

Analysis of Work and Employment Conditions of Contractual teachers in India

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Abstract

The employment and working conditions of teachers is the core of any search for quality education. The United Nations Millennium Development Goals, which aim to achieve universalisation of elementary education, has led to expansion of large scale low quality primary schools in India. Consequently, the contractual teachers were used as an approach to effectively expand access to education especially in rural and remote areas where qualified teachers were reluctant to be posted. Subsequently, appointment of teachers on a fixed short-tenure on lower salary with no allowances therefore became a major cost-saving tool for the government. However, there are significant unidentified costs such as the influence on students' performance; inspection of schools; the introduction of a syllabus and curriculum which limits the policies being cost effective, etc. There has also been a controversial debate that government expenditure on teachers' incentives, training and other capacity building measures has been decreasing. The study shows that the problem of educated unemployment is linked to the appointment of contractual teachers in primary schools in Delhi. With the help of data collected from Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) schools in Delhi, the paper discusses the employment conditions and recruitment policies of contractual teachers in Delhi government schools. Findings suggest that contractual teachers are young and more qualified than permanent teachers, but still get a meagre salary with no other incentives to keep them motivated.

Key Words: Contract Teachers; Employment; MCD Schools; Regular Teachers; Incentive

Introduction

The issue of teachers' employment and working conditions is central to any investigation of the quality of schooling. Previous work indisputably confirms that contractual work in teaching has become ever more insecure and unstable. This mounting lack of security is the outcome of policy developments in the 1990s with prevailing consequences common to many Indian contexts, namely District Primary Education Program (DPEP) and the immense growth in school enrolments driven by international action to achieve education for all (EFA). India faced a two-fold problem involving not just a shortage of teachers, given that the country was expected to create new jobs, but also limited financial support. The government's resources transfer through schemes such as DPEP in the beginning of 1990 and its following extension through the "Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan" (SSA) (the year 2000 onwards) stimulated the scheme of employing teachers on contractual basis. Many states in India thus introduced policies to lower their labour costs while at once creating new and often governmentally decentralised teacher categories ("contract", "guest" and "para" teacher, etc.), and avoiding agreements with the international recommendations on work in this sector (United Nations Millennium Development Goals¹). By the start of the 1990s, numerous states in India started recruiting contract teachers to maintain agreeable "Student-Teacher Ratios" in schools, abolish single-teacher schools and to minimise the cost of basic education. Therefore, the justification for provision of contract teachers was to accomplish three key equity and efficiency goals by affordable means: expanding access to schooling in unserved communities; removing single-teacher schools and dismissing multi-grade teaching; and reducing high pupil-teacher ratios. The contract teacher plan originated in India with the "Shiksha Karmi Project" in Rajasthan. The popular reason was that the teachers in urban regions were reluctant to relocate to distant localities. These thoughts inspired 'Para Teacher' arrangements such as 'Vidhya Sahayak' in Gujarat; 'Guruji' in Madhya Pradesh; 'Shikshan Sewak' in Maharashtra and many others (Pandey, S. 2006).

¹ The appreciation of the exercise of employment of diverse types of teachers in schools started by the recommendations of International Labour Organization (1966) and UNESCO on the Status of Teachers. The recommendation stated: "In developing countries, where supply considerations may necessitate short-term intensive emergency preparation programmes for teachers, a fully professional, extensive programme should be available in order to produce corps of professionally prepared teachers competent to guide and direct the educational enterprise" (ILO and UNESCO, 1966, Art. 142).

There are more than half a million teachers presently working on contractual basis in government schools in Indian states (Flash Statistics, DISE 2015-16). These new teachers are referred to in most cases as “contract teachers”, as their contract only lasts for a limited period of time and is often renewed. They are often disposed to unstable conditions and in many states, formal incentives are non-existent or counterproductive, and teachers may sometimes wait for months before being paid. For this reason, the most qualified or experienced teachers, particularly in developed Indian states, accept posts in other sectors that offer more attractive working conditions. This unfavourable situation as regards wages may provoke some teachers to engage in ineffectual practices. Over and above the reduced security of teachers from the standpoint of earnings, their profession also has to cope with disadvantageous teaching conditions. In addition, teachers do not always have the tools needed in their applied activity and have to manage with the lack of teaching aids or obsolete content. Providing dissimilar payments to different types of teachers helped countries, especially India, to hire relatively larger number of teachers with lower resources.

Literature Review

In estimating the employment and service conditions of contract teachers in India, it is important to analyse the factors such as remuneration and work environment, teacher training and their qualification, motivation level in the classroom, issue of absenteeism and teacher's effort, learning outcomes, etc. In their study, Kingdon & Rao (2010) observed that the qualification requirements for contract teachers in Gujarat and Maharashtra are the same as for regular teachers. Atherton & Kingdon (2010) found that contract teachers in Uttar Pradesh are more qualified than regular teachers. Regional differences also have an impact on the working conditions of teachers. The profession faces greater challenges in rural communities, especially as regards the deployment of teachers, their staffing levels, absenteeism and working hours, and educational follow-up (Kingdon & Rao, 2010). Finally, it is important to consider the issue of motivation. A lack of career prospects has an adverse effect on their job satisfaction. Supportive environment, societal respect and the ability of teachers to make themselves heard at the national level may be just as important (Kingdon et al 2013).

On the contrary, studies around the states revealed that in the long term, employing teachers on short tenure was in reality more expensive. For instance, a differential payment system can have a wider influence on the quality of teaching and the teaching profession itself (Govinda & Josephine, 2004). They frequently discourage teachers and decrease their commitment to continue with their organisation. As a result of this situation, there is a fall in the quality of teaching in government schools, which is neither measured nor monitored by the government. Non-appearance or absenteeism can be a direct result of lower payment to contract teachers, because teachers often want to enhance their salary by working elsewhere. However, Kremer et al (2005) discuss teacher non-attendance rates in government schools and conclude that higher compensation for regular teachers may not be linked with lower absenteeism because teachers face no risk of being fired for absenteeism. Muralidharan & Sundararaman (2010) found in their study that the absenteeism rate for contract teachers was 16%, as compared to 27% for permanent teachers. Comparable results were found by Pandey & Raj Rani (2003) through their observation of contract teachers in Uttar Pradesh which showed that they were punctual and honest in their work. Atherton & Kingdon (2010) found that the absenteeism rates of contract teachers were roughly half that of regular teachers in UP, but were a bit higher in Bihar. This is attributed to lack of responsibility arising from the fact that contract teachers in Bihar are appointed for relatively longer tenures. In one non-experimental study, Goyal & Pandey (2009) found, with evidence from two Indian states (Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh), that teachers' performance in terms of both teacher attendance and teaching efforts were high for contract teachers in both the states. Also, Atherton & Kingdon (2010) provided evidence in favour of contract teachers' efficiency after analysing School TELLS survey data for two Indian states, namely, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. This study further explained that the difference is due to the fact that contract teachers in Bihar are appointed for long tenures and do not face annually renewable contracts.

Muralidharan & Sundararaman (2010) provided experimental evidence of the impact of adding a contract teacher to 100 schools in the state of Andhra Pradesh over and above the usual allocation of teachers. At the end of two years, it was observed that students in these schools performed significantly better than other schools. The study also pointed out using non-experimental evidence that contract teachers perform just as well as regular teachers at comparatively lower salaries. This result was proven with and without school fixed effects and also with pupil fixed effect. However, in Muralidharan & Sundararaman's paper, pure contract teacher effect was not evident, as was pointed out by Atherton & Kingdon (2010). Therefore, in their study, using School TELLS data, Atherton & Kingdon make a clear distinction between the two kinds of effects and find that contract teacher effect is not a class-size effect, that is, the effectiveness is not just because of smaller class sizes facilitated by use of contract teachers. On the contrary, Pandey & Raj Rani (2003) in their survey of Uttar Pradesh, found that the classroom techniques used by contract teachers were largely routine activity and ineffective. This study credited the poor quality of contract teachers on lower academic qualifications and inadequate training, rather than a lack of motivation on

part of these teachers. Govinda & Josephine (2004) found that the contract teachers in Uttar Pradesh were responsible for opening the school every day and closing it at the end of the school day and also cleaning and maintaining the school premises.

All these aspects influence the efficiency of teachers and children's achievements and therefore, affect the teaching profession as a whole (Chaudhury et al., 2006). Duthilleul (2005) argues that being regionally employed, contract teachers can be perceived to build a good relationship and better responsibility amongst the community members, parents and the school (Duthilleul, 2004; Govinda, 2004). Contrary to the World Bank's results, other studies (Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2009; Pandey, 2006) suggested that the difference in types of teachers in schools have an impact on students' learning and the school's performance. Confirming that teachers are close to the community, studies found that contract teachers who are locally appointed have poor association with parents and Parents-Teachers' Association than the regular teachers. This could be due to a greater risk of dismissal faced by contract teachers (Chaudhury et al., 2005).

Research Objectives and Methodology

This paper examines government policy to appoint contract teachers in state government schools in Delhi as the resolution to deal with the shortages of teachers in schools. The paper further analyses the service conditions and experiences of the contract teachers in government schools. The objective was to validate findings of the previous question by conducting a small sample study of Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) schools in Delhi, focusing on their working conditions, terms of employment, motivations and problems faced by contract teachers. In this paper, 'contract teacher' has been defined as a teacher who is not employed under permanent contract, but on a fixed-tenure.

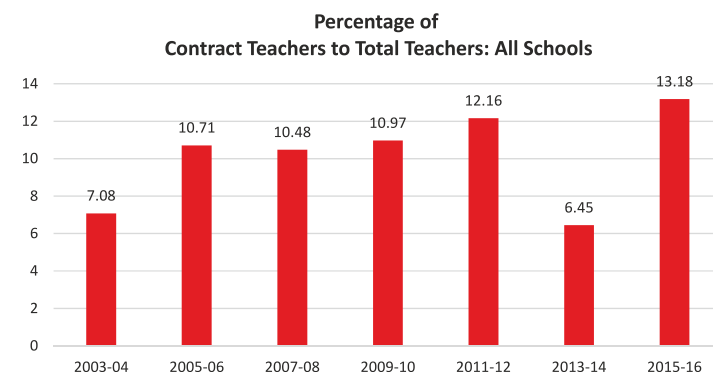
The methodology used in this study was qualitative in nature. Qualitative strategy followed the case study approach, which is, in turn, reliant on *interviews*, *observations* and *document analysis* in order to explore the research questions. Interviews were conducted with permanent and contract teachers working in ten MCD schools in Delhi. MCD schools were selected for study because approximately 80% of government primary schools are run by MCD in Delhi², which recruit the maximum number of contract teachers annually in Delhi. The study was comparative across different cases which illustrate the service conditions, work environment, efforts and motivations of teachers employed in MCD schools. The data collected from interviews and observations in these case studies revealed the perceptions and views of contract teachers on their job conditions, efforts, in-service-training and towards the overall workings of the schools. Interviews were both structured and non-structured, although under the second category, only informal interviews and conversations were conducted. Secondary information, gathered from various research papers and policy documents, was used for literature review. Documents studied and analysed for the purpose include the Delhi Municipal Corporation (DMC) Act 1957, Delhi Education Act 1973, recent Economic Survey of Delhi, MHRD and DISE statistics of the last decade, etc.

Research Findings

All the ten MCD schools were located in urban villages mostly in east and west regions of South Delhi (Munirika, R. K. Puram, Ladosarai). The schools were upper primary, co-educational and Hindi medium, with average size of 450 students and average official pupil-teacher ratio as 35 families. These schools annually recruited a large number of teachers on contractual basis. Conferring to the new figures, the proportion of contract teachers to total teachers in Delhi state government schools is around 27% (Flash Statistics, DISE 2015-16). Figure 1 shows the percentage of contractual teachers to total teachers in schools in India in the last fifteen years. According to the recent DISE statistics (2016), the proportion of contract teachers amid government school teachers in India rose to 28% in 2016 from 6% in 2003. Consequently, in recent decades, the engagement of teachers on a contractual basis has revealed a noteworthy growth in government schools in Delhi as shown in Table 1.

² Primary school education in Delhi is the responsibility of local and state administrations namely: Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), the New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) and the Directorate of Education of Government of Delhi (DOE). About 36% of the government schools in Delhi are managed by the local bodies (Flash Statistics, DISE 2014-15), that is, Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC). According to DOE statistics, MCD administers about 1,750 Primary Schools enrolling about 1 lakh children in Delhi. This is almost 50% of the total children in primary school age group. Apart from Central Delhi, which is under the jurisdiction of NDMC, MCD divides the rest of Delhi into 12 zones. In 2016, the MCD had 1,802 schools in Delhi and the total enrolment of students in MCD schools was 8,18,707. The functioning of the schools is governed by Delhi School Education Act 1973.

Figure 1: Percentage of Contract Teachers to Total Teachers in Schools in India



Source: Compiled from DISE, Flash Statistics, Published in 2017

Table 1: Percentage of Contract Teachers to Total Teachers in Schools

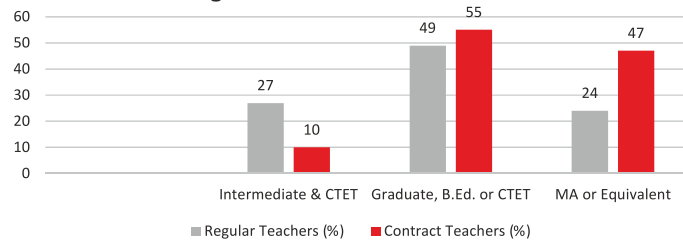
<i>Schooling</i>	<i>India</i>		<i>Delhi</i>	
<i>Grade 1 to 5</i>	<i>All Schools</i>	<i>Government Schools</i>	<i>All Schools</i>	<i>Government Schools</i>
2014-15	13.64	14.59	17.64	23.7
2015-16	13.18	14.26	19.88	26.74
<i>Up to grade 10</i>				
2014-15	13.72	NA	17.74	NA
2015-16	12.8	NA	19.89	NA

Source: Compiled from DISE, Flash Statistics, Published in 2017

Profile of Teachers in MCD Schools Visited

The author randomly selected 51 teachers in 10 MCD schools in Delhi. Out of 51 members interviewed, 34 were working on contractual basis and the rest (17) were permanent teachers. The contract teachers were working on a contractual basis for one year whereas permanent teachers are regular civil service employees. Personal and professional qualifications of regular and contractual teachers are shown in Figure 2. Despite the commonly held view that contractual teachers are less qualified, in fact, the academic qualifications of contractual teachers are overall somewhat higher than those of regular teachers. Data reveals that 100% (34) of the contract teachers in the 10 MCD Schools visited in Delhi have much higher qualifications than the minimum required. Figure 2 compares the professional qualifications of regular and contract teachers interviewed in 10 MCD schools. Amongst 34 contract teachers interviewed, 49% had a graduation degree and 24% had post-graduation and higher qualifications. Figure 3 presents the age profile of teachers in schools visited in Delhi. As shown in Figure 3, the contract teachers were younger in age than regular teachers. None of the contract teachers fall in the 'Above forty years' age group and about 64% contract teachers were not above thirty years of age.

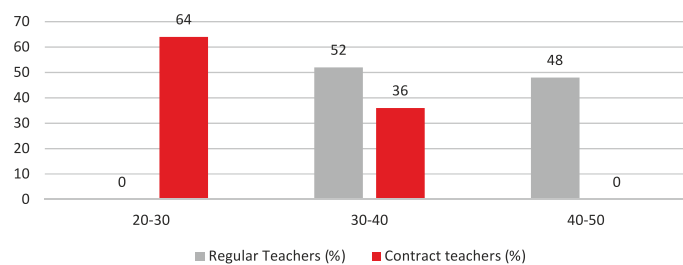
Figure 2: Academic Qualifications of Contract and Regular Teachers in MCD Schools



Source: Compiled from interviews

All the teachers interviewed were reported to be trained, have B.Ed. or M.Ed. degree and hold CTET certification. Most of the contract teachers were hopeful to be absorbed as a regular teacher in future, after few years of service. The respondents stated that in Delhi, contract teachers were just a stop-gap arrangement. As soon as vacancies are filled by regular teachers, duly recommended by Delhi Subordinate Service Selection Board (DSSSB) after written examinations, the contract of a guest teacher expires. The salaries paid to them are also higher in comparison to other states like MP, UP and Bihar, but it is lower compared to permanent employees. A detailed discussion on recruitment policy and salary structure is given in the next section. The sample highlights the fact that contractual teachers in MCD schools held higher qualifications than required. In addition, most of the contract teachers were significantly younger in age than permanent teachers, and they exhibited higher education levels than their regular employed colleagues. Further, the high levels of educated unemployment could be another contributing factor to the employment of contract teachers in Indian states.

Figure 3: Age profile of Contract and Regular Teachers in MCD Schools



Source: Compiled from interviews

According to government sources, there are approximately 22,000 vacant positions of primary school teachers in MCD schools. More than 7,000 posts for teachers are lying vacant in Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) schools³. To overcome the issue of dearth of teachers and adverse Student-Teacher Ratio (PTR) in the government schools in the national capital, Delhi government hires 6,000 guest teachers every year. According to District Information System for Education (DISE) statistics, the PTR at the primary level is 54 (959 schools) and upper primary level is 39 (410 schools)⁴. The state clarified that though there are a large number of vacant posts of teachers, these are filled up by guest teachers and hence, there is no post vacant. As there is no shortage of graduates applying for contract-teaching positions, the youth view being contract teachers as an alternative to being unemployed. The next section examines the recruitment process, payment structure and the service conditions of permanent and regular teachers employed in MCD schools in Delhi.

Appointment, Payment and Contract of Employment

Contract teachers in municipal schools are typically recruited and paid by the municipal bodies, rather than being employed directly by the state government as regular teachers. In Delhi state-run schools such as Directorate of Education (DOE), MCD, and Delhi Cantonment Board (DCB), the recruitment process of contractual teachers at primary and upper primary levels is done through two sources - one under state quota by the management bodies and another under Right to Education/Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (RTE-SSA). In the first case, DOE⁵ releases a notification for recruitment of guest teachers for the posts of assistant teachers (primary/nursery), in Delhi government schools for one academic year⁶. In another case, contractual

³ http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-08-13/news/41375070_1_mcd-schools-guest-teachers-vacant-posts

⁴ <http://ssa.nic.in/pabminutes-documents/PAB/Delhi/Delhi%20PAB%20Minutes%202014-15.pdf>

⁵ Directorate of Education (DOE) is the administrative wing of Ministry of Education, Government of Delhi.

⁶ <http://studyandskull.com/mcd-guest-teacher-vacancy-2015/>

arrangements are made under the scheme of RTE-SSA in the schools of MCD. The eligibility criteria are moreover the same; the payment to guest teachers varies in both the cases. Teachers under SSA are selected every year by different bodies at the beginning of the academic session and later removed by the end of the academic session, thus making fresh recruitments for 10 months every year, which creates the problem of late availability of teachers in the schools. The guest teachers cannot claim permanent service status regardless of their length of service. The tenure of agreement is such that these teachers can be dismissed from their job anytime. The appointment of permanent teachers in MCD Schools in Delhi is done with the approval of Delhi Subordinate Service Selection Board (DSSSB). On the basis of requirements sent by MCD, a written exam for teachers' selection is generally conducted by the board (DSSSB).

The payment and other incentives given to regular and contract teachers differs significantly and the remuneration for regular teachers is significantly higher than that of contract teachers in MCD schools. The regular teachers are authorised to standard grade salary and pay scale as prescribed under the government norms (refer to Table 5). For instance, according to the 6th Pay Commission document, the initial monthly payment for primary and secondary permanent teachers in government schools was around Rs.25,000 and Rs. 35,000 respectively. The initial salary for senior level permanent teachers was found to be higher than Rs. 50,000 on a monthly basis. On the other hand, 'contract-teachers' who are temporarily employed are compensated far less compared to the regular teachers who are permanent in nature. The existing payment to contract teachers in Delhi state government schools varies from around Rs.10,000 to Rs. 25,000, depending upon the duration and the level of grades of teaching. In addition, there has been regular financial upgradation in payment to regular teachers. Although the exact number of appointments of these contractual teachers is not known, the data from interviews with teachers and school administrators reveal that around 30% of the total teachers are contractual in one academic year. As guest teachers were highly qualified, they showed disagreement for additional training and support to carry out their teaching tasks. They also suggested that the training programs discriminate between the requirements of those newly selected guest teachers and those who were old and whose contracts were reintroduced.

Table 2 describes the salary structure, methods of promotion and the eligibility criteria for permanent and contract teachers at primary, secondary and senior levels as specified under the 6th Pay Commission (2008). The salary structure of government school teachers is normally determined in agreement with the scales for a government employee and all the remuneration groups have an annual increase of around 2-3%. In addition, there are definite features of salary structure of permanent employees, which makes it discriminatory. First, unlike contract teachers, regular teachers enjoy the benefit of working as a permanent employee, which provides them job security. Secondly, the contractual teachers are not entitled to get as many leaves and holidays as regular employees can avail. Thirdly, contract teachers receive no payment for annual inflation such as Dearness Allowance (DA). It was also reported that they often come to school from far and distant locations, but they do not get any travelling and housing allowances. Lastly, all the permanent teachers get the opportunity for promotion on the basis of seniority or merits. But there is lack of scope for promotion for contractual teachers which makes the profession dissatisfying and demotivating.

Table 2: Recruitment Rules and Salary Structure of Government Teachers

Designation	Regular Teachers (Grade I)			Contractual Teachers		Eligibility
	Grade Pay	Pay Band	Recruitment Rules	Consolidated Pay	Pro Rate Basis	
PGT	Rs. 6,100	Rs. 15,600-39,100	DR-50%, P-50%	Rs. 27,500-32,000	Rs. 220 per period	PG; B.Ed. /Equivalent
TGT	Rs. 5,400	Rs. 15,600-39,100	DR-50%, P-50%	Rs. 26,250-33,750	Rs. 210 per period	BA; CTET
PRT	Rs. 4,800	Rs. 8,700-34,800	DR-50%, P-50%	Rs. 21,250-28,500	Rs. 170 per period	Intermediate; CTET

Source: Compiled from 6th Pay Commission document and DOE documents

Note: GP: Grade Pay, PB: Pay Band; RR: Recruitment Rules; Eligibility: Essential qualification is the same for regular and contractual teachers; DR: Direct Recruitment; P: Recruitment through Promotion; CP: Consolidated Pay for contractual teachers; PRB: Pro Rate Basis

Like other poorer states, employing teachers on a contract basis in Delhi state government schools has been seen as an answer to high school dropouts and lower enrolment rates; this therefore does not involve a recurring liability on the government and helps achieve some savings since guest teachers are paid lesser than permanent teachers. Nevertheless, since the payments to contract teachers do not put much burden on the government's budget, official statistics do not record accurately the exact amount. Slowly, the increasing proportion of appointments of contract teachers has caused a decline in normal employment of teachers under regular payment system in Delhi state government schools. RTE commands that the salaries of contract and

regular school teachers must be at par with one another. While this seems to be a reasonable demand, many schools have had issues when it comes to paying their teachers suitable wages; while the basic mandated salary for a contract teacher in primary school and high school is 10,000 per month⁷, an average contract school teacher gets paid about 20% of an average government permanent teacher's salary. While regular teachers are paid as per Pay Commission norms, contract teachers tend to be paid at market rates. As a result, many of these teachers complain that their payment is hardly enough to sustain a decent standard of living. In addition, RTE's ban on private tuition makes this debate even more complicated since that served as a primary source of many teachers' supplemental salaries outside of school hours. Likewise, contract teachers demand financial up-gradations and benefits of career progression schemes of pay commissions.

The pre-service and on-job training⁸ of teachers in state government schools in Delhi (including MCD schools) are directed under the guidelines of District Institute of Education Training (DIET). It was observed that for principal or head-teachers, there was organised machinery for imparting professional training to teachers and school managers. In Delhi, the teachers employed on contractual or short-term basis had to fulfil similar eligibility criteria (educational qualifications) required for permanent teachers (as shown in Table 2). Thus, the credentials applicable to regular teachers are also applicable to guest teachers in Delhi state government schools. In general, officially, the MCD and other state government schools in Delhi cannot appoint untrained and under-qualified teachers.

The study of MCD schools conducted in Delhi enabled negotiations with guest teachers, who described that apart from teaching in government schools, the other substitute offered to them in the job market was work as 'private tutors' or teaching in low cost or unrecognised private schools where they are paid even lower than what they receive in state government schools in Delhi (Rs 10,000 per month). Consequently, it was not merely an essential incentive, but also the unavailability of superior substitutes, which drive the professionals to opt for the role of guest teachers in government schools. Further, as a considerable number of contract teachers had higher levels of educational qualifications (post-graduation and above as shown in Figure 3) than mandatory for the positions, most of them were reluctant to receive any in-service training. The next section analyses the work environment and inducements available to contract teachers in MCD schools in Delhi.

Work Culture and Motivations

When asked whether contract teachers like the working conditions of the school, most of them reported it to be unsatisfactory. The teachers stated that they do not have any opportunities for using any teaching aids nor do they get any exposure. Though teaching aids are available in some schools, they were of conventional nature, most of which are maps, charts and blackboards. Some of the teachers felt that there should be a laboratory for teaching science and maths, especially in the primary section. They revealed the difficulty in assigning project tasks to students in absence of teaching aids and basic lab facilities in these MCD schools. The teachers also strongly voiced the need for medical facilities for the education department to be introduced in MCD schools. The physical condition of the school building and inadequacy of the furniture were also cited as some of the problems. Additionally, teachers complained about poor basic facilities such as drinking water and toilet, and overcrowding in the class (the class average reported earlier was stated to be 50⁹). Overcrowding of the classroom does not permit proper teaching. The teachers (both permanent and contract) opposed the large class size, which was unmanageable.

Responses from municipal school teachers suggest that the performance of contract teachers in all the schools was not significantly unlike from regular employed teachers. However, there were differences in attitude; contract teachers seemed demotivated to work with more involvement and for longer hours in the schools. They perform under the direction and leadership of the principal who puts an extra burden on them. Contract teachers have to multi-task. They mentioned that while they were appointed only for teaching, they are performing all the tasks expected out of regular teachers including distribution of textbooks, uniforms, mid-day meal, maintenance of attendance registers and other records. The poor delegation of assignments was more profound in case of MCD schools where apart from academic tasks, administrative responsibilities were also transferred to the newly appointed contract teachers. More than half of the contract teachers stated that they assisted the permanent teachers in teaching, administrative and other tasks. They also gave clerical assistance to the school heads. A few

⁷ "Teachers of Unaided Schools Not Being Paid Basic Salary." *The Hindu*. June 15, 2014. <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-karnataka/teachers-of-unaidedschools-not-being-paid-basic-salary/article6118464.ece>.

⁸ Pre-service training includes certificates such as Basic Teaching Certificate (BTC), Bachelors of Education (B.Ed.), Licentiate in Teaching (LT) or Masters of Education (MEd).

⁹ In this regard RTE mandates PTR (pupil-teacher ratio); the law states that the PTR can vary from 1st-5th grade but can be no more than 1:35 for 6th-8th grade.

teachers demanded separate academic cells that look after all academic matters and timely monitoring with periodical supervision of poor performing schools.

Contract teachers also highlighted the poor management of time and the problem of bad planning in the schools. Issues like meetings, school events, academic and administrative evaluation, allocation of subjects and instructional time were poorly managed with no prior planning and follow-up actions. For example, the staffing pattern was not maintained according to the subject offered in case of MCD schools. For instance, contract teachers who have specialised in one subject were also teaching other subjects apart from performing some accounting work in the school's office. Another noticeable fact reported was that permanent teachers came to the school at their suitability and they were not as punctual as contract teachers. One contract teacher reported that during the process of evaluation of the school's achievements, the school inspectors and education officers treat them at par with permanent teachers. A small number of teachers also revealed their resentment towards the school management committee. They put emphasis on the fact that there is a problem of stagnation in career and no personal value addition to their life being a teacher. According to them, the school management body does not organise refresher courses and reorientation programmes often enough. Thus, they lack motivation and do not find enough opportunity of being rewarded or promoted. In the interest of overburdened contract teachers, a few teachers demanded a five-day week to be implemented in schools, which may also give space for students to pursue self-learning as per their aptitude and interest.

Some contract teachers also expressed a lower amount of respect for teachers in government schools. Both regular and contract teachers complained about lack of interest of students in learning and school activities; parents too did not show interest in the educational development of their children. They expressed dissatisfaction regarding standard of children coming from MCD schools. Most students come from extremely deprived sections of society, and a large number of them being first generation learners, lack interest in education and did not have a conducive atmosphere in their family/home. Secondly, parents were uncooperative; they never visited the school in spite of repeated requests. This could also be attributable to students not informing their parents about teachers' requests to visit the school in spite of teachers telling them to do so. Most of the teachers had a similar opinion regarding the poor performance of children in MCD; according to them, most students in primary classes in MCD schools do not even have the basic skills of reading and writing.

Policy Concern and Managerial Applications

The expansion in the use of contract teachers to meet the shortages has been clearly supported by the national government by means of the resources it transfers through several schemes. Central funds are provided to state governments to appoint contract teachers under the agenda of ensuring elementary education and not as a means of preserving state government resources. The decentralisation movement of the early 1990s also allowed the use of contract teachers. The employment of contract teachers has also been promoted by the local community leadership. They appoint contract teachers on an annual basis and renewal of their contract is possible if performance is satisfactory. In practice, however, no formal framework for evaluation exists. Most contracts are issued by the local bodies or school committees that offer the state government a way to avoid possible litigation under the principle of 'equal pay for equal work'. In addition, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 also has implications on the present system of teacher appointment. State governments appoint teachers on contractual basis to maintain Pupil-Teacher Ratio as specified under the Act¹⁰. Regular posts are being filled by contract teachers who are not offered public service status; these provisions are becoming less relevant.

The expansion of this scheme is resulting in a virtual freeze on employment of regular-pay-scale teachers in some states, with all vacancies being filled on contractual basis. Numerous contract teachers in India find the current employment system arbitrary and discriminating. Despite delivering similar efforts as regular teachers, they are engaged on agreements for limited duration, which can be easily terminated. They receive a lower amount of compensation and do not enjoy any service benefits as compared to permanent teachers. Financial benefits, work security and autonomy of work are generally perceived as essential conditions for enhancement in the social status of teachers. Contract teachers demand regularisation of their services and upgradation of their payment. There should be a provision to absorb contract teachers into the regular workforce if they showcase good performance. The state should not let bureaucratic hurdles and political motives come in the way of giving teachers their rightful due. The contract teachers' appointments are now becoming a norm in many Indian states. However, since their salaries do not form part of the payroll, there are no official statistics available. Contractual appointment should be made for a specific period and only in exceptional circumstances. Equal pay must be given for equal work, which is

¹⁰ As per RTE Act 2009, vacancy of a teacher in a school, established, owned, controlled or substantially financed by the government, shall not exceed 10% of the sanctioned strength.

indeed one of the directive principles of state policy under the constitution. Therefore, it is essential that policies should be well thought-out to keep the contract teachers motivated and professionally competent by paying them equal wages and sufficient security of tenure and job upgradation.

Limitations of Research and Potential for Future Research

This study lacks sufficient available literature. There is paucity of research on issues such as work environment, motivation and monitoring process particularly in the Indian schooling sector. The minimal available literature focuses mostly on relative effectiveness of contract teachers and their impact on learning outcomes; other institutional factors such as appointment, motivation, training, service conditions and accountability variables crucial for efficient working of contract teachers have been ignored.

The study is also hampered by the lack of data. Despite recent efforts by DISE and Directorate of Education (DOE), Delhi, there is dearth of reliable educational data in India. The available data is inappropriate and insufficient to bring a comparative analysis across the schools. Additionally, data is not publicly available. As there is no official data on the number of contract teachers employed every year, it was challenging to investigate whether the number has been increasing or stagnant. This analysis was entirely based on qualitative data. The scarcity of time and contract teachers' reluctance to respond limited the sample size.

Conclusion

Contractual provisions for teachers and their position vary within the states according to the terms of service. In Delhi government schools, the contract teachers co-exist with regular teachers. The recruitment of contract teachers is held annually; the process is repeated on demand and the requirement and renewal of contracts is also performed in some cases. On the one hand, there are teachers who are considered as 'public servants', compensated a fixed annual salary based on certain criteria such as educational qualifications, number of years of experience, age, etc. The permanent teachers enjoy promotions, allowances and complete security of tenure. On the other hand, contractual or guest teachers are employed for short tenures and subject to somewhat easy dismissal without prior notice. Generally, the remuneration of contractual teachers is also fixed, based on their performance as per the employment agreement.

Nevertheless, no prescribed structure for monitoring teachers' performance occurs and most contract teachers see their contract renewed. The authorities see appointment of contract teachers as cost effective and ignore all the concerns expressed by various committees like the Kothari Commission 1966 and the National Policy of Education 1986 and their suggestions to enhance the working conditions and status of the school teachers. The growing numbers of trained teaching professionals and other competent young graduates on the one side, and the decelerating teaching market in Delhi government schools on the other side, has resulted in disorder and chaos amongst teaching professionals in Delhi. Therefore, young qualified professionals find it difficult to get suitable and decent teaching jobs and start teaching as a career by choice. The number of educated and trained teaching professionals is growing gradually, but the government is not in a situation to meet the expenses of providing decent and matching employment to these professionals. This has resulted in disappointment and frustration amongst the work force who remain unemployed or end up in low skilled jobs in spite of suitable qualifications. Considering the career cycle and its progression, the situation of contract teachers cannot be a solution in the long-run. Along with introducing and promoting decentralisation and autonomy in state government schools in Delhi, there is a need to revise the salary structure, service tenure and other incentives for guest teachers to make the employment more stable and decent. Providing suitable chances of professional development and career progress is vital to maintain and preserve guest teachers' potential.

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