

I am concerned about the wastage of time in my school: An action research

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Time wastage at school level affects the learning of students. It has become a major responsibility of the school management to minimise the educational wastage. Definitions on educational wastage indicate late coming of students and teachers, low achievement of students, non-attendance of school children and absenteeism of teachers as indicators of wastage. Accordingly the major component of wastage is time, which is the focus of the study. The objectives are to find facts on the different aspects of the wastage at a school, to find different strategies to minimise the wastage and as a Principal, to prepare plans and implement them as remedial measures to overcome the problem of time wastage; also to reflect on the results focusing on achievements, constraints and problems when implementing an intervention programme. An action research approach was used. Classes from grade 1 to 13 in a school in Puttalam Education Zone were the setting. Interviews were conducted

using three teachers, who come from very remote areas; two teachers who stay near the school; and two other teachers who are permanent residents of the area. Further, maintaining a reflective diary and analysing the school artifacts were used to collect data. Nearly three weeks were taken to find facts about the prevailing situation and two months were taken for the interventions. A duration of another three weeks was required to analyse the results of interventions.

The quantitative results of interventions revealed satisfactorily minimised time wastage at the school level. The indicators of successfulness were the minimised leave taking of the teachers and students' full engagement of school time. Preparing assignments for the leave days minimised the wastage of student time. Self-evaluation of teachers, by way of reporting their work on their leave days to the Principal, developed the teachers' positive attitude. The attitudinal changes of teachers, developing the researcher's managerial competence as the Principal and school practices of teachers, dispensing with stress of teachers as well as students were the qualitative results of interventions. The final conclusion can be summarised as follows: "Correctly directed management processes and co-operative attempts of teachers are the only way of minimising the time wastage"

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