THE EVALUATION OF TEACHER EDUCATORS' EFFECTIVENESS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS ENROLLED IN THE SINDH UNIVERSITY DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of content knowledge of the teacher educators for the professional development of prospective teachers. Moreover, the study was carried out to gauge the impact of the educators' content knowledge on the prospective teachers concerning how much they are professionally developed to use subject content knowledge effectively, after completing their B.Ed M.Ed degree from the Distance Education University of Sindh. Specifically, the effectiveness of teacher educators' subject content knowledge for the professional development of prospective teachers was investigated. For this evaluation the researcher used five point Likert scale for the survey and interviewed the teacher educators. For analysis of data frequencies, cross tabulation, T-test and one way ANOVA were used. The study concludes with recommendations and implications on the basis of findings. Further this study tested a null hypothesis that there is no significant effect of content knowledge of the teacher educators on their professional development. The null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted concluding that there is positive significant effect of contain knowledge of teacher educator on the professional development of prospective teachers.

INTRODUCTION

The teachers are the backbone of education system. Aggarwal (1990) believes that no education system can be effective if teachers are ineffective and incompetent (p.260). Bhatti (1987) adds that teachers, being pillars of education system, are directly connected with high quality teacher education and training.

The implementation of government policies, plans and curriculum is impossible without quality teachers. The performance of schools and students depends upon the effective role of teachers. The skilled, experienced,

qualified, committed and self-motivated teachers are the great assets of the education. They are the foundation pillars of the education system. The success and failure of learners depend upon the effectiveness of teachers.

The teaching techniques and students learning outcomes are strongly and positively correlated. In other words, the knowledge, skills and experiences of students depend upon the knowledge, skills and experiences of teachers.

In order to make a proper professional development of teachers, government has introduced pre-service and inservice teacher education. Teacher education means the systematic education and training that leads teachers in teaching profession and equips them with teacher content knowledge, experiences, pedagogical skills, modern teaching techniques, classroom management competences, capabilities to interact with learners and use of A.V aids (instructional media). Norton (1985) states that teacher education refers to the acquisition of knowledge, experiences and skills that enables prospective teachers to teach, manage, interact and use modern technology effectively and efficiently in elementary and secondary schools. Teacher education focuses more on five basic objectives (elements) of successful and result oriented teaching learning process. Farrant (1990) adds that "Teacher Education consists of all formal and informal policies, activities and experiences that equip prospective teachers with knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours required to perform their duties effectively and efficiently in the classroom, school and wider community" (p. 42). Masood (2011) describing key purpose of teacher education describes that "key purpose of teacher education is to equip prospective teachers with suitable attitudes, appropriate abilities, skills and techniques required to make them effective and efficient professionals" (p. 7).

To sum up, prospective teachers are the catalysts of change. They are the builders of future generation. The learning and achievement of students totally depend upon the effective role of teachers and teacher effectiveness depends upon the teacher education and training. Effective professional development of prospec-

tive teachers is impossible without proper teacher education and training. The study is designed to investigate the role of teacher educators in the transformation of content knowledge, how much impact prospective teachers have on the professional achievement.

Research Design

This study examines the perceptions of teachers' from various districts of Sindh regarding their ability and knowledge of subject content to teach their students. A survey method was used in this study.

Research tools

After thorough literature survey and on the basis of a number of studies, the researcher developed research tools according to prevailing local exigencies. Hence, the following research tools were developed for the data collection in the study.

1. Questionnaire (for trainee students)
2. Interview (for teacher educators)
3. Class room Observation.

To check the validity of a questionnaire, a pilot study of research tool was proposed for trainee teachers. It was carried out on twenty prospective teachers of the same program-me. The responds further were not included in the sample.

To check the consistency among the items of the questionnaire reliability test the (Cronbach's Alpha) was used through SPSS16. The reliability statistics alpha co-officient which is .710. This level is highly significant.

An interview was conduc-ted from the teacher educators on the same indicators which was already addressed in the questionnaire. After probing on the indicators the researcher conformed the authenticity of the results. An inductive strategy was adopted to analyze the data. That is entitled read-ing and looking closely to avolute critically through questionnaire and interview. Responses and checks were assigned in the observation instrument. This was done to identify and compare the responses and behaviors of participating teachers as suggested by leedy (1993 Pg-150). The observation tool was developed in the light of other tools. Which were used in the same type of studies.

Population of study

Population of study consisted of (a) all the trainee teachers who were enrolled in B. Ed and M. Ed off campus programme for in 2012, (b) all the instructors who taught the students in same academic year.

Total number of prospective teachers 3157 and sample 595 18.84%.

Total teacher educators 392 and sample 103 - 26.

Sample of the study

A sample of 595 prospective teachers enrolled in B. Ed and M. Ed and 103 teacher educators teaching to B. Ed and M. Ed classes was selected from Sindh University distance education by stratified random sampling technique.

Table-1: Sample of prospective teachers

Total population of prospective teachers	Sample	Percentage of population sampled
3157	595	18.84%

Figure-1: Sample of prospective teachers

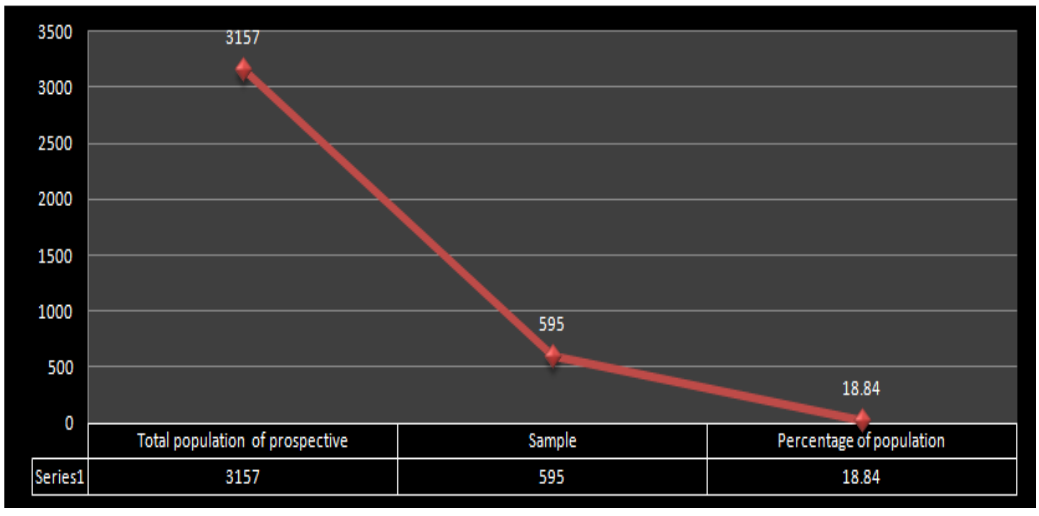


Table 2: Center-wise and class-wise sample of prospective teachers

Sr. No.	Center	Prospective teachers in B. Ed	Prospective teachers in M. Ed	Total	Sample	Percentage of population
1	Badin	61	00	61	20	33.33%
2	Hala	138	00	138	30	21.73%
3	Hyderabad	442	123	565	90	15.92%
4	Khadro	36	57	93	25	26.88%
5	Khipro	46	00	46	15	32.60%
6	Malir	130	63	193	55	28.49%
7	Matli	180	00	180	30	16.66%
8	Mirpurkhas	330	63	393	60	15.26%
9	Mithi	122	00	122	20	16.39%
10	Nawabshah	171	00	171	30	17.54%
11	Sanghar	73	00	73	20	27.39%
12	Shahdadpur	177	94	271	50	18.45%
13	Tandoadam	88	44	132	35	26.51%
14	Tandoallahyar	130	00	130	35	26.92%
15	Thatta	274	00	274	30	10.94%
16	Umerkot	225	90	315	50	15.87%
Total		**2623**	**534**	**3157**	**595**	**18.84%**

Figure-2: District (Center-wise) sample of prospective teachers

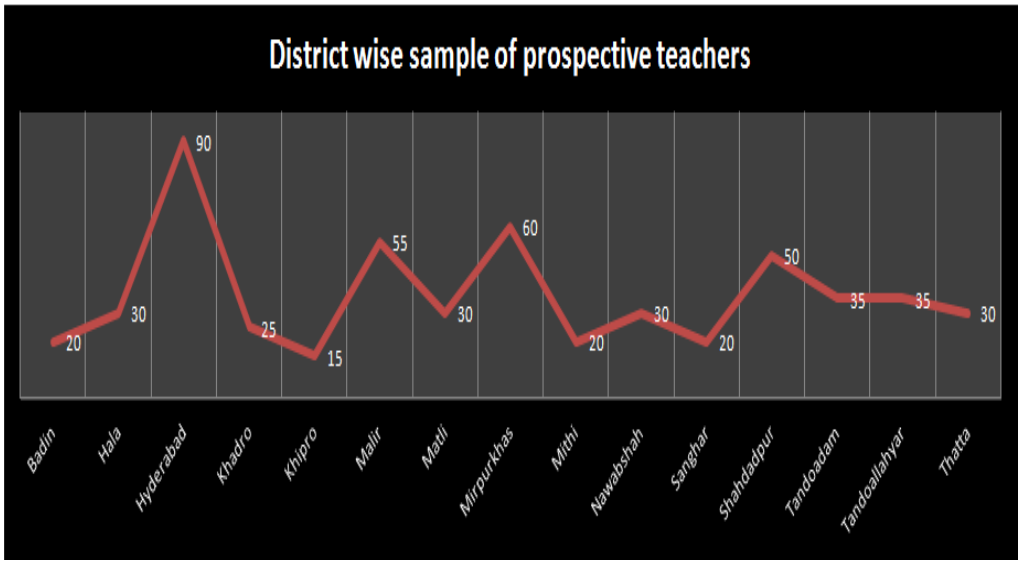


Table-3: Sample of teacher educators

Total population of teacher educators	Sample	Percentage of population
392	103	26.27%

Figure-3: Sample of teacher educators

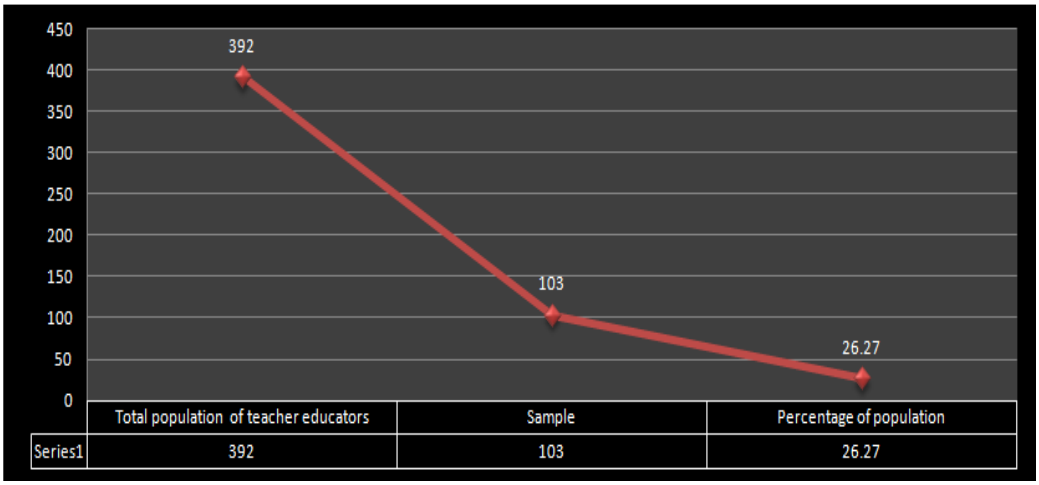


Table 4: Class-wise and gender wise Sample of teacher educators

Sr. No.	Name of Study Center	No. of instructors					
		B. Ed			M. Ed		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1	Badin	2	2	4	00	00	00
2	Hala	3	3	6	00	00	00
3	Hyderabad	7	5	12	2	2	4
4	Khadro	2	00	2	2	1	3
5	Khipro	2	00	2	00	00	00
6	Malir	2	2	4	1	2	3
7	Matli	3	1	4	00	00	00
8	Mirpurkhas	4	4	8	1	2	3
9	Mithi	3	1	4	00	00	00
10	Nawabshah	4	2	6	00	00	00
11	Sanghar	2	2	4	00	00	00
12	Shahdadpur	3	2	5	2	1	3
13	Tandoadam	3	1	4	2	1	3
14	Tandoallahyar	2	2	4	00	00	00
15	Thatta	4	2	6	00	00	00
16	Umerkot	4	1	5	3	1	4
	Sub Total	50	30	80	13	10	23
	Total						103

Figure-4: District-wise, Class-wise and gender-wise sample of teacher educators

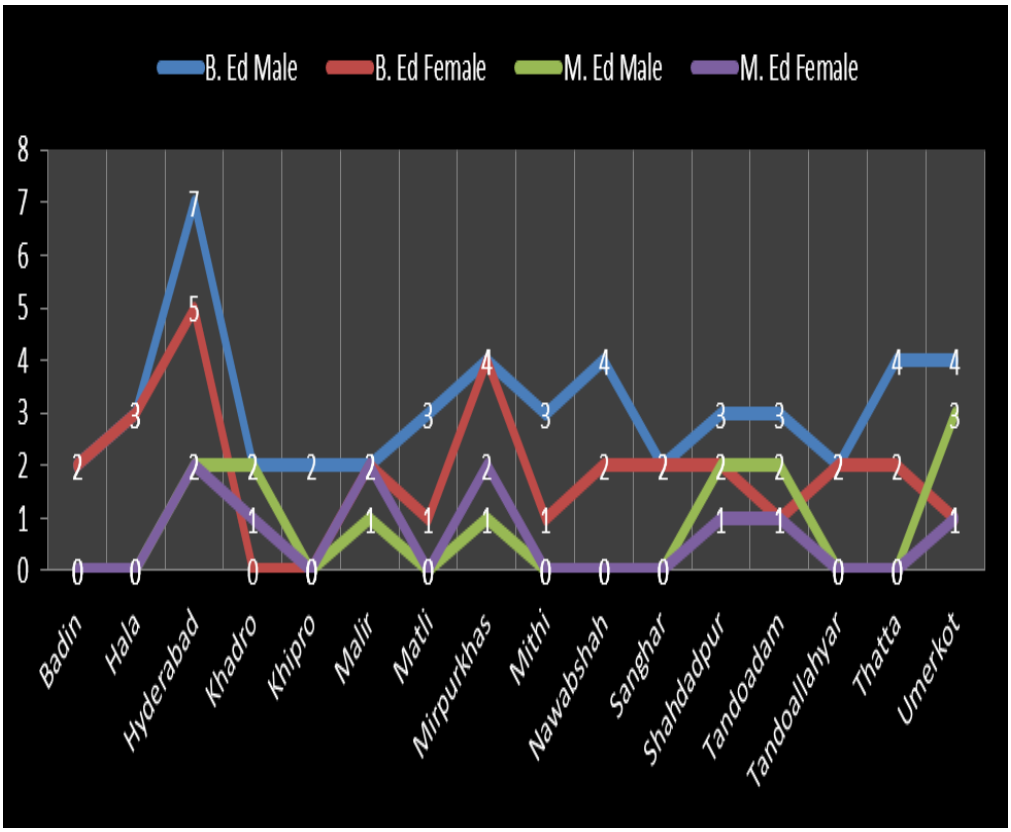


Table-3 presents teacher educators selected for study. According to table total 103 teachers were selected randomly from all 16 centers. Out of 103 teachers 80 instructors (50 male and 30 female) were selected from B. Ed program and 23 instructors (13 male and 10 female) were selected from M. Ed program.

Observation

In addition to the questionnaire, the researcher made the classroom observation of distance education centers. The basic objective of the obsevation was to verify the facts and figures that were shared by teachers, students and head teachers. The researcher visited the Sindh University Distance Education centers to observe and evaluate the teacher educators' effectiveness in the professional development of prospective teachers. The observations were carried out from 10 May to 31 October 2013.

Areas of obsevation inclu-ded the following: Teachers educators' content knowledge and skills to interact with prospective teachers during observa-tion.

Sample of observation: The observation was made in 8 centers i.e. four centers from an urban (Hyderabad, Nawabshah, Mirpurkhas and Malir Karachi) and four from rural (Umerkoat, Shadadpur, Sanghar and Mithi) areas. Furthermore, in the urban area centers, 2 male and 2 female teacher educators' lessons were observed. Same procedure was also repeated in the rural areas.

Interview from teacher Educators

To what extent do the teacher educators possess the required content knowledge and how can one measure the effectiveness of their content knowledge to enhance the professional development of prospective teachers?

Most of the respondents were satisfied with the content knowledge of teacher educators teaching to prospective teachers in Sindh university distance education program. However, there were a few respondents who raised some questions regarding the delivery of the content knowledge. The respondent "A" told stated that "a teacher cannot be allowed to teach in Sindh University distance education programme without having sound content knowledge. The selection of teachers takes place after the evaluation of content knowledge of teachers". Adding to this the respondent "B" indicated that "all the prospective teachers had at least a pass grade on graduation. Some of them were even master's degree holders. Therefore, to teach them without having the right grip on the content knowledge of the sub-

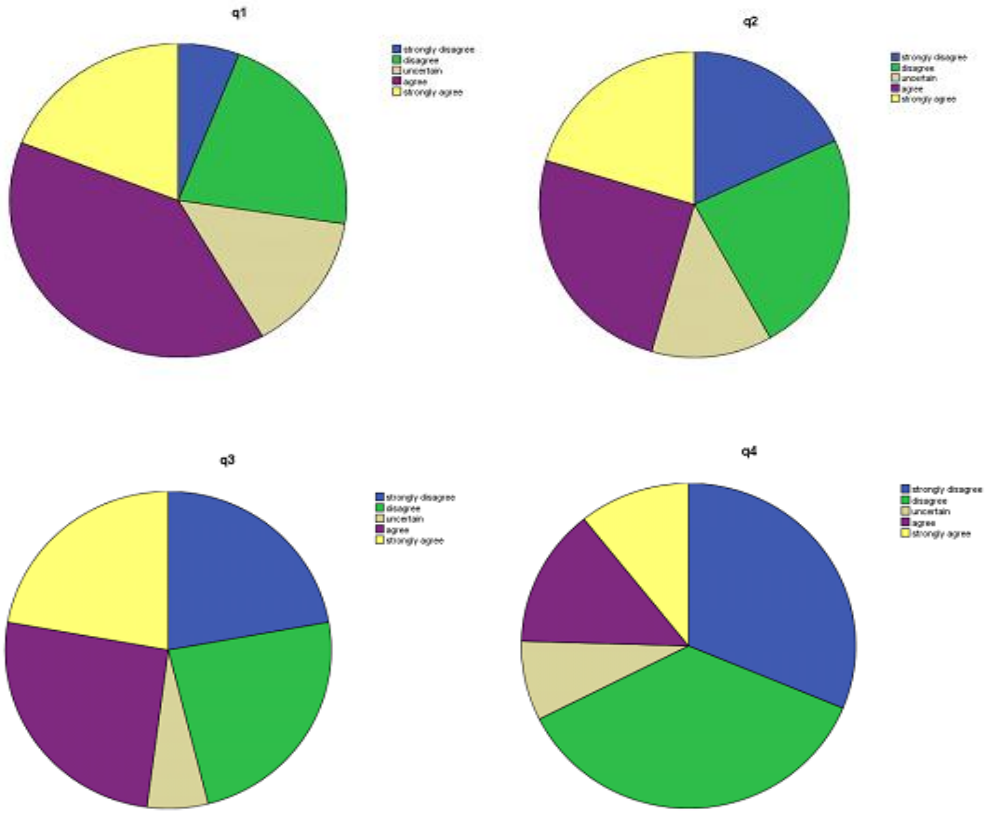
ject matter is not possible for the teacher educators". Similarly, respondent "C" stated that "there is no question regarding the content knowledge skills of teacher educators but the question arises whether whatever the content knowledge teacher educators possess is communicated effectively or not. The content knowledge that is limited to teacher educators only and is not communicated to prospective teachers is useless". Adding to this respondents "D" described that, "The basic objective of the content knowledge is the communication and transfer to others. The knowledge that is not transferred or not communicated is of no use". Furthermore, respondents "E, F, G, H, I & J" also believed that all the teachers do have content knowledge but not all of them are capable to transfer the knowledge to students effectively. To them, the performance of prospective teachers in classroom tests, assignments and other activities reveals the effectiveness of teacher educators' content knowledge.

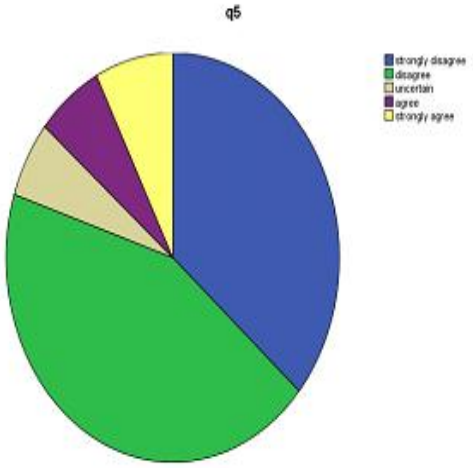
In summary, the respondents were fully satisfied with the content knowledge of the teacher educators but on the question of effectiveness of content knowledge in the classroom teaching and learning, their responses were divided. The justification was based on the argument that selection of teacher educators in Sindh university distance education program is impossible without sound content knowledge. Only those teachers are selected who have command over content knowledge. Furthermore, the selection of teacher educators is purely meritbased. Nevertheless, majority of the respondents appreciated the effectiveness of educators' content knowledge but some showed their dissatisfaction regarding the effectiveness of content knowledge. To them, possessing content knowledge does not mean content knowledge is imparted effectively. There are several teachers who possess content knowledge but are not capable to communicate effectively. Moreover, there are other teachers who do not deliberately communicate content knowledge due to various reasons like poor monitoring lack of motivation, lack of incentives, laziness and so on.

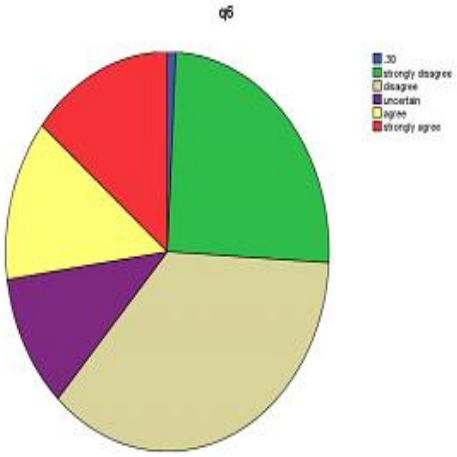
Table: 5 Frequency (responses) for teacher content knowledge

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
Statements	**Enhancement content knowledge**	**Use of course outline**	**Additional knowledge to clear concepts**	**Completion of course**	**Remain to the point**	**Use of Proper terminology**
Strongly Disagree (%)	35 (5.9)	108 (18.2)	132 (22.)	186 (31.3)	216 (36.3)	149 (25.0)
Agree (%)	128 (21.5)	141 23.7)	142 (23.)	216 (36.3)	260 (43.7)	214 (36.0)
Uncertain (%)	85 (14.3)	75 (12.6)	36 (6.1)	47 (7.9)	36 (6.1)	65 (10.9)
Agree (%)	234 (39.3)	150 25.2)	153 (25.)	82 (13.8)	38 (6.4)	78 (13.1)
Strongly Agree (%)	113 (19.0)	121 (20.3)	132 (22.)	64 (10.8)	45 (7.6)	84 (14.1)
Total (%)	595 (100.0)	595 100.0)	595 (100)	595 (100.)	595 (100)	595 (100)
Mean	3.44	3.05	3.01	2.36	2.05	2.530

Figure-5: Frequency responses for subject matter







Analysis

The Table-5 presents the frequency and means of all the six questions (along with percentages) of first variable of content knowledge. According to table the responses of q1 were 35 strongly disagree, 128 disagree, 85 uncertain, 234 agree, 113 strongly agree. The overall mean of the responses was 3.44. This mean shows the respondent's higher level of satisfaction on content knowledge of their instructors. The majority agreed that the content knowledge of teacher educators was effective to enhance the professional development of prospective teachers. The responses of q2 were 108 strongly disagree, 144 disagree, 75 uncertain, 150 agree, 121 strongly agree. The overall mean of the responses was 3.05. The mean show that students are slightly more satisfied with their teachers on the use of outlines and textbooks in their Sunday classes. The responses of Q3 had, 132 strongly disagree, 142 disagree, 36 uncertain, 150 agree, 132 strongly agree.

The overall mean of the responses was 3.05. The mean of the questions of same responses is 3.01. The mean according to responses show that the students are slightly more satisfied on the use of additional knowledge for clarification of concepts in face to face interaction. Q4 had 186 strongly disagree, 216 disagree, 47 uncertain, 82 agree, 64 strongly agree. The overall mean of the responses was 2.36. The mean of the question of same responses is 3.01. The

mean according to responses show that the students are slightly not satisfied on the completion of course. The ratio of unsatisfied students was slightly more who said that courses were not completed during program. The response of q5 had 216 strongly disagree, 260 disagree, 36 uncertain, 38 agree, 45 strongly agree. The overall mean of the responses was 2.36.

The mean of the question of same responses is 2.05. The mean according to responses show that the students are slightly not satisfied with the teachings of instructors on the matter of specific or to the point teaching. The q6 had 149 strongly disagree, 214 disagree, 65 uncertain, 78 agree, 84 strongly agree. The overall mean of the responses was 2.53. The mean of the question of same responses is 2.53. The mean ac-cording to responses shows that the students are not satisfied from their teachers on the clari-fication of concepts and use of pr-oper terminology in the teaching.

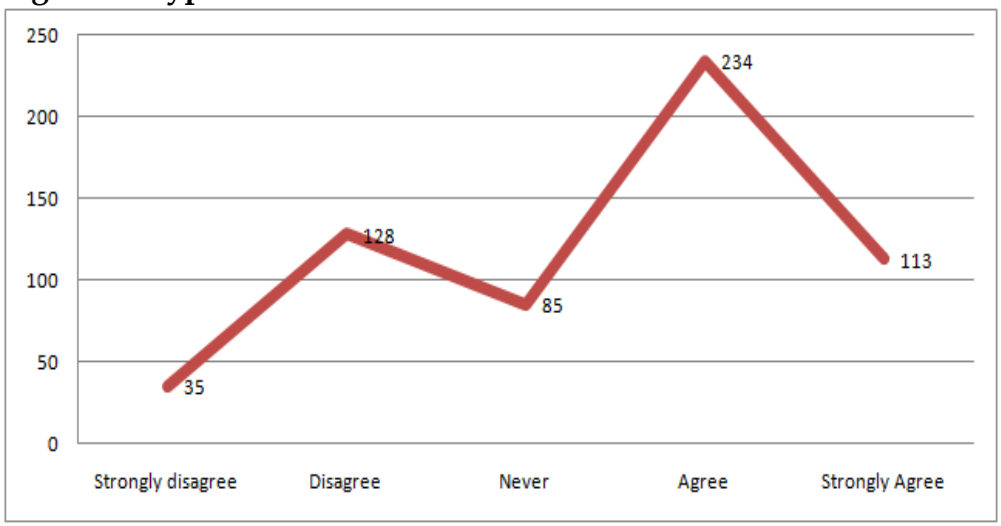
Testing of Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant effect of content knowledge of teacher educators on the professional development of prospective teachers.

Table: 6 Hypothesis

Q1.	**The content knowledge of teacher educators is effective to enhance the professional development of prospective teachers.**								
N		**Observed Responses**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**	**Mean Difference**	**t**	**df**	**Sig**
1	Strongly disagree	35	3.44	1.188	.049	3.440	70.626	594	.000
2	Disagree	128							
3	Never	85							
4	Agree	234							
5	Strongly Agree	113							
	Total	595							

Figure-6: Hypothesis



Analysis:

The t-test table shows that observed value of "t" (t=70.626) is significant (sig: = .000) at 594 df and 0.05 alpha. Hence null hypothesis is rejected (p= .000 ≤ .05, t = 70.626) and alternate hypothesis accepted, concluding that there is positive a significant effect of content knowledge of teacher educators on the professional development of prospective teachers.

Findings on the observation about the Teachers educators' content knowledge:

The researcher observed that the content knowledge of teacher educators was effective to enhance the professional development of prospective teachers. Whatever, the questions were asked from teacher educators, most of them satisfied the students with their content knowledge. The teacher educators were fully prepared while teaching and using the outlines and textbooks in their Sunday classes. They often explained the different concepts and theories of education by giving practical examples with their additional knowledge. However, completion of course was not a top priority for the teacher educators. They mostly did not follow the schedule of study. Furthermore, teacher educators did not focus on the matter of specifics or to the point teaching. They often used to discuss many

things that were unimportant and irrelevant to the course or content of teacher education programme. There were only few students taking part in such fruitless discussion while majority of students remained disappointed with the teachers' behaviour. However, due to dignity and respect they have for the teachers they did not misbehave but remained silent and waited till the end of discussion. In brief, teacher educators were fully equipped with content knowledge but rather than to impart the knowledge to students, they often wasted their time in fruitless discussions.

Findings from Interview

a) It was found that teacher educators were satisfied with their own content knowledge, organization of content knowledge and pedagogical skills.

b) The teacher educators did not come up with much relevant content knowledge, related to the topic.

c) The teacher educators cou-ldn't make effective use of the course outline, as they cannot stick too much to the topic in the class discussions.

Findings from the questionnaire
Effect of educators' content knowledge on the professional development of trainees

Referring to table 5, it is found that:

a) The mean score (3.44) regarding Q1 showed the respondent's higher level of satisfaction for the content knowledge of their instructors. The majority agreed that the content knowledge of teacher educators was effective to enhance the professional development of prospective teachers.
b) The mean score (3.05) regarding Q2 showed that students were slightly more satisfied with their teachers on the use of outlines and textbooks in their Sunday classes.
c) The mean score (3.01) regarding Q3 showed that students were slightly more satisfied on the use of additional knowledge for clarification of concepts in face to face interaction.
d) The mean score (Mean score = 2.36) regarding Q4 showed that students were slightly not satisfied with the completion of course.

e) The mean score (Mean score = 2.05) regarding Q5 showed that students were slightly not satisfied with the teachings of instructors on the matter of specific or to the point teaching.
f) The mean score (Mean score = 2.53) regarding Q6 showed that students were not satisfied from their teachers on the clarification of concepts and use of proper terminology in the teaching.

b. Difference between male and female trainees regarding educators' content knowledge.

There was no significant difference in the opinion between male and female trainees on the statement of Q1, Q5 and Q6. However, there was significant difference in the opinion between male and female trainees on the statement of Q2, Q3 and Q4

c. Difference between B.ED and M.ED trainees regarding educators' content knowledge.

There was no significant difference in the opinion between B.ED and M. Ed trainees on the statement of Q1, Q3, Q4, Q5 and Q6. However, there was significant difference in the opinion between B. ED and M. Ed trainees on the statement of Q2

d. Difference among trainees of different centers regarding educators' content knowledge.

There was no significant difference in the opinion among the trainees enrolled in 16 different centers on the statement of Q4, Q5 and Q6. However, there was significant difference in the opinion among the students enrolled in 16 different centers on the statement of Q1, Q2 and Q3 (table 4.4.1.4).

e. Difference among different age trainees regarding educators' content knowledge.

There was no significant difference in the opinion among the trainees according to their ages on the statement of Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5 and Q6.

f. Difference among trainees' teaching experience regarding educators' content knowledge.

There was no significant difference in the opinion among the students according to their teaching experience on the statement of Q1,Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5 and Q6.

g. Difference among service of trainees regarding educators' content knowledge.

There was no significant difference in the opinion among the students according to the services of teachers on the statement of Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5 and Q6. However, there was significant difference slightly difference in the opinion among the students according to the services of teachers on the statement of Q6.

Discussion

58.31 The prospective teachers agreed on the effectiveness of teaching in understanding concept of content and the process of transforming the content knowledge. The teacher educators were also satisfied with the professional development of prospective teachers. The teacher educators also suggested to conduct the workshop for enhancement of teaching skills of teachers. In this study efforts were also made to dig deeper for the accurate level of teacher educator's effectiveness. Aggarwal (1990) believes that no education system can be effective if the teachers are incompetent.

44.51 The prospective teachers agreed on the use of relevant text material and rest disagreed, so teacher educators need to improve text material for the professional development. Results of the research showed that teacher educators were a little bit lazy in completing the course outlines. So there is a need to develop a monitoring system for the time management.

61% the prospective teachers denied on the usage of multimedia or computer in the teaching process, so it is suggested that teacher educators must use the multimedia/technology to have positive effect on the professional development.

Besides the questionnaire was made just to verify the results. It was observed that teacher educators explained the different concepts and theories of education by giving practical examples with their additional knowledge. It was also observed that few prospective teachers were taking a part in the discussion, and Rest of the prospective teachers did not take any part. Due to lengthy discussions course outlines could not be finished within due course of time.

During the classroom observation one weakness was observed that is less attendance of the

prospective teachers. Teacher educator`s were also pointed out there absentisium that is the big hindrance in the quality assurance.

During the observation it was found that teacher educators were not reflective practitioners. They actually don't self-evaluate their teaching skills. After this evaluative study, a new research work is suggested on the pedagogical skills, In that way teacher educators will know the essentials of effective teaching.

Conclusion

The study findings revealed that majority of the trainee teachers were satisfied with the teacher educators' content knowledge and their skills to organize content knowledge in an effective way to enhance the professional development of trainee teachers. The observation tool reveals that teacher educators explained the different concepts and theories of education by giving practical and local examples with their additional knowledge. It was observed that most of the teachers followed the schedule of study. A few teachers were observed to waste their time in irrelevant and lengthy discussions. Interview from the teacher educators justified that majority of the teachers were able to communicate the content knowledge effectively. There were a few teachers who opined that the poor check and balance and lack of incentives made them a little lazy. The achievement of the trainees in professional development shows that the teacher educators were effective to enhance content knowledge.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended:

- ✓ The teacher educator's should use subject content knowledge according to the need of the topic.
- ✓ The teacher educators must use clear objectives of the subject, and should clarify the meanings of terminologies and difficult concepts.
- ✓ Teacher educators should be able to deliver their own knowledge, related to the subject knowledge.
- ✓ The teacher educators must relate the content knowledge to the objectives of the subject.

- ✓ The teacher educators need to use innovative approaches to deliver content knowledge.
- ✓ The teacher educators must be more reflective about their own teaching methods and should pay more attention on the organization of content knowledge.
- ✓ The teacher educators need to focus more on practical applications of content knowledge and skills.
- ✓ The teacher educators need to have more understanding of the subject resources in order to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process.
- ✓ Teacher educators should pay more attention to planned teaching.

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Questionnaire on Teacher Content Knowledge:

The questions from Q1 to Q6 represent the variable teacher Content Knowledge. These include:

Q1. The content knowledge of teacher educators is effective to enhance the professional development of prospective teachers.

Q2. The instructors use course outlines and prescribed texts for teaching.

Q3. The instructors used additional knowledge to clear the concepts in face to face interaction.

Q4. The instructors completed courses within time.

Q5. The instructors usually remained 'to the point' and taught specifically according to the topic.

Q6. The instructors explained proper terminology and cleared my concepts.