

# Status of Para-teachers in India

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## Abstract

*Over the last a few years, para-teachers are being recruited in almost all the states in India. This is primarily being done to meet the shortage of teachers particularly in primary and upper primary schools. At present there are more than half a million para-teachers. The present study covered 22 states which are affiliated to the All India Primary Teachers' Federation. Of these states, only 6 states are not recruiting para-teachers and the rest are recruiting them. Para-teachers are being deployed both in rural and urban areas. Only in some states such as Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Rajasthan and West Bengal, they are being deployed in rural areas only. The nomenclature of para-teachers is different in different states. Para-teachers are being appointed against vacant posts of teachers and additional posts created under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Professional qualification for appointing para-teachers is not mandatory in states like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal. So in these states, professionally untrained teachers are being appointed as para-teachers. Some states such as Gujarat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and West Bengal have discontinued appointment of regular primary teachers. In these states only para-teachers are being appointed. Local authorities such as Village Education Committee, Zila Panchayat/PRI have also been empowered to make recruitment of para-teachers. Remuneration being paid to para-teachers is much less than that which is paid to regular teachers. State governments are exploiting these teachers. The tenure of appointment of para-teachers ranges from one to five years. But most of the states are appointing para-teachers for one year or so. Only few states such as Gujarat, Orissa, Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh have made some provisions for regularising the services of para-teachers.*

The term para-teacher is a generic one. It covers all teachers appointed on a contract basis under varying conditions. When we peep into the history of appointment of para-teachers in the country, we find that their appointment in primary schools started in the eighties. It was in 1984 when the government of

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Himachal Pradesh introduced the Scheme titled 'Volunteer Teachers'. Thereafter, para-teachers have been being employed in most of the states in the country.

Para-teachers are not being appointed in India alone. In recent years, the use of para-teachers has been growing in other developing countries too. They are in Africa, Latin America and Asia. The most extensive use of contract teachers has been in the West and Central Africa over the last one decade where it has been encouraged by the World Bank perspectives regarding cost effectiveness and efficiency in education (Fyfe, 2007). In 1995, Senegal introduced an experimental programme of recruiting volunteers and, now along with Niger," has around half of its teaching force under short-term contract. Further, Guinea has 39 per cent of its teaching workforce as contract teachers, Togo 31 percent, Burkina Faso 24 per cent and Cameroon 20 per cent. However, other countries in the sub-region such as Chad and Ivory Coast have no contract teachers (Fyfe, 2007). In Latin America, contract teachers in Peru represent about 11 per cent of the teaching workforce and in Chile upto 20 per cent. China, Kenya and Cambodia have also appointed contract teachers. In India as many as 499 thousand teachers were appointed upto 2005-2006 which is 10.64 per cent of total teachers"(Mehta, 2007). The number of these teachers is steadily increasing. The scheme of appointment of para-teachers originated in the background of achieving Universalisation of Primary Education (UPE) and Universalisation of Elementary

Education (UEE). States particularly educationally backward ones resorted to appointment of para-teachers to meet shortage of teaching workforce in existing schools and newly opened ones to provide access schooling to children.

### **Need for the Study**

Para-teachers are being appointed under varying service conditions in terms of their emoluments, recruitment qualifications, etc. The All India Primary Teachers' Federation (AIPTF) felt the need to study their service conditions in terms of emoluments, possibilities of making them regular teachers, admissibility of leave and other benefits.

### **Objectives of Study**

The main objectives of the study were to:

- find out the states in which para-teachers are being appointed;
- determine the recruitment conditions of para-teachers in different states; and
- determine service conditions of para-teachers in different states.

### **Design of study**

The study covered those states in which state primary teacher associations are affiliated to the AIPTF.

### **Development of tool**

A questionnaire was developed for collecting requisite data from the states.

### **Collection of data**

The questionnaires were mailed to the state primary teachers associations in different states with the request to collect

the requisite data from the Education Department and the office of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in their state. Discussions were held with General Secretary of different affiliates of the AIPTF.

### **Delimitations**

The following were the delimitations of the study:

- Only para-teachers working in Government primary schools were covered in the study; and
- It was limited to those states in which state primary teachers associations are affiliated to the All India Primary Teachers Federation. Thus the study covered 22 states. Two affiliates of the AIPTF could not make available the requisite data.

### **Operational definition of the term – para teacher**

Para-teachers are those teachers who are contracted for a very limited period and are paid remuneration considerable below of the salary paid to regular teachers in the state.

### **Findings of the Study**

The main findings of the study are highlighted below:

#### **Deployment of Para-teachers**

About 93 per cent of the total para-teachers have been appointed in rural areas (Mehta, 2007). Of the total para-teachers, 61 per cent of them are male and the remaining 39 per cent female during 2005-2006 (Mehta, 2007). During 2005-2006, the percentage of male and

female para-teachers to total male and female teachers comes to be 11.21 and 10.47 respectively. In other words, about 11 per cent of total teachers (all categories) are para-teachers (Mehta, 2007).

Majority of the para-teachers are appointed in the states of Andhra Pradesh (63,323), Bihar (68,728), Chhattisgarh (38,596), Madhya Pradesh (95,773) which together constitute a total of 417 thousand para-teachers, i.e. 84 per cent of the total para-teachers across 35 states and UTs of the country. Further, it is observed that 23.89 per cent of the total para-teachers are appointed alone in the state of Madhya Pradesh.

### **Schools Solely Manned by Para-teachers**

In as many as 79,480 (7.07%) of total schools, only para-teachers were working in 2005-2006. Of 22 states, 17 states are recruiting para-teachers. The states such as Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Punjab, Goa and Mizoram are not recruiting para-teachers.

### **State Governments Discontinued Appointment of Primary Teachers on Regular Basis**

Six state governments discontinued appointment of primary teachers on regular basis. These states are mentioned in table 1.

### **Introduction of the Policy of Recruitment of Para-teachers**

The year in which different states started the recruitment of para-teachers is highlighted in table 2.

**Table 1: States Discontinued Appointing Teachers on Regular Basis**

<i>State</i>	<i>Year from which the appointment of teachers on a regular basis discontinued</i>
Gujarat	1998-1999
Haryana	2005
Madhya Pradesh	1994
Maharashtra	1994-95
Orissa	1996-97
West Bengal	2006

**Table 2: Appointment of Para-teachers in Different States**

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Year</i>
1	Andhra Pradesh	2000-2001
2	Bihar	2000
3	Chhattisgarh	1998
4	Delhi	2001
5	Gujarat	1998
6	Haryana	2005
7	Himachal Pradesh	1984
8	Jharkhand	2003-2004
9	Madhya Pradesh	1994-1995
10	Maharashtra	2001-2002
11	Meghalaya	
12	Orissa	1995-1996
13	Rajasthan	1997
14	Uttar Pradesh	
15	Uttarakhand	1998-1999
16	West Bengal	2002

### **Academic and Professional Qualifications Prescribed for Para-Teachers at Primary Level**

Academic and professional qualifications prescribed by different state governments for appointment of para-teachers are highlighted in table 3.

It is evident from the table that a good number of states, professional qualification are not compulsory for making of appointment of para-teachers.

### **Appointing Authority of Para-teachers**

Table 4 highlights the appointing authority of para-teachers in different states.

**Table 3: Qualification Prescribed for Para-teachers**

<i>State</i>	<i>Academic Qualification</i>	<i>Professional Qualification</i>
Andhra Pradesh	Intermediate /Senior secondary or its equivalent	Not necessary
Bihar	Intermediate/Senior secondary or its equivalent	
Chhatisgarh	Shiksha Karmi Grade – I Post graduation	
	Shiksha Karmi Grade – II Graduation	
	Shiksha Karmi Grade – III Sr. Secondary	
Delhi	Senior Secondary	Diploma in Education or its equivalent
Gujarat	Senior Secondary	PTC/CPED
Haryana	Senior Secondary	Two years Diploma in Education
		One year training
Himachal Pradesh	a) N.T.T. Matriculation	] Not necessary
	b) Vidhya Upasak - Sr. Secondary	
	c) Gramin Vidya Upasak - Senior Secondary	
	d) Prathmic Sahayak Adhyapak-Senior Secondary	
	e) Contract teacher	
Jharkhand	a) Primary school-Intermediate/Senior Secondary or its equivalent	B.Ed./DM/Shastri/PET
	b) Upper primary school-Graduation with intermediate with Science	Not compulsory
Madhya Pradesh	Grade – I Post graduation	Professional qualification is not necessary at the primary level but at the upper primary level, D.Ed./B.Ed. is required
	Grade – II Graduation	
	Grade – III Senior Secondary	
Maharashtra	Senior Secondary	Two year diploma in education
Meghalaya	Senior Secondary	Not necessary
Orissa	a) Matriculation/+2 for 70% of the posts	Certificate in teaching B.Ed.
	b) B.A./B.Sc./B.Com for 30% of the posts	
Rajasthan	Senior Secondary	B.S.C.T./B.Ed./D.P. Ed. / C.P.Ed./B.P. Ed./ B.P.E. or its equivalent
Uttar Pradesh	Intermediate or its equivalent	
Uttarakhand	Intermediate Remote areas - Matriculation	Not compulsory
West Bengal	School Final which is equivalent to Class X	

**Table 4: Appointing Authority of Para-teachers in Different States**

<i>State</i>	<i>Appointing Authority</i>
Andhra Pradesh Bihar	Village Education Committee (VEC) / SDMC PRI/Village Level PRI/Nagar Parishad/Nagar Panchayat
Chhattisgarh	Grade – I Zilla Panchayat Grade – II Zilla Panchayat Grade – III Janpad Panchayat
Delhi	Director of Primary Education
Gujarat	State Education Department
Haryana	Block Education Officer
Himachal Pradesh	a) Gramin Vidya Upasak / Volunteers/ PAT by Panchayat b) NTT/Vidhya Upasak/Contract teacher by Deputy Director of Primary Education
Jharkhand	VEC
Madhya Pradesh	Grade-I Zilla Panchayat Grade – II and III Janpad Panchayat
Maharashtra	Chief Executive Officer of Zilla Parishad
Meghalaya	–
Orissa	PRI/ Zilla Parishad
Rajasthan	Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI)
Uttar Pradesh	VEC
Uttarakhand	DEO on the recommendations of the VEC
West Bengal	District Project Officer through Sub-inspector of schools

It is quite clear from the table that para-teachers are being appointed by authorities at the District/ Block/Village level. On the other hand, teachers on regular basis are appointed mostly by the state governments.

#### **Remuneration being paid to Para-teachers**

The monthly remuneration being paid to para-teachers in 2007 for different states is highlighted in table 5.

Table 5 highlights that remuneration paid to para teachers in 2007 in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Meghalaya, and West Bengal is very low i.e. Rs. 1500/-per month.

It is the highest in the state of Delhi. Para-teachers are paid remuneration of Rs. 9,500/- per month. There is a difference in remuneration paid to untrained and professionally trained para-teachers in a few states. In Haryana, para-teachers are paid wages at the rate of Rs. 225/- per day.

#### **Tenure of Appointment of Para-teachers**

Generally the appointment of para-teachers in different states is made for about a year or so. In some states like Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh, the tenure of appointment ranges from 3 to 5 years.

**Table 5: Remuneration Payable to Para-teachers in Different States**

<i>State</i>	<i>Remuneration</i>
Andhra Pradesh	Para-teachers were paid a fixed amount of Rs. 1000/- per month. Their remuneration has been increased to Rs. 1500/- from 2007-2008.
Bihar	The honorarium is different for trained and untrained para-teachers. The trained teachers get an honorarium of Rs. 5000/- per month and the untrained ones Rs. 4000/- per month. After completion of three years of service, a para-teacher is entitled to an increment of Rs. 500/-.
Chhatisgarh	From 1 <sup>st</sup> Sept. 2003, Shiksha Karmis are placed in the following pay scale: Shiksha Karmi : Grade – I 3000-75-5400 Grade – II 3250-60-4450 Grade – III 2700-50-3700  In addition to the basic pay in the said scales, Shiksha Karmis are also entitled to 24% dearness allowance, Rs. 100 per month as interim relief and Rs. 100/- as special relief.
Delhi	Rs. 9500/- per month
Gujarat	Rs. 2500/- per month
Haryana	Rs. 225/- per day
Himachal Pradesh	NTT / Vidhya Upasak - Rs. 2500/- PAT/Gramin V. Upasak - Rs. 2000/- untrained - Rs. 2500/- trained  Contract teacher - Rs. 6825/-
Jharkhand	a) For primary schools - Trained Rs. 3000/- - Untrained Rs. 2500/-  b) For upper primary schools - Trained Rs. 3500/- - Untrained Rs. 3000/-
Madhya Pradesh	Grade – I Rs. 4500/- Grade – II Rs. 3500/- Grade – III Rs. 2500/-  After completion of three years of service, the para-teacher gets an increment of 15 per cent of her/his pay in the scale.
Maharashtra	Trained Rs. 3000/- Untrained Rs. 1500/-
Meghalaya	Rs. 1500/-
Orissa	Rs. 3000/-
Rajasthan	Rs. 2000/- with an annual increment of Rs. 200/-
Uttar Pradesh	Rs. 3000/-
Uttarakhand	From December 2006 Rs. 6000/-
West Bengal	Rs. 1500/-

### Regularisation of Services of Para-teachers

Most of states covered in this study have not made any provision for regularisation the services of their para-teachers. Some states have made provisions in this regard. Table 6. provides information in this regard.

### Conclusion

The study reveals the plight of para-teachers in different states. They are poorly paid. Their remuneration is much less than those appointed on a regular basis. Since their tenure of appointment is for a year or so in most of the states, they suffer from the sense of in-security. Unemployment prevailing in the country

forces them to accept employment at a very low remuneration. There is also no provision for contributory provident fund for para-teachers in all the states. All this is against the canon of social justice. Their future is therefore, dark as only a few states such as - Gujarat, Maharashtra, Orissa and Himachal Pradesh have made provisions for regularizing their services. If this state of affairs continues, many of them may suffer from depression. Some of the para-teachers are not professionally trained. State governments are urged to impart them necessary induction/in-service training and bring all the para-teachers into the main stream. This is most desirable in our socialistic pattern of society.

**Table 6: States having Provision for Regularising Services of Para-teachers**

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Period</i>
1	Gujarat	After the completion of 5 years service
2	Orissa	After completion of 3 years satisfactory service a para-teacher is eligible to become a junior teacher. The junior teacher, on completion of 3 years of continuous satisfactory service is eligible to become a regular teacher at the primary level.
3	Maharashtra	After completing 3 years of satisfactory service, para-teachers are appointed as regular teachers. NTT - 8 years 3 months
4	Himachal Pradesh	Volunteer 86 scheme - 10 years Volunteer 92 scheme - 6 years 6 months Vidhya Upasak - 7 years 9 months Contract teachers - 8 years G. V. Upasak & PAT - No policy for regularisation of their services



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