

**STUDY OF THE WORKING OF WELFARE HOSTELS  
IN DADRA AND NAGAR HAVELI - 1982**

1. **The Study**

The Welfare Hostel Scheme of the Government of India aims at improving the socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Tribes (S.Ts.), Scheduled Castes (SCs) and the economically backward communities living in tribal concentration areas of the country by promoting literacy and education among them. Under the Scheme, the Administration of the Union Territory (U.T.) of Dadra and Nagar Haveli set up a welfare hostel at Silvassa in 1961. By 1980-81, the Union Territory had 11 welfare hostels- 9 hostels run by the U.T. Administration (henceforth referred to as 'government-run-hostels') and the remaining two set up by the Missionaries Society of Saint Francis Xavier (henceforth referred to as 'Society-run-hostels'). The government-run-hostels were provided with Central assistance in the form of grants-in-aid in accordance with the norm of expenditure per inmate and the total sanctioned strength of inmates. The inmates, both of the government-run-and Society-run hostels, were given free lodging and boarding facilities.

The norm for meeting the expenditure of lodging and boarding was initially fixed at Rs.20 per inmate per month in 1961. The amount was subsequently raised to Rs.25 in 1965 and again to Rs.40 in 1968. Thereafter, without revising the per-head norms, the grant-in-aid for the govt.-run-hostels was hiked in 1977-78 and 1978-79 to meet the mounting cost of facilities provided. However, since 1968-69 the amount of grant had persistently been falling short of the expenditure on the running of the hostels. In view of the pressing request of the U.T. Administration to revise the existing norms of expenditure from Rs.40 to Rs.60 per head per month and to provide grant-in-aid to the tune of Rs.5.40 lakh for 1980-81 as against the existing grant of Rs.2.15 lakh, the Ministry of Home Affairs requested the Programme Evaluation Organisation (PEO) to evaluate the working of these hostels and inter-alia, to suggest the scale of required assistance. Accordingly, the Programme Evaluation Organisation conducted an evaluation study of these hostels and published its report in 1982.

## 2. Objectives

The main objectives of the study were to examine;

- i) The socio-economic impact of the welfare hostels;
- ii) Whether there is a continuous need for these hostels and thereby to incur expenditure on the scale now being incurred;
- iii) Whether the present pattern of assistance should continue, or it should be modified; and
- iv) The scale of assistance necessary.

Beside these main objectives, the study, inter-alia, also looked into the following aspects;

- i) In case the existing hostels are required to be continued on a long-term basis, whether the number of inmates can be increased without involving any organisational difficulties;
- ii) Whether the running of these hostels can be on contributory basis;
- iii) Whether voluntary organisations can be encouraged to set up welfare hostels with grant-in-aid; and
- iv) Codification of the details of schemes of different hostels which are at present spread over the different orders of the Union Territory Administration/Central Government.

## 3. Sample Size/Criteria for Selection of Sample

The sampling design covered the selection of (a) official respondents, (b) the beneficiaries, i.e. present inmates, ex-inmates and their parents/guardians and (c) the control group, i.e. the non-beneficiaries.

The selected official respondents included the Assistant Director of Education, the official in charge of the administration of the Welfare hostels run by the Union Territory Administration and the Superintendents of all the 11 hostels. Among the beneficiaries, 6 present inmates from each of the 11 hostels were selected from the final year class inmates by simple random method. For choosing among beneficiary ex-inmates, 5 hostels, i.e. 4 government run hostels and one society run hostel, were selected through stratified sampling from among those which had completed 10 years of existence. From each of the 5 hostels, 6 beneficiary ex-inmates were selected from those who had passed out in the years, 1979-80, 1978-79, and 1977-78, at the rate of 2 ex-inmates from each year. Shortfall in the number from any hostel was compensated by substituting the ex-inmates selected from another hostel. The parents/guardians of all the selected beneficiary present and ex-inmates were chosen for canvassing. Finally, 20 applicants who had not got admission to the hostels were selected as 'control' through simple random method.

The final sample consisted of the Assistant Director of Education, 11 hostel Superintendents, 66 beneficiary present inmates, 30 beneficiary ex-inmates, 96 parents/guardians and 20 non-beneficiary control group children.

#### **4. Reference Period**

Information obtained regarding the nature of facilities provided in the hostels and family size, occupation, income, holding size, etc. of the beneficiary families was with reference to the year 1980-81. Information regarding the number of inmates, inmates detained and dropped out, etc. related to the period, 1976-77 to 1980-81.

#### **5. Main Findings**

1. Only those Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students who were 9 years or above and belonging to parents with an annual income below Rs.1200/- were eligible for admission to the welfare hostels; that too, subject to the non-availability of alternative educational facilities, sanctioned strength of the hostel and a distance of more than 5 kms. between their residence and the hostel. The distance criteria was violated in many cases. Again, the fruits of the hostel facilities were mostly cornered by the relatively well-off section of the tribals. Out of 66 beneficiary present inmates studied, only 17 were from families with income below Rs.2400/- per annum whereas 16 were from families with income above Rs.6000/- per annum.

2. The inmates of the government-run-hostels were required to help the cook in the preparation of meals, clean the utensils, fetch water from wells and sweep their rooms. In the society-run hostels, assistant cooks were employed. The inmates were not allowed to study late in the night i.e. beyond 21.45 hours.

3. Whereas the percentage of inmates detained in the government-run-hostels was more than double of those detained in the society-run-hostels, drop-outs were three times lower in the case of the former than in the case of the latter. The proportion of inmates detained tended to be high in the final year of the primary, middle and high school classes in both the cases.

4. As regards accommodation, the extent of space provided per inmate ranged from 21 to 23 square feet. However, the average number of 141 inmates per room in the society-run-hostels was too high to facilitate their studies. No cots were provided to the inmates, except in two government-run-hostels. The items of bedding provided to the inmates included one durrie, one blanket and one bedsheet. These items were not only inadequate, but were old and tattered as well. Pigeon-holes for keeping personal belongings were provided only in 8 hostels (6 govt-run-hostels and 2 society-run-hostels). The lighting arrangements and the ceiling fans provided to the inmates were inadequate.

5. The number of bathrooms was inadequate, especially in the society-run-hostels. All the welfare hostels, except one government-run-hostel, had lavatories. Some had safety tank system and one had flush system. However, only in 2 out of 11 hostels studied, the lavatories were operational. In none of the hostels urinals were provided and none had the provision of regular sweepers. Signs of non-use of lavatories were conspicuous. Some of the lavatories did not have doors, water taps and lighting arrangements. The prescribed toiletry items, i.e. towel, hair oil and toilet and washing soaps were not made available in any of the hostels studied.

6. Lunch and dinner were the two major meals served free of charge in all welfare hostels. Breakfast was served only in the 2 society-run-hostels. Superintendents of 7 government-run-hostels reported that the inmates were served 'mid-day meals' in their schools. Food served was short of quality, quantity and variety. In majority of the hostels, milk, fruits, eggs and non-vegeterian dishes were not served. Sweet-dish was served once a month. Not all inmates were provided with a set of personal utensils for which they were entitled under the welfare hostel scheme.

7. Inmates were given free medical aid as and when required. None of the hostels had a doctor attached to it. The society-run hostels had dispensaries of their own. The government-run hostels did not have any first aid facilities. Annual medical check-up was carried out only in a few hostels.

8. Majority of the hostels did not have proper dining rooms for inmates nor did they have any common room for indoor games, nor library. Majority of them had a reading room each.

9. In the schools, uniforms, books and notebooks were generally provided free of cost. However, different norms and frequency of supply of these facilities were observed by different schools. Superintendents of only three government-run hostels reported that educational trips for the hostel inmates were organised by the school authorities.

10. Though the hostel Superintendents were the teachers of the schools to which the hostels were attached, they did not have any administrative linkage with the Headmasters of the respective schools. The Superintendents of the government-run hostels were directly answerable to the Assistant Director of Education while their counterparts in the society-run hostels were answerable to the Regional Supervisor of the Society.

11. The supply of items like cereals, pulses, spices, edible oils, firewood, hair oil, soap, etc. was made to the government-run-hostels by the Education Department of the union territory while the same was done by the Missionaries society in the case of society-run hostels. The Superintendents of the Government-run-hostels were empowered to purchase their prescribed requirements of vegetables at the rate of 20 paise per inmate per week. Since they were not given any contingency fund, they faced difficulty in buying vegetables from the open market at prescribed rates. The 20 paise allowance per inmate per week was considered to be very inadequate. The replacement of items in the government-run-hostels was done through the Education Department while the Society undertook this responsibility in case of hostels run by it.

12. Over the years, the gap between expenditure incurred and the quantum of grant-in-aid received by the U.T. Administration had been widening. The total number of inmates studying in the govt-run- hostels was 555 in

1980-81. With the expected rate of growth of 6 per cent per annum in the intake of inmates, the above-said gap was likely to widen. The actual number of inmates in the hostel and its rate of growth should be kept in view for working out the quantum of grant-in-aid in future.

13. During the two decades 1961-81, there was 180.59% increase in the rate of overall literacy and 313.58% rise in female literacy in the Union Territory. The corresponding all-India figures were 50.58% and 92.9% respectively. This, along with the improvement in the ranking of Dadra and Nagar Haveli in literacy levels among the States and U.Ts. in India, substantiated the efficacy of the welfare hostels under study. In the spread of literacy among the scheduled tribe population of the territory, these hostels played a loudable role.

14. Almost all the beneficiary guardians acknowledged the utility of these hostels in making the career of their wards and in increasing their family income. 47% of the beneficiary ex-inmates canvassed were engaged in skilled employment.

15. The beneficiary present inmates and ex-inmates were highly mobile in seeking education or employment. This was largely due to the free hostel facility that they could avail.

16. Though the admission to the hostels had created in the inmates a desire for and an appreciation of education, the nature of education imparted to them in the attached schools failed to make them feel its utility in their career building.

17. Majority of the ex-inmates and their guardians and the guardians of present inmates did not favour voluntary contribution in any form.

18. Voluntary organisations played an important role in the dissemination of education in the Union Territory. It was, however, observed that the Missionaries Society did not observe the desirable norms with regard to the prescribed criteria for admission etc.

## 6. Major Suggestions

1. The applications for admission to the welfare hostels should be properly scrutinised, the criteria for admission should be specified and the applicant should be properly intimated of the result. Again, the income criterion for admission should be with reference to the family income instead of guardian's income. Submission of income certificate should be made compulsory.

2. All the welfare hostels should admit inmates from fifth class onwards. To this end, all the existing primary schools in the U.T. should be allowed to run classes for 4th class as well.

3. One additional cook should be employed in a hostel with a sanctioned strength of more than 40 inmates. The inmates who wish to study late in the night should be allowed to do so in a common room.

4. To counter the existing high rate of detainment of inmates in higher classes, weak students should be given extra coaching from the junior classes itself.

5. Regarding the hostel facilities, the suggestions mooted include fixing an upper limit to the number of inmates to be housed per dormitory; providing for safes in the form of pigeon holes wherever they are not available; providing bathrooms, lavatories and urinals in accordance with the number of inmates in the hostel and keeping them functional with doors, bolts, latches, buckets, taps and running water; installing tubelights in large occupancy rooms with their number in proportion to the size of the rooms; providing for timely replacement of fans, bulbs and tubes; arranging for adequate and regular supply, replacement and cleaning of bedding; ensuring adequacy and uniform norms in the provision of toiletry items; and assuring the facilities of a common room, a reading room and a playground in each hostel.

6. A doctor from the local Primary Health Centre or Medical Sub-centre may be required to visit each hostel once a day. A first-aid box should be kept in each hostel. The annual medical check-up should be made compulsory and be performed at the beginning of the academic term.

7. Norms regarding provision as well as replacement of existing items of bedding should be fixed.

8. Regarding facilities provided in the schools, it is suggested that the norms for the supply of clothing to the hostel inmates should be clarified and that the responsibility for the supply of uniforms, books and notebooks and for organising educational trips should clearly be defined.

9. A full-time superintendent should be appointed in each hostel. A contingency fund should be placed at his disposal with which he can make prompt payments for vegetables brought to the hostel and meet contingencies. An administrative liaison between the Society-run hostels and the Education Department of the U.T. should be built up. Again, the official position with regard to the provision for the writing-off of the spoiled items in the hostel stores should be clarified.

10. There is an urgent need for an upward revision of the per head expenditure norm of Rs.40/- to Rs.60/- per month with a provision for some formula for revision of this norm based on the behaviour of the Wholesale Price Index. The grants-in-aid should take into account not only the number of inmates admitted to the hostels but the likely increase in their number also. If the grants-in-aid is to continue on some expenditure norm, then the Central Government should take cognizance of the expenditure incurred by the U.T. Administration on items prescribed by it for running welfare hostels.

11. Instead of opening new hostels, the existing hostels may be provided with extra rooms for accomodating more inmates. Also, wherever a school is upgraded, the hostel attached to it should also be upgraded to admit senior class students as inmates.

12. The welfare hostel facility may be reserved for children upto 7th class only. For children seeking admission to 8th class and above, the Central Government may consider giving them suitable stipend.

13. The beneficiary ex-inmates suggested that the education should be vocation-based and employment-linked and that arrangements for guidance in career planning and for post-welfare hostel technical training be made.

14. The U.T. Administration should activise its employment cell, arrange for registering the names of all inmates coming out of the hostels and ensure that this cell functions as a career guidance cell also. It should start at least one polytechnic in which priority in admission should be given to the children coming out of



the welfare hostels. The possibilities of providing intensive teaching of crafts and agro-based activities should also be examined.

15. Voluntary organisations should be encouraged in the field of education. However, the rules and regulations applicable to the government-run hostels should equally be applicable to their hostels also.

16. The U.T. Administration should undertake the codification of different welfare hostel schemes into a single scheme and approach the Ministry of Home Affairs for the approval of the same.