The average student success rates from 2005 to 2008 for the four categories of schools are presented in Figure-3. Around 90% of the unaided schools are achieving an average student success rate of more than 90% where as only 9% of Local Body schools could manage to that level; while the majority among other categories are able to achieve the student success rates between 50 to 70%. Many of the schools have incentive mechanism for both students and teachers.
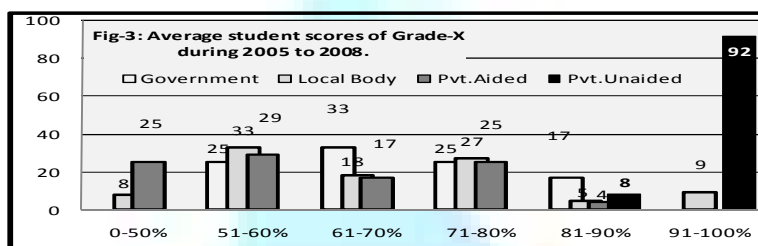


Source: Survey responses

## 2. INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

It is widely recognized that student performance is strongly affected by the design and suitability of those facilities in which it takes place. Both teachers and students feel motivated and satisfied with adequate infrastructural facilities and create positive environment for learning (Yadav, 2008). A number of studies have documented the link between the physical environment and academic achievement. Some economic researchers report that every dollar spent on such projects can generate almost another dollar in local spending. In India, Punjab has emerged a leading state in the country in providing best infrastructure and facilities to primary and upper primary schools (Yadav, 2008). Availability of land is a prerequisite to all other physical resources. Only when the land is available, other physical expansions are possible. Next to land, the physical structures occupy a prominent role in infrastructure planning. The following discussion facilitates the status of infrastructure planning among the select secondary schools.

- **DISCUSSION**

Availability of land is a boon to many Government run schools. The schools run by Local Body managements were successful in attracting donors of land for the establishment of schools to the extent of almost 60%. The land for 28% of private aided schools was leased by different governmental agencies while a majority-72%, are run with the land purchased by the managements concerned. Despite the availability of sufficient land resources, there are some schools which suffer from insufficiency of pucca buildings. The major need is in the Local Body category as 44% of the schools were suffering from insufficient accommodation. Providing sufficient accommodation is not an issue in the Private Unaided schools. In the Private Aided category, 11% schools were not having sufficient building infrastructure. However, the ratios of plinth area to student showed much variation as evident from Table – 3.

**TABLE-3: RATIO OF PLINTH AREA IN SQ. FEET PER STUDENT (CROSS TABULATION)**

| Category of Schools | | Ratio of plinth area of school buildings in square feet per student. | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Less than 5 sq. ft. per student | 5 to 10 sq. ft. per student | More than 10 sq. ft. per student | |
| Government | Count | 0 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| | % within category | .0% | 75.0% | 25.0% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | .0% | 2.7% | 8.3% | 2.1% |
| | % of Total | .0% | 1.6% | .5% | 2.1% |
| Local Body | Count | 51 | 59 | 3 | 113 |
| | % within category | 45.1% | 52.2% | 2.7% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 79.7% | 52.7% | 25.0% | 60.1% |
| | % of Total | 27.1% | 31.4% | 1.6% | 60.1% |
| Private Aided | Count | 3 | 20 | 3 | 26 |
| | % within category | 11.5% | 76.9% | 11.5% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 4.7% | 17.9% | 25.0% | 13.8% |
| | % of Total | 1.6% | 10.6% | 1.6% | 13.8% |
| Private Unaided | Count | 10 | 30 | 5 | 45 |
| | % within category | 22.2% | 66.7% | 11.1% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 15.6% | 26.8% | 41.7% | 23.9% |
| | % of Total | 5.3% | 16.0% | 2.7% | 23.9% |
| Total | Count | 64 | 112 | 12 | 188 |
| | % within row | 34.0% | 59.6% | 6.4% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 34.0% | 59.6% | 6.4% | 100.0% |

Source: Survey responses.

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**TABLE-4: CHI-SQUARE TEST RESULTS**

|                    | Value    | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|----------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 21.332** | 6  | .002                  |
| N of Valid Cases   | 188      |    |                       |

\*   0.05- Significant;      \*\*  0.01 - Highly Significant;      \*\*\* 0.001- Very Highly Significant.

Among the Government schools, 75% were operating with ratios between 5 to 10 square feet to student and the remaining 25% have a ratio of more than 10 sq.ft. The Local Body schools which could provide around 5 to 10 sq.ft per student were 52% and another 45% percent of them have less than 5 sq.ft. Among the Private Aided schools, around 77% could provide between 5 to 10 sq.ft, per student while the unaided category also could show the same result as 67% of them were able to operate around 5 to 10 sq.ft per student and another 22% show an inferior ratio of less than 5 sq.ft. Very less number of schools, among all categories, has more than 10 sq.ft. per student. In this aspect, the Private Unaided schools are not an exception. Of the total sample schools among the four categories, only 6% could operate with spacious premises where as the majority at 60% were operating with ratios between 5 to 10 sq,ft. per student. The Chi Square value - 21.332 (Table-4) is highly significant at 0.01 level.

## 3.    FINANCIAL PLANNING

In education, more than 75% of the expenditures are by and large on maintenance (non-plan) activities. In the present framework of federal financial arrangements, the plan funds for the union, state, and decentralized units have to be sanctioned by the Planning Commission of India and non-plan funds by the Finance Commission. Even though much ground work is done through the Planning Commission and many other working groups for determination of the financial requirements of education sector, much of it, however, remains only on paper. All the plans and proposals prepared by various commissions and working groups are tailored to fit the budget and many-a-time end up with 'no new scheme' philosophy. This is a clear indication of 'centralization' of Indian educational planning which can otherwise be called 'reductionist planning' (Mukhopadhyay & Tyagi, 2008). The scenario in the states is also similar, if not the same. The financial requirements and the views of the basic unit of educational service – the school, are never taken into consideration during the centralized process of financial planning. The schools do not have any say in the resource allocation. As a result, they are not able to design various programs and plans for efficient achievement of goals.  While there is a great shortage in funds allocation for the basic and minimum requirements at the institutional level, many educational analysts observed that there is huge wastage of financial resources.

A study by Loh (1995) estimated the contribution of education, through production function approach, by using macro data at the all India level over a period of time, i.e. 1961 – 1991, found that the effect of education on economic growth was insignificant during 1961-71, while it was substantial during 1971-91. Tilak and Qamar (1994) discussed the utilization of financial resources to school education in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh. Most of the schools were found to be below optimal level for which the total cost turned out to be much higher than desired. Within the current trend to decentralize management to schools, budget authority is usually the most common responsibility delegated to the school management followed by personnel and curriculum responsibilities. Raywid (1990) argues that devolution of budgeting to individual schools will encourage innovation and change. Many advocates of school based budgeting have argued that it will enhance organizational effectiveness and productivity by placing decisions closest to students (Levin, 1987) and by directing accountability toward individual schools instead of the central office and board of education (Ornstein, 1974). The budget should evolve primarily from the schools' current needs. Hence, provision must be created for financial autonomy where schools can prepare their budgets and can re-appropriate funds for school improvement. Thus, financial planning must originate from the micro plans developed at the institutional level. Acharya Ramamurthy Committee in 1992 reviewed the National Policy on Education, 1986, and strongly recommended transfer of centrally sponsored schemes to states through decentralization.  The following discussion provides insights into the financial planning aspect of school management among the select schools.

- **DISCUSSION**

In some schools under the Local Body and Private Aided managements, salary payment is not as prompt as in other schools. Interestingly, the 13% of the local body schools experiencing delay in salary payment totally belong to the schools run by municipal bodies. Similarly, about 38% of the schools under private aided managements facing delay in salary payment attributed the delay to non transfer of grants by the government within time. Even though there is provision for maintenance grants for education department in the State budget, the public sector schools do not receive funds for school maintenance regularly. The Government and Local Body schools don't have the practice of preparing annual budget for their schools. The management bodies of Private Aided schools take care of preparing and submitting budgets to get grants from the education department and the school heads and staff are involved to some extent in this process. Majority of the school heads from all categories responded positively for involving in long term / perspective planning for their schools, if given the opportunity. The private sector schools are more inclined towards perspective planning than the public sector managements as evident from Table – 5.

**TABLE-5: OPINION REGARDING PERSPECTIVE PLANNING (CROSS TABULATION)**

| Category | | Opinion of school heads regarding perspective planning | | | | | Total |
|----------|---|----------------|--------|--------|----------|-------------------|--------|
|          |   | Strongly agree | Agree  | NR     | Disagree | Strongly disagree |        |
| Government and Local Body | Count | 14 | 42 | 4 | 45 | 12 | 117 |
|          | % within category | 12.0% | 35.9% | 3.4% | 38.5% | 10.3% | 100.0% |
|          | % within column | 29.8% | 63.6% | 66.7% | 81.8% | 85.7% | 62.2% |
|          | % of Total | 7.4% | 22.3% | 2.1% | 23.9% | 6.4% | 62.2% |
| Private Aided | Count | 7 | 10 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 26 |
|          | % within category | 26.9% | 38.5% | 3.8% | 23.1% | 7.7% | 100.0% |
|          | % within column | 14.9% | 15.2% | 16.7% | 10.9% | 14.3% | 13.8% |
|          | % of Total | 3.7% | 5.3% | .5% | 3.2% | 1.1% | 13.8% |
| Private Unaided | Count | 26 | 14 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 45 |
|          | % within category | 57.8% | 31.1% | 2.2% | 8.9% | .0% | 100.0% |
|          | % within column | 55.3% | 21.2% | 16.7% | 7.3% | .0% | 23.9% |
|          | % of Total | 13.8% | 7.4% | .5% | 2.1% | .0% | 23.9% |
| Total | Count | 47 | 66 | 6 | 55 | 14 | 188 |
|          | % within row | 25.0% | 35.1% | 3.2% | 29.3% | 7.4% | 100.0% |
|          | % within column | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
|          | % of Total | 25.0% | 35.1% | 3.2% | 29.3% | 7.4% | 100.0% |

Source: Survey responses

**TABLE-6: CHI-SQUARE TEST RESULTS.**

|                    | Value     | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|-----------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 42.526*** | 8  | .000                  |
| N of Valid Cases   | 188       |    |                       |

\*   0.05 - Significant;        \*\*  0.01 - Highly Significant;        \*\*\* 0.001 - Very Highly Significant.

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Among the public sector schools, about 36% agreed for involving in perspective planning and another 39% disagreed. Of the Private Aided schools, 39% agreed whereas 58% of the Private Unaided schools strongly agreed and another 31% agreed for practicing perspective planning at schools. Thus, the unaided school heads were showing much interest in perspective planning while a majority of their counterparts in public sector and aided schools also agreed for the same. Thus, all the school heads showed similarity with the majority trend of the total sample; whereas the private unaided school heads were more proactive. The Chi Square value (42.526) as derived by the SPSS analysis in Table-6 is very highly significant at 0.001 level.

## CONCLUSION

The planning practices regarding the components of academic planning are centralized to a major extent making professional management difficult. However, in some areas like instruction planning, the school managements, specifically under the public sector, are not showing interest for larger involvement. Similarly, infrastructure and financial aspects of planning also are considerably centralized which hinders accountability of the school management. The main contention of the school based management reforms is decentralization to enhance accountability of the school managements. Professional management of schools is possible only when the resource allocation and decision making are decentralized to the level of individual schools. The governments initiating reforms at the secondary level of school education through schemes like Rastriya Madhyamic Siksha Abhiyan (RMSA) should consider these aspects first to facilitate professional management of each school which ultimately can ensure efficiency of the sector.

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