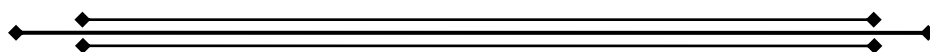


Teacher Absence in Primary Schools



A STUDY



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Preface

There is an absence of a responsive education system in India. School curricula are inapt to meet diverse learning needs of learners living in different contexts. Teachers are engaged in non-professional work such as election duty, preparation of voters list, survey for people below poverty line and out of school children, campaign against literacy and diseases. This reduces their teaching hours in schools. Besides in-service education and training being imparted to teachers reduces their teaching hours. This is because no substitute is posted when a teacher undergoes training under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and also when a woman teacher proceeds on maternity leave. Teachers also remain absent from school due to their illness and for discharging their social responsibilities etc. All this affects adversely pupils' learning.

The study conducted by Kremer *et al* (2004) revealed that one in four teachers was absent at a typical government run primary school. The finding of the study is eroding the image for teachers in the country. This situation urged the All India Primary Teachers' Federation to find out the rate of teacher absence from school. This is because teacher absence rate is not the same throughout the year. Their absence rate increases during festivals, extreme weather conditions etc. Further the AIPTF felt that Kremer and others did not study the reasons for their absence.

The present study was therefore, undertaken by the All India Primary Teachers' Federation to highlight specific reasons for teachers' absence from schools. The study reveals that teachers' in-service education and training and their engagement in non-professional work outside the school contribute significantly towards their absence from schools. The findings of the study are an eye opener for all concerned.

We are indebted to the Education International for financial support in conducting this study. We are also thankful to Mr. Fred van Leeuwen, General Secretary-EI, Mr. Aloysius Mathews, Chief Coordinator, Ms. Shashi Bala Singh, Coordinator, Mr. Sagar Nath Pyakuryal, Coordinator, EI-APR for providing academic support in planning and conducting the study. My thanks are also due to Dr. Ajit Singh, Director-PDP for his incessant endeavors for developing design, analyzing the data and producing the report of the study. Sh. Sanjeev Kumar also deserves my thanks for working diligently for word processing of the report of the study. I am also thankful to Shri S. Anbalagan, General Secretary-Tamilnadu Elementary School Teachers' Federation, Shri Kamala Kant Tripathy-General Secretary, All Utkal Primary Teachers' Federation and Shri Digvijay Singh Chauhan, Deputy General Secretary, Uttarakhand Rajya Prathmik Shikshak Sangh and their associates for collecting the requisite data for the study.

S. Eswaran,
Secretary General, AIPTF

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Executive Summary

The present study titled teacher absence in primary schools was conducted in three states – Orissa, Uttarakhand and Tamilnadu. The main objectives of the study were to determine teachers' absenteeism rate in government primary schools in the said states and also to find out specific reasons for their absence from schools. In each state, three districts were covered. Sundergarh, Khordha and Nayagarh were covered in the state of Orissa. Dehradun, Haridwar and Rudra Prayag were covered in Uttarakhand state and Ramanathapuram, Sivagangai and Virudhu Nagar in the state of Tamilnadu. In each district, two to four blocks were covered. In each block, 10 per cent of primary schools were covered.

Eleven hundred and forty teachers in 314 schools were covered in these districts. Investigators from the concerned state primary teacher association visited these schools. Only one visit was made to these schools.

The study reveals that in the state of Orissa, 23.5 per cent teachers were not present in their school. Of these, only 5.5 per cent were not present in their school due to personal reasons. Personal reasons included illness, maternity leave and casual leave to discharge their family responsibilities and social obligations. The rest of the teachers were not present in their school either because of their participation in in-service training programmes (14.4%) or their engagement in non-professional work (3.6%) assigned to them by their authorities. In Uttarakhand state, 33.8 per cent teachers were not present in their school. Of these, only 16 per cent were not present due to personal reasons. Further, 12.0 per cent were participating in in-service training programmes and 5.8 per cent were engaged in non-professional work. In Tamilnadu state, only 11.5 per cent teachers were not present in their school. Of these, only 7.3 were not present in their school due to personal reasons and 4.2 per cent on account of on account of academic reasons – participation in-service training programmes. On the whole, in these three states, 21.0 per cent teachers were not present in their school. Of these, 9.1 per cent were not present in their school due to personal reasons. Further, 9.2 per cent were undergoing in-service training and 2.7 per cent engaged in non-professional work.

The study reveals that teachers' participation in in-service training programmes and their engagement in non-professional work contribute significantly to their absence in school. This reduces their teaching hours in schools. To increase teaching hours in schools, the state government should reduce suitably the duration of teachers' in-service education and training. Further teachers should not be subjected to non-professional assignments/ duties outside their school. These measures would reduce teachers' absenteeism rate from schools and would result in significant improvement in their teaching hours.

1.0 Backdrop

In 2005, India, according to the new estimates by the World Bank, had 456 million people or about 42 per cent of the population living below the new international poverty line of \$ 1.25 per day. India is therefore, home to roughly one-third of all poor in the World. One of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that member countries of the United Nations pledged to attain by the year 2015 is to eradicate poverty and hunger. Education is the key to socio-economic development of any nation. Without education, it is not possible to eradicate poverty. Therefore, the achievement of the goal - Education For All is highly essential to eradicate poverty from the country.

Realizing the importance of education, the framers of the Indian Constitution incorporated in the Directive Principles of the State Policy that the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children in the age group 6 to 14 years within ten years from the promulgation of the Constitution.

Since independence, the country has been making concerted efforts to achieve the goal-Education For All (EFA). The National Policy on Education (1986), International Conventions such as Jomtien Conference (1990), Dakar Convention (2000) have provided impetus to these endeavours. On 13th December 2002, the country amended its Constitution and made Right to Education a Fundamental Right. Despite of all these endeavours, the long cherished goal - Education For All (EFA) is still elusive. The achievement of the goal – EFA seems to be distant dream. In the light of the present scenario in the country, it is not on track. Therefore, the achievement of the goal even by 2015 does not seem to be a reality.

The attainment of the goal - education for all by 2015 implies that all eligible children complete and graduate from the cycle of free and compulsory quality primary education. To achieve this, it would require entry of all children into school by 2008 or 2009 at the latest with no dropout and completion and graduation for all in the final year of primary schooling. Though the net enrolment ratio is increasing over the years and yet it is at present around 93 per cent. But the dropout rate is still alarmingly very high. It is around 30 per cent. The high dropout is therefore, a significant hindrance for achieving education for all by 2015.

For attaining Universal Primary Education (UPE), the primary education system needs to be efficient one. The essential ingredients of an efficient primary education system are – appropriate infrastructure facilities in schools, an adequate flow of qualified professional teachers (one teacher per class) with remuneration adequate to meet their needs and sustained professional development, and use of appropriate instructional approaches and strategies by teachers for transacting the curriculum.

1.1.0 Teaching Workforce in Primary Schools

In our country, primary schools are ill-equipped with teaching work-force. All primary schools managed by the Government have an average of 2.63 teachers per school against 5 classes (Mehta, 2007). ‘Schools with less than 3 teachers are 60.3 per cent. Further 11.7 per cent schools are still single teacher schools (NUEPA, 2008). An adequate number of qualified professional teachers is the key for improving quality of education and for attaining UPE. Since there is inadequate teaching workforce in our primary schools, the quality of teaching is suffering. Though the pupil-teacher ratio in the country is 42:1, there are many states in which this ratio is very high. “For instance in the state of Bihar, the pupil teacher ratio is more than 60:1 in 68.5 per cent schools, followed by Uttar Pradesh in 35.8 per cent schools, 26.5 per cent schools in Jharkhand, and 24.7 per cent schools in West Bengal. Further pupil-teacher ratio is more than 100:1 in 5.2 per cent schools in the country” (NUEPA, 2008).

1.2.0 Teacher Absenteeism

Inadequacy of teachers coupled with high rate of teacher absenteeism renders the learning conditions in schools from bad to worse. A recent study titled Teacher Absence in India: A Snapshot conducted by Kremer and Others (2004) in eight countries – Peru, Ecuador, Papua New Guinea, Bangladesh, Zambia, Indonesia, India and Uganda covered 20 Indian states representing 98 per cent of the population or roughly one billion people. The study focused on government run primary schools, but it also covered rural private schools and private aided schools located in villages. The study revealed that one in four teachers was absent at a typical government run primary school. India has the second-highest average absence rate among eight countries. The teacher absence rates in eight countries are presented in Table 1.1

Table 1.1 Teacher Absence Rates in Different Countries

	Teacher Absence (%)
Peru	11
Ecuador	14
Papua New Guinea	15
Bangladesh	16
Zambia	17
Indonesia	19
India	25
Uganda	27

Within India, the absence rate ranged from 14.6 per cent in Maharashtra to 41.9 per cent in Jharkhand. Absence rates are generally higher in low income states. Teacher absence rates in different states are presented in Table 1.2 (Kremer and Others, 2004).

Table 1.2 Teacher Absence Rates in Government run Schools in different States in India

State	Absence (%)	State	Absence (%)
Maharashtra	14.6	West Bengal	24.7
Gujarat	17.0	Andhra Pradesh	25.3
Madhya Pradesh	17.6	Chhattisgarh	30.6
Kerala	21.2	Uttaranchal	32.8
Himachal Pradesh	21.2	Assam	33.8
Tamil Nadu	21.3	Punjab	34.4
Haryana	21.7	Bihar	37.8
Karnataka	21.7	Jharkhand	41.9
Orissa	23.4		
Rajasthan	23.7	Weighted Average	24.8

1.3.0 Need for the Study

Teachers remain absent /are not able to attend school for a number of reasons. Teachers are deployed for certain non-professional duties such as participation in elections to local bodies, State Legislatures and Parliament, decennial population Census, disaster relief duties, polio drop campaigns, preparing voters' list, animal and bird surveys, below poverty line survey, ration card verification, generating awareness among people about leprosy, preparing project activities to be conducted by different panchayats, literacy campaign etc.

Further teachers have to go to their Education Department for getting their leave sanctioned, GPF Advance, seeking release of their dues, annual increment, transfer, to participate in meetings and departmental functions, etc. The situation in the education department is generally so bad that teachers feel that unless they go personally, their case would not move. Teachers are also required to undergo mandatory 20 days in-service education and training every year under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. It has been observed that teachers and students are also required

to receive high officials and VIPs. Teachers are also required to participate in various awareness programmes such as HIV/AIDS, Polio and welcome programmes. These reasons coupled with teachers' illness, and to discharge their family responsibilities and social obligations, etc. increase teacher absence rate. Further absence rates are higher during rainy season, extreme weather conditions, festivals, towards the end of the calendar year, harvesting period, festivals, etc. Absence rates are not the same the whole year.

The All India Primary Teachers' Federation shared the findings of the study conducted by Kremer and others with the members of the state affiliates, at the state, district and block level. The teachers opined that teachers' rate of absenteeism is high on account of factors referred to above. But it is not as high as reported in the said study throughout the year. They expressed that the findings of the study are tarnishing the image of teachers. They further expressed that inadequacy of infrastructure facilities such as toilets, electricity, safe drinking water, rooms for instruction and teaching work-force affect adversely teacher motivation and increase teacher absence rate. Kremer and others (2004) also found that absence rate was considerably lower in schools with better infrastructure – a potentially important element of working conditions.

In the light of the above situation, All India Primary Teachers' Federation (AIPTF) decided to undertake a study to determine rate of teacher absenteeism in government primary/elementary schools. The present study was undertaken with the objectives specified below:

1.4.0 Objectives of the Study

The study was conducted to:

- determine teacher absenteeism rate in government run primary/elementary schools; and
- find out specific reasons for their absence from schools

1.5.0 Design of the study

Sample :

The survey method was used to collect the requisite data for the study. The study was conducted in three states only – Orissa, Uttrakhand and Tamilnadu. One state

was selected from each of the Eastern, Northern and Southern regions of the country. Further one state was selected from those states in which the rate of teachers' absenteeism is very high and two other from those states in which the rate of absenteeism is moderate. In each of these states, only three districts were selected on a random basis. In each district, two to four blocks were selected. In each block, 10 per cent of primary schools were selected randomly. Districts and blocks covered in these states are mentioned below:

Orissa State

District	Block
1. Sundergarh	Bisra, Kuarmunda and Lathikata
2. Khordha	Khordha, Begunia and Bolagarh
3. Nayagarh	Nayagarh, Ranpur and Nuagaon

Uttarakhand State

District	Block
1. Dehradun	i) Vikas Nagar ii) Kalsi
2. Haridwar	i) Bahadarabad ii) Narson
3. Rudra Prayag	i) Ukhimath ii) Jhakhali

Tamilnadu State

District	Block
1. Ramanathapuram	i) Ramanathapuram ii) Thirupullani iii) Nainarkovil iv) Kadaladi
2. Sivagangai	i) S. Pudur ii) Thiruppathur iii) Singampunari iv) Kallal
3. Virudhu Nagar	i) Sattur ii) Vembakkottai iii) Thiruchuli iv) Rajapalayam

Tool

A questionnaire was developed to collect the requisite data for the study.

Procedure of Collection of data

Investigators were appointed to collect the data from the states under study. Each state appointed two to three investigators and one supervisor for the purpose. These investigators were qualified professional teachers who are either retired or in service.

Training of Investigators

Investigators appointed by the AIPTF were provided training at Shikshak Bhawan New Delhi for two days on 9th and 10th May 2007. During training, these investigators were sent to two primary schools in Delhi with a view to providing them experiences to collect the requisite data with the help of the questionnaire developed for the purpose. Investigators perceived the visit to schools as meaningful experiences to collect the data.

Collection of Data

Trained investigators visited the schools without any information to them. They ascertained from the head-teacher the position of teaching staff in her/his school and the number of teachers who were not present in the school on that day. Reasons for their absence/not being present in the school were also ascertained from the head-teacher. The school record in this regard was also consulted. These investigators made only one visit to each school. It took about three months to collect the requisite data from schools.

Delimitations

The following were the delimitations of the study

- The study was conducted in the states of Orissa, Uttarakhand and Tamilnadu only. In each state, only three districts were selected. In each district, two to four blocks were selected randomly. Only 10 per cent of schools in the selected blocks were covered.
- Only one visit was made to the selected schools.
- The study was conducted in Government run primary/elementary schools in the states mentioned above.

Teacher Absent II

This chapter presents data regarding teachers' absenteeism rate from schools. As mentioned in Chapter-I, the present study was conducted in three states – Orissa, Uttarakhand and Tamilnadu. In each of these states, three districts were covered. Names of these districts and the number of schools covered in these districts are mentioned in table 2.1.

Table 2.1 States, Districts, Schools and Teachers Covered

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Name of the District	No. of Schools Covered	No. of Teachers Covered
1	Orissa	i) Sundergarh	30	94
		ii) Khorda	31	119
		iii) Nayagarh	30	114
2	Uttarakhand	i) Dehradun	37	103
		ii) Haridwar	39	149
		iii) Rudra Prayag	29	56
3	Tamilnadu	i) Ramanathapuram	33	114
		ii) Sivagangai	33	145
		iii) Virudhu Nagar	52	246
Total			314	1140

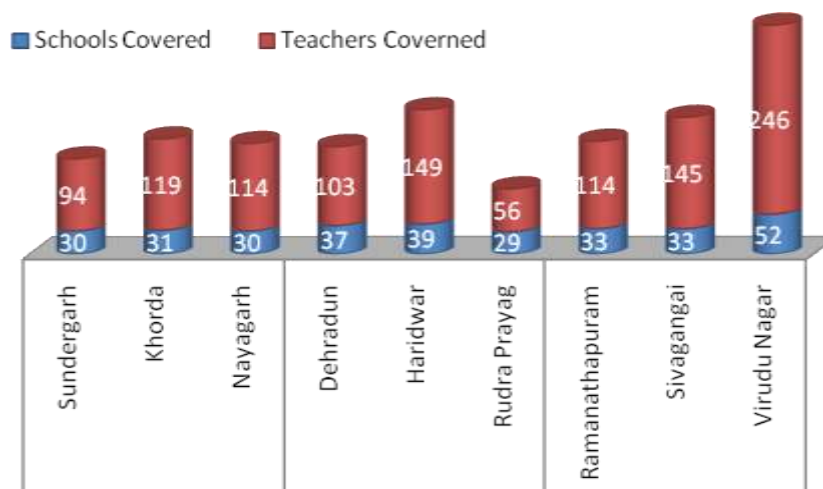


Figure 2.1 Number of Schools and Teachers covered

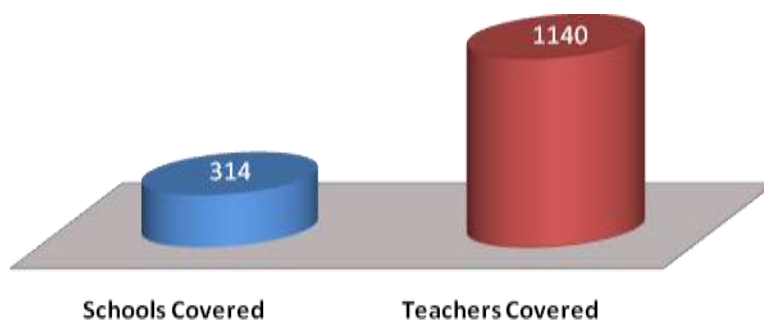


Figure 2.2 Number of Schools and Teachers covered in Orissa, Uttarakhand and Tamlinadu

Investigators from the concerned state primary teachers association visited schools with a view to determining the number of teachers who were not present in the school on that day. The data in this regard are presented block-wise. The data related to teacher absenteeism in the selected blocks of the said districts in Orissa state are presented first.

Orissa State

In Orissa state, three districts were covered. In each district, three blocks were covered. The data regarding teachers' absenteeism in the selected blocks from Sundergarh district are presented in Table 2.2. The table manifests the number and percentage of teachers who were absent/not present in their school.

Table- 2.2 Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Sundergarh District

Sl. No	Name of the Block	No. of schools covered			No. of teachers									Percentage of teachers not present in school		
					appointed in schools			present in School			not present in school					
		R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T
1	Kuarmunda	07	03	10	18	07	25	16	07	23	2	-	2	11.1	-	8.0
2	Lathikata	10	-	10	44	-	44	38	-	38	6	-	6	13.6	-	13.6
3	Bisra	10	-	10	25	-	25	22	-	22	3	-	3	12.0	-	12.0
	Total	27	03	30	87	07	94	76	07	83	11	-	11	12.6	-	11.7

It is evident from table 2.2 that only three schools in the urban area were covered in Kuarmunda block alone. Further all the seven teachers appointed in these schools were present in their school. The percentage of teachers who were not present in their school in these three blocks

ranges from 8 in Kuarmunda block to 13.6 in Lathikata block. Only 11.7 per cent teachers were not present in their school in these blocks.

The number and percentage of teachers who were not present in their school in Khordha district is highlighted in Table 2.3

Table 2.3 Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Khordha District

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of schools covered			No. of teachers									Percentage of teachers not present in schools		
					appointed in schools			present in schools			Not present in schools					
		R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T
1	Khordha	10	-	10	42	-	42	31	-	31	11	-	11	26.2	-	26.2
2	Begunia	10	-	10	27	-	27	22	-	22	05	-	05	18.5	-	18.5
3	Bolagarh	11	-	11	50	-	50	41	-	41	09	-	09	18.0	-	18.0
	Total	31	-	31	119		119	94	-	94	25	-	25	21.0	-	21.0

Table 2.3 manifests that all the 31 schools covered under Khorda, Begunia and Bolagarh blocks were in the rural area. The table further manifests that rate of teachers' absenteeism is quite high i.e. 26.2 per cent in Khordha block. In other two blocks, percentage of teachers who were not present in their school is around 18 per cent. Teacher' absenteeism rate in the district is, however, 21.0 per cent. It is higher than that in Sundergarh district.

The data with regard to teachers who not were present in their school in Nayagarh, Rampur and Nuagaon blocks of Nayagarh district are presented in Table 2.4

Table 2.4 Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Nayagarh District

Sl. No.	Name of the Block				No. of teachers									Percentage of teachers not present in schools		
		No. of schools covered			appointed in schools			present in schools			not present in schools					
		R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T
1	Nayagarh	10	-	10	37	-	37	23	-	23	14	-	14	37.8	-	37.8
2	Ranpur	10	-	10	28	-	28	20	-	20	08	-	08	28.6	-	28.6
3	Nuagaon	10	-	10	49	-	49	30	-	30	19	-	19	38.8	-	38.8

	Total	30	-	30	114	-	114	73	-	73	41	-	41	36.0	-	36.0
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Table 2.4 reveals that percentage of teachers who were not present in their school in all the three blocks of Nayagarh district is very high. It ranges from 28.6 per cent in Ranpur block to 38.8 per cent in Nuagaon block. In the district of Nayagarh 36 per cent teachers were not present in their school.

Table 2.5 presents data regarding percentage of teachers who were not present in their school in all the three districts covered in this study. Data in this regard are also depicted through Figure 2.3

Table 2.5 District-wise Number and Percentage of Teachers not present in Schools

Sl. No.	Name of the district	No. of schools covered			No. of teachers									Percentage of teachers not present in schools		
					appointed in schools			present in school			not present in school					
		R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T
1	Sundergarh	27	03	30	87	07	94	76	07	83	11	-	11	12.6	-	11.7
2	Khordha	31	-	31	119	-	119	94	-	94	25	-	25	21.0	-	21.0
3	Nayagarh	30	-	30	114	-	114	73	-	73	41	-	41	36.0	-	36.0
	Total	88	03	91	320	07	327	243	07	250	77	-	77	24.1	-	23.5

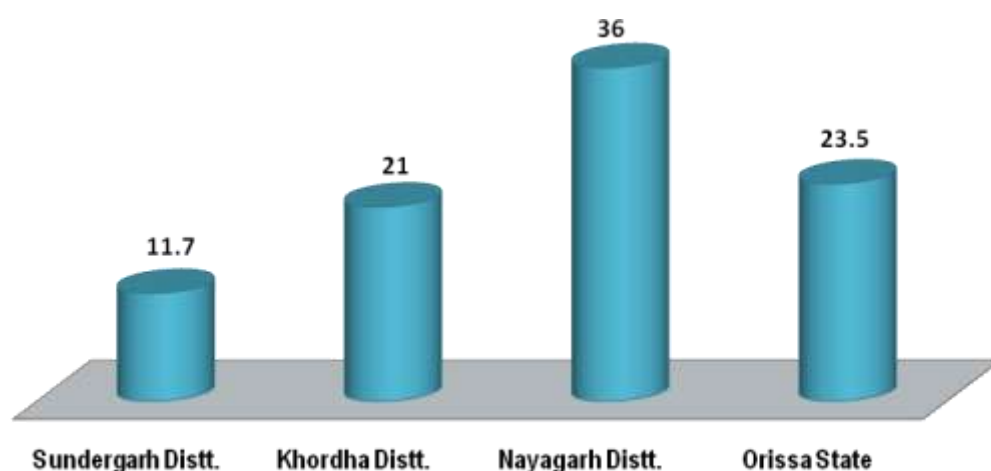


Figure 2.3 Percentage of teachers not present in schools

Table 2.5 reveals that the percentage of teachers who were not present in their school is the highest i.e. 36 percent in the district of Nayagarh. It is the lowest i.e. 11.7 in Sundergarh district. The percentage of teachers who were not present in these districts on a average is 23.5. Kremer and associates (2004) also found that the rate of teacher absenteeism from their school in Orissa state was 23.4 per cent.

Uttarakhand State

In the state of Uttarakhand, three districts – Dehradun, Haridwar and Rudra Prayag were covered. In each district, only two blocks were covered. Table 2.6 presents data regarding number and percentage of teachers who were not present in the school when investigator from the state primary teachers association visited the schools.

Table 2.6 Block-wise Number and Percentage of Teachers not present in Schools in Dehradun District

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of Schools Covered			No. of teachers									Percentage of teachers not present in schools		
					appointed in Schools			present in Schools			not present in Schools					
		R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T
1	Vikas Nagar	17	-	17	59	-	59	35	-	35	24	-	24	40.7	-	40.7
2	Kalsi	20	-	20	44	-	44	29	-	29	15	-	15	34.1	-	34.1
	Total	37	-	37	103	-	103	64	-	64	39	-	39	37.8	-	37.8

Table 2.6 reveals that the rate of teachers' absenteeism in these selected blocks is very high. It is 40.7 per cent in Vikas Nagar block and 34.1 per cent in Kalsi block. On an average, teachers' absenteeism rate is 37.8 per cent in these blocks.

The rate of teachers' absenteeism from schools in the district of Haridwar is presented in the table 2.7

Table 2.7 Block-wise Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Haridwar District

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of Schools Covered			No. of teachers									Percentage of teachers not present in schools		
					appointed in Schools			present in Schools			not present in Schools					
		R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T
1	Bahadarabad	24	-	24	103	-	103	60	-	60	43	-	43	41.7	-	41.7
2	Narson	15	-	15	46	-	46	35	-	35	11	-	11	23.9	-	23.9
	Total	39	-	39	149	-	149	95	-	95	54	-	54	36.2	-	36.2

Table 2.7 reveals that 41.7 per cent teachers were not present in their school in Bahadarabad block. On the other hand 23.9 per cent teachers were not present in their school in Narson block. On an average 36.2 per cent were not present in their school in the said the blocks. This rate of teachers' absenteeism from their school in these blocks is quite high.

The number and percentage of teachers who were not present in schools in Ukhimath and Jakholi blocks of Rudra Prayag district is presented in table 2.8

Table 2.8 Block-wise Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Rudra Prayag District

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of Schools Covered			No. of teachers									Percentage of teachers not present in schools		
					appointed in Schools			present in School			Not present in School					
		R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T
1	Ukhimath	18	-	18	34	-	34	28	-	28	6	-	6	17.8	-	17.8
2	Jakholi	11	-	11	22	-	22	17	-	17	5	-	5	22.7	-	22.7
	Total	29	-	29	56	-	56	45	-	45	11	-	11	19.7	-	19.7

Table 2.8 manifests that on a average 19.7 per cent teachers were not present in their school in Ukhimath and Jakholi blocks. The rate of teachers' absenteeism in these blocks of

Prayag districts is quite low when we compare the rate of absenteeism with blocks in Dehradun and Haridwar districts.

Table 2.9 presents data regarding teachers' absenteeism in all the three districts in Uttarakhand state. The data are also depicted through figure 2.4

Table 2.9 District-wise Number and Percentage of Teachers not present in their School

Sl. No.	Name of the District	No. of Schools Covered			No. of teachers									Percentage of present of teachers not present in schools		
					appointed in Schools			present in Schools			Not present in Schools					
		R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T
1	Dehradun	37	-	37	103	-	103	64	-	64	39	-	39	37.8	-	37.8
2	Haridwar	39	-	39	149	-	149	95	-	95	54	-	54	36.2	-	36.2
3	Rudra Prayag	29	-	29	56	-	56	45	-	45	11	-	11	19.7	-	19.7
	Total	105	-	105	308	-	308	204	-	204	104	-	104	33.8	-	33.8

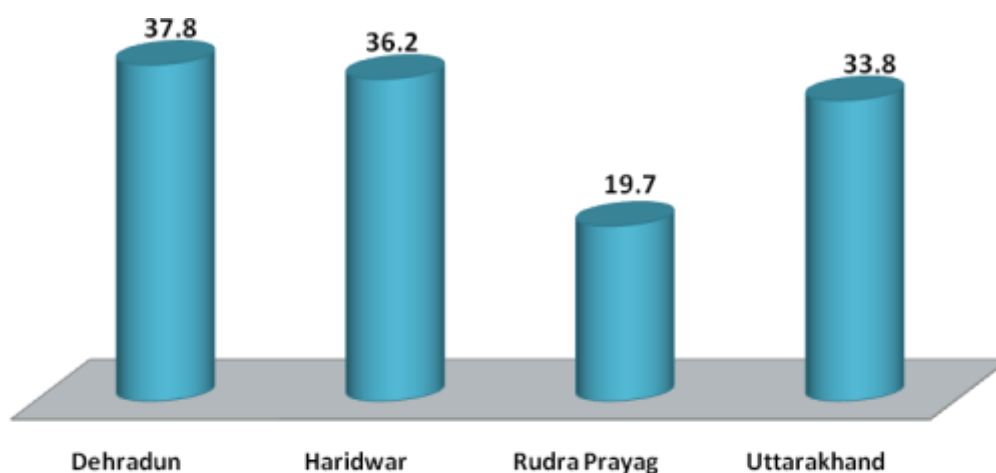


Figure No. 2.4 Percentage of teachers not present in their school

The table 2.9 reveals that teachers' absenteeism rate is quite high in Dehradun and Haridwar districts. It is quite low in Rudra Prayag district. On an average, the rate of

teachers' absenteeism in Uttarakhand state is 33.8 per cent. Kremer and associates (2004) too found that teachers' absenteeism rate in Uttarkhand was 32.8 percent.

Tamilnadu State

In Tamilnadu state also, three districts - Ramanathapuram, Sivagangai and Virudhu Nagar were covered. In each district, four blocks were covered. Table 2.10 specifies number and percentage of teachers who were not present in their school in selected blocks of Ramanathapuram district.

Table- 2.10 Block-wise Number and Percentage of Teachers not present in their School in Ramanathapuram District

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of schools covered			No. of teachers									Percentage of teachers not present in schools		
					appointed in schools			present in Schools			not present in schools					
		R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T
1	Ramanathapuram	7	-	7	44	-	44	37	-	37	7	-	7	15.9	-	15.9
2	Thirupullani	9	-	9	29	-	29	24	-	24	5	-	5	17.2	-	17.2
3	Nainarkovil	7	-	7	18	-	18	14	-	14	4	-	4	22.3	-	22.3
4	Kadaladi	10	-	10	23		23	17	-	17	6		6	26.1		26.1
	Total	33	-	33	114	-	114	92	-	92	22	-	22	19.3	-	19.3

Table 2.10 reveals that percentage of teachers who were not present in their school ranges from 15.9 to 26.1 in the selected blocks mentioned in the table. The highest rate of teachers' absenteeism i.e. 26.1 per cent is in Kadaladi block and the lowest i.e. 15.9 per cent in Ramanathapuram. Overall percentage of teachers who were not present in their school in Ramanathapuram district is 19.3 per cent.

Table 2.11 presents data regarding teachers' absenteeism in four blocks of Sivagangai district – S. Pudur, Thiruppathur, Singampunari and Kallal.

Table 2.11 Block-wise Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Sivagangai District

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of schools covered			No. of teachers									Percentage of teachers not present in schools		
					appointed in schools			present in schools			Not present in schools					
		R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T
1	S. Pudur	6	-	6	15	-	15	12	-	12	3	-	3	20	-	20
2	Thiruppathur	6	4	10	17	47	64	15	47	62	2	-	2	11.8	-	3.1
3	Singampunari	7	-	7	33	-	33	32	-	32	1	-	1	3.0	-	3.0
4	Kallal	10	-	10	33	-	33	28		28	5	-	5	15.2		15.2
	Total	29	4	33	98	47	145	87	47	134	11	-	11	11.2	-	7.6

Table 2.11 reveals that teachers' absenteeism rate is the highest (20%) in S. Pudur block and the lowest (3.0 per cent) in Singampunari block. It is interesting to highlight that in Thiruppathur block only four schools were in the urban area. All the 47 teachers appointed in these schools were present. Though the data in this regard is not adequate, but it does indicate that the rate of teachers' presence is better in urban schools than in rural schools. However, the rate of teachers' absenteeism in Sivagangai district is quite low (7.6 per cent)

In Virudhu Nagar district, four blocks – Sathur, Vembakkottai, Thiruchuli and Rajapalayam were covered. Table 2.12 present data regarding teachers' absenteeism rate from schools in these blocks of Virudhu Nagar district.

Table 2.12 Blocks wise Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Virudhu Nagar District.

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of schools covered			No. of teachers									Percentage of teachers not present in schools		
					appointed in schools			present in schools			Not present in schools					
		R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T
1	Sathur	10	2	12	46	14	60	44	13	57	2	1	3	4.3	7.1	5.0
2	Vembakkottai	12	-	12	53	-	53	49	-	49	4	-	4	7.5	-	7.5
3	Thiruchuli	12	-	12	54	-	54	48	-	48	6	-	6	11.1	-	11.1
4	Rajapalayam	9	7	16	39	40	79	32	35	67	7	5	12	17.9	12.5	15.2
	Total	43	9	52	192	54	246	173	48	221	19	6	25	9.9	11.1	10.1

Table 2.12 manifests that teachers' absenteeism rate is very low (10.1%) in Virudhu nagar district. Teachers' absenteeism rate in blocks ranges from 5.0 to 15.2 per cent. The highest absenteeism rate (15.2%) is in Rajapalayam block and the lowest (5.0%) in Sathur block.

Table 2.13 highlights teachers' absenteeism rate in all the three districts covered in this study. The teachers' absenteeism rate is also depicted through figure 2.5

Table 2.13 District-wise Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Tamilnadu state

Sl. No	Name of the District	No. of teachers			Not present in school	Percentage of teachers not present in schools
		No. of schools covered	appointed in school	present in school		
1	Ramanathapuram	33	114	92	22	19.3
2	Sivagangai	33	145	134	11	7.6
3	Virudhunagar	52	246	221	25	10.1
	Total	118	505	447	58	11.5

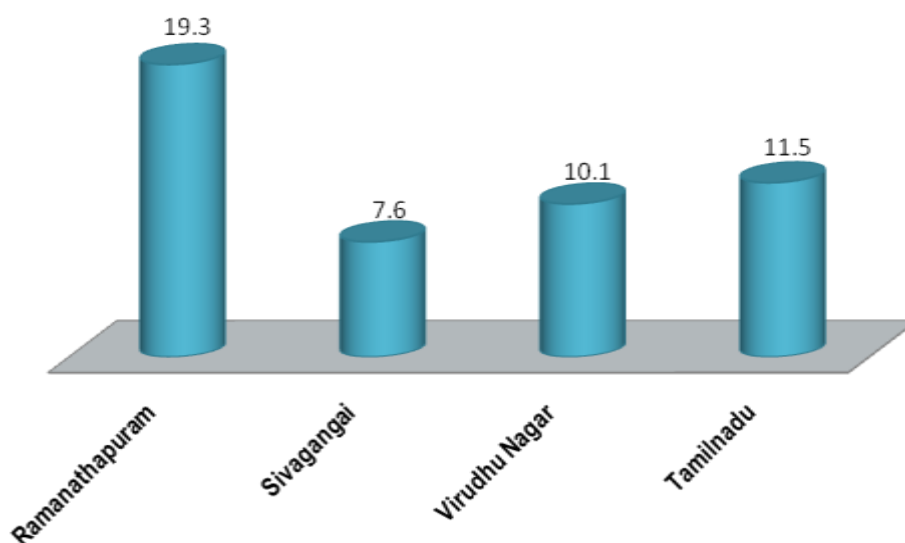


Figure 2.5 Percentage of Teachers not present in Schools

Table 2.13 reveals that teachers' absenteeism rate is high (19.3%) in Ramanathapuram district. The lowest teachers' absenteeism (7.6%) is in Sivagangai district. Overall teachers'

absenteeism in Tamilnadu state is 11.5 per cent. It is quite low in comparison to teachers' absenteeism rate in other states – Orissa and Uttarakhand.

Table 2.14 manifests teachers' absenteeism rate in the states of Orissa, Uttarakhand and Tamilnadu. Teachers' absenteeism rate is also depicted through Figure 2.6

Table 2.14 State-wise Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools

Sl. No.	Name of the State	No. of Schools Covered	No. of teachers			Percentage of teachers not present in schools
			appointed in Schools	present in School	not present in School	
1	Orissa	91	327	250	77	23.5
2	Uttarakhand	105	308	204	104	33.8
3	Tamilnadu	118	505	447	58	11.5
4	All the three states	314	1140	901	239	21.0

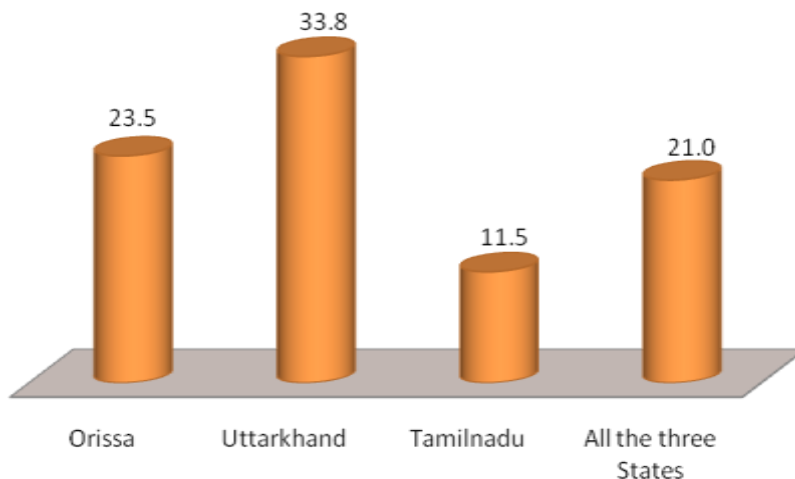


Figure 2.6 Percentage of Teachers not present in Schools

Table 2.14 reveals that in all the three states, 314 schools and 1140 teachers were covered. The rate of teachers' absenteeism is the highest (33.8%) in Uttarakhand and the lowest (11.5%) in Tamilnadu. The rate of teachers' absenteeism is 23.5 per cent in Orissa. The overall average teachers' absenteeism in these states is 21 per cent.

The study conducted by Educational Consultants India too revealed that only 24 per cent in Andhra Pradesh, 15.4 per cent Madhya Pradesh and 11 per cent in Uttar Pradesh were not present in their school when unannounced visits were made to schools (Ed. CIL, 2008).

Specific Reasons for Teachers' Absence from Schools

IV

In chapter-II, teachers' absenteeism rate from schools has been presented. The data collected from schools reveal that 23.5 per cent teachers were not present in their school in the state of Orissa, 33.8 per cent in Uttarakhand state and 11.5 per cent in Tamilnadu state. Overall rate of teachers' absenteeism in these states is 21.0 per cent.

The study conducted by Kremer *et al* (2004) revealed that one in four teachers was absent at a typical government run primary school in India. It also highlights that India has the second-highest average absence rate among countries.

The study conducted by Kremer *et al* (2004) did not, however study where were those teachers who were absent from their school when the investigator(s) visited their school. The present study besides determining rate of teachers' absenteeism in the states of Orissa, Uttarakhand and Tamilnadu, studied specific reasons for teachers not being present in their school. It attempted to determine the percentage of teachers who were not present in their school on account of personal reasons, academic reasons and because of their engagement in non-professional work assigned to them by their authorities.

Personal reasons included illness, maternity leave, domestic work such participation in marriage parties, religious functions, festivals etc. Academic reasons included participation in in-service education programmes for teachers such as seminars, orientation courses and workshops. Non-professional work included election duty, preparation of voters' list,

undertaking survey for different purposes such as people below poverty line, identification of dropouts from primary schools, campaign against diseases such as polio etc.

Specific reasons for teachers' absence from their schools are presented in the following paragraphs. Data in this regard are presented first in respect of Orissa state.

Orissa state

The data collected from schools are presented district wise. Table 3.1 presents data regarding number and percentage of teachers who were not present in their school due to personal reasons, academic reasons, and because of their engagement in non-professional work assigned to them.

Table 3.1 Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Sundergarh District due to Various Reasons

Name of the District	Reason for not being present in school	Total no. of teachers in Sampled schools	No. of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons	Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons
Sundergarh	Personal I. Earned leave II. Casual Leave III. Medical /Maternity leave	94	4	4.25
	Academic Participation in training programmes, seminars, workshops etc.		4	4.25
	Non-professional Work I. Election Duty II. Preparation of Voters' list III. Survey for different purposes such as people below poverty line, drop outs from schools IV. Campaign against illiteracy, diseases-Polio etc.		3	3.20

	Total	94	11	11.70
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Table 3.1 reveals that out of 11.70 per cent teachers who were not present in their school, only 4.25 per cent were not there in their school due to personal reasons. The rest i.e. 7.45 per cent were not there either due to academic reasons (4.25 %) or were engaged in non-professional work (3.20%) assigned to them by the authorities of the education department.

Table 3.2 manifests number and percentage of teachers who were not present in their school due to various reasons – personal, academic and non-professional work in Khordha district.

Table 3.2 Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Khordha District due to Various Reasons

Name of the District	Reason for not being present in school	No. of teachers in sampled schools	No. of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons	Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons
Khordha	Personal I. Earned leave II. Casual Leave III. Medical /Maternity Leave	119	4	3.36
	Academic Participation in training programmes, seminars, workshops etc.		16	13.44
	Non-professional Work I. Election Duty II. Preparation of Voters' list III. Survey for different purposes such as people below poverty line, drop outs from schools IV. Campaign against illiteracy, diseases- Polio, etc.		5	4.20

	Total	119	25	21.0
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Table 3.2 reveals that out of 119 teachers, only 4 (3.36 per cent) teachers were not present in their school due to personal reasons. Further 16 (13.44 per cent) were not there due to academic reasons and 5 (4.20 per cent) on account of their engagement in non-professional work.

Table 3.3 presents data regarding number and percentage of teachers who were not present in their school due of various reasons in Nayagarh district.

Table 3.3 Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Nayagarh District due to Various Reasons

Name of the District	Reason for not being present in school	No. of teachers in sampled schools	No. of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons	Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons
Nayagarh	Personal I. Earned leave II. Casual Leave III. Medical/maternity Leave etc	114	10	8.8
	Academic Participation in training programmes, seminars and workshops		27	23.7
	Non-professional Work I. Election Duty II. Preparation Voters' list III. Survey for different purposes such as people below poverty line, drop outs from schools IV. Campaign against illiteracy diseases-polio etc.		4	3.5
	Total	114	41	36.0

In this district, 36.0 per cent teachers were not present in their school. It is interesting to highlight that out of 36 per cent, only 8.8 per cent were not present in their school due to personal reasons. The rest were not there in their school either due to academic reasons (23.7%) or their engagement in non-professional work (3.5%).

Table 3.4 presents data regarding teachers' absence from schools due to personal and academic reasons and their engagement in non-professional work in all the three districts – Sundergarh, Khordha and Nayagarh. The data are also depicted through figures 3.1 and 3.2.

Table 3.4 Number and Percentage of teachers not Present in Schools in different districts in the State of Orissa due to Various Reasons

Sl. No.	Name of the District	No. of teachers in sampled schools	No. of teachers not present in schools	Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to reason			Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons
				Personal	Academic	Non-professional work	
1	Sundergarh	94	11	4.25 (4)	4.25 (4)	3.20 (3)	11.7
2	Khordha	119	25	3.36 (4)	13.44 (16)	4.20(5)	21.0
3	Nayagarh	114	41	8.8(10)	23.7(27)	3.5(4)	36.0
	TOTAL	327	77	5.5(18)	14.4 (47)	3.6(12)	23.5

* Figures in bracket indicate the number of teachers

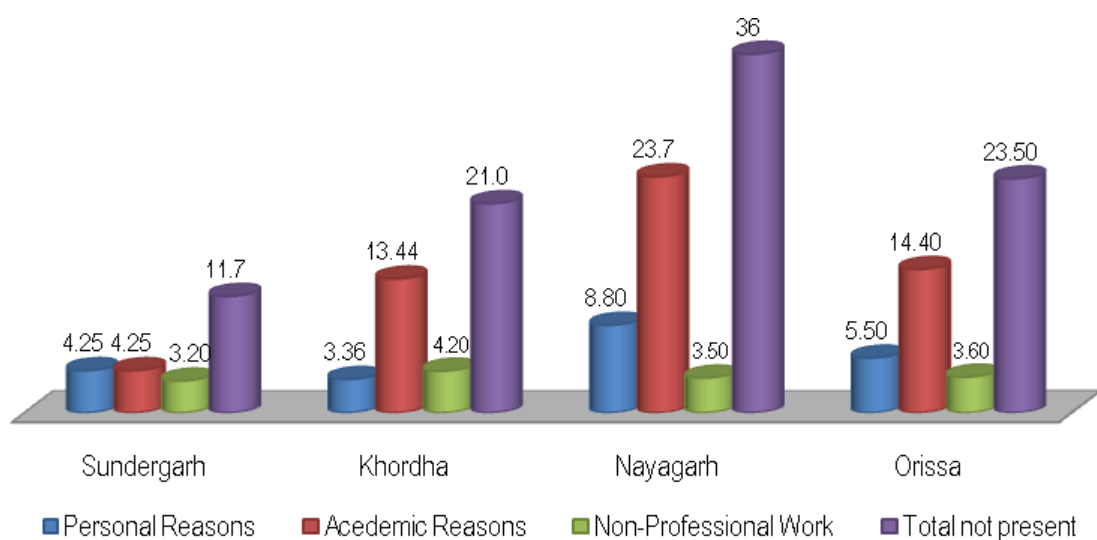


Figure 3.1 Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons

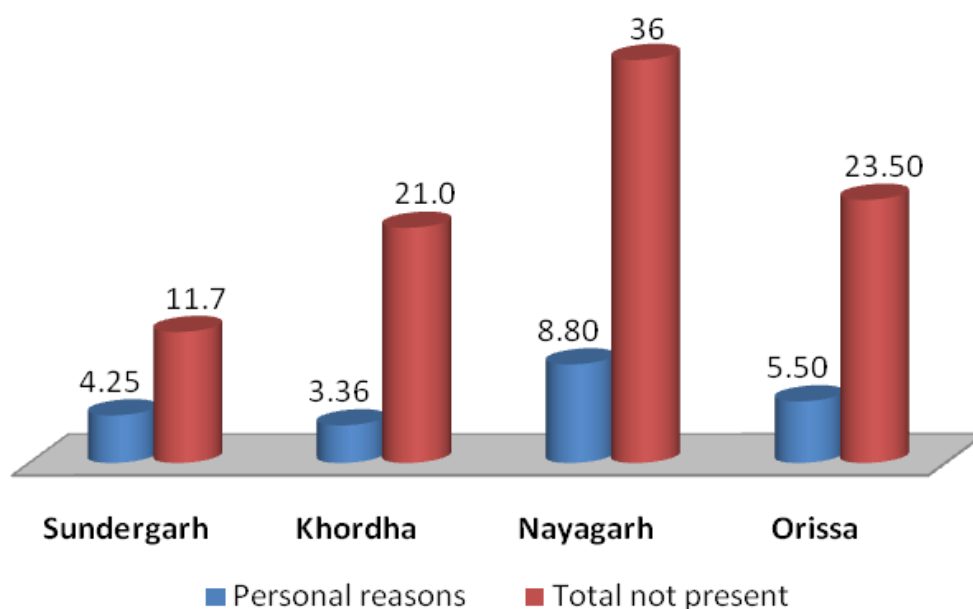


Figure 3.2 Percentage of Teachers not present in School due to Personal Reasons

Table 3.4 reveals that teachers' absenteeism rate on an average in these districts is 23.5 per cent. Out of 23.5 per cent teachers who were not present in their school, only 5.5 per cent were not there due to their personal reasons, 14.4 per cent due to academic reasons and 3.6 per cent were engaged in non-professional work.

Uttarakhand State

Table 3.5 specifies number and percentage of teachers in selected blocks of Dehradun district who were not present in their school.

Table 3.5 Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Dehradun District due to Various Reasons

Name of the District	Reason for not being present in school	No. of teachers in Sampled schools	No. of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons	Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons
Dehradun	Personal I. Earned leave II. Casual Leave III. Medical/Maternity Leave etc	103	19	18.4
			3	2.9
	Academic Participation in training programmes, seminars, workshops		1	1.0
	Non-professional Work I. Election Duty II. Preparation of Voters' list III. Survey for counting out of school children IV. Campaign against illiteracy diseases-Polio etc.		14	13.6
			2	1.9
				15.5
	Total	103	39	37.8

In Dehradun district, a high percentage (37.8%) of teachers were not present in their school. Out of 37.8 per cent, a high percentage of teachers (21.3%) were not present due to

their personal reasons. Out of these, 2.9 per cent teachers (3 teachers) were not present in their school due to their illness. Further, 15.5 per cent teachers were not there in their school due to their engagement in non-professional work. Of these, 13.6 per cent were engaged in preparation of voters' list and 1.9 per cent for survey of counting children in the age-group 6 to 14.

The number and percentage of teachers who were not present in their school in Haridwar district is mentioned in Table 3.6

Table 3.6 Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Haridwar District due to Various Reasons

Name of the District	Reason for not being present in school	No. of teachers in sampled schools	No. of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons	Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons
Haridwar	Personal I. Earned leave II. Casual Leave III. Medical/Maternity Leave etc.	149	16 2	10.70 } 12.05 01.35
	Academic I. Participation in training programmes, seminars, workshops II. Attachment to other schools		27 7	} 18.1 } 22.80 } 4.7
	Non-professional Work I. Election Duty II. Preparation of Voters' list III. Survey for different purposes such as people below poverty line, drop out children IV. Campaign against illiteracy Diseases-Polio etc.		2	1.35

	Total	149	54	36.2
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Table 3.6 reveals that out of 36.2 per cent teachers who were not present in their school, only 12.05 per cent were not there due to personal reasons. Of these, 1.35 per cent were on leave due to illness/maternity leave. Further 18.1 per cent teachers were participating in training programmes and 4.7 per cent were attached to other schools. Besides 1.35 per cent were engaged in non-professional work - preparation of voters' list.

The number and percentage of children who were not present in their school in Rudra Prayag district is presented in Table 3.7

Table 3.7 Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in their School in Rudra Prayag District due to Various Reasons

Name of the District	Reason for not being present in school	Total No. of teachers in sampled schools	No. of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons	Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to reasons
Rudra Prayag	Personal Reasons? I. Earned leave II. Casual Leave III. Medical/Maternity Leave etc	56	8 } 1 } 9	14.3 01.8 } 16.1
	Academic Participation in training programmes, seminars, workshops, CRC meetings		2	3.6
	Non-professional Work I. Election Duty II. Preparation of voters' list III. Survey for different purposes such as people below poverty line, drop outs from schools IV. Campaign against	-	-	-

	illiteracy diseases- Polio etc.			
	Total	56	11	19.7

Table 3.7 manifests that out 19.7 per cent teachers who were not present in their schools, 16.1 per cent were not there on account of personal reasons. Further 1.8 per cent were not there in the school due to their illness or maternity leave. Besides 3.6 per cent teachers were not in the school as they were attending meeting in Cluster Resources Centres (CRCs).

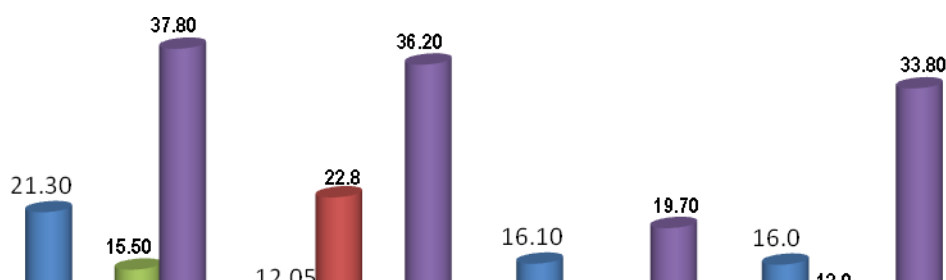
Table 3.8 depicts picture regarding teachers' absenteeism rate in all the three districts in the state of Uttarakhand. Data in this regard are also depicted through figures 3.3 and 3.4

Table 3.8 Number and Percentage of teachers not Present in Schools in different districts of State of Uttarakhand

S. No.	Name of the District	No. of teachers in sampled schools	No. of teachers not present in schools	Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to reasons			Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons
				Personal	Academic	Non-professional work	
1	Dehradun	103	39	21.3 (22)	1.0 (1)	15.5 (16)	37.8
2	Haridwar	149	54	12.05 (18)	22.80 (34)	1.35 (2)	36.2
3	Rudra Prayag	56	11	16.1 (9)	3.6 (2)	-	19.7
	TOTAL	308	104	16.0 (49)	12.0 (37)	5.8 (18)	33.8

Figures in brackets indicate number of teachers

Table 3.8 reveals that out of 33.8 per cent teachers who were not present in their school in the state of Uttarakhand, only 16.0 per cent were not there due to personal reasons. Twelve per cent were participating in training programmes and 5.8 per cent were engaged in non-professional work.



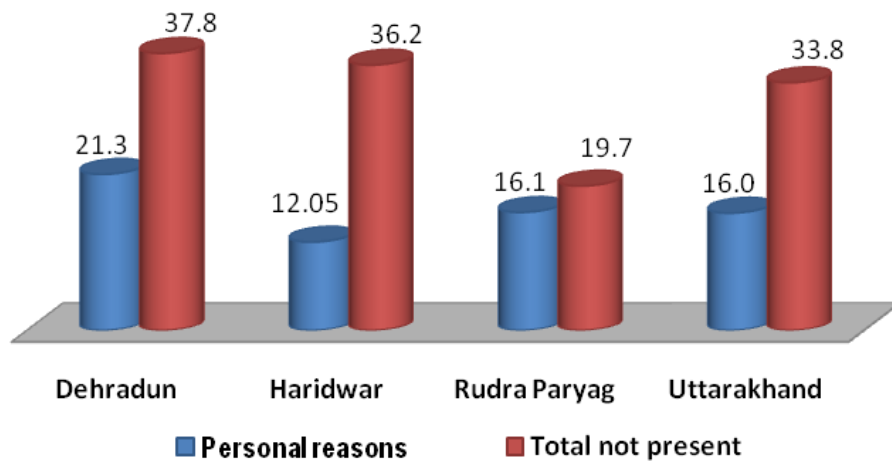


Figure 3.4 Percentage of Teachers not present in Schools due to Personal Reasons

Tamilnadu State

In Tamilnadu state, the study was conducted in three districts– Ramanathapuram, Sivagangai and Virudhu Nagar. Table 3.9 manifests the number and percentage of teachers who were not present in their school due to personal, and academic reasons, and because of their engagement in non-professional work.

Table 3.9 Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Ramanathapuram District due to Various Reasons

Name of the District	Reason for not being present in school	No. of teachers in sampled schools	No. of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons	Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons
Ramanathapuram	Personal I. Earned leave II. Casual Leave III. Medical IV. Maternity leave	114	2 (1.8%) 5 (4.4%) 3 (2.6%)	8.8
	Academic Participation in training programmes, seminars, workshops,(in yoga, peace education, computer training)		12	10.5
	Non-professional Work I. Election Duty II. Preparation of Voters' list III. Survey for different purposes such as people below poverty line, drop out children V. Campaign against illiteracy, diseases-Polio etc.	-	-	-
	Total	114	22	19.3

Table 3.9 reveals that out of 114 teachers, 22 (19.3 percent) were not present in their school. Of these, 12 (10.5%) teachers were not present in their school because they were participating in training programmes in yoga, peace education and computer education. The remaining 10 (8.8%) teachers were not there due to personal reasons. Of these, 3 (2.6%) teachers were on maternity leave, 5 (4.4%) on medical leave and remaining 2 (1.8%) on casual leave to attend to their personal work. It is interesting to highlight that none of the teachers from selected schools in the district was engaged in non-professional work.

Table 3.10 presents data regarding number and percentage of teachers who were not present in their school in Sivagangai district due to various reasons.

Table 3.10 Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in Sivagangai District due to Various Reasons

Name of the District	Reason for not being present in school	No. of teachers in sampled schools	No. of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons	Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons
Sivagangai	Personal I. Earned leave II. Casual Leave III. Medical / Maternity Leave	145	9	6.2
	Academic Participation in training programmes, seminars, workshops	-	2	1.4
	Non-professional Work I. Election Duty II. Voters List II. Survey for different purposes such as people below poverty line, drop out of students V. Campaign against illiteracy, diseases-Polio etc.		-	-
	Total	145	11	7.6

Table 3.10 manifests that out of 145 teachers in the sampled schools in Sivagangai district, 11 (7.6%) teachers were not present in their school. Of these, 9 (6.2%) were on leave due to some personal reasons and the remaining 2 (1.4%) were participating in in-service training programmes being organized by government agencies. It is interesting to observe that none of the teachers was engaged in non-professional work.

Table 3.11 highlights the number and percentage of teachers who were not present in their school in Virudhu Nagar district.

Table 3.11 Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in their School in Virudhu Nagar district due to various reasons

Name of the District	Reason for not being present in school	No. of teachers in sampled	No. of teachers not present in schools due to	Percentage of teachers not present in
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		schools	various reasons	schools due to various reasons
Virudhu Nagar	Personal I. Earned leave II. Casual Leave III. Medical /Maternity Leave	246	18	7.3
	Academic Participation in training programmes, seminars, workshops	-	7	2.8
	Non-professional Work I. Election Duty II. Preparation of Voters list III. Survey for different purposes such as people below poverty line, drop out children IV. Campaign against illiteracy, diseases-Polio etc.	-	-	-
	Total	246	25	10.1

Table 3.11 reveals that of 246 teachers, 25 (10.1%) were not present in their school. Of these, 18 (7.3%) were not there due to personal reasons and the remaining 7 (2.8%) due to their participation in-service training programmes.

Table 3.12 presents data regarding number and percentage of teachers who were not in their school due to personal and academic reasons in all the three districts of Tamilnadu state. Data in this regard are also depicted through figures 3.5 and 3.6.

Table 3.12 Number and Percentage of Teachers not Present in Schools in different Districts due to Various Reasons

S. No.	Name of the District	No. of teachers in sampled schools	No. and Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to reasons			Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons
			Personal	Academic	Non-professional Work	
1	Ramanathapuram	114	8.8 (10)	10.5 (12)	-	19.3
2	Sivagangai	145	6.2 (9)	1.4 (2)	-	7.6

3	Virudhu Nagar	246	7.3 (18)	2.8 (7)	-	10.1
	TOTAL	505	7.3 (37)	4.2 (21)	-	11.5

Figures in brackets indicate number of teachers.

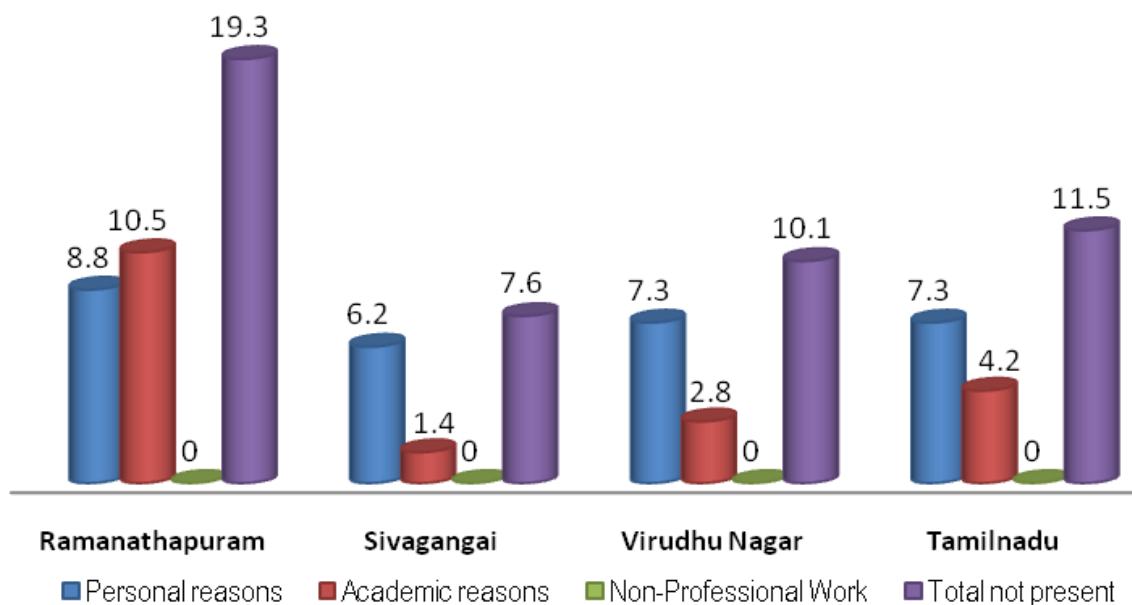


Figure 3.5 Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons

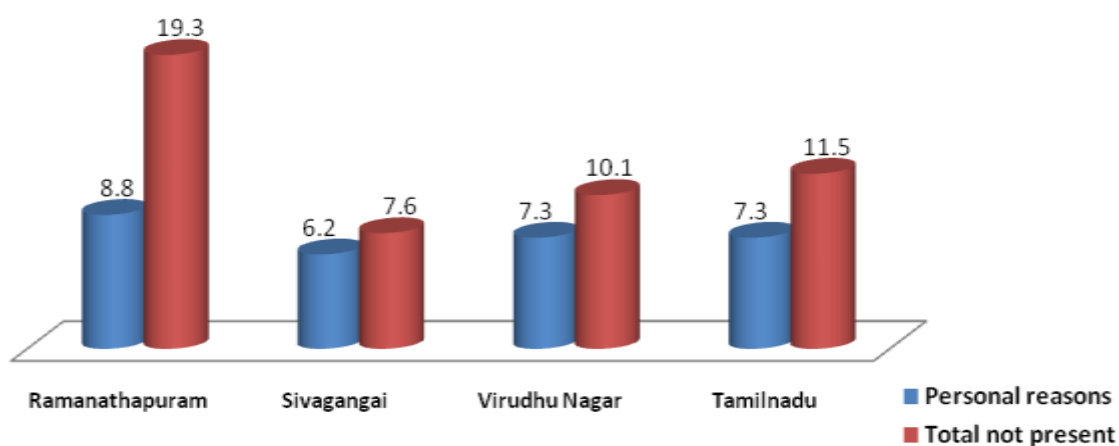


Figure 3.6 Percentage of Teachers not present in schools due to Personal Reasons

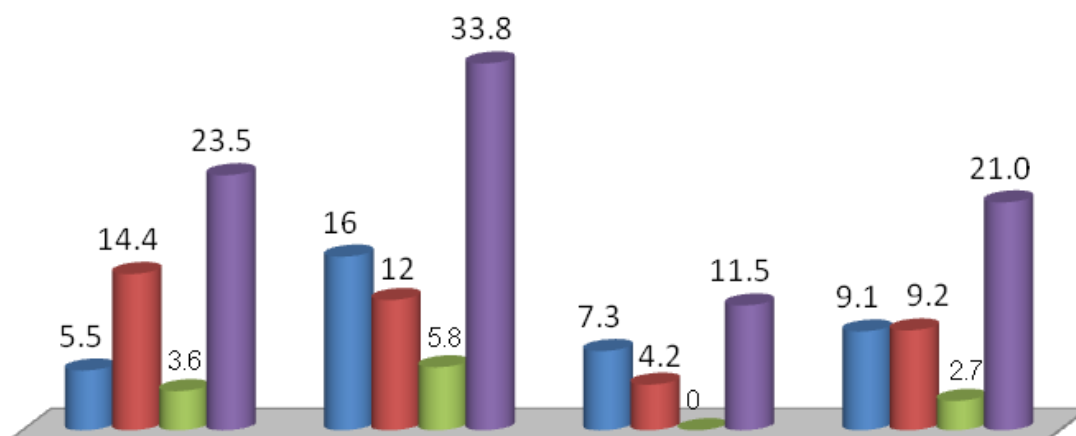
Table 3.12 reveals that out of 505 teachers in sampled schools in the districts of Ramanathapuram, Sivagangai and Virudhunagar, only 11.5% teachers were not present in their school. Of these, 7.3% were not there due to personal reasons and the remaining 4.2% due to their participation in-service training programmes. It is interesting to highlight that none of the teachers was engaged in non-professional work.

Table 3.13 presents number and percentage of teachers who were not present in their school due to personal and academic reasons and because of their engagement in non-professional work in the states of Orissa, Uttarakhand and Tamilnadu. Data have also been depicted through figures 3.7 and 3.8.

Table 3.13 **Number and Percentage of teachers not Present in Schools in different States due to Various Reasons**

Sl. No .	Name of the state	No. of teachers in sampled schools	No. of teachers not present in schools	Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to reasons			Percentage of teachers not percent in schools due to various reasons
				Personal	Academic	Non-professional Work	
1	Orissa	327	77	5.5 (18)	14.4 (47)	3.6 (12)	23.5
2	Uttarakhand	308	104	16.0 (49)	12.0 (37)	5.8(18)	33.8
3	Tamilnadu	505	58	7.3 (37)	4.2 (21)	-	11.5
4	All the three states	1140	239	9.1 (104)	9.2 (105)	2.7 (30)	21.0

Figures in bracket indicate number of teachers



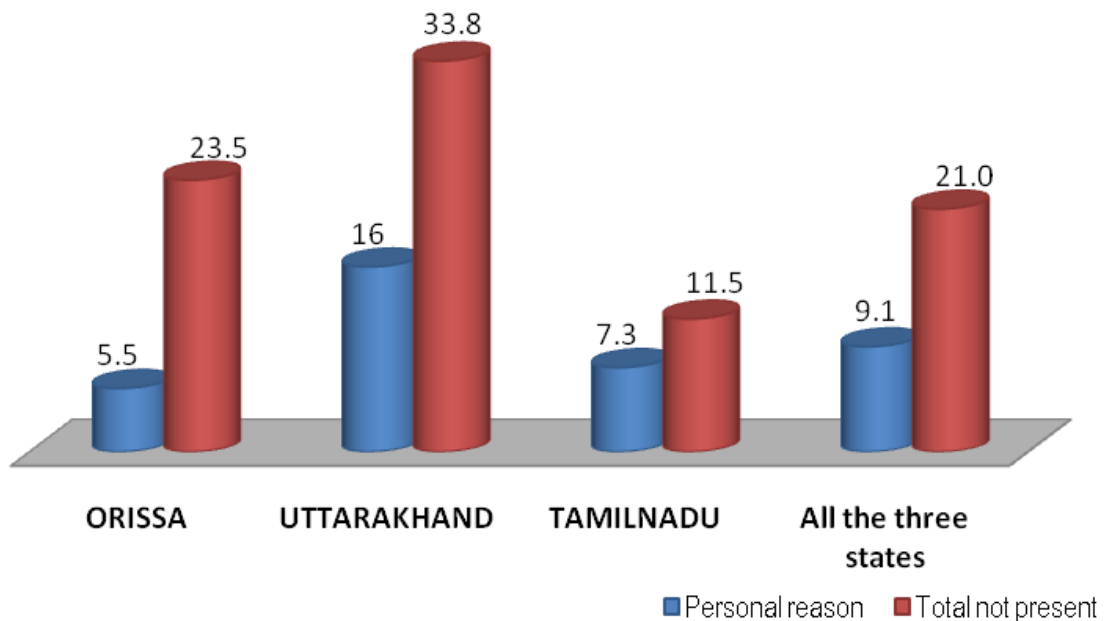


Figure 3.8 Teachers not present in from Schools due to Personal Reasons

Table 3.13 reveals that out of 1140 teachers in sampled schools in the states mentioned above, 21% teachers were not present in their school. Of these, only 9.1 per cent were not in their school due to personal reasons. Personal reasons included leave due to illness/maternity leave, domestic work, etc. Further 9.2 per cent teachers were not there due to their participation in in-service training programmes. The rest 2.7 per cent were engaged in non-professional work assigned to them by their authorities.

Main findings

The following are the main findings emanating from the study:

- © In Sundergarh district of Orissa, 11.7 per cent teachers were not present in their school. Twenty one per cent teachers were not present in their school in Khordha district and 36 per cent in Nayagarh district. On an average, 23.5 per cent teachers were not present in their school in these three districts.
- © In Uttarakhand state, 37.8 per cent teachers were not present in their school in Dehradun district. The percentage of teachers who were not present in their school in Haridwar and Rudra Prayag districts was 36.2 and 19.7 respectively. On an average, 33.8 per cent teachers were not present in these three districts.
- © In Tamilnadu state, 19.3 per cent teachers were not present in their school in Ramanathapuram district. The percentage of teachers who were not present in their school in Sivaganagai and Virudhu Nagar districts was 7.6 and 10.1 respectively. On an average, teachers' rate of absenteeism in these districts was 11.5 per cent.
- © In Orissa state, 23.5 per cent teachers were not present in their school. Of these, only 5.5 per cent were not present in their school due to their personal reasons. Further 14.4 per cent were participating in training programmes being organized by the state government and 3.6 per cent engaged in non-professional work assigned to them by the state authorities.
- © In Uttarakhand state, 33.8 per cent teachers were not present in their school. Of these, only 16 per cent were not there on account of personal reasons. Twelve cent

were participating in training programmes and 5.8 per cent engaged in non-professional work assigned to them by the state authorities.

- © In Tamil Nadu state, 11.5 per cent teachers were not present in their school. Of these, only 7.3 per cent were not there due to some personal reasons. The rest - 4.2 per cent were participating in training programmes.
- © On an average 21.0 per cent teachers were not in their school in the states of Orissa, Uttarakhand and Tamilnadu. Of these, only 9.1 per cent teachers were not present on account of personal reasons. Personal reasons included illness, maternity leave and leave to discharge responsibilities of their family and other social obligations. Further 9.2 per cent teachers were not present due to academic reasons- their participation in training programmes being organized by government agencies. Besides, 2.7 per cent teachers were not present as they were engaged in non-professional work assigned to them by their authorities.

The study reveals abundantly that teachers themselves are responsible for their absence from schools to a limited extent. Their absence is primarily caused by their participation in the training programmes being organized by the state authorities and also because of their involvement in non-professional assignments.

Suggestions for Increasing Teaching Hours

The following are the main suggestions emanating from the present study:

- © Teachers' absence from their school reduces teaching hours. To improve schooling quality, there is a need to increase teachers' teaching hours. Table 4.1 given below highlights specific reasons for teachers' absence in the states of Orissa, Uttarakhand and Tamilnadu.

Table 4.1 Specific Reasons for Teachers' Absence from Schools

Sl. No.	Name of the state	No. of teachers in sampled schools	No. of teachers not present in schools	Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to reasons			Percentage of teachers not present in schools due to various reasons
				Personal	Academic	Non-professional work	
1	Orissa	327	77	5.5 (18)	14.4 (47)	3.6 (12)	23.5
2	Uttarakhand	308	104	16.0 (49)	12.0 (37)	5.8(18)	33.8
3	Tamilnadu	505	58	7.3 (37)	4.2 (21)	-	11.5
4	All the states	1140	239	9.1 (104)	9.2 (105)	2.7 (30)	21.0

Figures in bracket indicate number of teachers

The table reflects that teachers' absence from school on account of personal reasons ranges from 5.5 per cent in Orissa to 16.0 per cent in Uttarakhand. Teachers' absence from school due to academic reasons ranges from 4.2 per cent in Tamilnadu to 14.4 per cent in Orissa. To increase teachers' teaching hours, there is a need to reduce suitably the duration of in-service training being imparted to teachers every year under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. This is because hardly any substitute teacher is posted in school when a teacher is under in-service training.

- 3.6 per cent teachers in Orissa and 5.8 per cent in Uttarakhand were engaged in non-professional work. Teachers should not be engaged in non-professional duties. This measure would further improve teachers' teaching hours in schools.
- In Uttarakhand state, 16 per cent teachers were not present in their school due to personal reasons. This percentage is quite high. The study conducted by Kremer et al (2004) reported that teachers' absence rate was lower in schools with better infrastructure facilities. The State Government of Uttarakhand needs to augment infrastructure facilities in its schools. This is one of the steps that the state government needs to take to reduce teachers' absenteeism rate and to increase their teaching hours in schools.

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