

CHAPTER IV

THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND LAND

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CHAPTER IV

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I do not want to interfere much with the Education Code and Rules. But at this stage we must forget the rules and regulations. You should not think whether there is a school building or not; as the village children are hungry, worried, fallen and like vagabonds.*

Jawaharlal Nehru

The above sentence were uttered by our beloved ex. Prime Minister, showing his anxiety to give more importance to education and not to the school buildings, which were merely the places where boys and girls and the teachers gather to use the special equipment provided for imparting knowledge to the children. They must be worthy of this purpose and so the Handbook for Teachers of Basic Schools says:

For the eight-grade Basic School, there should be atleast five classrooms. The remaining three classes can meet in the open, either under the shade of trees or, still better, in the sun, if weather permits.... It is desirable to provide hostels for the students and residential quarters for teachers.... What is of still greater value is the sense of 'ownness' that the members of the school community inevitably feel towards the school building erected by themselves.... Repairs to the school buildings should also be collectively carried out in the same way.... money comes from the authorities concerned, the labour should come from the school community.¹

But the Special Committee said:

Wherever we visted we have found the building arrangements very inadequate.... The Department will have to look into these problems without further delay.²

* Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, Speech Inaugurating the Rural University at Sevagram on 1st November, 1952, Sevagram, Hindustan Talimi Sangh. P.4.

¹ Handbook for Teachers of Basic Schools, New Delhi: Ministry of Education, Government of India, 1950. Pp. 34 & 35.

² Special Committee for Basic Education, Op.Cit. P.97.

The Government had been doing its best to improve the situation. Shri P.Rangareddy, the then Minister for Planning and Information, speaking to press men on 24th May 1960 said that each one of the 235 Panchayat Samithis in the state had been given a special grant of Rs.7,500 to be spent for the construction of elementary school buildings supplemented by local contributions upto not less than one third of the total cost of each work.³

Consequent to this policy it was true that in some Zilla Parishad areas like Sreekakulam lakhs of rupees were contributed, and many acres of land donated by people for starting schools. With the introduction of the universal free and compulsory primary education scheme, the number of elementary schools had also increased with the enrolment. So, the Zilla Parishads and the Panchayat Samithis were faced with the problem of providing buildings for the schools. The elementary schools were mostly located in private rented buildings in villages. The impact of the innumerable community development programmes undertaken by the Zilla Parishad and the Panchayat Samithis had been telling seriously on the financial position of these organisations, so much so that the building programme had necessarily been slowed down. The Government only should take the initiative and consider this question.⁴ More or less the same position was stated in a study conducted during 1956-57:

From the reports of the Education Department it is clear that the problem of accommodation and land facilities is very acute. Most of the schools are housed in rented buildings and the Government is spending a lot of money on rent. In some villages, the schools are run on the varandhas of some rich man's house or in the village 'Chavidis'. This problem is less acute in the cities, when compared with the villages. No Basic school has a hostel.

³The Deccan Chronicle. May 24, 1960.

⁴The Deccan Chronicle. April 10, 1963.

Though some additions and alterations were effected in a few buildings, the methods adopted were praiseworthy, as the villagers rendered voluntary service by contributing their labour and money.

The land for play ground is just sufficient.

In a recent study conducted by the State Institute of Education, Hyderabad it was revealed that urban schools were better than the village schools in respect of separate room for each class (rural 36%, urban 70%) proper flooring for the class rooms (rural 59%, urban 89%) pucca buildings (rural 63%, urban 91%) and furniture (rural 70%, urban 77%). In the case of sanitary conditions (rural 27%, urban 24%) and garden space (rural 95%, urban 8%) the rural schools were leading. The special extra features in the urban schools noticed were (1). Information Boards (32%) (2). Provision for efficient craft work (51%) (3). Drinking water arrangements (5%)⁶. Even though these studies revealed that the situation in the urban areas was brighter than in the rural areas, it should not be misunderstood that the condition of the rural school buildings was very satisfactory. The Deccan Chronicle editorially commented:

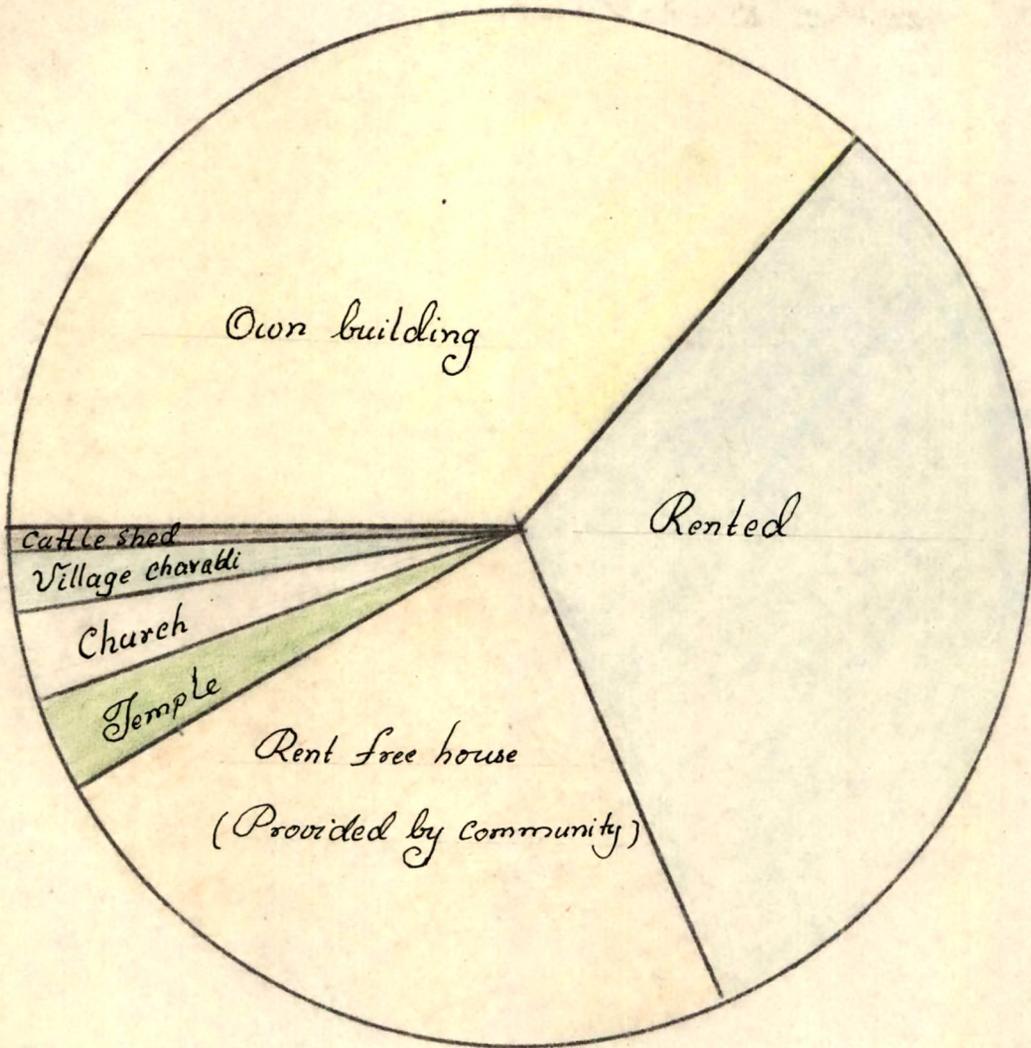
It is said that people in rural areas are not quite enthusiastic about sending their children to school as in some places classes are conducted under trees and roofless dilapidated structures..... authorities should compel the Panchayats to build school houses and provide habitable quarters to the teachers..... They (education sub-committees of Zilla Parishads) prepare a consolidated budget for buildings, equipment, teachers quarters and salaries.... there should arise no difficulty for the Gram Panchayats or Samithis to build school houses and teachers quarters. Teachers admit that they can not live in villages under the existing circumstances.⁷

⁵Subba Rao, C.S. Basic Education in Practice.
Secunderabad, Ajanta Publications, 1958. P.150.

⁶Publication No.40. A Study of the Physical Facilities in a Few Rural and Urban Primary Schools:Hyderabad,
State Institute of Education, 1965. P.7.

⁷The Deccan Chronicle. 13th November 1964.

Nature of the Basic School Buildings in Andhra Pradesh.



rent out the building for housing the school, in case a suitable building was available. Probably the duty before the teacher and the educational administrator should be rouse public interest and persuade the Government to allocate more funds for the school building programme.

The above data were richly corroborated with the evidence from the Educational officers. A majority of them (55%) stated that public had not realised the importance of education and so they did not bother to give good buildings to schools. The rich people did not give contributions while the poor people can not some times due to failure of crops, which depend on rains. A good number of them (32%) said that the situation of the buildings and land was very discouraging and atleast 15 sq. feet of covered space and fifty cents of garden space were required urgently. 24 per cent of Educational Officers stated that the Government or the Managements were unable to do anything, even though sometimes they paid enough attention. Mere exhortations do not result in action. Red tapism and useless correspondence were reasons for delay in action. But only 3 per cent inspectors regretted that the buildings constructed under the Community Development programme and freely gifted and were not properly utilised by the schools.

TABLE 42
NATURE OF THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Nature of the building	Andhra			Total
	Rayala- seema	Telangana	(%)	
1. Own buildings	38.00	35.2	34.3	36.5
2. Rented buildings	33.3	35.2	27.3	32.1
3. Rent free houses (provided by community)	19.4	14.3	36.4	22.9
4. a) Temple	2.3	5.6	1.5	2.8
b) Church	4.6	1.3	-	2.8
5. Village chavidi	1.6	7.4	-	2.4
6. Cattle sheds	0.8	-	-	0.5

It could be noted from the data of the table 42 that more rent free accomodation was provided for schools in Telangana than in the other two reasons.

TABLE 43
STATUS OF BUILDINGS (1)

Nature of the building	(%)		
	Single teacher School	Plural teacher School	Total
1. Own	4.33	38.84	44.17
2. Rented	3.01	35.82	38.83
3. Rent free	10.84	6.10	17.00

The 1956-57 survey by the present author revealed that in Telangana more schools were in rented houses (36%) than in own buildings (28%) and this position was corroborated with Government records too. But now there was a big change as the own buildings rose in number while the number of the rented houses went down. This time also this change was corroborated with Government records as seen in the tables 42 and 43. This shows that there has been considerable improvement in the community participation and Government effort under Community Development in providing school houses during the past decade. In Telangana 1.33 per cent of schools on village chavidis have disappeared as per evidence from the present study. A good number of schools were running in rent-free houses. No school was run in Mosques while a few (2.8%) were housed in temples or churches. It was pity to find that a few schools were run even in the cattle sheds in the coastal Andhra region of the state.

The following data gathered from the statistics compiled by the Director of Public Instruction, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad give further particulars about the school houses.

TABLE 44
STATUS OF BUILDINGS (2)

Nature of building	(%)		
	Single Teacher Basic schools	Plural Teacher Basic schools	Total
Pucca	6.51	53.45	59.96
Thatched	11.75	28.29	40.04

Slowly even these 40.40 per cent of thatched sheds should disappear and in their place pucca buildings should be constructed.

TABLE 45
NUMBER OF ROOMS IN THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Number of rooms	(%)		
	Single teacher Basic Schools	Plural teacher Basic schools	Total
Five and below	13.11	51.97	65.08
6 to 10	.03	34.22	34.25
10 to 15	-	0.49	0.48
Above 15	-	0.19	0.19

A majority of the school buildings have less than five rooms and a few plural teacher Junior Basic and Senior Basic schools had upto ten rooms. The majority of school buildings could not hold an average of 9 sections and an average of 92 students per school, as revealed from Directors of Public Instruction statistics.

The school buildings should also be situated in an ideal atmosphere and the following table gives an idea of the location of the school buildings in the different regions of Andhra Pradesh.

TABLE 46
LOCATION OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Location	(%)			
	Andhra	Rayalaseema	Telangana	Total
1. Near the garden	67.67	5.55	4.65	41.30
2. In the outskirts	34.58	53.70	41.86	40.30
3. On the main road	9.75	44.44	55.81	21.30
4. Near the fields	9.02	16.67	4.65	10.00
5. In the middle of the town or village	9.02	12.96	2.32	8.26

Three to five per cent of the schools were situated near markets, taverns, weekly fairs, factories, cinema halls. About one per cent of the schools were near burial ground, hospital, and railway station. The people concerned were taking sufficient care to house the schools in buildings, which were either at the outskirts (40.43%) or near the garden (41.30%) away from the din of habitations, which was a welcome factor, even though in the case of students of the schools situated outside there might be some inconvenience in reaching the institutions. A few schools existed on the main road, which might not be safe for the children, and some in the middle of the town or village, which might not be quite ideal. About ten per cent of the schools existed near the fields and it provided opportunity for observation and participation in the agricultural operations, an experience which was considered essential in Basic education. The number of schools situated near disturbing places like markets, factories, etc. was very negligible.

The following schools provide sanitary facilities, according to the figures supplied by the Director of Public Instruction.

TABLE 47
SCHOOLS PROVIDING SANITARY FACILITIES

Particulars	(%)		
	Single teacher Basic Schools	Plural teacher Basic schools	Total
Private aided co-educational schools providing separate sanitary facilities for girls.	3	29	24
Number of boys schools providing separate sanitary facilities for girls.	15	79	67

From the above table it was clear that a few of the private aided schools provide sanitary facilities as per the Grants-in-Aid Code, while a good number of schools admitting girls provided separate sanitary facilities for them. From the following figures collected by the investigator the different types of sanitary facilities available could be known.

TABLE 48
TYPES OF SANITARY FACILITIES AVAILABLE

Type of sanitary facilities available.	(%)			
	Andhra	Rayalaseema	Telangana	Total
No sanitary fittings available	17.26	33.50	4.65	18.69
1. Ordinary	28.57	24.07	46.05	30.86
2. Compost	26.05	24.07	44.65	18.69
3. Flush	13.08	1.85	-	17.83
4. Cement	15.04	12.96	4.65	12.60
5. Septic tank	-	3.55	-	1.23

Ordinary sanitary fittings were in use in a majority of the schools, where as compost latrines and urinals were specially recommended for use in the Basic schools, in which respect Telangana appears to be leading.

AVAILABILITY OF LAND

Sufficient extent of land should be available for a Basic school for organising garden work, agriculture and play. The following figures were supplied by the Director of Public Instruction, Hyderabad:

TABLE 49
SCHOOLS HAVING PLAY GROUND

Extent in acres	(%)		
	Single teacher Basic Schools	Plural teacher Basic schools	Total
Nil	5.66	20.17	25.83
Below 1	13.12	57.29	70.42
1 to 2	0.15	3.11	3.26
2 to 3	-	0.38	0.38
3 to 4	-	0.11	0.11

A majority of 70.42 per cent of the schools had only below one acre of land. Only about 4 per cent of the schools had land for play ground between 1 to 4 acres. The position called for improvement.

Average Land available for various activities in Basic Schools.

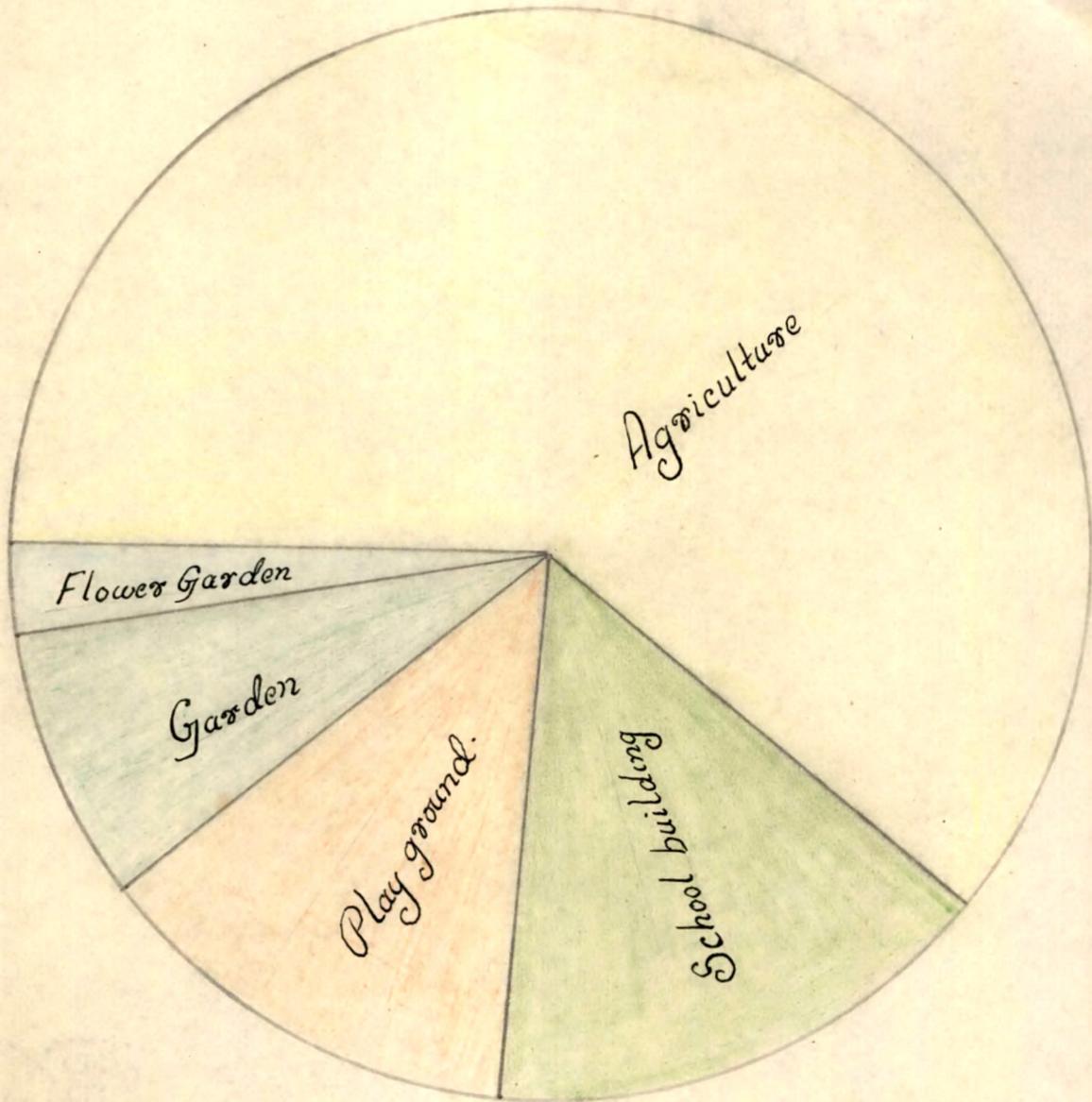


TABLE 50
SCHOOLS HAVING GARDEN

Extent	Single teacher Plural teacher Total		
	Basic schools	Basic schools	(%)
No garden available	3.80	14.01	17.81
Below 10 cents	13.44	60.62	74.06
10 cents to 1 acre	0.94	6.63	7.57
Above 1 acre	0.08	0.49	0.56

While the figures quoted in tables 48 and 49 were supplied by the Director of Public Instruction the following were the data obtained through questionnaire:

TABLE 51
AVERAGE LAND AVAILABLE FOR VARIOUS
ACTIVITIES IN BASIC SCHOOL

Purpose	Average land available	
	Acres	Sq.yards
School building	0-1246	
Play ground	0-1006	
Agriculture	1-0010	
Gardening	0-666	
Flower garden	0-209	

From the above tables it could be read that the Basic schools did not possess more than one acre of land for purposes of play ground, vegetable garden or flower garden, etc. and only a few schools have space for agriculture a little over an acre.

Agriculture and gardening were supposed to be the most important activities of a rural Basic school and it could be seen from the above data that necessary facilities for their practice were not provided. As things stand like this it might not be very fruitful to judge these activities without taking these serious limitations into consideration.

Apart from the availability of land for play, garden and agriculture, accommodation was required for a number of other activities in Basic schools. The change of system warranted the space in the school buildings to be put to different use hereafter. The standard plans of buildings specially prepared for Basic schools should make suitable provision for various activities - social gatherings, cultural programmes, exhibitions, students assembly etc. A multipurpose hall might serve this purpose. Since the present conditions were inadequate the Special Committee urged the Government to look into these problems without further delay.⁹ The following tables give an idea of the present conditions:

TABLE 52
FACILITIES FOR CONDUCTING BASIC EDUCATION
PROGRAMMES (%)

Purpose	Availability of		
	Separate Space	Sufficient Space	Satisfactory Ventilation
1. Class room teaching	74.3	62.0	100.00
2. Basic crafts	37.4	44.2	60.30
3. Agriculture	29.0	25.1	100.00
4. Fine Arts	9.5	11.3	13.40
5. Cultural activities	32.4	32.4	34.60
6. Store room	34.6	28.5	29.60
7. Assembly	45.2	59.2	65.30
8. Reading room	7.8	17.2	22.90
9. Library	25.7	24.6	27.90
10. Exhibition	13.4	16.7	30.60
11. Museum	11.2	10.1	14.00
12. Hostel	10.6	10.6	12.40

⁹ Report of the Special Committee for Basic Education, Andhra Pradesh: 1961. Op.Cit. P.97.

The above table showing the facilities of separate and sufficient space with satisfactory ventilation might also serve as an index of the extent of operation of these activities in the Basic schools, as their progress depended, upon the actual facilities provided. It appears that the facilities for class room teaching were satisfactory when compared to other items. The facilities for Basic crafts and agriculture need improvement, while the facilities for fine arts and reading(room) were very unsatisfactory.

Hostel facilities were made available for 10.6 per cent of the schools. The statistics collected from the Director of Public Instruction, Hyderabad showed that the hostel facilities were provided mostly for the scheduled castes and tribes and backward class children. More hostels (59.38%) were provided for scheduled castes in Senior Basic schools (53.13%) and a total of 2,837 students of all classes were reported to be getting this benefit. No hostels were attached to single teacher schools, while 6.25 per cent of the Junior Basic schools enjoy this benefit provision of hostels for children of scheduled and backward classes was part of the special programmes of the Government to aid the weaker sections of the community in order to increase the enrolment of their children. Though provision of hostels for Basic schools was not part of Basic education programme, it helped in fostering the spirit of community life and attempts should be made to provide hostels for the children of other communities also purely for the educational and socialisation value involved in it.

ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Since a good number of the school buildings were originally intended for residential purposes (32 to 38 per cent) and many others, though own were acquired to the school the need to ask whether any additions or alterations were made after conversion of the school into Basic pattern had arisen.

Seventy five schools (Andhra 41, Rayalaseema 19 and Telangana 15) reported some additions and alterations. The most important point would be to know how such changes could be effected, as the agreement of the house owner or the trust should be obtained and necessary funds had to be raised for this purpose. Government would not come forward to spend money on private buildings. The following techniques were reported to have been employed:

TABLE 53

AGENCIES RESPONSIBLE FOR ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS
EFFECTED IN THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS AFTER THEIR CONVERSION

Source of help	(%)			
	Andhra	Rayala- seema	Telang- ana	Total
1. State funds.	21.05	31.48	30.23	25.22
2. Community participation				
a). Donations.	40.60	11.11	11.63	28.26
b). Offer of building material.	48.12	7.41	13.95	32.17
c). Shramadan. (Voluntary labour)	8.27	12.96	4.65	8.70
3. School community parti- cipation (Teachers and students)				
a). Collection of donations.	6.77	9.26	4.65	6.96
b). Shramadan.	46.62	16.67	16.28	33.91

It is very interesting to note that the efforts of the students and teachers in effecting the additions or alterations figure supreme, while the community offers building material or in some cases donations. State funds ran fourth in this endeavour and Rayalaseema and Telangana regions seem to have got more funds,

while in Andhra region community participation figures most. Community participation in school improvement is a very welcome trend and the Government should catch up this mood and exploit the same to the maximum.

The Educational Officers reported certain other measures adopted to get suitable buildings for the schools. Some of them (27%) tried to induce philanthropic spirit among the community members through propaganda organised through the Parent-Teacher Associations and individual contacts with elders to get either free accommodation, furniture, land, or contributions for the additions and alterations. A few of them (11%) regretted the unhygienic atmosphere of the huts or chavidis or rented sheds and tried to help erection of some buildings and compound walls for garden or tried to alienate 'Banjars' or 'Porambokes' for construction of buildings. Only nine per cent of the inspectors reported that construction of buildings was going on according to a phased programme by the local bodies under the Community Development programme, utilising the matching grants (50% Government - 50% Local Community).

Eithteen per cent of the Educational Officers said that the Government should make full and liberal grants for the construction of school buildings, without depending on the Community participation. Five per cent of them opined that the Government should delegate powers to the concerned officers to acquire the available good buildings for schools, by paying a nominal compensation, if possible, in places where the community had not participated in providing physical amenities for schooling of its children. Only three per cent Educational Officers said that public should be encouraged to provide land and buildings for the school.

If the Government or the local bodies float a public loan for the construction, just as they do for defence effort all schools could be provided with buildings. The teachers should be given loans against their Provident Fund Account or under House building co-operative credit scheme, for construction

of teachers quarters. Or the Government could construct the quarters along with the school buildings in the aforesaid manner and charge some nominal rent from the teachers to pay off the loan in course of time.

Summary:

The **school buildings** were found to be inadequate and this situation was posing a big problem to the Government. The Zilla Parishads and Panchayat Samithis took up a number of development activities which were telling upon their financial position and so the school building programme was slowed down. In many places land was ~~donated~~ and money was contributed by the people for construction of school buildings. Hence, the number of schools housed in rented buildings was reduced considerably and schools run on village 'chavidis' ^{almost disappeared} during the past decade.

The condition of rural schools was very bad as regards to the building, room space, flooring, and furniture. The reason for not getting suitable school buildings was constructed, unanimously stated by schools and inspectorate to be lack of public enthusiasm for education. A majority of the schools had less than five rooms.

Most of the schools were situated at the outskirts of the villages or near the garden away from the din of habitation. Very few co-educational schools provided separate sanitary facilities for girls. While compost latrines and urinals were recommended for use in Basic schools, they continue to use the traditional type of sanitary fittings. The extent of play ground and garden space available was not sufficient for the schools, as only a few schools possessed land not more than one acre on an average. The space available for class room teaching was satisfactory when compared to the space available for other Basic education activities. Accommodation for pursuing arts and crafts and organising library and reading room was very unsatisfactory. Hostel facilities for students were totally lacking

except in the case of a few students belonging to scheduled castes or tribes.

Since a number of school buildings were originally constructed for residential purposes and the conversion of the school to Basic pattern it was necessary to effect certain additions and alterations. In a number of cases the voluntary labour of the students and the teachers coupled with the voluntary contributions of the local community was responsible for effecting additions and alterations in school buildings. The Government should catch this mood of the community and exploit the same to the full for accelerating the building construction programme.

The government should plan a crash programme for providing suitable and sufficient buildings to the schools and quarters for the teachers working in the same, by floating public loans to tackle this problem on a war footing. The teachers could be granted house loans through accepted channels and the same could be recovered monthly through the pay bills. Or the government could build quarters for them and a nominal rent could be charged.
