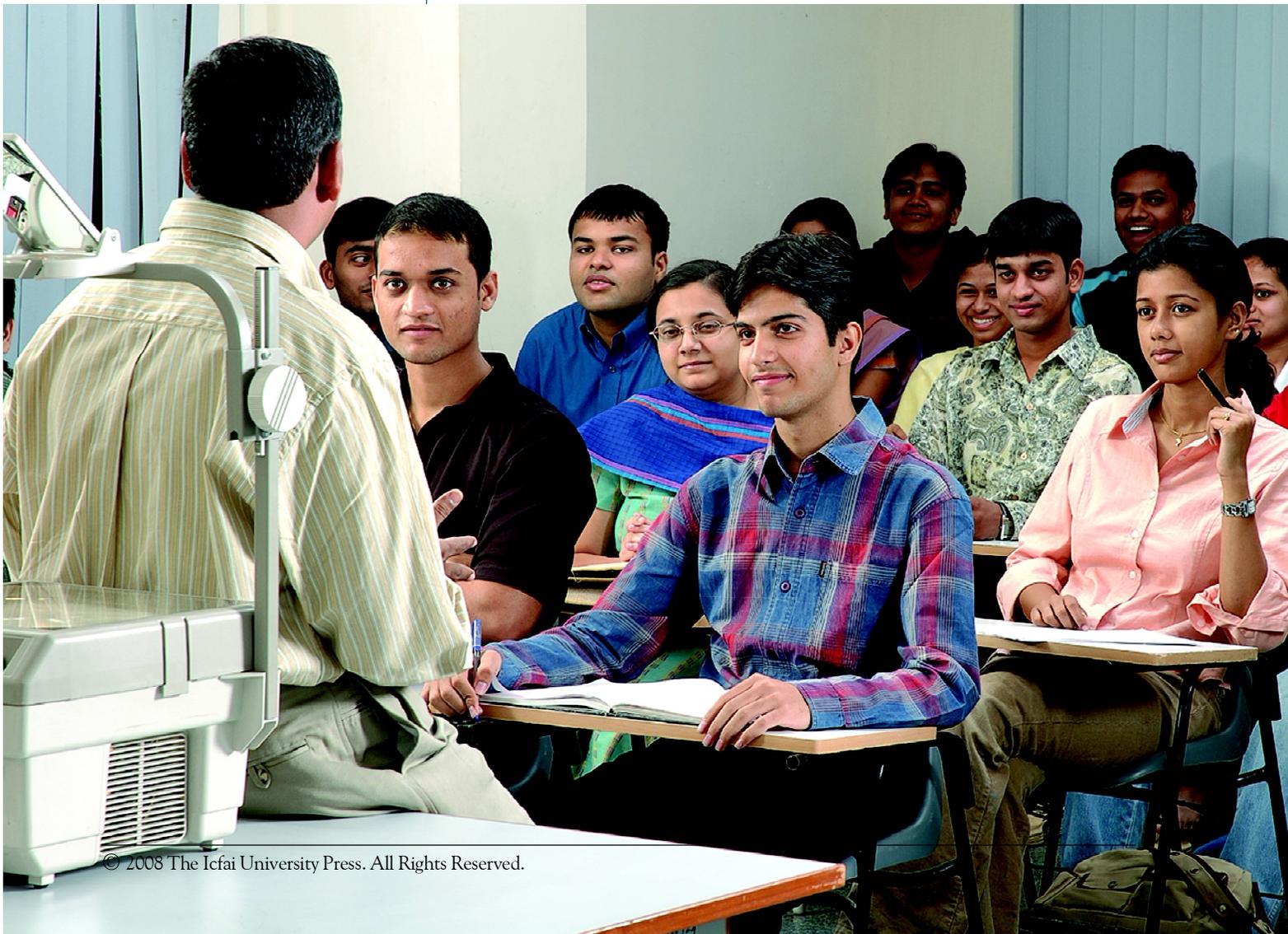


Human Resource Management i

S Chandrasekar

HR Consultant, Chennai.
The author can be reached
at chandruselva@yahoo.com

The article deals with the prevailing scenario of 'education to all' and the task of managing, recruiting and retaining the huge number of teachers required for handling the delivery of education. It investigates into why teachers migrate abroad. It throws light on an effective HRM system needed for the mass recruitment drive and rationalization of teaching positions across the country.



ment in Education Sector

The biggest asset of any country is its people. When it comes to the question of growth of economy and the GDP, it all depends on the employability of potential skilled manpower. In order to constantly have a talent pool of achievers in all the sectors, literacy is the backbone of impetus. There should not be a short supply of educated manpower in India. Literacy rate has to be pushed beyond 80%. For this, emphasis is laid on higher

education institutes; and generation of human resources has to be structured and streamlined.

As per United Nations statistics, India's population is estimated to touch 1.5 billion by 2030, making it the world's most populous country. When looking at it from the human resources perspective, it would be needless to say that the maximum optimal deployment of human resources for utility and global productivity in the country would be the highest in the world. Growth of human resource is a vital factor for consistent growth of the economy.

However, the outcome thus predicted may vary due to various reasons of handling and managing the vast skilled potential manpower. Based on the survey on Manpower Employment Outlook, the destination of preferred sector of employment has been the services sector that will be the top employer while administration and education has the lowest.

Be it any sector, shaping tomorrow's professionals has to take place on a strong substrata of education. Without a proper education or degree, one may not land a job after an academic career of two decades. Out of the thousands of graduates who qualify every year, how many opt for teaching? It could be around 14-17%, comprising those with a chosen aim or without an alternative choice of employment.

The education sector consists of administration, finance, quality but predominantly teaching *per se*. For

our population, we need to double the number of universities and other institutions of higher learning apart from schools with equal participation of public and private sectors. We need to analyze why the employment status of our teachers is often underestimated when compared to other sectors?

Employment as Status of Respect, Growth and Security

At the same time, it is quite evident that many are attracted towards higher education jobs of the love for teaching or willingness to associate themselves with their alma mater. In order to make the higher education jobs more attractive, both government and private institutes are raising the salaries of professors and lecturers. The recent appeal by former President APJ Abdul Kalam to raise the salary of defense personnel and school teachers, is a booster to this sector. Every year teachers are recruited in the army as Junior Commissioned Officers.

Even by assuming that only as much as 11% of the Indians pursue higher education, the scope of mobilizing and deploying human resources in education sector will not be diminished. This has to be doubled to cope with the growing multitudes. With enormous focus on the issues around human resources in the education sector, the importance of 'knowledge societies' has gained dimensions such as: i) education as a supplier of human resources ii) human resources for delivery of education. The first one needs a map to devise, implement and execute the delivery model through skilled support services like planning,



administration, finance and quality heads. The second one is the core component mainly poised to attract, develop and retain quality teachers through effective human resources management.

The human capital thus mobilized has to be distributed on levels of 'teacher demand and supply' in rural, urban and metro areas. The channeling parameters are: employment requirement, grade separation, domain expertise, training level, working conditions, individual career options, performance monitoring system and continuous knowledge update for development.

Recruitment of human resources to the education sector has basically three professional stages—fresher or newly qualified, probationers and experienced. As far as our country is concerned, HRM has responsibilities like forecasting the employment requirements based on the Planning Commission's report and designing a fast and stable individual career growth and scope for upward mobility. Motivation and sprucing up the staff morale depend on the extent to which the status of a teacher is accepted and acknowledged in the society in terms of monetary value.

Scope and Utilization of Quality Resources for Future

The strategies emerging in managing the human resources involve retention of quality manpower, optimum utilization of the skills and quality upgradation. A newly-qualified teacher may stay the promising job for about 30 years or so, without much mobility

upwards. If within a decade of high school teaching experience, if the secondary grade teacher adequately qualifies for an MPhil or a PhD, he/she could be directly promoted to the rank of a Lecturer/ Asst. Professor.

It is the management's responsibility that the manpower recruited is utilized fully to the optimum level. Never should skilled staff be underutilized or ignored for want of basic infrastructure, non-availability of students, inadequate compensation and poor working conditions.

Teachers are becoming like an endangered species. Many experienced teachers in our country have either migrated or changed the careers for better prospects

A flexible lucrative system will definitely facilitate a continuous inflow of high quality personnel who will join the workforce, year after year. The Sixth Pay Review Commission recently recommended fixing the age of superannuation of all college and university teachers throughout India at 65 years and selective re-employment on contract basis up to the age of 70. This will ensure optimum utilization of resources for the next five years. This concept applies to high school, secondary level and university faculty members also. At any point of time, more number of seniors will be available in buffer.

"There is a shortage of about 8,00,000 primary and middle school teachers. Given India's youthful population, the situation doesn't

look promising: 6.5% of India's teachers retire every year; at this rate, the country will be left with 3,50,000 primary and middle school teachers by 2011 end".¹

Initially, all schools have to be mapped under a general pool and mobility to be facilitated within schools of similar boards or pattern of education. Vacancy and recruitment is a continuous process. Teachers retire every month and so vacancies do exist. Not always the vacancies are filled immediately; temporary staff or skilled non-domain teachers are appointed

interim. Necessary steps have to be taken to bridge the gap by effective HRM by minimizing the lead time.

Where Have the Teachers Gone, Hibernation or Migration?

Teachers are becoming like an endangered species. Many experienced teachers in our country have either migrated or changed the careers for better prospects.

When teachers migrate within the country, their number is conserved but the respective state or school will be deprived of their services. If they migrate abroad, then it is brain drain. The whole nation is deprived of their services. What makes the highly experienced teaching manpower to be carried along with the overseas current?

¹ *Times of India: India Faces a Drought of Teachers*, July 5, 2008.

The school managements and local governments dealing with institutions of higher education in the West, particularly in the US and Britain, are satisfied with the quality performance of a large number of Indian academics hired by them. Going through the advertisements in newspapers or Internet, it is true that those countries have deficit manpower to handle Science, Maths and English. In spite of the operational problems faced by them, there is a widespread appreciation for their academic and intellectual contributions. Our teachers who feel underestimated, underutilized, and underpaid and couldn't make it on the home turf, find migrating the next best option.

Quite interestingly, our history has recorded the migration of Buddhist teachers during the period of Nalanda and Vikramasila to Tibet and China along with libraries and literatures. It also cites the exchange of learned scholars between Kanchi and Kasi. Today, our country has moved from being a job-seeking economy to one that is being driven by demand in developed nations for services and migrant workers.

Role of Consultancy in Recruitment of Teachers

Ma foi Management Consultancy started recruiting teachers in 2002 for schools in Dubai and Britain, where there is rising demand for Indian teachers. The hiring authorities pay consultancy fees and bear the airfare and other expenses of teachers they recruit. Many more consultancies have come out with official emigration licenses to help the English-speaking teachers fly

on Highly Skilled Migrant Program HSMP.

When an exclusive recruitment drive is planned and designed to help our inland teachers to migrate, any steps put forth to foster improvement of human resources in education sector by the Planning Commission will be futile.

Though the Ministry of HRD has not yet come up openly to stop the overseas recruitment drive for teachers, it can at least slow down the migration by implementing effective management system across the country. Any surplus number of

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teachers, after attaining the goal of HRD, may be allowed to go abroad to serve the global education. Otherwise, the problem shall return to square one.

India is the fourth largest developing Commonwealth supplier of teachers to Britain. Though India is worried about the brain drain of teachers, it is more concerned about providing jobs to an estimated 10 million graduates.

There has always been a shortage of personnel in all sectors. When it is faced by a sector that produces human capital for various sectors of the economy, a swift action is needed on a war-footing to fill the lacuna.

Reforms to Systemize Recruitment, Retention and Improve Quality

The teacher-student ratio is appreciable and India stands at 1:14

with one point up or down with respect to the US, Sweden, Germany, Japan and the UK. Predominantly, employability of manpower depends on a lot of soft skills like patience, communication, computer proficiency, presentation and people management skills, besides academic qualification, domain expertise and experience. The question here is how to make use of their growth for our economy?

Many private institutions have come to offer short-term courses on induction trainings. There goes a saying, 'the art of teaching cannot

be taught'. In spite of qualifying for a BEd, one needs to master the techniques of reaching the students through participation.

The Government and the UGC have to chalk out a plan to capture the vital human resources, targeting the coverage from higher secondary to college level. This span of education of students is essential for decision-making on future course of career.

Some better ways to ensure retention of teachers are making the working atmosphere more acceptable and equivalent to that of a corporate, elevating the social status with good pay, providing ways for continuous learning and knowledge enrichment, non-traditional and informal ways of teaching methods, guest lectures,

Internet and broadband access, online tutoring, etc. When invitees cannot make it up, teleconferencing facility can be provided. This mode of reaching the masses has already been followed by Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Jawaharlal Nehru University and many others, since the 1980s.

International or Inter-state Teachers Exchange programs could be mooted to give an online experience of cross-cultural adjustments, new system of education, syllabus content, examination pattern, interpersonal approach, psychology, counseling, management, combinational methods of teaching, evaluation procedures, lateral enrolment in higher education program for teachers, etc.

Teachers, as a whole, should be gathered 'grade wise' under the general stream in every state. The compensation and benefits have to match the government-prescribed norms for private schools also. When private institutions are unable to cope with the pre-determined norms, highly skilled teachers either divert themselves or leave the job. If private institutions do not reach up to the expectation of the norms, licenses need not be sanctioned. Thus, the pilfering of human resources can be stopped. It is time that the government implemented the Minimum Wages Act and systemized the career of the underpaid teaching faculty.

'Given our population, we need to double the number of teaching structure (faculty) and this is not

possible with the public sector alone. We need the private sector also to pitch in equally', said Planning Commission Chairman MS Ahluwalia.

On par with corporate organizations, the Board of Education should evolve a time-tested method to redress grievances, look into dissatisfaction, improve performance appraisal and draw successful career plans. Political pressure and favoritism should be strictly kept at bay. Any unlawful and unjustified punishments in the form of transfers should be stopped forthwith/revoked.

Bifurcation of HRM System and Mass Drive

Every taluk, district, and metro has to formulate 'Action Groups' under the supervision of an Educational Director, who may have all data relevant to his zone and sub-zone, at the click of a button. Number of schools at all levels, applications waiting for new sanction, each school strength, number of teachers, non-teaching staff, pay structure, info of retirees, memos, transfers, vacancies, exchange programs, standard of quality, etc., have to be streamlined. The management of resources module-wise, simplifies the task of the director and the focus of supervision is intensified with precision.

At the micro level, Sub-Directorates will control primary and secondary boards of school administration in their respective zones and, in turn, will be controlled by the Central/State Directorate. At present, the Tamil Nadu Teachers

Recruitment Board follows a single-window counseling to help it secure the desired choice of posting within the available vacancy. It has been noticed in the Gujarat Board that fake certificates have snooped in along with the applications and a large chunk of time is being consumed in the verification of the job applications.

Recently, the Government of AP has taken a decision to appoint teachers on a mass scale to fill the vacancies in the Government-aided schools of the state. As a result of this, more than 50,000 teachers will be appointed in 76,213 schools.

To strengthen this process of new governance and management system, many non-teaching support services personnel have to be proportionately recruited at sub-zone level. Some senior teachers may be considered for the training faculty positions on deputation, optional career or contract basis, with the staff college. This new era of multi-employment helps to rejuvenate and strengthen the network and helps to ease the operations of the central workload pressure from several channels hitherto happening.

As population is progressing, multiple routes are required to manage human resources with time and its optimum utilization to achieve the 'win-win' situation. Henceforth, the teaching profession will be a dignified and more-sought-after 'white collar job' in the wear future. ▶◀

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