

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-58324

Title: The Academic Precariat: Combating Wage Theft, Delayed Compensation, and Economic Violence Among Contractual Teaching Staff.

Recommendation:

Accept as it is

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	✓			
Techn. Quality	✓			
Clarity	✓			
Significance	✓			

Reviewer's ID: JPR-130

Detailed Reviewer's Report

Overall Evaluation

The manuscript examines the legal protection available to contractual trainers, guest faculty, and vocational instructors against delayed remuneration in Indian higher education and skill development institutions. It critically analyzes constitutional provisions, labour legislation, judicial precedents, and sector-specific regulatory frameworks, including the Code on Wages, the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, the MSMED Act, UGC guidelines, AICTE regulations, and MSDE funding mechanisms. Based on this legal synthesis, the study proposes a policy framework centered on a mandatory 40-day payment rule to ensure timely remuneration and institutional accountability. The topic is highly relevant and addresses an important issue affecting contractual academic staff across India. The manuscript demonstrates extensive legal research and integrates statutory provisions, constitutional principles, judicial decisions, and regulatory guidelines into a coherent policy-oriented discussion. The proposed institutional framework is practical and has significant implications for educational institutions, policymakers, and labour administrators. The conclusion effectively reinforces the need for legally enforceable mechanisms to prevent delayed payments and protect the dignity of contractual educators.

One of the major strengths of the manuscript is the comprehensive compilation of judicial precedents and regulatory provisions. The proposed "Approved Hour = Paid Hour" principle and the 40-day payment mandate provide a clear policy direction grounded in existing legal provisions. The extensive reference list further demonstrates considerable effort in reviewing relevant legal and policy documents. However, although the manuscript is comprehensive, it is primarily doctrinal and policy-oriented. Greater

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methodological clarity regarding the legal research approach would strengthen the academic rigor. In addition, the manuscript occasionally adopts advocacy-oriented language, which could be revised to maintain a more neutral academic tone. Overall, the manuscript represents a valuable contribution to labour law, higher education governance, and public policy and is suitable for publication after minor revisions.

Strengths

- The manuscript addresses a significant and socially relevant issue concerning delayed remuneration for contractual academic staff.
- The topic is timely and contributes to labour law, education policy, and governance literature.
- The study provides a comprehensive analysis of constitutional provisions, labour legislation, judicial precedents, and regulatory frameworks.
- The integration of UGC, AICTE, MSDE, and MSMED regulations provides a holistic understanding of the institutional and legal environment.
- The proposed 40-day payment mandate offers a practical and policy-oriented solution supported by existing legal provisions.
- The manuscript effectively synthesizes multiple legal sources into a coherent conceptual framework.
- The discussion has strong practical implications for universities, colleges, vocational institutions, and government agencies.
- The manuscript is logically structured with clear progression from legal analysis to policy recommendations.
- The conclusion is well aligned with the objectives and effectively summarizes the legal and policy implications.
- The reference list is extensive and includes a wide range of legal documents, government reports, judicial decisions, and scholarly sources.

Areas for Improvement

- The manuscript should explicitly describe the legal research methodology, including the approach used for selecting statutes, judicial precedents, and policy documents.
- Some sections employ advocacy-oriented expressions such as "economic violence" and "wage theft" repeatedly. A more balanced academic tone would improve objectivity while preserving the legal arguments.
- A separate subsection discussing the limitations of the study would strengthen the manuscript, particularly regarding its doctrinal nature and the absence of empirical validation.

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- The discussion could be enhanced by comparing India's legal framework with similar regulations or best practices in other countries.
- Several lengthy paragraphs may be condensed to improve readability and reduce repetition.
- Minor grammatical errors, formatting inconsistencies, and citation formatting should be carefully proofread before publication.