

PROBLEMS OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN TRIPURA – A CRITICAL SURVEY

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ABSTRACT

It is rightly said that progress of a country particularly of a democratic country like India depends upon the quality of its teachers. Truly, because of this fact, teaching is considered the noblest of all professions. The Indian Education Commission (1964--1966) recommended the initiation of a solid programme of education of teachers professionally which is very important for qualitative improvement of education. As teachers are the key persons for nation building, hence, it is certain that still there is a need to stress on the teacher and his development in any educational reconstruction. India's National policy of Education (1986) boldly opined, "*No people can rise above the level of its teachers.*" The society is indebted to the teachers for writing the destiny of the nation through the education of young minds. But a high demanding educational system has made the teaching profession extremely challenging, as in one way, high performance is mostly expected from teachers and in another, they frequently face various problems in performing their jobs. It is true in almost all spheres of the country. Therefore, present study focuses on finding various problems faced by teacher-educators especially along with the ways they handle those problems in the State of Tripura.

Key words: Teacher, teacher education, problems, Tripura.

1. Introduction:

It is rightly said that progress of a country particularly of a democratic country like India depends upon the quality of its teachers. Truly, because of this fact, teaching is considered the noblest of all professions. The Indian Education Commission (1964--1966) recommended the initiation of a solid programme of education of teachers professionally which is very important for qualitative improvement of education. Professor Humayun Kabir also stated that teachers are literally the arbiters of nation's destiny. It may sound a truism, it still needs to be stressed that the teacher is the key to any educational reconstruction. India's National policy of Education (1986) boldly opined, "*No people can rise above the level of its teachers.*" The society is indebted to the teachers for writing the destiny of the nation through the education of young minds. But a high demanding educational system has made the teaching profession extremely challenging, as in one way, high performance is mostly expected from teachers and in another, they frequently face various problems. Therefore, present study focuses on finding various problems faced by teacher-educators especially along with the ways they handle those problems.

2. Literature Review:

Abdullah (2009) studied different issues and problems related to growth of teacher education institutions. He analysed the secondary data of NCTE and found that among all Teacher Education Courses, a majority comprised of Elementary Teacher's Training (ETT) and B.Ed. programmes. Except for pre-primary courses, where a marginal decrease was observed from 1995-96 to 2000-01, there had been a steady increase in number of all courses. It was also found that the most rapid expansion in

number of courses recognized by the NCTE took place from 2000-01 to 2005-06. Further, it was found that the southern region has had the maximum number of Teacher Education Courses at all points of time whereas the eastern region has had minimum of such courses. The author found that a conducive climate for privatization of education, increased demand for teacher education institutions, restricted growth of correspondence courses in teacher education, near stagnation in the growth of government institutions etc. were the major factors responsible for mushrooming of self financing teacher education institutions.

Kothari and Shelat (2009) in their paper on “Teacher Education Programme at Secondary Level: Some Issues” critically evaluated the Secondary Teacher Education Programme in the country. They found that the admission policies and procedures differed from state to state and university to university within the state. Even minimum percentage of marks also varied from university to university as criteria for admission. Knowledge of content and teaching aptitude had hardly any place in most of the universities as criteria for admission. It was also found that teacher-student ratio also varied from State to State. Moreover it was also found that practice teaching programme was far from satisfactory. There was no integration among pre-primary, primary and secondary teacher education institutions. It was suggested that an association of teacher education institutions and teacher educators at State / National level should be established.

Misra (1961) reported that some of the Organizational Problems in the organization of community activities in Normal Schools and Junior Training Colleges as enumerated by the teachers, were heavy curriculum, short training period, inadequate funds and equipment, lack of skilled teachers and supervision etc. which affected the quality of teacher education programme.

Chohan (1962) while evaluating the quality of teacher training programme of the women training college, Dayalbagh, Agra, reported that the theory syllabus was considered neither heavy nor superfluous. It was considered most useful and necessary for the knowledge required for teaching. Regarding practice teaching, the pupil teachers felt that the demonstration lessons by the lecturers should be both at the start of the teaching practice period and during the teaching practice period. Co-curricular activities were considered most necessary and the students felt that these should be organised in the mornings instead of at noon.

Tikamni (1970) evaluated the quality of Primary Teachers Training Programme in Gujarat state by taking the opinions of teacher educators, headmasters, inspectors and primary school teachers and recommended that training programme should contribute to the future teacher efficiency. It should enable him to understand child development and its importance. Knowledge of new tools and techniques of teaching, evaluation tools and measurements should be imparted to the trainees. He also suggested that the subject matter orientation be given to pupil-teachers.

Sharma (1982) surveyed the progress and problems of teacher education in India outlining the inadequacies of pre-service teacher education and built a case for continuous in-service teacher education programme.

Dash (1985) studied the teacher education programme in Orissa and found that inadequate physical facilities, inefficient teachers, poor quality of trainees, unsuitable practice teaching and undue expansion of training colleges was reflected in the poor status of teacher training programmes in the state.

Sharma and Sharma (2002) found that untrained teachers, lack of professional status, drop outs, limited student strength, outmoded curriculum and lack of funds are responsible for deterioration of quality of teacher education.

According to Singh (2004 c) as regard teaching is concerned, some self-financed institutions provided theoretical knowledge and partially practice of teaching. A few of them totally ignored teaching and practice; they had been interested only in admissions and examinations. There were no qualified teachers, no proper infrastructure and essential requirements in these institutions. Thus quality of teachers provided was very low.

Singh and Singh (2004) had found that quality of Teacher Education Programmes in India needed improvement. They saw reframing teacher education curriculum, delayed sessions, admission procedures, and thin attendance in the classroom, neglected supervision duty by the teacher educators during practice teaching and micro-session periods as serious issues.

Joshi (2005) pointed out mushroom growth of private B.Ed. institutions had created a formidable problem. It appeared that the main purpose of these institutions was not to impart quality training to the prospective teachers. They were rather interested in earning money only.

Vij (2005) concluded that the teacher education programmes were not only of poor quality but also turned out teachers who carried negative and undesirable attitudes and values. According to her, pressure of number, unscrupulous private managements, no financial support from the government, isolation of teacher education from main stream of academic life and the existing pattern of evaluation system were some of the main factors responsible for poor quality.

Sungoh (2005) was of the view that defective selection procedure, lesser duration of training, lack of adequate opportunities to develop teaching competencies, absence of professional attitude and imbalance between demand and supply of teachers had lead to deterioration of quality of teacher education programme.

According to Singh and Singh (2007) quality control was a major problem in teacher education and neither the State Governments nor the Universities tried to enforce the minimum standards required for teacher preparation. As a result it was found that there were a large number of institutions which did not have the minimum necessary buildings, furniture, library, teaching staff with appropriate qualifications etc. State Government, Universities and NCTE are accountable for quality control in teacher education. Most of the institutions were found to be under private management and some did not feel any accountability towards standard, they were busy in collecting huge capitation fees only.

Vashishta, Pathak and Lal (2007) commented that the quality of pre-service and in service teacher education needs to be upgraded. They stressed upon the need to develop new models of teacher education to fashion it on more professional lines. They have provided the following suggestions to ensure the quality of teacher education:

- i. Phasing out sub-standard institutions of teacher education.
- ii. Certain norms of accountability with incentives for good performance and disincentives for non-performance should be laid down.
- iii. Specialized programmes like M.Sc.Ed introduced by NCERT (1974) should be given a practical shape for preparing teachers for +2 stage in subject areas like chemistry, physics, mathematics and life sciences in teacher training colleges.
- iv. Commercialization of teacher education should be checked by discouraging non-viable enrolments in teacher education programmes with apparently false certificates of teachers shown to be working in schools along with other fake certificates. Substantial funds should be made available for providing academic support to meritorious but poor teacher trainees.

3. **Research Questions:**

- a) What are problems generally faced by Teacher-educators and Student-teachers in teacher education institutions?
- b) How far do teachers face various kinds of problems in doing duties in their respective institutions?

4. **Objectives:**

- a) To study the types of problems faced by teacher-educators in teacher education institutions.
- b) To study the extent of facing problems by teacher-educators in teacher education institutions.

5. Hypotheses:

- a) There are problem areas faced by teacher-educators in teacher education institutions.

6. Research Methodology:

The present study was based on primary data only. In order to meet the objectives framed above a well structured questionnaire has been designed and executed accordingly. Using simple random sampling method, 53 teacher-educators had been selected. Statistically, percentage of responses as well as Histogram had been applied in order to derive logical conclusion. SPSS software had been used for data analysis.

7. Analysis and Findings:

a) *Problems related to physical facilities:*

Table 1: Problems related to physical facilities

Problems	Always	Sometimes	Not at all
Lack of furniture in the school	20.75%	60.39%	18.86%
Insufficient buildings for class rooms	9.43%	18.87%	71.70%
Lack of professional library	73.58%	18.87%	7.55%
Absence of a room for keeping teaching aids	66.04%	9.43%	24.53%
Classes are over crowded	22.64%	64.15%	13.21%

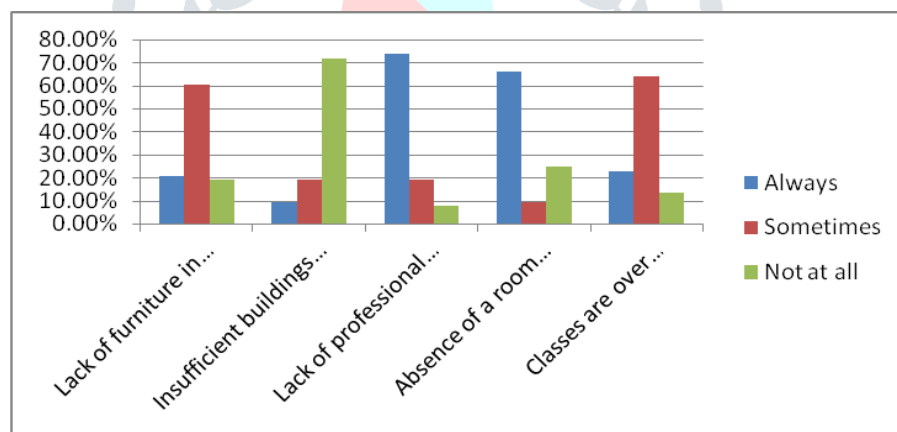


Fig. 1: Histogram related to Physical Facilities

From the above table and graph it is clear that maximum respondents agreed with the view that sometimes shortage of furniture in the school was found. Again, lack of professional library as well as absence of room for keeping teaching aids were in maximum or rather 73.58% and 66.04% respectively. Only 64.15% admitted on over-crowding classes.

b) *Problems related to Time-Table:*

Table 2: Problems related to time table:

Problems	Always	Sometimes	Not at all
Time table is very rigid	5.66%	16.98%	77.36%
Class load is heavy	20.75%	69.81%	9.43%
Time allotted for various subject is not adequate	7.55%	24.53%	67.92%
Irregular attendance among students	9.43%	75.47%	15.09%
Time-table is not consonance with local needs	5.66%	50.94%	43.40%

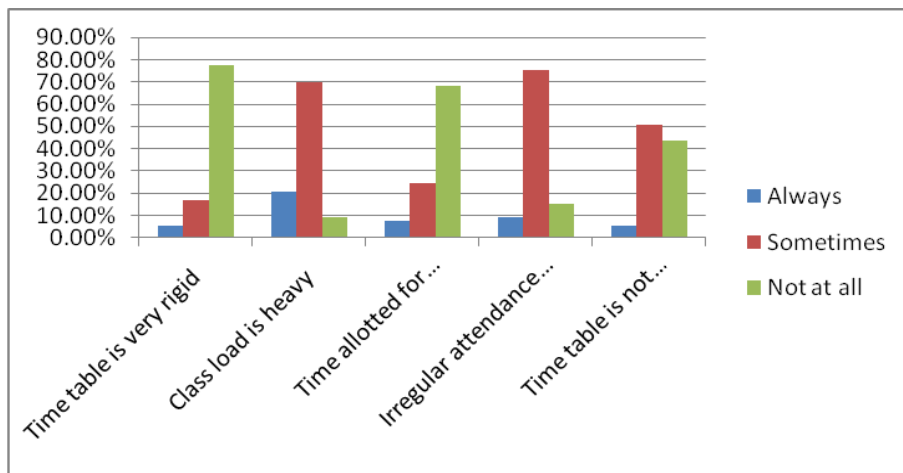


Fig. 2: Histogram related to Time Table

From both the above table and graph it was seen that response indications regarding rigidity of time-table and non-adequacy in allotting time for various subjects were negligible. It meant that flexibility was maintained in both time-table preparation and allotting time for different subjects. Further, it was observed that sometimes class load became heavy and irregular attendance of students were also occasionally seen as in both cases the percentages of responses were 69.81% and 75.47% respectively. But, in case of consonance of time-table with local needs some showed favour in ‘sometimes’ (50.94%) and some in ‘not at all’ (43.40%).

c) **Problems related to Syllabus:**

Table 3: Problems related to syllabus

Problems	Always	Sometimes	Not at all
Prescribed content of syllabus is excessive	79.25%	13.21%	7.55%
Course of study is very rigid	13.21%	71.70%	15.09%
Course of study is vague	0.00%	18.87%	81.13%
Lack of knowledge of the objectives of different subjects	13.21%	64.15%	22.64%
Lack of knowledge of content among teachers	0.00%	13.21%	86.79%

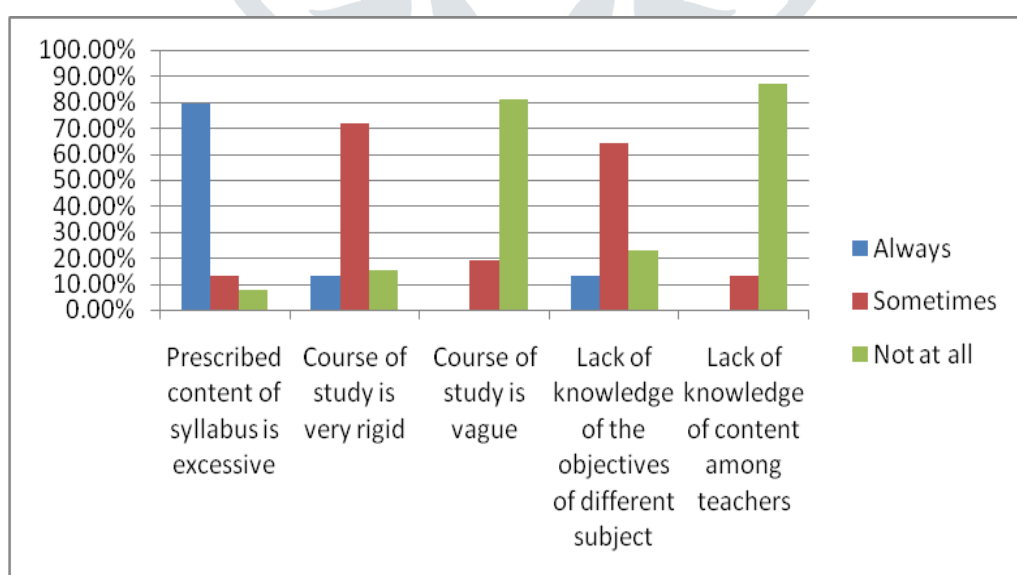


Fig. 3: Histogram related to Syllabus

From both the above table and graph it was seen that maximum supported the view that prescribed content of syllabus is excessive whereas course of study according to 71.70% respondents were very rigid. Again, they disagreed with facts that both course of study is vague as well as lack of knowledge of

content among teachers by maintaining 81.13% and 86.79% in those two cases respectively. But, regarding knowledge of the objectives of different subjects sometimes teachers show lacking.

d) Problems related to resources for teaching:

Table 4: Problems related to resources for teaching

Problems	Always	Sometimes	Not at all
Non-availability of teaching aid of teaching	24.53%	64.15%	11.32%
Getting training for improving teaching aids	81.13%	15.09%	3.77%
Many students do not have text books	16.98%	75.47%	7.55%
Teacher's hand books are not available	94.34%	5.66%	0.00%
Training for developing skills in the use of teaching aid is not adequate	84.91%	9.43%	5.66%

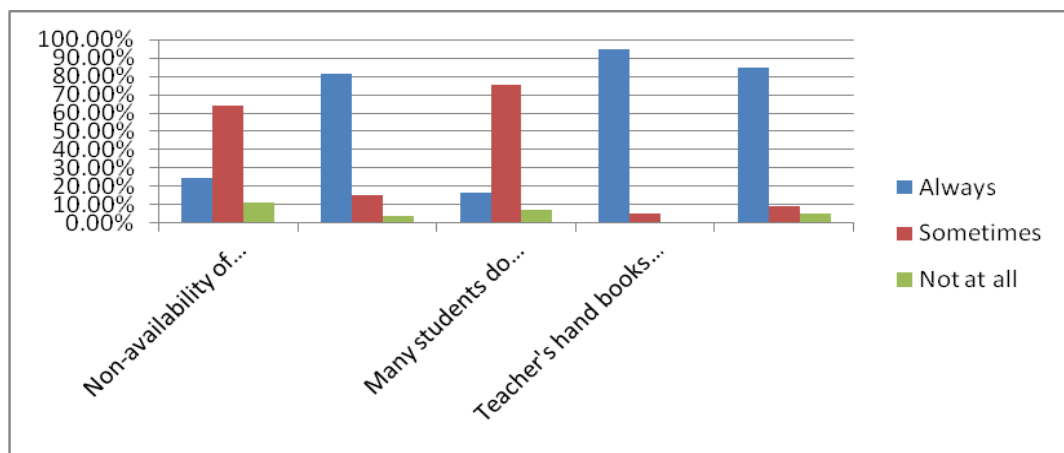


Fig. 4: Histogram related to Resources for Teaching

Both table and graph indicated that a good number of respondents favoured that sometimes for teaching purpose teaching aids were not available (64.15%). Not only so, 75.47% respondents confirmed that many students do not have text books too. But, there was a positive response (81.13%) in favour of getting training for improvement of teaching aids. Significantly, in two cases, like teacher's hand books are not available and training for developing skills in the use of teaching aid is not adequate, maximum respondents supported the view with 94.34% and 84.91% respectively.

e) Problems related to the achievement of qualitative improvements:

Table 5: Problems related to the achievement of qualitative improvements

Problems	Always	Sometimes	Not at all
Slow and passive trainees in class	15.09%	79.25%	5.66%
Motivating the under achievers	16.98%	81.13%	1.89%
Identify the cause of trainees' poor achievement	18.87%	73.58%	7.55%
Lack of skill in remedial teaching	3.77%	18.87%	77.36%
Lack of skill in preparing diagnostic test	77.36%	15.09%	7.55%

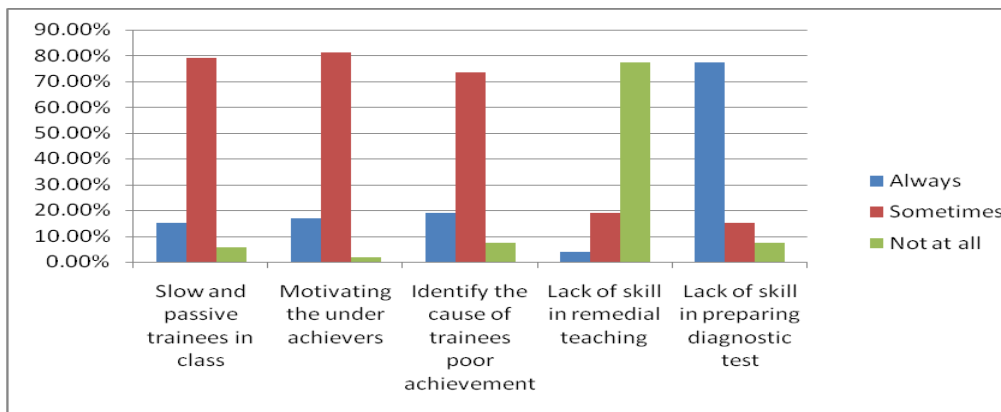


Fig. 5: Histogram related to the achievement of qualitative improvements

The table & graph showed that regarding slow and passive students in class and motivating the under achievers sometimes they were found or rather efforts were taken. Moreover, sometimes the cause of trainees’ poor achievement were tried to found out. But, lack of skill in providing remedial teaching was almost denied as the percentage of responses showed 77.36%. Further, it was agreed by maximum respondents that in preparing diagnostic test lack of skill was there.

f) **General Problems:**

Table 6: General problems

Problems	Always	Sometimes	Not at all
In-service training is too theoretical and traditional	9.43%	64.15%	26.42%
It is a really challenge in handling pupils	22.64%	24.53%	52.83%
Lack of reading habits among the students	84.91%	9.43%	5.66%
Lack of environment to teach children	9.43%	22.64%	67.92%
Lack of support from parents and communities	84.91%	9.43%	5.66%

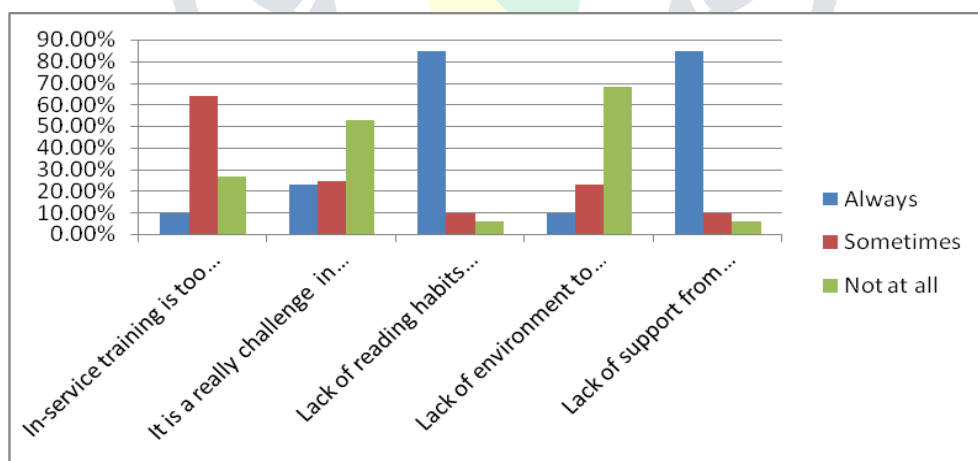


Fig. 6: Histogram related to General Problems

The table and graph both showed that a good number of respondents (64.15%) favoured that in-service training is too theoretical and traditional. But, according to 53.82% respondents it is not really challenge in handling pupils. Again, 84.91% respondents confirmed in both areas, like lack of reading habits among the students and lack of support from parents and communities. But 67.92% denied that there was not any lacking of environment to teach children.

8. Findings:

- a) The institutes have not requisite number of furnitures in all its rooms and these are inadequate in number. The buildings are satisfactory may be, but in some cases there are shortage of classrooms. The libraries have not necessary subscription of journals as per requirement and are also lacking of up-to-date data. Hence, physical facilities are not essentially supportive in all the ten teacher education institutes of Tripura.
- b) Moreover, apart from lack of professional library necessarily needed for teacher education institute there is also absence of room for keeping teaching aids in maximum cases.
- c) There are five factors identified in implementing teacher education programme, namely physical facilities, academic environment, teaching aids, academic performance and other issues. All the sixteen items used in questionnaire showed some common trendy natures which were ultimately clubbed down under the head of five factors. Factor analysis had been carried out for extracting the factors involved in.
- d) The time table is flexible in nature and regarding non-adequacy in allotting time for various subjects was negligible. At least, fifty percent respondents favoured that local needs are very carefully incorporated in preparing time table for the course or courses. Besides, irregular attendance of teacher-trainees is frequently seen.
- e) The prescribed contents of syllabus of teacher education institutes are huge and sometimes overburdened. The courses of study undertaken in those institutes are sometimes rigid and monotonous. According to most of the teachers, the courses of study introduced in the programmes are with denial of the fact that they are sometimes vague and sometimes knowledge of content among faculties creates problem. It signals that most of the teachers have proper knowledge of objectives of different subjects in the State. But, regarding acquisition of knowledge of the objectives of different subjects, very frequently teachers show their lacking.
- f) The Availability of teaching aids and availability of teacher-trainees with their text books are not consonant according to the need. Similarly, two cases like teacher's hand books are not available and training for developing skills in the use of teaching aid is not adequate, maximum respondents supported those views. Significantly, there was a positive response in favour of getting training for improvement of teaching aids in the State.
- g) The teachers generally attend the slow and passive teacher-trainees in the classroom. Maximum number of teachers are not in position to motivate the under achievers. Sometimes the cause of teacher-trainees' poor achievement are tried to found out. Further, it was agreed by maximum respondents that in preparing diagnostic test lack of skill was there. But lack of skill in providing remedial teaching was almost denied by maximum number of teachers.
- h) In-service training programme is too theoretical and traditional in the state. Most of the teachers are of view that it is not really challenging in handling their trainees. But majority of respondents are facing problems in areas, like lack of reading habits among the students and lack of support from parents and communities. Again, majority of faculties denied that there was not any lacking of environment to teach children.

9. Conclusion:

The study aimed at finding some areas of problems generally faced by teacher-educators while they were involved in different teacher education institutions. It was found that in almost all areas they found some problems which immediately needed to solve out properly. But in several cases they supported not having any real problem. Considering the fact that all teacher education institutions had

their own type of problems, ultimately teacher-educators admitted that all were manageable up to an extent.

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