PREFACE

University is a social system and teachers play a vital role in this system. Yet it is quite surprising that this fact has received little attention. Insignificant research has been made in the sphere of teacher’s role in higher education sector. Teachers have important obligations to the profession and discipline which they represent, and also to the institutions which employ them. In addition they owe some responsibilities to students, to the college administration and higher education in general.

Regular employment at a living wage is the dream and first demand of the poor in our country. Everyone wants a dignified life with all rights such as food, shelter, medicine and education etc. Today specialized education is required due to the advancement of technology and knowledge. Catering to the needs of students, various educational institutions have been established for higher learning by the UGC. But the status of the teachers which they enjoyed since ancient times as that of Guru has been gradually decreased. Now the appointment of the teachers on contract basis has become a norm in many institutions and colleges. This class of teachers is working in pathetic conditions but nothing is being done on their condition. Every year landlord increases the rent, inflation is getting higher and higher, permanent teachers get D.A. every six months but in case of contract teachers, they are not getting any relief, amount once fixed continues from year to year.

Many kinds of teachers fall under the label of “contract teachers” including “temporary”, “guest faculty”, “ad-hoc”, “volunteers”, “Para teachers” etc. However, their salaries and working conditions are far less than the regular civil service teachers. Typically they are hired for one year or less at a salary half or less than half of a regular teacher.

The contract teachers have demanded the regularization of their services and upgradation of their pay many times. They have also sought the benefits of regularization such as some job security and recognition of their work. They have also knocked at the doors of supreme courts for their rights but all goes in vein. There is no law on the protection of rights and job security of contract teachers. So their position is declining day by day. Many of the college teachers are dissatisfied with their job.
They have demanded the regularization of their services and the upgradation of their pay as compared to what is paid to regular teachers. They have also sought the benefits of regularization such as a certain promotion scheme as well as job security. They have repeatedly taken to the streets because their demands have largely been met with a deaf ear with even the Courts refusing to intervene in recent judgments.

The engagement of contract teachers is an optimal, low cost solution to the problem of staff shortages. Moreover, contract teachers can be assumed to be more efficient than regular teachers due to the risk they undertake of losing employment if they absent themselves from duty. Finally, the practice of hiring contract teachers helps governments build educational capacities in a very short time. However, such an approach ignores the professional well-being of such contract teachers. They are paid considerably lesser than their regular counterparts and receive emphatically diminished benefits. Moreover, their services can be terminated in accordance with the contractual terms which do not offer any job security to the contract teachers. Such a conundrum exists because contract teachers fall outside the ambit of most of India’s labour legislations such as the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. Additionally, the efficiency attributed to contract teachers could be a result of their hope that their posts will be regularized - an expectation that is betrayed with every renewal of their contract.