

Internship Report
On
Conducting Research under Politics and Governance cluster of BRAC
Institute of Governance and Development

Name : **Mohammed Misbah Uddin**
Student ID : 15269003
Semester : Fall-2016
Date : December 01, 2016



Submitted to
Masters in Development Management and Practice (MDMP) Program
BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD)
BRAC University

In Partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Masters in Development Management and Practice
December, 2016

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It was an exciting and tremendously busy time with multiple tasks that I never have experienced in my life. Thanks to BIGD for enabling this excellent working as well as learning environment here. Despite of many limitations, my academic supervisor, and organization's supervisor helped me in many ways to complete my learning through this internship program, and to prepare the report successfully.

At first, I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to my academic supervisor Sultan Mohammed Zakaria, Senior Research Associate and Lecturer of BIGD, BRAC University whose guidance helped me prepare this report.

Secondly, I am very grateful to Dr. Mirza Masood Hassan, Adjunct Fellow of BIGD, BRAC University for his continuous supervision. I am also thankful to other researchers of BIGD for their sincere cooperation.

My sincere thanks also go to Tarikul Alam Sharif Rajon, Program Coordination Officer of MDS and MDMP at BIGD for his sincere and in-time updates and support. I am also heartily indebted to my family members who always inspired, encouraged and supported me to pursue this masters program.

(Mohammed Misbah Uddin)

Table of Content

Name of Organization.....	4
Type of Business.....	4
Geographic location and address	4
Section One: A brief profile of BIGD	4
1.1 Research at BIGD	4
1.2 Academic Program.....	5
1.3 BIGD other Program.....	5
1.4 Affiliations	5
1.5 BIGD Organizational set-up	6
1.6 General information of Politics, Democracy and Governance cluster.....	6
Section Two: Tasks during working in BIGD	7
2.1 Entry time in BIGD	7
2.2 Tasks	7
Section Three: Learning through working in BIGD during internship	8
3.1 Public Finance and Revenue Mobilization of Union Parishads: A Case of Four Union Parishads. 8	
3.2 Preparing a chapter on Quality of Education in Bangladesh for the State of Governance report.	9
3.3 Working paper: Finalizing individual Working Paper titled Living with Insecure Tenancy, Eviction Threat and Meager Livelihood Opportunities: A Case of Zianagar Slum.....	9
3.4 Brain storming session with SOAS team, lead by Professor Mustaque Khan	10
3.5 Miscellaneous issues	10
Section 4: Self Evaluation.....	10
4.1 Criticism on my experience and the good and bad of it.....	10
4.2 Recommendation and suggestions	11
Appendix: Abstract.....	14

Name of Organization

BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD)

Type of Business

Education and Research

Geographic location and address

GP JA 4, SK Center, Mohakhali TB Gate, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh.

Section One: A brief profile of BIGD¹

BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University is a resource centre for promoting research and creating knowledge in areas of governance, economic growth, political economy, urbanisation, gender issues, sustainable development, and regional studies. It was established in June 2013 through the merger of the then Institute of Governance Studies (IGS) and the BRAC Development Institute (BDI), two institutes of BRAC University.

BIGD is devoted to specialised research on a range of governance and development concerns, as well as the nexus between the two intertwined areas. BIGD's research is aimed at supporting its academic and training programs. It does not limit knowledge creation to being an end in itself but rather to advance the pursuit of a just and prosperous society. It also plays an advocacy role to give voice to contemporary governance, political and economic issues. As an institute of BRAC University, BIGD works closely with the university and has the unique advantage of being associated with BRAC, world's largest NGO, through its work and carrying its 'brand.' It is inspired by BRAC's values in shaping its own institutional work, professional standards and product.

1.1 Research at BIGD²

BIGD's research mandate is spread over four broad clusters 1. Governance and Politics 2. Urban, Climate Change and Environment 3. Gender Studies and 4. Economic Growth.

BIGD's research is aimed at supporting its academic and training programs. It does not limit knowledge creation to being an end in itself but rather to advance the pursuit of a just and prosperous society. Hence, it also plays an advocacy role to give voice to contemporary governance, political and economic issues. One of BIGD's key strengths lies in the truly interdisciplinary character of its work. These are best reflected in its two annual flagship publications: The State of Governance and the State of Cities.

Apart from its flagship programs, BIGD also conducts research on various governance and development related topics. Some of these areas are: municipal finance, extreme poverty and

¹ <http://bigd.bracu.ac.bd/index.php/icons>

² <http://bigd.bracu.ac.bd/>

inequality, labor market, service sector dynamics, local governance, democratic governance, citizens engagement in public procurement, urban governance, climate change governance, inclusion and equality, efficiency in the judiciary of Bangladesh, women empowerment, women participation in politics, cultural norms, regional and trans-regional migration, regional economic integration, etc.

1.2 Academic Program

On the academic side, BIGD offers four Master's degree programmes, Master of Development Studies (MDS), Masters in Governance and Development Programme (MAGD), Masters in Development Management and Practice (MDMP) and Masters in Procurement and Supply Management (MPSM), and offers several first rate certificate courses aimed at building capacity of the public and private sector and the NGOs.

1.3 BIGD other Program³

Apart from research and advocacy, BIGD program division also provides technical and research support to various government entities. Some of the major projects undertaken:

Community of Practice in Performance Management in South Asia: Local Governance Programme SHARIQUE-III: Public Procurement Reform Project II (Extension Phase)

BIGD hosts IGC in Bangladesh, and houses a specialized centre—The Centre for Gender and Social Transformation (CGST), established in 2012.

1.4 Affiliations⁴

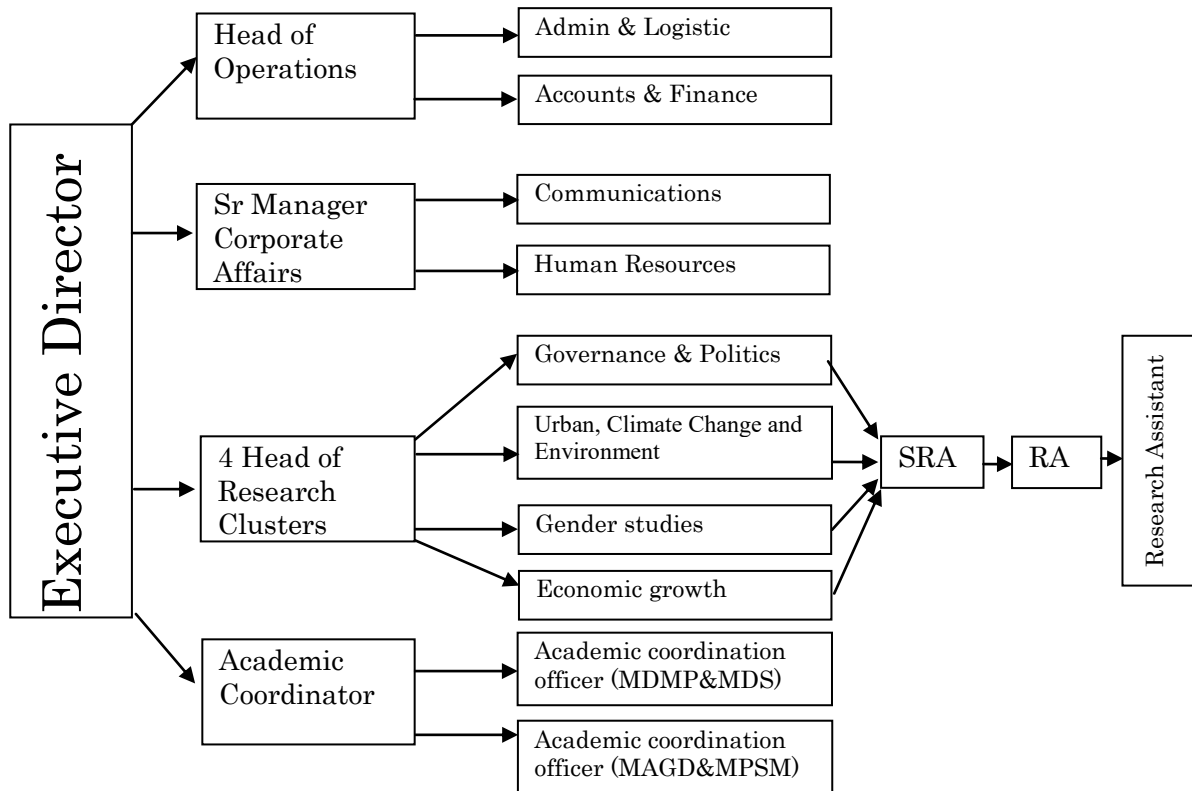
(MoU) with University College London (UCL), Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), The Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge, International Growth Centre (IGC) of London School of Economics (LSE) and University of Oxford, IFMR LEAD, India.

Collaborations with: Think Tank Initiative (TTI) of International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada, SOAS University of London, Department of International Development (DFID), UK, University of Manchester, HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), The World Bank, Institute for the study of Labour (IZA), University of Ottawa.

³ <http://bigd.bracu.ac.bd/>

⁴ <http://bigd.bracu.ac.bd/index.php/icons/affiliations>

1.5 BIGD Organizational set-up



Source: Author's construct

1.6 General information of Politics, Democracy and Governance cluster⁵

The Politics, Democracy and Governance (PDG) cluster primarily explores the links and relationships between politics, institutions and collective action and how these shape democratic and policy outcomes. The research conducted by the cluster has a strong empirical and policy focus, exploring how government reforms, policy and institutional changes and citizen's participation can lead to pro-poor development and social justice. The work conducted by the cluster broadly falls under the following themes:

- the changing role and capacity of the state in the context of democratization and liberalization;
- the role of collective action and social movements in creating inclusive and participatory governance mechanisms and influencing service delivery and public policy;
- the role and effectiveness of local government institutions;
- the changing nature and influence of the transnational actors, including donors and international organizations, on development policy and processes.

The cluster also engages in academic teaching and training; piloting action research; and policy advocacy.

⁵ <http://bigd.bracu.ac.bd/index.php/research/themes/politics-democracy-and-governance>

Section Two: Tasks during working in BIGD

2.1 Entry time in BIGD

Every working day, I entered into office within 09:00 am and left office after 06:00 pm.

2.2 Tasks

From September-November, I was involved with 3 research projects. These are (1) Public Finance and Revenue Mobilization of Union Parishads: A Case of Four Union Parishads. (2) Preparing a chapter (Quality of education in Bangladesh) for the State of Governance report. (3) Finalizing individual Working Paper titled Living with Insecure Tenancy, Eviction Threat and Meager Livelihood Opportunities: A Case of Zianagar Slum. Other than these, I attended several meetings/in house events within the mentioned time. Meetings include (1) Brown bag, and (2) Brain storming session with SOAS team, lead by Professor Mustaque Khan. On the other hand In house events include (1) Farewell of researcher (2) Ceremony in order to honor to the ED of BIGD for his great contribution in fund raising.

In order to write the chapter for SoG, and Working Paper; I had to go through a number of literature, reports as well as look on to newspaper for any relevant contemporary op-ed, interview, commentary. List of literature (those I reviewed) are given below:

SL	Reports/article
1.	Hossain, S. (2013). MIGRATION, URBANIZATION AND POVERTY IN DHAKA, BANGLADESH. <i>Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh</i> , Vol. 58(2), 2013, pp. 369-382.
2.	Payne, G. & Majale, M. (2004). <i>The Urban Housing Manual: Making Regulatory Frameworks Work for the Poor</i> . United Kingdom: Earthscan.2009.
3.	Gravett, S., Ramsaroop, S., 2015. <i>Perspective in education-2015</i> , Bridging theory and practice in teacher education: teaching schools-a bridge too far?
4.	BANBEIS, 2015. <i>The 1st Biennial Teacher Census</i> , 2013
5.	Duflo, E, Hanna, R and Ryan P, 2012. Incentives Work: Getting Teachers to Come to School. <i>American Economic Review</i> 2012, 102(4): 1241-1278 http://dx.doi.org/aer.102.4.1241

Other than these literatures, I used to look into several national daily, different website like BANBEIS, BBS, Ministry of Education, World Bank, and UNESCO for update data on education.

Notwithstanding, I was given a responsibility to collect monthly activities from all team members of Politics and Governance cluster each month, and compile the information in one file, and finally send to communication team. Cluster head assigned me, and I sent an email to the cluster member regarding this message. Before sending the message, I had a sitting with communication to clarify the writing format of the monthly activity form properly. Having few advices from communication team, I updated the format and shared with all.

Section Three: Learning through working in BIGD during internship

I had to work in several projects simultaneously as because of strict deadlines. Working in several projects, interactions with different people took place. Among them, working with seniors of SHARIQUE project, I had to interact with printers, communications team, program personnel, senior researchers, lead researcher. During interaction, few staffs were found very helpful and open.

Researchers used to present their concept note before us, and most of the research topic was very interesting. What I learned from one presentation is that, how to develop different models, and why to think about too many exogenous factors during looking at causality.

Learning through working in specific projects:

3.1 Public Finance and Revenue Mobilization of Union Parishads: A Case of Four Union Parishads.

Previously I was responsible to prepare the draft of this report followed by literature review, data collection, and data analysis. I also seek for help from my seniors; they deploy an intern to assist me in the following tasks as Data entry, Cleaning, Coding, Analysis, Generation of output tables, graphs, and Writing description of the tables and graphs.

I trusted on that guy, and I did not check his day to day's duties. However, when I started to generate outputs from the dataset, I found many inconsistencies. Then I rechecked and found that there exist too many error in data entry, coding.

I discussed these issues to the intern and he acknowledged his mistakes. He edited the data accordingly, and handed over to me. I generate output from the dataset and starts writing the report. After a month, I submitted the zero draft to my senior researcher. In the meantime, I received another recent report on revenue mobilization of union parishads. The study was conducted by a renowned researcher, and the study was funded by UNDP. That study was based on rigorous analysis, and a big sample size. I noticed that there might have little noise in our data, and analysis. I recheck and found that the budget and financial statement that our studied unions provided to the field researchers were noisy itself. Interestingly, in the meantime I interviewed a Union parishads secretary and representative through my personal connection to crosscheck the data we collected. I found that our studied UPs hide their weakness which quite natural. However, it was my weakness that I was not concerned about those matters before sending researchers to field for data collection. It is another important thing that senior researchers of any study must be well informed and contextually intellectual, and enough capability including leadership to guide junior researchers correctly. However, I received comments from team leader after few weeks. In the meantime, I adjusted the data

through crosschecking with data from all possible sources (website, primary and secondary sources, consultation). I informed my immediate supervisor regarding data adjusting, and adjusted few results in the 1st draft. When I sent the final draft to lead researcher, my immediate senior researcher informed him regarding changes of results. The lead blindly misunderstood, and questioned the authenticity of data collection.

3.2 Preparing a chapter on Quality of Education in Bangladesh for the State of Governance report

It was a challenge for me to search all reports regarding the quality of education in Bangladesh. It was obvious that quality of education in being questioned, but which factors are responsible, was not clear to all. There were many factors, issues are raising but no specific or most priority issue/issues were identified. No established framework were found (I could not find out as because I too not expert in this sector or a well concern) that can fit the research. My supervisor was also reluctant in these issues. I too do not know how extent his expertise in education sector, and he also never expressed his potential or interest area. I could not find him as my mentor type or I totally failed to seek his attention to my work or idea. Rather I found few idiosyncratic behaviors. It is also true that my frequent company could establish a good relationship with him, and I would be benefited in many ways. However, I finally found a research which was done through funded by IDRC which focuses on quality of education depends on quality of teachers. I firmly agreed with it, and considered other few factors that might affect on quality of education at some point. I prepared a concept note and shared with him. He never paid minimum attention to any of my work throughout the year. One thing may be that I chose my co-author from outside of BIGD for writing working paper which was supposed to be published from BIGD. However, if I am not wrong, he is too much professional and very keen to publish as many papers as possible at anyhow.

3.3 Working paper: Finalizing individual Working Paper titled Living with Insecure Tenancy, Eviction Threat and Meager Livelihood Opportunities: A Case of Zianagar Slum

Initially I started writing the paper with consultation with one of my MDMP course teachers. He made few comments on the draft especially to use little rigorous analysis on few issues and correct the English throughout the paper. I asked one of my friends to review my paper, and help me figure out grammatical errors and other issues. I paid beyond office hour in preparing the working paper which was promised to submit by 30th October 2016 to BIGD. Finally I could have managed to submit it in stipulated time.

3.4 Brain storming session with SOAS team, lead by Professor Mustaque Khan

Professor Mustaque Khan, team leader of Anti-Corruption Evidence Programme is going to conduct this multi-country research with BIGD for Bangladesh site. Senior researcher asked me to involve in this project. My entry into this project took place later although it is still in initial phase. However, first meeting took place at BIGD conference room on November 2, 2016. What I have learned from that session is that-

- Conventional anti-corruption strategy is top-up and often fail to most of the developing countries.
- One of the most important reasons is that developing countries are characterized by political settlements where formal rules are weakly enforced and widely violated.
- People of these types' countries always prone to rule violating than following, because rule-violating is profitable. On the other hand, rule-following is time consuming, lengthy process, and less profitable.

3.5 Miscellaneous issues

Another point I noticed that researchers who studied abroad, are better communicative, and holds good theoretical understanding of research. They are very likely to debate to clarify any issue. They have both national and global contextual understanding in other hand. Most of all capability for good write up is necessary for a researcher. Studying in Bangladesh is not enough to make one capable in this issue. Another important thing I learned is that Presentations among large audience lead anyone to be confident, better communicative as well as helpful to build confident to junior researchers also.

Section 4: Self Evaluation

4.1 Criticism on my experience and the good and bad of it.

- In order to several engagements, I had an excellent experience on doing multiple task and meet strict deadlines. However, too many engagements often reduce the quality output.
- During working with staffs of several sectors (Program, communications, research), I had a general understanding of their roles and responsibility. I also understood a little bit about their level of workload in BIGD.
- Few staffs were found unpredictable, and reluctant to cooperate up to the mark. Very few of them seem to mislead or misguide others. Beware of them might be the best policy. However, this may constrain to build a good team or lead the institute growing properly up to the expected level.

- Few researchers are skeptic in quantitative method (Mainly whose academic background is Economics), few are qualitative (Whose academic background is anthropology, and other social science subject). Few researchers are in between i.e., mix method is the best method for them.
- Due to less talkative in nature, everybody perhaps think me either unsocial or stupid. I found a senior researcher talking such a way few months back about a less talkative new researcher. That was not sound good.
- Misconduct in terms of ethics, data confidentiality, and idea stealing by few researchers created lack of trust in all researchers among senior researchers including the head of the institute. This may not go untreated or hold it for a long time.
- Communication and negotiation could resolve few of my misconception, as well as misunderstanding. I think I could tackle few odd situations in previous time if I could communicate and negotiate.
- Researchers and the academics are the heart of this institute. Admin, finance, accounts departments supposed to be support the researchers in order to smoothen their daily functions leading to expected and quality output. However, in this institute the three sections (Admin, finance, accounts) other than the core sections (research) are more organized, team spiritual, more interactive among them. Out of 7 floors, all of the members of above three groups sit together in one floor whereas the researchers are distributed in other 6 floors. Two specialist officers (Head of operations, and senior manager, corporate affairs) lead them. Their salary is also good enough compared to researchers which may some sort of headache to few. It is also observed that people often worry about others development rather than his/her own underdevelopment.

4.2 Recommendation and suggestions

- 1) During working in Governance cluster of BIGD, I achieved few fundamental things which can be very useful in my future. For instance, a good research should come across with lots of consultations, brainstorming session, extensive literature review. This is not a silent work until and unless the researcher attain in a position of theoretically and practically well off knowledge based.
- 2) A research is a team work. Dedication, integrity, enthusiasm are the key characteristics to lead a research into a good piece of work. Mutual understanding, trust and cooperation are necessary within the team members which is a challenge in

current societal context of Bangladesh. Information gaps, and lack of proper guidance may lead to a research unsuccessful as well as worthless.

- 3) Focus on the main research question is a vital issue. Researchers should be specific during working with a social issue, and which is based on empirical evidence. Because social issues are complex, and very likely to change over time and context. It was a great learning working Revenue mobilization research.
- 4) I came across multiple tasks with multiple supervisors with different academic background and experiences. I believe it certainly enable me to cope with future professional environment. I was not successful in maintaining same/good relationship with all because of some sort of competition with each other. Everybody looks crazy to get the credits anyhow, and wanted to be the best in the institute. To please all, one must be professional and canning. I think that I have not any of these two attributes which are pre-requisite in our current country context. It was the great lesson learning for me. It will definitely help me to take care in future, in elsewhere, if need.
- 5) Communication and negotiation are most important qualities in human. These two qualities are very needful in personal and professional life to become successful. I had a misconception or ignorance about these two issues. My belief was (1) Output is the only measurement of a staff's performance evaluation (2) Being punctual, obey the orders of supervisors are another indicators for evaluating staff's performance. However, motivating the supervisors, and earning trust by anyhow are found to be the key indicators in evaluating staff's performance in current context. Career development, proper incentives depends on these two informal and very open indicators now-a-days. This is the person who is unable to be fit with this situation, very likely to become a rejected item. This may lead to destroy one's existing capability day by day as well as limit one's potential at a large. Changing one's built-in characters (either negative/positive, right/wrong) and pull him/herself in the mainstream is only the solution.
- 6) Another important issue to be bear into consideration that if there is lack of coordination, cooperation exist within the same group members, these may often create mistrust among seniors about other staffs. One may tell ill of others to the seniors, and often mislead others, and even may create conflicts. So, frequent communication to the seniors may reduce the conflict. These challenges can also be minimized through conveying extra hour to senior colleague, appreciate their tasks, oiling and grouping. Although these are obstacle to evolve human quality.

7) When Personal benefit becomes the core/only objective of a staff, it can't be sustainable for an institute. Dedication, sense of ownership by researchers are very needful to grow and development of an institute. However, proper incentives scheme according to the potential of staffs may motivate the staffs.

I firmly believe Masters in Development Management and Practice (MDMP) was an excellent program of BIGD to give a broader idea about developmental issues including sustainable development to the learners. Faculties and researchers who taught us comprised with vast theoretical and practical knowledge from national level to global. Notwithstanding, the internship program was really helpful to achieve practical experience that will broadly help me think too much issues during selecting job, sectors/organizations/institutes. Other than this, what I have learned throughout this internship program will help me in developing research idea, drafting report as well as how to work in a large team, what measures need to take to minimize gaps/conflicts/misconception/misunderstanding among seniors and other colleagues. After all, no alternative to become a professional in every possible area of life.

Appendix: Abstract

Factors Affecting Quality of Education in Bangladesh

Education is a fundamental human right and essential for the exercise of all other human rights. It promotes individual freedom and empowerment and yields important development benefits. The Government of Bangladesh considers education as one of the most important ingredients for social and economic development of the country, resulting in reduced poverty, and ensuring good governance. However, education is not merely about obtaining a 'higher score in exam' but about obtaining capability for performing social and economic developmental activities. This research sought to discuss the quality of education in Bangladesh from secondary to higher secondary school, school & college, and Madrasah levels, and what factors affect the quality. This research reviewed published and internal surveys, and census reports of Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics. Besides, relevant documents from the Ministry of Education, research organisations, consultants, and development partners were reviewed. Articles, interviews, op-ed, opinions, commentaries, editorials on this issue of education, published in popular national print and online newspapers and websites also have been mined from 2015 onwards. It also uses some information following consultations with some relevant stakeholders during the first half of 2016. Findings shows very poor level of academic and professional qualifications of teachers, pedagogical knowledge, incentives and career development options for teachers might have associated with quality education. Quality of education in Bangladesh is very likely to be affected by current evaluation and examination system. Besides, quality of education depends on the performance of teacher, so academic and professional qualification of teachers, their pedagogical understanding and education system are very likely to affect the quality. Lack of job satisfaction is predominant among the teachers. Very poor incentives do not attract comparatively more qualified students into the teaching profession. As a result, Percentage of teachers with ≥ 60 percent marks in their academic exam was found to be very low. Half of the total teachers in secondary to higher secondary have no professional qualification/training. Factors associated with students' performance (obtaining higher GPA and pass rate) are flexibility in answer script evaluation, frequent question papers leakages, guidance by guidebook and coaching centers, memorizing rather than understanding. Study also found that more than 50 percent of teachers, who teach Mathematics and English, did not study those subjects in their academic life. Pedagogical knowledge of teachers was found to be very poor. Final recommendation was to upgrade the incentive system as if good quality students can be attracted to teaching profession.