Impacts on teachers’ lives of a capacity building course: A case study in rural Rajasthan, India.

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ABSTRACT

This case study is conducted on teachers working in Non-Formal Education centers (NFE’s), for the Non-Governmental Organization Seva Mandir, in the Udaipur district in Rajasthan, India. The setting for the study is remote rural villages around the small city Udaipur, with one million inhabitants.

The purpose of this case study is to investigate what impact the capacity building course that Seva Mandir offers the teachers, the NFE certification course, have had on the teacher’s lives. The aim is to get a picture of the overall impact of the course on a professional level and on the individual NFE teachers’ personal life. The case study was conducted on a sample of eleven out of 50 NFE teachers working for Seva Mandir in the Jhadol block. The empirical data was collected through qualitative interviews conducted in the NFE schools.

The NFE centers that are run by Seva Mandir are a complement to malfunctioning government schools in areas where most of the children are first generation learners. The schools aim to keep children from working or starting to work, through giving them an educational base. The teachers have no previous teachers training and are having an average prior education of 8th to 10th class.

The general findings of the study are that a majority of the teachers felt an increase in self-confidence after participating in the course. They generally had more concrete and ambitious future plans after the course than before it, and they were highly dominated of plans for further education for themselves and their children. It was also found that the teachers felt major changes in their teaching approach after the course. They had learnt new teaching strategies and seemed to have changed their attitude against the children. The teachers used activities like games, songs and stories in their teaching as well as taking help of the local surroundings when teaching.
1 INTRODUKTION

We, the two authors of this degree project, have been given a great opportunity through SIDA’s project Minor Field Study, to conduct our degree project in India. That we are truly grateful for. We have been given the opportunity not only to experience the work and challenges of working for development in a NGO (Non-Governmental Organization), but also to get a small insight into the rural conditions in the Udaipur district, in northwestern India. Udaipur is a city of around one million inhabitants, situated in the state Rajasthan. This degree project is being conducted in remote rural areas around the city of Udaipur, in cooperation with a well-established local NGO, Seva Mandir. The villages we have been able to visit are not only remote but also isolated from most urban opportunities.

One of the authors, Malin Andersson, has a personal relation to the city of Udaipur, since her in laws live there. She is below narrating on the city to explain how this study came to be.

Personally, I love the city Udaipur and would like to share it with the rest of the world. Like India as a whole, Udaipur is a mesmerizing mix of everything you could imagine, but in a slightly smaller package. Although Udaipur is as chaotic as India itself there is still places in Udaipur to relax at, as well as places to be astound by. Nevertheless the true beauty of the city lies in its people. Since the city of Udaipur always has intrigued me, I wanted to get to know another side of the region, the countryside, the life of people in rural Rajasthan. It was no longer enough for me to hear stories about rural India or to see it through the window of a bus. I wanted to experience it, to meet the people who live there. This degree project of the teachers' education program proved to be the perfect opportunity for this. That and through the big and well-established NGO Seva Mandir did my wish come through.

Since both the authors are prospective teachers it seemed natural that we in these conditions wanted to get to the grass root level and work with the Non-Formal Education centers (NFE’s). The NFE centers are schools run by Seva Mandir in remote areas were the education level is very low. The aim for these schools is to prevent children from working and for them to get a basic education to later enroll in the formal educational system. The teachers in the NFE’s normally have no previous teachers training.

In our normal setting we have quite an extensive social security, which is not at all present in rural India. The lack of security in life is always present, and makes the impact of even small changes in work and capacity even bigger. In every educational setting it is interesting to explore the possibilities that come with further knowledge and capacity building. Here we have a unique opportunity to with our own eyes have a look into which impacts education can have on people at an educational grass root level.

The purpose of this case study is to investigate what impacts the capacity building course that Seva Mandir offers the teachers, the NFE certification course, have had on the teachers' lives. The aim is to get a picture of the overall impact of the course on a professional level, but also on the individual NFE teachers’ personal life.

The capacity building course, the NFE certification course, is a basic teachers training course in three levels that focuses on the teachers skills in the subjects Mathematics and Hindi, as well as on Learning Processes of Children. By the NFE certification course the teachers get an opportunity to capacity building and learning
teaching approaches which is meant to enhance their ability to teach, but it may also affect their lives on a bigger scale. That is what we will investigate.

Personally we find this study extra interesting since the teachers that are participating in the course are having a level of prior education that is similar to the one of the students we will teach in the future. We are both prospective teachers for upper primary and secondary school. Although it is very interesting to meet the kids in the schools and learn about their way to learn how to read, write and do math, it is even more interesting for us to investigate the teachers own learning and development.
2 BACKGROUND

In these theoretical background theories of capacity building, professionalism and teacher development will firstly be presented. Thereafter the context in which this case study is taking place. The study is being conducted in India in a setting significantly different from the European. Therefore it is of utter importance to get a background on the setting in the area. It will be presented from national to regional, in terms of a small presentation of India, the state of Rajasthan and the region of Udaipur, as well as the Indian school system. The organization Seva Mandir and the background to the Non-Formal Education program will also be presented.

2.1 Theories and previous research of teacher development

In teacher development can be included a wide range of research on how students develop throughout the teacher's education, on how teachers develop during their working life and theories of professionalism.

The optimization of the outcomes of a process is facilitated by the understanding of that process. If we are to facilitate the professional development of teachers, we must understand the process by which teachers grow professionally and the conditions that support and promote that growth. (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002, s.1).

2.1.1 Competence

While exercising the profession of teaching, teachers need to have the competence which makes it possible for them to continuously develop and grow in their own profession (Nilsson, 2006). Competence in this sense means different abilities which are parts of the professional process. Competence can be defined as: The potential ability of the individual to act in relation to a certain task, situation or context. As a matter of fact, it is the ability to successfully (according to one’s own and others’ categories) carry out a task, including the ability to identify, take opportunity of and if possible, expand the space of interpreting, acting and evaluating that is provided by the work. When talking about teacher development it may for example include solving problems, the ability to manage the relation between theory and practice, ability to develop one’s own organization of work, ability to take rational well motivated decisions, and the ability to continuously be able to learn new things that might benefit one’s profession (ibid.).

A teacher is learning the skill how to teach during its whole working life in school. There is so much to learn in the actual interaction and socialization when teaching the children in school (Wedin, 2007). Teachers are building their competences in the actual teaching, and this is important to consider when thinking about the professional development of teachers. There is also a correlation when learning teaching skills between the teachers own straining and the conditions in which the teacher is working in (ibid.).

The teachers' development in practical didactics is according to Wedin (2007) happening through interaction. The interaction might be with other persons, but also with things like texts. For any development in the teacher's knowledge of didactics to take place the teachers must actively want to improve its knowledge (ibid.).
2.1.2 Professionalism

Wedin (2007) is stating that the building of knowledge in the teachers' profession is being affected by the teachers' view of the teacher's role, their goals with the teaching and with the demands that is present on teachers as a profession.

If the teachers cannot have any influence on the competence building courses that they undertake, they might fell subordinate. This may then exercise a negative effect on the motivation and willingness of the teachers’ to participate in competence developing courses (Nilsson, 2006). This can be considered serious since professional development is and is supposed to be a process through the whole working life of teachers (Wedin, 2007).

2.1.3 Development of competences

It is of great importance that development of competences should start with what teachers problematize around in their teaching and what they consider relevant for their teaching. By building the professional development of competences on the actual teaching, concrete examples can make it possible for teachers to develop new knowledge (Nilsson, 2006). In this way, familiar items or phenomena, from one’s individual reference frame can be used to create a solid base to develop further knowledge and competences upon.

Development of competences should be formed so that the participants are involved in the entire process (Nilsson, 2006). Involving the teachers in the process makes it possible for them to discover that there is a relation between teaching and the intentions of the society concerning development of competences by education (ibid.). Because of this relation we can say that the content of what the society members are taught would be reflected by the society at any given time. On the other hand, the society will be reflected by the content of what members of the society are being taught.

Because of the continuous development of the society and the fast global development of knowledge, teachers have to consider themselves as participants in a continuously learning process to be successful. Despite that they might already got their teacher exam (Nilsson, 2006).

Motivation to competence development

It is very important for the quality of teaching that the teachers are maintaining their commitment to teach. The conclusion of Bullough’s (2008) research about these phenomena was that the ability of teachers to maintain their commitment to the teaching was influenced by their own identity and the personal and professional phases in their lives. He also found that these were linked to the conditions in which they lived and worked (ibid.). This means that there are numerous of factors involved in what makes a person likely to maintain their passion for teaching. By this it is obvious that it is not only the job of teaching and what directly is connected to it that plays a part in what acts a motivation for the learners.
Content of competence development courses

The purpose of Nilsson’s (2006) study was to find out what thoughts teachers have concerning competence development courses. She is pointing out that as far as development of competences are concerned, many teachers prefer courses which directly can be derived to the specific subjects the teachers teach in. The teachers are more likely to agree upon undertaking competence development courses if they can picture any concrete use of the content of the course.

General competences (such as how to handle children who has reading and writing disorders), attaches subordinate importance if the teachers are not able to see that it might be directly useful in their teaching. Nilsson (2006) withhold that teachers more easily can see the use and relevance in competence development courses that specifically are related to the subjects (ibid.). This correlate with what has been said earlier here, that concretization of competence development courses are necessary to withheld a positive and constructive development of competences. That is why it is important for schools and organizations to be able to present a concrete and well defined purpose of their competence development courses to the teachers.

2.1.4 Professional identity and background

The teachers' background is an important part of their professional identity, as well as the profession is a big part of the personal identity. There are many aspects of a teacher’s background that can be helpful in the teaching (Goodson & Numan 2003). One of them is that a common cultural background with the students can help the teacher by creating a feeling of solidarity in the classroom. The teachers' background is a considerable factor in the classroom environment. According to Goodson & Numan (2003) studies also show that students are getting better results, when teachers elaborate and develop teaching materials according to the local cultural setting. That is simplified if the teacher shares the same local cultural background with the students (ibid.).

2.1.5 The need for professional development

Another point of interest is that teachers are pointing out that working with children and teaching is what makes this particular job interesting and rewarding (Nilsson, 2006). Although to withhold the interest and enthusiasm for the teaching, some new perspectives or new inputs on different ways of thinking are necessary.

When analyzing Nilsson’s work, it is clear that the bigger part of the teachers want concrete methodical and pedagogical tips that they can use in their teaching, more or less without the need of reflecting over it. They are looking for “how to do”- courses rather than ideas that lets the teachers develop an own strategy or teaching approach (ibid.).

2.2 India – A fast-growing economy

In this chapter India as a country and its cultural setting will be presented. Since this pedagogical study is being conducted in a rural setting in India it is important to get a
background on the context in this setting. We are all in some way a product of the context in which we live and work. India is an extremely vast country and the regional differences are big in both basic conditions of life and of culture. That is important to have in mind, and that is why this presentation of India is limited and thereafter the state of Rajasthan, where the study is conducted, is presented. The difference between urban and rural life in India is also extensive and the presentation below therefore has a focus on rural conditions in India.

India is the world's largest democracy with the second largest population in the world. (Swedish Embassy, 2010) The general picture of India as a whole is a society characterized by the tolerance and openness between different cultural and religious groups in the country (Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007).

The Indian cultural system

India is a vast country which makes the differences in the regional life quite extensive. In India there are several thousand ethnic groups, tribes and castes, as well as numeral religions. The Indian culture is built on the ancient caste system (Hockings, 2001). Although the caste system does officially not exist anymore and it is legally banned, it is definitely an important part of most Indians lives.

The castes are hierarchal linked to each other and in the olden days they were also strictly related to an occupation (Hockings, 2001). The hierarchy of the castes is evident in present days, although most noticeable in the planning of marriages. The far majority of marriages in India are in some extent an arrangement between families (ibid.).

The castes and sub castes in each region has its own distinctive subculture (Hockings, 2001). The differences in the way people dress, which deities they pray to and their way of talking can together be a signature of a caste. Tribes usually do not have a caste hierarchy but often have their own internal hierarchical organization. An interesting feature of the Indian caste system is that even though it is originally built on the Hindu fate, you can nowadays find caste organization among Indian Muslims, Jews, and Christians as well as in the Hindu community (ibid.).
Rural India and its major income source

A majority of the population in India (73%) is resident in rural areas, outside of towns and cities. There are still millions of illiterates in India who are more aware that they are from a specific region, than that they are Indians (Hockings, 2001). Although India is a fast growing and developing country, 2/3 of the population is working in agriculture. Even so agriculture is just contributing with one fifth to India's BNP, and that is continuously shrinking (Swedish Embassy, 2010).

The Indian landscape is dotted with over half a million villages, and each region has distinctive forms of village layout, domestic life and sources of livelihood (Hockings, 2001). The Indian rural population is a massive unorganized workforce that is now mainly working in small self-sufficient agricultural units (Swedish Embassy, 2010). The agriculture is ineffective, mainly due to poor infrastructure which leads to almost full dependence on the downfall of monsoon rains. The lack of infrastructure is also a big problem for the farmers that make it hard for them to earn money on their products outside of the local market. The present government has made promises to contribute to the development of the rural area in terms of research for watering systems and to increase the availability of credits for the rural population (ibid.).

India’s political system

India is a democracy with a central government lead by a president, but even so the states in India has a great deal of self-governance. Every state has its own government and many decisions are being taken in the state itself (Swedish Embassy, 2010).

There are 28 states in India, all of different size and living conditions, due to differences in climate, landscape and populations. The states are then divided into smaller districts, and since the states are vast as countries in Europe, even the districts are vast. The districts are made up of 6-12 blocks (O'Sullivan, 2002). The organization Seva Mandir is working in 6 blocks in the Udaipur district, in southern Rajasthan.

2.2.1 The state of Rajasthan

The state of Rajasthan is located in the Northwestern part of India, with the Pakistani border at its western border. The northwestern part of Rajasthan, the part that is connected to the boarder of Pakistan, is flat and dominated by the sandy Thar Desert, the only desert in India (National Encyklopedin, 2011; Government of Rajasthan, 2011). The rest of the state is more fertile and has some forests, but the region is still generally very dry (Government of Rajasthan, 2011).

Rajasthan is areawise the largest state in India, with a population (2001) of 56,5 million. The state has a large rural and tribal population with 43,3 million people living in rural villages. These numbers are all from the Indian census of 2001 (Government of Rajasthan, 2011). According to National Encyklopedin (2011) was the population in Rajasthan 68,1 million in 2009. In less than ten years it seems that the population in Rajasthan increased with as much as 11, 6 million people. Still the
state is not one of the most densely populated states in India. There are more than 40000 villages in the state of Rajasthan (Government of Rajasthan, 2011).

**The region of Udaipur**

Udaipur is a city of approximately 1 million inhabitants, which is situated in the southwestern part of Rajasthan. The city of Udaipur is attracting many tourists, which is of importance to the city's economy. The landscape in the region around Udaipur is dominated by the Aravali Mountains, an ancient chain of mountains surrounding the city on all sides (National Encyklopedin, 2011).

The landscape in the region consists of hills and low mountains and small areas of lower land in between. The climate in the Udaipur district is characterized by low rainfall and the temperature variations are extreme, with as low as 4 degrees Celsius in the winter and continuously as high as 48 degrees during the dry season (Seva Mandir, 2011). These climate conditions make life in the rural area of Udaipur not only hard, but the landscape also makes the villages highly inaccessible.

The government has a policy that all children should have an elementary school within one kilometers range and an upper primary school within three kilometers range. This is according to the government a fact for around 85% of the population in India (Bandyopadhyay & Govinda, 2008). Even when so that is still putting obstacles in the way for children to come to school in these inaccessible areas.

The local rural population is still to a large extent dependent on natural resources for their livelihood. A great problem is not only the lack of infrastructure in the rural areas, but also the lack of modern farming methods. Only 13% of the land that is being cultivated has any sort of irrigation, which leaves the farmers dependent on the very small natural rainfall (Seva Mandir, 2011).

**2.3 The Indian school system – A historical background**

Since India is such a vast country with such a big difference in both culture and economic standard even the Indian school is a complex arena to describe. Here follows an attempt to do so, in the extent of the size of this project. Because it is of importance to understand the educational context in which this project is being conducted. We will first try to give the reader a view of the central school system, what is similar in the whole country, and then look closer into the region of Rajasthan. This since the conditions for schooling is very different in different states of India.

The Indian school system is based on eight years of primary school and four years of secondary school (Bandyopadhyay & Govinda, 2008). The primary school usually is divided in to primary level (1\textsuperscript{st} -5\textsuperscript{th}) and upper primary level (6\textsuperscript{th} -8\textsuperscript{th}) and the secondary school is divided in secondary level (9\textsuperscript{th} - 10\textsuperscript{th}) and upper secondary level (11\textsuperscript{th} -12\textsuperscript{th}). After 12\textsuperscript{th} class, students continue in college, usually for three years before pursuing a master or PhD (ibid.).
2.3.1 The British empire’s implementation of western education in India

Even today you can see a large similarity between the British and the Indian school system, but if you take a closer look at the British Imperial Education Policy there was a lack of any nationwide and widespread British educational idea (Whitehead, 2005). Since 1815, first the East India Company and later the British Government were responsible for implementing a western education in India. Looking back on the education in India during British role reveals an attempt to educate the people of India, but the quality of the education was poor compared to European standards.

After 1858 the British government almost completely left providing of Indian schools to the power of free market, which sadly did not work the way they intended. Instead of a fast growth of educational institutions on the demand of education, many private secondary school and colleges, sometimes with poor quality sprung up. Something, which the country, is in some sense still struggling with (Whitehead, 2005).

2.3.2 Independence and educational policy

At Independence, 1947, India inherited a legacy of large-scale illiteracy (Gandhi Kingdon, 2007). The country had no proper educational system to provide education to the mass. In the initial years after freedom, the Indian state had to focus on establishing new schools and raising the demand for education among the masses. They had to begin transforming what was before an elite system, into a system of education for all (Bandyopadhyay & Govinda, 2008).

In 1951, at the first Post-Independence Census, only 9% of the women and 27% of the men were literate in India. It was decided by the makers of the constitution that India by 1960 was to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to age 14. This goal turned out to be elusive and is still not fulfilled. The deadline has been put back repeatedly in the past 55 years (Gandhi Kingdon, 2007).

2.3.3 Free and compulsory as a fundamental right

In 2002 the Indian Parliament changed the Constitution to make free and compulsory elementary education in the age group of 6-14 a fundamental right. It is now a legal fundamental right, but still not a fact for many children in India (Bandyopadhyay & Govinda, 2008). In earlier times missionaries were important for the running of schools, especially in rural areas, but in the last century the government has taken on the responsibility to build and run schools. Local and state schools have educated the vast majority of students the last decade, even though there also have been some impact of NGO's especially in rural areas (Hockings, 2001).

2.4 The Indian school today

In recent years the elusive goal of education for all children under 14 has started to look more realizable (Bandyopadhyay & Govinda, 2008). According to Bandyopadhyay & Govinda (2008) is one major factor that made them get this
impression the fact that the central government has taken a lot more initiatives lately. Initiatives regarding the development and delivery of elementary education, in forms of developing teaching materials, providing infrastructure and school policies (ibid.).

The elementary education is today a joint responsibility between the central government and the state government. Before the state government had almost total responsibility for the elementary education in the state. Today the majority of the financial expenditure are still provided by the state government, but the central government are controlling the process a lot more now (Bandyopadhyay & Govinda, 2008).

2.4.1 The central government’s action and literacy rate today

Since the 1990's the Indian government has put a big effort in improving access to primary education in rural areas and to marginalized groups of the population, as tribes and scheduled castes. As a part of the program Education For All and the Millennium Development Goals, many schools have been built in rural areas in India (Blum & Diwan, 2007). The Millennium Development Goals were reaching to eradicate illiteracy among people age fifteen to thirty five by the year 2000. This goal was not achieved, but there has been a steady decrease in the illiteracy rate since the 1990's (Hockings, 2001).

When compared to other countries at a similar economic level India is lagging behind in educational level, not so much in primary school enrollment, but well so in secondary school enrollment and youth literacy level (Blum & Diwan, 2007). According to the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2007) the overall literacy rate in India was 49% in 1990. That in comparison to the 52% literacy rate of 1991 that Hockings (2001) is claiming. No matter what, there have been a large increase in the literacy rate in India, since it 2003 was of 61% (Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007).

The most southern state, Kerala, has the highest rates of literacy in India of almost 95%, while Rajasthan is one of the five states with the lowest literacy rate (Blum & Diwan, 2007).

In the present five-year-plan, for 2008-2012, the government is instead of eradication of illiteracy reaching for the goal that 85% of the population should be literate by the end of 2012 (Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007). This period of time is soon over, and such an increase in literacy rate might not be likely.

2.4.2 Enrollment rates in Indian schools

Gandhi Kingdon (2007) states that 93,4% of children aged 6-14 are enrolled in primary school in India, according to the ASER survey of 2006. This is a large increase since the 1990's. The enrollment rate of children age 11-14 is lower than that of primary children, 89,7% of the girls and 92,3% of the boys are enrolled in school. The enrollment rate for youths of age 15-16 years are as low as 77,3% for girls and 79,8% for boys. This shows that the Indian school has a problem with large dropout rates of children in secondary school (ibid.).
2.4.3 Girls and rural children are at disadvantage

Women have historically been excluded from education in India, and there is still a big sexual disparity in female and male literacy rates. In 1991, 64% of the men were literate, but only 39% of the women (Blum & Diwan, 2007).

The differences in enrollment rates in Indian schools are also big when comparing the urban and the rural areas. There is a significant difference in the access to education for children in rural areas in India (Blum & Diwan, 2007). According to Bandyopadhyay & Govinda (2008) 68% of rural children in age 6-14 were attending school in 2008 compared to 81% of the same age group in urban areas.

Research shows that the most disadvantaged group in the Indian education system is tribal girls in rural areas, as only 51% of them are enrolled in schools. Compared to 80% of all girls in urban areas (ibid.).

2.4.4 Primary education in India

The quality of education in government schools in India has got a great deal of criticism. There is a shortage of qualified and engaged teachers, as well as in many schools a lack of relevant teaching materials. There is a substantial difference in the access and quality of education in different states, as well as in different districts. The difference between the states has a historical background, since the state governments before had the full power to take decisions regarding education (Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007).

The government is the largest provider of both primary and secondary education, but India has seen an increase in private primary and secondary schools lately (Bandyopadhyay & Govinda, 2008). These schools are commonly considered to be functioning better and more regularly then the government schools. They usually have better infrastructural facilities also, but they do take charges in forms of fees (Bandyopadhyay & Govinda 2008; Hockings 2001). This makes the private schools often inaccessible for the unprivileged masses.

2.4.5 Small multigrade schools

Around three out of four primary schools in India involve multigrade teaching (Bandyopadhyay & Govinda, 2008). There has been a big increase in both the number of schools and the employment of teachers in India in the last 10 years (Blum & Diwan, 2007). The enrollment in primary schools have also increased, but one reason that the increase in the number of schools looks so phenomenal is that most of the new schools are one teacher-one room schools on the countryside (ibid.).

Since 73% of the population lives in rural and often remote areas (Hockings 2001), small schools are a fact and a necessity in India. In these small schools there are mostly just one or a few teachers to teach all the classes, which demands for multigrade teaching (Blum & Diwan, 2007). Multigrade teaching is requiring of the teachers to be innovative. The teacher has to simultaneously teach students of several grades, which is a challenge (Bandyopadhyay & Govinda, 2008).

The lack of teachers in rural schools is both due to an overall teacher shortage, to the unattractiveness of working in remote areas and to the low enrollment rates in small
village schools (Blum & Diwan, 2007). The distance a young child can walk to school is of course limited and the infrastructure is very limited which leads to a very small area of uptake of children to these rural schools. A big problem is that the curricula in the government schools and the teacher training programs are based on a one-teacher-one class scenario, which in the rural area is not a fact. There is a need for more teachers’ training and adapted teaching material for multigrade classrooms for the goal of successful primary education for all to come through (ibid.).

In Indian schools there is a big problem with extensive teacher absentees, primarily in rural areas (Blum & Diwan, 2007; Gandhi Kingdon, 2007; Gandhi Kingdon & Sipahimalani-rao, 2010). A problem of concern for the small one-teacher schools are that they have to be closed when the teacher is on leave, sick or busy in administrative and training courses (Bandyopadhyay & Govinda, 2008). Many of the NFE’s are such one-teacher schools.

2.4.6 Para-teachers in India

Para-teachers, or “contract teachers” are common in India and are commonly persons without specific teacher's education, which are being hired on different hiring conditions than normal teachers, to work in rural areas were teacher shortage is substantial (Gandhi Kingdon & Sipahimalani-rao, 2010). This usually means being hired on a one-year contract, with a lower salary than a normal teacher. Para-teachers are present in government schools as well as private schools, but they are also a major part of different school systems run by NGO’s. They are also normally hired from the local area (ibid.). In this context it is good to know that teachers in India when been working in a government school for one year usually are offered in-service for life, which by definition is not the fact for para-teachers.

Para-teachers are a fairly recent phenomenon in India (Gandhi Kingdon & Sipahimalani-rao 2010). A few states, such as Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan, began to hire them in the 1980's for specific educational projects. The trend spread to other states in the 1990's, and the numbers of para-teachers have grown in many states since then. The states that have not to hired para-teachers, such as the ones in the south, are having stabilizing child populations. Therefore they have not experienced acute teacher shortages (ibid.).

According to Gandhi Kingdon & Sipahimalani-rao (2010) studies show that although para-teachers normally have less or no teachers training, there seems to be small differences in their students results compared with students taught by normal in-service teachers.

A problem that is present in the Indian government schools is extensive teacher absentees, primarily in rural areas (Blum & Diwan, 2007; Gandhi Kingdon, 2007; Gandhi Kingdon & Sipahimalani-rao 2010). Studies of para-teachers show that para-teachers are present in the schools on a more regularly basis than teachers hired on lifetime bases (Gandhi Kingdon & Sipahimalani-rao, 2010). It is suggested that the hiring conditions, might be one reason for that. Another reason is the fact that the para-teachers are more likely to be resident in the area close to the school, which decreases the necessities for absentees due to traveling for family matters, weddings, funerals and such. Another positive effect of that the para-teachers are hired from the local community seems to be that they are personally more engaged in the students,
in the development of the community as well as more trusted by the adults in the community (ibid.).

Thus all the studies on this issue so far suggest that there is little difference in the learning achievement levels of students taught by para-teachers and regular teachers, or sometimes even a learning advantage for children taught by para-teachers (Gandhi Kingdon & Sipahimalani-rao 2010). It is suggested that children taught by para-teachers may be disadvantaged vice-a-versa those taught by regular teachers by having teachers who are less knowledgeable or less competent. At the same time, they may be advantaged because their teachers are more likely to be present in the school and more engaged in teaching tasks than regular teachers. Learning levels are overall low in rural areas in India, for children taught by both teacher types. Although it seems clear that being taught by a para-teacher does not mean a student will necessarily have lower achievement (ibid.).

2.5 Education in Rajasthan

Rajasthan is one of the five most backward states when it comes to education. In many of the statistics on enrollment rate and attendance rate there is statements like:

In most states (except Rajasthan, Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh) enrolment for this age group was above 90% (UNESCO 2002 s.11).

According to Bandyopadhyay & Govinda (2008) are 75-78% of children age 5-14 in Rajasthan attending school, which is interesting to compare with the Indian overall attendance rate of 82%. Rajasthan also has a high illiteracy rate, with the highest women illiteracy rate in India (UNESCO 2002). Data from the 1991 and 2001 Indian censuses show that Rajasthan during this decade had a remarkable 22% increase in overall literacy rate (Gandhi Kingdon 2007).

Rajasthan is the state, together with the state of Bihar that has the biggest gender inequality in education higher than primary school. A girl is half as likely to enroll secondary school as a boy in Rajasthan. Gandhi Kingdon (2007) means that the reasons for this gender equality is more likely to be found in conditions in the household then in the organization of the educational institutes.

India's three most educationally backward districts, Jaisalmer, Balmer and Jalore, are all in Rajasthan, were the literacy rate among women is negligible. (UNESCO 2002, s.6)

2.6 Child Labour and Non-Formal Education in India

India has the largest population of working children in the world, an estimate of 12.6 million in 2001, and it has proved to be a challenging task for the Indian government to deal with. The government has during the years taken various different pro-active measures to fight the problem of child labour (ILO - International Labour Organization, 2004).

The largest was the promulgation of the Child Labour Act in 1986 (Zutshi, 2004) This Act was proceeded with a committee being formed in 1979, with the task to study the issue of child labour and suggest what the nation should do about it (ILO, 2004). The Child Labour Act of 1986 prohibited employment of children to work in
specified hazardous occupations. It also regulated working conditions for children, which had not been done before (ibid.).

**Child Labour today**

According to ILO are 11, 2 million children between ages 5-14 working in India today. The problem of child labour is highly linked to poverty, marginalization and illiteracy (ILO, 2004). As a way to improve access to education for working and marginalized children *The National Child Labour Project* was started in 1988 (Zutshi, 2004). This was and is still being done by starting and running special Non-Formal schools to give working and out-of-school children a chance to primary education. The purpose of these *Non-Formal Education centers* is to keep the children out of work or not to start working, and to give them the educational base needed to later enroll in the formal educational system (ibid.). This is what the *NGO Seva Mandir* is doing in the rural areas of Udaipur. They are running *Non-Formal Education centers* in remote villages with high illiteracy rates and a big marginalized community.

As stated before, the main reason for children to work is poverty. They are being sent to work by their parents to help supporting the family. In different parts of India, different occupations are most usual, but the main areas of labour are in agriculture, household work, and carpenter-, shoe- and silk-industries (Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007)

**Non-Formal Education a way to battle child labour**

*The Non-Formal Education program* in India is a part of the *National Child Labour Project*. The aim of such NFE’s (Non-Formal Education centers) is to educate children up to class-five level through an accelerated three-year educational package. After three years of NFE education, it is intended that the children will be integrated into formal schools at Class VI level (Zutshi, 2004; Bandyopadhyay & Govinda, 2008).

The NFE schools were primary started in 9 areas with a high child labour rate, and they are a part of the rehabilitating part of the National Child Labour Project. The NFE’s is also a way to prevent or at least delay children from starting working. The children are more likely to at least finish primary education if they are enrolled in NFE’s in an early stage (ILO, 2004).

The instructors, or teachers, are normally hired from the local community to work in the Non-Formal Education centers (Zutshi 2004, Bandyopadhyay & Govinda 2008, Gandhi Kingdon & Sipahimalani-rao, 2010). According to Bandyopadhyay & Govinda (2008) is the functioning of the centers to a large extent dependent on the teacher's ability and commitment. Although it also is important with a commitment from the local governing body in the village community (ibid.).

**2.7 The impact of NGO’s**

There are numerous Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO’s) of different social, political, religious, or educational natures in India today (Hockings 2001). NGO's are
autonomous organizations and are therefore often more flexible than governmental systems of education in developing countries (Raval, Mckenney & Pieters, 2010). The governmental systems of education are often highly centralized, extremely big and slow moved, compared to a NGO that with the funds present can take quicker decisions (ibid.).

There are around 2800 NGO’s in India that is being a part of the implementation of the Non-Formal Education program. To provide education to underprivileged children in marginalized communities who are at risk of not enrolling in school or not completing primary school (Bandyopadhyay & Govinda 2008). Seva Mandir is such a NGO in Rajasthan.

2.7.1 Seva Mandir an NGO working in the Udaipur district in the state Rajasthan

Seva Mandir is a well-established secularized NGO that has been operating in the Udaipur district since 1968. The region of Udaipur, is situated in the Southern part of Rajasthan. Seva Mandir was founded by Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta, an educationist and Social Activist from Udaipur (Give India 2011). Seva Mandir started their work with an Adult Education program in some villages in the region, and has since then expanded a lot. The organization is now working in all the below areas:

(1) village institutions; (2) natural resource development; (3) women's empowerment; (4) early child care and development; (5) health; and (6) education; (ibid.)

The mission of the organization is stated below:

Seva Mandir's mission is to make real the idea of a society consisting of free and equal citizens who are able to come together and solve the problems that affect them in their particular contexts. The commitment is to work for a paradigm of development and governance that is democratic and polyarchic. Seva Mandir seeks to institutionalize the idea that development and governance are not only to be left to the state and its formal bodies such as the legislature and the bureaucracy, but that the citizens and their associations should also engage separately and jointly with the state. The mission, briefly, is to construct the conditions in which citizens of plural backgrounds and perspectives can come together and work to benefit and empower the least advantaged in society. (Seva Mandir 2011)

Seva Mandir is working in 6 blocks around Udaipur city, including the urban block. The organization is currently working in 626 villages and is according to themselves reaching out to over 60,000 persons in the region. When it comes to education Seva Mandir is today apart from some projects for Adult Education also running NFE (Non-Formal Education) centers and Day care centers called Balwadis (Seva Mandir 2011).

2.8 Non Formal Education in Seva Mandir’s regime

Seva Mandir helps village communities to run Non Formal Education centers to ensure education to out-of-school children in tribal and marginalized communities (Seva Mandir, Report 5, 2009). Seva Mandir is 2011 running 176 NFE centers in the rural areas around Udaipur (Seva Mandir, Report 4, 2011). The NFE’s give children
from age 6-14, with no or very little prior education, an opportunity to get a good educational base, normally up to 3rd or 5th class level (Seva Mandir, Report 5, 2009). The goal is for these children to enroll in the existing government schools after they completed the NFE program. The children are from a very poor background and from villages with a very limited tradition of formal education. The children are often engaged in household and agricultural work or migrating for work, either daily or seasonally. This together with a non-existing educational history in the family is usually the reason why they don't go to government school (ibid.).

The local teachers in the NFE's are usually not formally trained at teaching and their own level of education is at an average of 8th - 10th class (Seva Mandir, Report 5, 2009). The teachers are focusing on the students individually and on the joy of learning, that and the fact that they don't use violence against the kids are a contrast against a big part of the government schools (ibid.).

A big problem in the government schools in rural areas is an extensive teacher absence (Seva Mandir, Report 5, 2009). Absent teachers cannot teach any children to read. To ensure that that's not happening in the NFE's Seva Mandir has a system where the teachers take pictures of themselves and the children three times a day. The pictures shows that they are present the whole day and also give Seva Mandir statistics on how many children that are coming regularly. The teachers can get a payment bonus through this system if they are present all day (Seva Mandir, 2011).

2.9 Seva Mandir´s capacity building course – The NFE certification course

The instructors (the teachers in the Non-Formal-Education Centers) have been offered an opportunity to further education and capacity building, in the form of the NFE certification course, since April 2004 (Seva Mandir, Report 3, 2009). The course is on three levels where the first focuses on the instructors' basic reading and writing skills in Hindi and skills in Mathematics to the level required of class 5 (Seva Mandir Report 1, 2006). The course is based on work with worksheets on the Hindi language, Mathematics and Learning Processes of Children. Every worksheet is given, taken in and given back to the instructors twice (Seva Mandir, Report 2, 2007). The first time, the instructors are given constructive comments on their work and they are also doing self-correction of the worksheet. The second time the worksheets are handed out they have been graded and corrected (ibid.).

The course is, apart from the worksheets, consisting of tutorials monthly where group discussions are being held on the content of the worksheets (Seva Mandir, Report 2, 2007). The tutorials are usually one and a half day and are based on responses and questions on the worksheets. In level I the instructors are also expected to conduct classroom observations and the course is finished with written exams (Seva Mandir, Report 2, 2007). Three groups of level I had been completed by December 2008 (Seva Mandir, Report 3, 2009).

Level II of the NFE certification course includes the same parts as level I, but with a more advanced content (Seva Mandir Report 4, 2011). It involves more of classrooms processes that will help the instructors understand the classroom situation and children's learning in the classroom. The content of this course is more abstract than the one of level I. The instructors should, after completing level II be able to
teach upper-primary classes. There have been two groups of level II completed by July 2009 and a new course started in Oct 2009 that is being completed with exams in March 2011.

The first group of level 3 has started on Nov 2009 in all the blocks and is continuing through 2010-2011. This last course focuses on understanding of children’s development and on the sociology of education. It also aims at building a more fundamental understanding of the subjects being taught in the NFE centers (ibid.).

The NFE certification course has a team of six people working on it continuously. They are handing out worksheet material, planning and conducting the tutorials, performing and grading the worksheets and exams (Seva Mandir Report 3, 2009).
3 PROBLEM

The purpose of this case study is to investigate what impact the capacity building course that Seva Mandir offers the teachers, the NFE certification course, have had on the teacher’s lives. The aim is to get a picture of the overall impact of the course on a professional level, but also on the individual NFE teachers’ personal life. This is a study that will help Seva Mandir to better understand the effects of the course, both on the teaching and the development of the teachers themselves, but also on the teachers’ personal lives. For us as prospective teachers it is interesting to investigate how this first opportunity to further education is affecting the teachers themselves in their building of a professional self and how it affects the thoughts of the future.

Research questions

- What are the NFE teachers’ thoughts of the course and suggestions for developing the course?
- How have the teachers' lives been affected of beginning to teach in the NFE?
- What are the changes in the teachers' lives after participating in the NFE certification course, regarding home conditions, work and the professional and personal self?
- Has the teachers' teaching approach changed after the course? In which way has it changed?
- How have the teachers’ thoughts about the future changed after participating in the NFE certification course?
4 METHOD

Here is the research method of this study being presented. That is followed by an explanation of the sample selection, along with information of the teachers’ backgrounds. The latter to making it easier to analyze the general findings. Last some limitations and ethical considerations are being presented.

4.1 Research method

For this study a qualitative method has been used to collect the empiric data. Qualitative strategies focus, instead of quantifying the data collected, on words and how the individuals in the study look upon and express their own reality (Bryman, 2002). A qualitative study mainly conducts an inductive approach where the dedication is to generate theories. The antonym to a qualitative method would be a quantitative method. In a quantitative study the focus is to put theories to the test, where numbers play a bigger part than words (ibid.). Since we were interested in the teachers own thoughts and out of their answers finding patterns, we chose to conduct a qualitative method to collect the empiric data.

Qualitative interviews

When it comes to collecting the empiric data in a qualitative study there are mainly two methods to use, either surveys or interviews. Surveys have positive effect that there is no outer source of distraction that might affect the objects of interest. In an interview there is however the possibility for the researchers to ask follow up questions that might be of interest for the study. In a study they cannot explain the questions if the person undertaking the survey find the questions difficult to understand. Conducting interviews, the researcher have that possibility and they can also get a bigger insight in the interview object’s environment (Bryman, 2002). You are more likely to get a broader answer if the interviewers can create an interest and a relation to the interview object.

In this study qualitative interviews were conducted. The purpose of qualitative interviews is to get a picture of the persons’ thoughts and state of mind by exploring the same (Patel & Davidsson 2003). This means there can never be any in true answers beforehand and the structure of the qualitative interview has by definition a low standardization, which means there is space for the interview object to self-formulate the answers. The qualitative result is based on the persons own words analyzed by the researcher (ibid.)

According to Patel & Davidsson (2003) it is important in a qualitative interview that the interviewer and/or the translator are able to help the interview object to create a coherent reasoning. Of course without interfering with the actual thoughts and point of views of the interview object. To make this possible the interviewer has to be able to talk to the interview object on a level which won’t inhibit the conversation. This means that the interviewer must be aware of the language, gesture and body language that is custom in the area of interest and to which the interview object can rely to (ibid.). Even when this awareness does exist it does not necessary mean that the interviewer and the interview object will be able to meet in a conversation under equal conditions. There are countless factors that may create an unofficial hierarchy,
which might inhibit or alter the answers the interview object is giving. Factors that might play a part in this hierarchy can be gender, age and social background (Patel & Davidsson, 2003).

**Case study**

The aim of a case study is to investigate a smaller group, which can be everything from one individual in one specific situation, to a couple of organizations. In a case study you try to get an as wide-ranging perspective as possible about a phenomenon (Patel & Davidsson 2003). Case studies are a good way to investigate processes and changes, were a broader perspective is needed.

Since it is impossible to look into all situations included in a population (the studied group), one need to select a sample to conduct the case study on (Patel & Davidsson 2003). Depending on the mode of selection of the sample it will be possible to generalize from the sample. A big enough sample chosen with as much randomization as possible makes it possible to generalize and say something about the population from which the samples were selected (ibid.).

**Pilot study**

Before collecting the empirical data for this study a background research on Seva Mandir's work and a pilot study were conducted. Seva Mandir's intern reports of the NFE's and the NFE certification course were studied. This to get a background on, and the official description of the NFE's and the NFE certification course, as well as a background to the implementation and extent of the courses. The reports gave the basic information of Seva Mandir's system and the course which made it possible to prepare a pilot study. A rough questionnaire was then created and the effectiveness of the questions was tested in a small pilot study.

The pilot study was conducted in the area Bargaon, the block closest to the city Udaipur. Since the conditions in the blocks differ a lot, mainly depending on the possibilities to reach the city, the parts of Bargaon that was farthest away from Udaipur were chosen for the pilot study. In the pilot study the first questionnaire was tested on two NFE-teachers at two different NFE-centers. During these interviews it appeared that some of the questions were incomprehensible to the interview objects. Other questions had to be modified to make it easier for both the interview objects and the interviewers to see the difference between the questions. During the pilot study was also the first time we worked with the translator, and conducted interviews in this setting. The translator got an opportunity to get to know the questionnaire. We all got the chance to get a hold of the interview situation and set up a strategy for the data collection. This was very helpful.

**4.2 Sample selection – The studied case**

The group of target for this study is teachers working in Non-Formal Education centers (NFE´s), and who have undertaken a NFE certification course, for the NGO Seva Mandir in the Udaipur district, Rajasthan, India. Seva Mandir is running 176 NFE centers in six blocks in the Udaipur district (Seva Mandir, Report 4, 2011). With the intention of restricting the sample selection to one of the six blocks, the
Jhadol block, was selected. This was mainly because of its far distance from Udaipur, and the lack of possibilities that comes with this remoteness. Seva Mandir is running 46 NFE-centers in the Jhadol block, a remote region northwest of Udaipur.

The empirical data was collected through interviews with a sample of eleven out of the 50 NFE teachers working in the Jhadol block. Since the terrain in the rural Jhadol area possess with a logistically challenge as far as transportation is concerned, we considered this sample as sufficient. The sample size is reasonably big, since it is one fifth of the working NFE-teachers in the area. None of the eleven chosen teachers declined when being asked to participate in the interviews.

There are three levels of the NFE certification course that Seva Mandir is providing the teachers. Since we are investigating the effects of the NFE course on the teachers’ lives, we felt that it was important that the sample was taken evenly over the three levels of the course. We needed approximately as many teachers that finished the first, the second and the third level of the course. This was to be able to see if there were any differences in the impacts of the course depending on the length and level of study. Seva Mandir started the certification courses in 2004 which means that a majority of the teachers have finished at least the first course, except for the teachers who has started teaching in a NFE centers recently. It is also important that the sample is as representable for the population as possible. To make sure that we chose to take the sample from different parts of the vast area of Jhadol, to get them as even geographically spread as possible.

Eleven out of the 50 NFE teachers working in the vast Jhadol block were interviewed in 10 different schools. They were strategically selected based on the location of their NFE and their level of certification. The age of the interview objects were widespread from the age of 20 to 45. Of the eleven interviewed only one was a woman, which is due to the fact that there are very few women working in the NFE's. Only four out of the 50 NFE teachers in Jhadol block are women. Jhadol which is where the block begins and were Seva Mandir has a block office, is a small town 50km from Udaipur. The interviews were normally conducted in the small NFE schools during the working day. The schools are in the far majority one teacher schools and they normally have one classroom, which meant that the students were present. All of the teachers in this study agreed when being asked, to conduct the interview.

### 4.3 The teachers’ background

To understand why the teachers are answering as they are, and to be able to separate patterns it is important to know some of the individual teachers’ background. The NFE teachers are all married and besides working at the NFE-school they are conducting some sort of farming and- or housework. To be able to trace an answer to a specific background, without calling the teachers by name, we will be referring to the teachers by randomly given numbers.

**T 1**

The interview object is a male in his latest forties'. He is a married man and has passed 10th class in government school. He has five children, three daughters and two
sons. His oldest child, a son, has passed 12th class in the government school in the village, and is now studying the first year in college. His other son is studying in government school. Only one of his three daughters is attending school. When confronted with the question, why he as a teacher and a father, is keeping two of his children out of school he says that: “I know, it is my guilt”. His explanation is that he has so many goats at home so he has to have someone to look after them during the days. He did join Seva Mandir and the NFE in 2003 and before that he was a teacher at another NGO. When we meet him he has passed level one of the certification course and is awaiting the result for level two.

T 2

The interview object is approximately 45 years old. He is married, has passed 8th class and is planning to take the national exam for 10th as well, in government school. He has totally four children, one daughter and three sons. Because his oldest son is having a functional disorder he is not attending school but is doing some duties at home. His second son is studying 11th class in government school, in a science and math stream, in Jhadol. His daughter is studying in 10th class. As the first NFE-teacher in Jhadol block he started working in 1993. Before that he was a mechanic, working with repairing cars and bikes. Concerning the certification course he has passed level one and has given exam for level two from which he is awaiting the result.

T 3

This teacher is a 33 year old man. He is married and has three children, one daughter and two sons. The oldest one, a boy, is now 16 years old and is studying in 6th class in the government school in the village. Before that he went to his father’s NFE-school. The other son and the daughter are regularly attending the NFE-school for study. At home, they all are studying together, the father and his children. In 1999 he passed 10th class and he started as a NFE-teacher in 2003. After that, he has done BSTC, Elementary teacher’s training course, in Jammu Kashmir. He lived there for two years, 2006-2007. Now, he has also given the B.Ed. exam (Bachelor of Education).He is trying to find government job as a teacher now, and has filled in the TAT-form (meaning teacher ability test) from which he is awaiting result. Besides that, he is also doing his B.A. and has in the certification course passed two levels and is awaiting the result of the 3rd exam.

T 4

The interview object is a 37 year old married man. In government school he has passed 12th class and 1994 he started as a teacher in another kind of school. It was Shaw Shiksha Abhiyan for the organization Lok Jumbish, which is a development program run by the state government. He has two daughters and one son, his oldest child is 12 years old and is attending government school in Jhadol. The two other children are studying at their father’s NFE-school. He started at the NFE in 2003 and has passed first level in the certification course, and is awaiting result of level two.

T 5

The interview object is a 35 year old man. He has two daughters, 12 and 6 years old, and two sons, eight, and 4,5 years old. The three oldest of his children is studying in a private school in the far away town of Ogna. The oldest daughter is in 6th class and was admitted in 3rd since private schools admits students in lower classes. The
The interview object started in NFE at 2004 and has passed level one and two in the certification course. He is now waiting for the result of the exam of level three.

**T 6**

The interview object is a 20 year old woman. She is married and has one child, a son, who is 18 month, and is with her when she is teaching. She has passed 9th class in government school and after that she started directly at the NFE in 2007. She has given the exam for level one in the certification course and is waiting for the result. Since she started participated in the course she also managed to take a private exam for 10th class. She was very shy when we started the interview and throughout the interview it becomes more and more evident that she isn’t comfortable with the situation. She is a woman, young, quite low educated and living in a village in the rural part of Jhadol. When questioned by a slightly older and highly educated man it stands clear that it is not custom for her to take a big part in the conversation. Even though one of the interviewers is a woman, and able to talk some Hindi, and the translator do everything he can to make her as comfortable as possible she hardly speaks on direct questions. During the interview she grows more and more tough and talks a little bit more. When we are asking how her life looks like she answers that her husband is studying in Jhadol, 1st year for his B.A. With a husband who is studying and herself in the NFE-school for half of the days, her husband is the only one in the family that supports her.

**T 7**

This interview object is approximately 40-45 years old man. According to himself he is 35 but considering when he started to teach and how old his children are, that is hardly unlikely. He has a total of five children, two daughters and three sons. His oldest child is, a boy, is 15 and his youngest child is six month. His three sons are studying in government school, 8th, 5th and 2nd class. His oldest son went 4 years at the NF-school before starting in government school. His daughters are too young to attend school. In government school, the interview object has passed 8th class and as far as the certification course is concerned, he has passed level one and two and is awaiting result for the level three exams. He started at the NFE-school 1994 and before that he was teaching aged people as another project of Seva Mandir. In the certification course he has passed level one and two and is waiting for the result of level three. He has also been involved in a women development program in his village before NFE. One of his brothers is a contractor in the constructing business. Two of his brothers are doing agriculture. His brother has bought land for 60000 and now he is getting 15 acres of wheat. Now they together have a lot of agriculture animals.

**T 8**

The interview object is a 45 year old man who has passed 8th class in government school. He has totally six children, three daughters and three sons where the oldest one is a 25 year old boy. His two youngest sons are studying in government school, 6th and 7th class. His oldest son is constructing contractor. His daughters are already married. When they were still living at home there was no school in the village so that’s why they haven’t attended school. The interview object has actually been working within the Seva Mandir organization since 1981 when he was teaching aged people. 2004 he started as a NFE-teacher in another NFE close to this one. At the same time he got involved in a women empowerment group, called Vidhya Laxmi, which purpose is to get the women employed. They are now doing fishing works and
building houses. In 2009, that school closed and he took his student to the NFE-school where interview object 7 is working. Now they are teaching their students together. Now, “Jhadol 8” as well is waiting for the result of the 3rd level and has passed level one and level two concerning the certification course.

T 9

The interview object is as 28 year old man. He is married and has totally two children, two and one years old. He is awaiting the result of the level one exam in the certification course. He started as a NFE-teacher in 2009 and has passed 12th class in government school as a senior student. After that he was a teacher in a private school in Ghogal. Now, he is also pursuing his B.A. in collage. He is doing that private meaning he study at home and only do the exams in school. So to 1pm he is a NFE-teacher, after that he is a farmer and at night he is a student. Concerning the certification course he is awaiting the result of the first level exam. Since his own children are too young to attend school they are still at home. He is looking to take them to the NFE-school and become their first teacher.

T 10

The Interview object is even he a 28 year old male. He has three children in total. His daughters are 11 and seven years old. His son is four years old. His oldest daughter is studying in 6th class in government school. She did attend her father’s NFE-school before that. Her sister is now in the NFE-school and the boy is still too young to attend school. The interview object himself has passed 10th class in government school, dropped out because of the economic situation in his family, and joined Seva Mandir in 1998. He was then teaching aged people and started as a NFE-teacher in 2001. Before NFE he was also working with a women-group who worked with forest development. In the certification course he has passed level one and two and is now awaiting result of level three.

T 11

The interview object is a 26 year old man. He is married and has totally four children, one daughter and three sons. His oldest child is an 8 year old child and his youngest is 2 years old. His two oldest children are with their father at the NFE-school and the two youngest are at the local balwadi. That is a kind of kindergarten where younger children can stay some hours a day so that their mothers are able to work and do household work which would benefit the family. In government school he has passed 9th class and have attempted 10th but failed. After that he did labor work for some time. He first started as NFE-teacher in another village. At that time there were two NFE-schools there and he was running one of them. But, according to the interview object, the community and the people of the village did not support him. They didn’t listen to him. He thought that in that case, he'll better be working in his own village. One of the NFE-schools in that other village eventually was relocated to the interview object’s village. Since 2007, he has been working at this NFE-school that he is teaching at now. As far as the certification course is concern, he has given exam for the first level and is now awaiting the result.

4.4 Data collection and analysis

The interviews were conducted with the help of a translator. One of the interviewers understands Hindi to the extent that she could understand in which way the translator
phrased the questions and the main themes of the teachers’ answers. This was helpful to conclude that the questions were put in the way meant and that all the themes were properly translated. It also made it easier to be a more active part in the interviews and take away some of the tension of having foreigners and on top of that, strangers in the school. The translator was still needed because the interviewer could not phrase the questions in Hindi herself and the villagers were speaking in a very different dialect, close to the local language, even when they spoke Hindi.

The interviews were recorded with a voice recorder and then transcribed before analysis. Since the environment of the interviews often was not ideal for voice recording, one of the interviewers also took field notes during the interviews. These were then compared and consulted with during the transcription of the recordings. The interviews lasted for between 30 and 45 minutes. The transcribed material was then analyzed as below.

Analyzing and categorization

The transcribed material from the interviews was analyzed and patterns were distinguished. The answers of the interviewed teachers were compared with one other to see if there were any similarities or something that separated them. The different answers were arranged in themes corresponding with the research questions and then arranged in different categories based on their content. The themes and categories are presented under General Findings, and in the categories are a few citations included to clarify them.

4.5 Limitations and ethical considerations

Limitations

One limitation of interviews is that they are based on questions and the fact that the interview object chooses to answer the questions. The interviewer is left to the goodwill of the interview object (Patel & Davidson, 2003). The motivation of the interview object to answer the questions is effected of the relation that the interviewer can establish with the interview object during the interview. That is even more important in the situation were a translator is needed for the interview. It is always important to make the environment as nice and comfortable for the interview object as possible, and in the case of a translator it makes his work more than just translating the actual words, since it is easy to feel uncomfortable with communicating through somebody (ibid.). The schools itself possessed an as familiar and comfortable environment as possible for the interview objects. Here they had access to their own material which could help them explaining their point of view. Our translator proved to be very socially competent and turned out to be good at making the interview objects feel comfortable. As an interviewer it's important to show genuine interest of the persons’ answers and thoughts and to show understanding of the interview persons’ conditions (Patel & Davidsson 2003). Even when the interviewer does have a genuine interest of the thoughts of the interview object it can afford a challenge to actually show it. Since one of the interviewers actually understands some Hindi and can manage to express herself in Hindi to a certain degree, we tried to achieve an as mutual and relaxed conversation as possible.
Along with the translator, we managed to bring about a quite open and sheer atmosphere of interest.

The schools of interest are in the far majority one teacher schools and they normally have one classroom, which meant that the students were present during the interviews. In one way we could consider the students as a source of distraction, but on the other hand they could by their present take the edge off a tense atmosphere that otherwise might appear.

One problem of validity is that this study is based on narratives. All research based on narratives or using stories as a research tool is having a minor problem of validity, since this research has to try to present the genuine voice (Goodson and Numan, 2003). The individual teachers are, when first being asked, reminding themselves how their lives were before. After that they are, more or less on purpose, choosing what they are telling the interviewers. It is then up to the interviewers to analyze and interpret the collected empirics that will be presenting in the report of the research. In the case of interviews or observations, the interview object can tend to alter their answers depending on who is the interviewer which would be a problem of validity (Bryman, 2002). Since the interview objects knew that we were cooperating with the same organization as they were employed by, we can’t be sure of to which degree that might affect the answers of the interview objects. Out of concern for what the superiors at Seva Mandir might say if they read the report or talked to the interviewers, the teachers might alter their answers to please the superiors of the organization.

For a test or interview to be reliable the answers given have to be similar regardless who is the interviewer (Bryman, 2002). Before the actual interview was conducted we made, through the translator, a short introduction about who we were and in what purpose we were asking the teacher to be a part of our study. In our point of view there is no sensitive information which would be brought into daylight because of our questionnaire. What we cannot be sure of is how the interview objects felt about the questions. He or she might misunderstand the questions. Because of the difference in cultures between the interviewers and the interview objects there could be questions that in the context of consideration by the interview objects could be considered being too personal. We did what we could to minimize the latter by having both our translator and other people at Seva Mandir looking into our questionnaire. This was to see if there was anything that could seem offensive or in other way act in a negative way to the interview object. This was not a major issue, since there are many things that in Europe would be considered too personal, but that is not so in Indian culture. For example would a question about the marriage status and the person’s children be a perfectly natural and good way to start a conversation in India. What we did experience was some gender inequality, when interviewing a young woman from one village. It is not custom for women to take a large part in a public conversation with men, especially not older men. When we interviewed a young woman it was obvious that she was cautious and shy in the beginning. During the interview she gradually became braver however, and the interview was finally conducted in a pleasant atmosphere.

**Ethical principles of research**

As a part of the introductory presentation of us and our project, the interview objects were told that participating in the interview were voluntarily. The conditions of the
research were pointed out and they were told that they could at any given time call off the interview. This was in line with one of the rules of the ethical principles of research of Vetenskapsrådet, the demand of information (Vetenskapsrådet 2011). Approval to participate in the interview was confirmed, also in line with Vetenskapsrådet (2011). Another rule of ethical principles of research is the demand of confidentiality. The interview objects were informed that they would be anonymous and that any information that could be used to identify themselves would be left out of the report. In this report the teachers are named by a number, for example t1, t2 and so on, which stand for teacher one and teacher two. This was to be able to trace an answer to a person without giving away their identity. According to Vetenskapsrådet (2011) the interview objects have to be informed in which way their answers are going to be used. The interview objects in this study were informed that their answers were only going to be used in the purpose of research as a basis for this study.
5 GENERAL FINDINGS

The findings from the interviews with the teachers have below been categorized according to their content. Firstly the teachers' thoughts of the course and suggestions for developing it are presented, to give a picture of the success of the implementation of the course. Thereafter are the changes in the teachers' lives investigated. The teachers spoke of changes in their lives of beginning to teach in the NFE as well as changes after participating in the course, in their personal and professional lives. When it comes to the impacts of the course we have chosen to separate the impacts on the personal life and on the professional life, with the latter being presented under Changes in teaching approach. In the end will the teachers' thoughts and prospects for the future before and after the course be presented to give a picture of their ambitions.

The findings are being presented in the above mentioned themes, which are directly connected to the research questions. Under each theme are the findings presented in categories which are exentualized by citations from the NFE teachers. The teacher behind the citation is marked by t for teacher and a number between one and eleven.

5.1 The teachers’ view of the course

The NFE teachers were asked of their thoughts of the courses and if they wanted to change anything in the course. Whether they would like to add or take away something of the content in the course. In this chapter firstly the teachers' thoughts and opinions of the course will be presented proceeded by their suggestions for changes in the NFE certification course.

5.1.1 Thoughts of the course

When being asked of their thoughts of the course, the teachers in unison declared the course as being good. Seven of the eleven teachers used the phrase, “The course is good”. It is important to have in mind that we as volunteers of Seva Mandir might oppose some resentment in having any bad opinions of the course, even though we did point out that the teachers would be anonymous in the report and that the purpose of the report is to understand the impacts of the course and to develop the course further. The statements have been categorized below according to their content on why the course is good.

The course is simply good

One of the teachers is simply stating that the course is good and is not further elaborating the answer. “The course is good.” When being asked what is good the teacher said: “Activity was good.” The course is good, but what is good the teacher is not specifying, more then that the activities in the course were good.

It's good because I learn the subject
Four of the interviewed teachers are considering the NFE certification course to be good because they have improved their skills in the subjects. In the NFE centers they are teaching Hindi, mathematics and elementary English, like the English alphabet and the meaning of a few words. The focus of this category’s answers was on the skills in mathematics.

Very good. This course is good. It helps me to teach them. I was facing some problems in mathematics and so, and now I’m able to teach them in a better way. (t7)

It seems that the new things these teachers have learned are quite extensive, and they are pointing at specific skills in the subjects of mathematics and Hindi. It might seem a bit strange that the teachers consider themselves to have learned many new words and grammatical rules in Hindi, but Hindi is not these teachers’ mother tongue. Although Hindi is related to the locally spoken languages in the region, it is not generally spoken in the villages. Commonly people understand Hindi, but they do not speak it to a great extent. The teachers can speak Hindi since they are fairly educated.

*The course made me learn teaching strategies*

According to four of the eleven interviewed NFE teachers the course is good because they learned new teaching approaches in it. They are explaining that by this courses they have learned many new ways, how to make the children learn in a better manner. One teacher phrases it like this:

By the course I come to know how to make them learn, and how to teach in a better manner, how can he grasp (t2).

Another teacher also spoke of the fact that he by the course learned about didactics of how to teach the subjects.

This course is good. By this we can learn poems, stories and even we can increase our experience by it (t5).

He is speaking of that he learned that the use of poems and stories can be a way for the children to learn language in a good manner. This category can be summarized by the citation of teacher number 3 below:

By this many things we can learn, by this course. How to make them learn. How to make them understand. By this the children can learn faster. /.../ The things I used to do to make them learn are totally different from now (t3).

*I learned minor things, much repetition*

One of the interviewed NFE teachers is stating that he did not learn many new things in the course, that it in the subject parts was a great deal of repetition from his prior education. It is warranted to point out that this teacher is one of two teachers who prior has passed 12th grade. He is one of the most educated NFE teachers we have interviewed.

The course is good. We are taught minor things in the course and the course is good in the activity point of view. Minor things. Activities, like playing something and then we can learn by playing something. This types of activities. Minor things (t9).
Experience, I improved myself

One teacher is defining the course as beneficial for his life. He is speaking of the NFE certification course as more profound for him as a person than what the others did. He is explaining that the course has made him eager for knowledge and for education and that it is giving him useful experience for teaching.

He is saying that this course is making me eager for education, for knowledge. He's saying that the course is good. When I was planning to do this course that time everybody said to me what will you do after the course? What is the importance of this course? What will you get? That time I was saying to them, I will do. Before the course I was bookworm. Only I just read and made them learn, read and made them learn. This was the process. But after the course I could improve myself, I could make them learn in better manner. I can make them understand in a better manner. By my experience, by. I can elaborate things. I can make them understand. How it will be easy for the children. That was learned by me, by the course. (t10)

Teachers can influence the course

One of the teachers is apart from a statement about that the course is good because it's a possibility to learn new teaching strategies, also making a statement that Seva Mandir is listening to the teachers’ suggestions in this course. He spoke of actual situations when the participants of the course had asked for particular things and that the instructors of the course had made the changes.

He says that we demanded the percentage calculations in the mathematics, and they added it. They changed the course on their need. In Hindi course we didn't know all the meaning of the words. We demanded a Hindi meaning book for that, like a dictionary. And they provided. (t3)

5.1.2 Future development of the NFE certification course

When it comes to being a part of developing the NFE certification course the teachers had considerably many suggestions for changes of the course. The major suggestions were that English and some other subjects should be added in the NFE certification course. Some of the teachers did not see any need for any changes in the course.

No changes are needed

Several of the teachers interviewed stated that the course was good and there was no need for any changes in it. It is difficult to interpret if that truly is their opinion or whether it might be due to them being shy or nervous. Maybe they didn't have any proposals that they thought would be important for us or Seva Mandir.

English should be added

Seven of the teachers answered that they wish that English could be added to the curricula of the NFE certification course. Some of the teachers wished for English to be added and mentioned some other change they would like, but English was the first statement for all seven. One teacher said that:
in the government school there is a rule that the children has English from 3rd standard and I always get them admitted in 6th. So sometimes they feel bad, and I also feel that, that my kids they are not getting good things and sometimes they are lacking (...) Even I don't know English, so how can I teach them? If they add English it will be good for me also. Then it will be directly be good for the kids. If I know English then I can make them learn, I will teach them (t10).

Another teacher mentions that English would be good not only for the children's future education, but for himself also. That is a view that is shared with several others.

English should be in the course. If I come to know about English then I can make them learn. And if they experience about the English words, then if they go to the higher education, like 4th and 5th in government school, that time they can grow more. They can grasp more. It would be good for them and for me also if English should be added. (t11)

More subjects are needed

Three teachers stated that there is a need for more subjects in the NFE certification course, and consequently also in the NFE schools as such. They should be teaching more subjects than Hindi and Mathematics.

This course should have more subjects. It should have environmental science and English also. Otherwise everything is ok. No things are meaningless in the course. (t9)

There are officially quite many more subjects in the curricula of the formal education system. In the government schools they are, at least officially, teaching in subjects like Hindi, Sanskrit, Environmental studies, and Science.

One teacher is stating that the NFE certification courses should include technical studies, like that of how mechanical machines work. The impression was that this was of personal interest to him, but also that he considered this kind of knowledge useful for the village's children.

He really wants to add English in this course and engineering, like technical work. He wants to add some technical work so he can teach the children. Machines and like that. Some technical things, he wants to add. (t8)

Overview of the teachers’ thoughts and suggestions for changes in the course

The teachers did in unison consider the NFE certification course as good. As many of them meant it was good because of the subject skills they learn, as them who meant it was good mainly because of the teaching strategies they learn. One teacher stated that he only learned minor things in the course, and that was mainly activities like games through which the children can learn. That teacher is one of the teachers with the longest prior education, which indicates that he might find the subject content quite easy. Another teacher spoke of the NFE certification course as beneficial for his life, because it made him eager for knowledge. He also defines improvement in the teaching approach as a benefit of the course.
5.2 Changes in the teachers’ lives of beginning to teach in the NFE

When interviewing the teachers we asked about their background and how their lives had changed after joining Seva Mandir. This we did much to get a picture of the teachers’ lives and to understand the context that they are living in. The background of the teachers was presented in 4.3, but below will an overview of the teachers’ background be presented as a help for the readers.

Since the questions put to the teachers about changes in their lives were open could one teacher speak of a couple of different things that changed. The NFE teachers spoke of changes in their homes, in financial conditions and changes within themselves. The teachers also discussed the difference between teaching in the NFE and other schools, and with other jobs.

Overview of the teachers’ background

The prior education level on the NFE teachers’ interviewed varies between 8th and 12th grade. Four of the eleven teachers interviewed in Jhadol teachers has passed 8th and only 2 has passed 12th grade.

A majority of the interviewed NFE teachers have been teaching before they started in the NFE. Out of the eight with some prior experience of teaching three did not teach in schools before joining the NFE. They were instead teaching aged people in their villages in projects for adult education run by Seva Mandir. Out of the five teachers that had prior experience of teaching children one worked in a private school in another village and the other four had been working for other NGO's or for development programs run by the government.

One teacher, the only female teacher interviewed in Jhadol, started teaching in the NFE directly after dropping out of school after 9th class. The other two teachers that did not at all teach before joining the NFE did work as a mechanic and a security guard respectively.

Concerning their teaching

When being asked about how their lives have changed after starting to teach in the NFE, a majority of the teachers in Jhadol referred to different things in their teaching. That was something that we did not expect beforehand, but generally the teachers seemed to consider their professional selves as a big part of their life. They spoke a lot about their teaching and their work even when asked about their personal life.

Almost half of the teachers explain how the Seva Mandir's NFE schools differ in teaching methods from other schools. Either they referred to their own schooling in government schools, or to their own previous teaching. One teacher states that: “Now, I am always lovable towards them (the students) also.” (t4) He has been teaching before he joined the NFE and means that it is a difference working in Seva Mandir. Many of the teachers seemed to show a great affection to their students, sometimes to an extent that could be compared with the affection one shows to one's own children. They are often calling the students in their school for “their children”. One of the teachers tells us that he has been taking his students to Udaipur, visiting the zoo and tournaments in Gulab Bagh.
A couple of teachers are comparing the NFE centers with the government school, and one of them explains that in government schools the children are being taught how to read only by the alphabet, by rote-learning.

The NFE teaching material is based on pictures, our surroundings like trees and many other things, which helps the children to learn reading and writing. (t3)

According to one of the NFE teachers, do the teachers in the government schools not come regularly. Moreover they are mostly doing different kind of report work, like counting the population, and surveys. To his opinion they also put too much time in to the Mid-day meal program.

Another teacher doesn’t give any example on any changes in his way of teaching but proudly tells us that he got better result than the government school.

Many of my children, around 20 children are studying in 6th to 12th class now (t10).

Changes within themselves

Several of the interviewed teachers in Jhadol spoke specifically about an increase in self-confidence as an effect of the NFE certification course. Two of them spoke of hesitation for speaking to people and in front of people before they were teachers in the NFE and before they participated in the course.

I was not even able to speak in front of anybody, not even the village people. I felt shy sometimes. I always felt like this, if I say something, then what he will say to me. These types of wrong things always came in my mind, again and again. After joining it I could improve myself, how can I deal with other persons (t10).

Another teacher puts it like this:

I’m feeling confidence. I have self-confidence, self-attitude. Now I can face anyone, I can speak. I can teach them. (t5)

He explains that it was not like that before he started teaching.

Another teacher speaks of the fact that people in the village is coming to him for advice. This indicates that he is a person with good reputation in the village, somebody who people trust since they seek advice from him. He does not say that outspoken, but there is another teacher who does speak of his reputation and position in the village as a considerable change since before he started teaching in the NFE. As he puts it, people from the village and even the government school teachers come to him and ask how to do.

They ask me questions, they have some queries and they come to me. I solve the problem, because of the NFE, because of this teaching. (t10)

There are also changes in their way think about their professional appearance.

He didn’t use to be neat and clean. Didn’t think about wearing clean cloth. After joining the NFE all that has changed. He is also stressing how important it is that the children learn this and that he is teaching them this. (t5)

Another of the NFE teachers is mentioning that he got well-informed about the society by the course.

I was not able to understand the customs and traditions of us, but after joining it I could be able to deal with the customs, what is our customs, what are my
That he after the course he understood the traditions, customs and social conditions of the region and he taught it to the children in his school.

Financial conditions

Concerning the financial conditions four of the teachers are mentioning their payment as a change in their life after starting to teach in the NFE. They are all declaring that the economic conditions are better, after starting to teach. Two of the teachers are stating that even though the payment is not very high it is helpful, and that they are putting it on their children's education. They also state that the fact that the teacher job is rendering them a salary every month is a difference to the better compared to their life before joining the NFE.

One of the teachers, who before joining the NFE were migrating to the state Gujarat for labour work in factories, is speaking of that time as a time when his family faced economic problems. He had to go out of the village and live apart from his family which he didn't like at all.

Changes in the home

Four teachers spoke specifically about changes in their family and home conditions. Two of them are narrating of the bliss to be able to live and work in this village, in their own village, something they were not able to do before. One teacher had to live and work for long periods in Gujarat. “I did not like at all to go and leave my family here and have to spend some time, to stay somewhere else for work.” (t11) He says that the most important change is that now he can stay in the village and live with his family. The other teacher was working as a teacher in a private school far from the village. When he worked at the private school he had to go to another village. “But by this NFE, to be a part of this NFE I can be here and teach my village's children.” (t9) He dropped the job in a private school to be able to live and work in his birth village.

One teacher is narrating on how his home conditions have changed since he started teaching. He is educated, which his father is not, and his brothers are not to the same extent. This teacher has been teaching in the NFE for almost 20 years and seems to have brought a big deal of development to the village.

I have two younger brothers and two elder brothers also. Even my father is an illiterate also. So I'm the leader of the house. I show the path. That by this path where you can go, what you can do. They always listen to me. What I am saying they follow. It was not like this before. (t10)
The last teacher who is expressing a change in the home since starting to teach spoke of a change in his children’s education. “Now they are all studying at home, the father and his kids.” He meant that starting teaching in the NFE had made himself start to read more again, and that he now studies with his kids, which in a long run has a positive impact on their education.

**Overview of the impacts of starting to teach in the NFE**

As pointed out before there was a bit more changes of beginning to teach in the NFE than we had expected. Eight out of eleven teachers pointed out some changes considering their teaching, and that of started to teach in the NFE. Half of the teachers mentioned that they experienced changes in their way of thinking about teaching methods. A few of them referred to the fact that in the NFE-center they taught in a totally different manner compared to the government school. What also was evident was an increase in their own self-confidence. These teachers are stating that they felt more comfortable to talk in front of people and that they seem to render a greater reputation in their villages. Also, when still considering their work, some teachers announced that they feel very relieved to be able to work in their own villages and not have to travel or stay away periods of time. The majority of the statements were including the teachers’ work in some way and the financial add that’s comes with it.

**5.3 Changes in the teachers’ lives after participating in the NFE certification course**

When analyzing the interviews to get a picture of the impacts of the course on the teachers’ lives, it is evident that they do feel that participating in the course has had a large impact on their teaching and work life, but also on a bigger scale in their personal lives. It became clear during the interviews that it seemed hard for them to separate the personal life and the professional life, since when being asked about one of them the answers were of the other and vice versa.

The changes in the teachers’ professional lives in terms of changes in teaching approach have been separated from the changes in their personal life. The changes in the personal lives of the teachers will be presented below followed by a chapter on the changes in the teaching approach after participating in the course.

**No changes**

When analyzing the interviews to get a picture of the impacts of the NFE certification, it was found that two teachers did not feel any changes in their lives.

One teacher did not feel any particular changes after the course, especially concerning his work. “I’m already an educated man” and he explains that he feels that he can teach in an easy way.

Another teacher is stating that he did not see any benefits for him as a person of participating in the NFE certification course. He is telling us that he has been trying to get a job at another place, before joining the course.
There are no benefits, there are no benefits for me, after participating. By this we can’t get more and more wages, and more salary, from this. No benefit, we are just doing a formality. But there’s no benefit, no sense, and no changes. After the course../.../After 2009 I didn’t thought that I would go for the second level. And for the children’s future I went there. (t4)

For the sake of the children he did another level after the first one. He didn't see any benefits for himself, but saw it for the children in his school's education. “But for children’s future only.” The NFE certification course is an informal teacher education course and it is not valid if trying to get a job as a government teacher.

**Changes within themselves**

The NFE certification course seems to have had a quite profound impact on the teachers themselves. About half of the teachers spoke of this when being asked about changes in their lives. They spoke of changes in terms of an increase in self-confidence, an awakened curiosity for knowledge and an increase in the confidence as a professional.

The NFE certification course is for the far majority of the teachers the first teachers training that they have undertaken, and also the first opportunity for any further education after their own secondary schooling. This is important to have in mind when analyzing the interviews.

One teacher is narrating about that when it comes to standing up and talking in front of people there have been changes for him.

> If someone tell me before joining the course to go upstairs and talk in front of many people, 40-50 people, then I felt hesitation. Nervousness. But after joining the course I can tell in front of anyone. (t3)

He is stating that he feels confident talking in front of anyone now after participating in the certification course. This can be seen as an increase in this teachers’ security to speak in public, but also as an increase in his self-confidence.

Another form of confidence that two of the teachers showed a lot of are the professional confidence to teach. These two particular teachers spoke widely of their ability to teach the children in a good manner and about the results in their school, which was really nice to see.

> Even I am only 10th pass but this year many children will pass 10th and go for 12th, and many will go for the further study also. They will get the government job and the private jobs also. That time they will say that Prakash is my teacher. That time I will be proud. (t10) (The name is feigned)

The other teacher explains proudly that he has increased his knowledge and ability to teach a lot by the courses and states that:

> After the course if a child comes regularly for one year I can secure the A-level (the A-level in the NFE means that this child will soon be able to get admitted in a formal school in the 5th grade), in my class. (t10)

Two of the teachers mentioned a change in their own sought for knowledge and education after participating in the certification course. The first one is stating that one of the important things with the course was that “by that I again went for the study.” (t3) The way he phrased it can be interpreted as this course was a way back in the educational system for him that this course opened his life to study again. The other teacher that spoke of changes in his own thoughts of knowledge is stating that:
This course gave me that we should always be curious for the study, knowledge. He is also saying that I have spent 20 years, and many more years will be spent here. (t7)

Financial conditions

When being asked about the changes in their lives after participating in the NFE certification course there are not many teachers who mention economic changes. That seems quite natural because the fact that the teachers have passed one or more courses is not rendering in an increase in payment. The teachers are being paid according to how many children that are participating in the school and depending on how many days they are teaching every month. One teacher is discussing this in terms of the citation below.

I'm doing more, but the payment in Seva Mandir NFE is not according to my work. My working is more than the payment. So I should get paid more, like that. Because it's now a price highking area. It's not easy to manage my family. But I want to do this job, that's why I have been doing! (t10)

One teacher is mentioning the financial conditions in terms of that the major income source for his family is farming. This is interesting to have in mind that although these teachers are spending six hours in the NFE center teaching every day and besides that preparing for the classes, they are all also having fields that has to be taken care of. The teaching is a halftime job for them.

Home conditions

Concerning the changes in the teachers home conditions there are two teachers who are just simply stating that everything is good. One of them, Teacher 3, said that his family conditions are “thik thak”, which means that they are absolutely fine. When speaking of the home conditions a couple of the teachers are naturally making the connection to how their farming is going. One is stating that the work on the fields is going good now and that that is one of the reasons why the home conditions are good.

Another teacher is not only making a connection between successful farming and good home conditions, but is also making a statement that his increased outcome of the farming is a direct result of Seva Mandir’s certification course. The course had an impact on his field work in a positive way.

We could be able to adopt some new things for the fieldwork, for the cropping.
We could come to know many things of how to grow more crops, by this courses (t10).

“I teach my family members also by this course.” He says that he made family members, even those who dropped out at 5th class, understand that they should always try to read books and write their names so they don’t forget how to. (t7)

Before 1pm he is a teacher, after 1pm he is a farmer and at night he is a student. He is happy to tell us that he has a good relationship with his wife and that his children are healthy. (t9)

He does also see some problem with the camera system that is employed by Seva Mandir.
This system is so strict. So frequent. We must be in the school the whole day, but you know we are living in the village and the village tradition is different. If someone dies, if someone has a special occasion, at the funeral party, we have to go. But if we go the whole day is finished. Can I come suppose I have to go 11am and I have to take a picture at 1pm. If I come 7 to eleven they don't count this. So we are facing some problem with this sometimes.

Changes in the village
One teacher is narrating on changes that have occurred in his village after he participated in the NFE certification course.

In my village also, I felt some changes. They always come to me and ask about the cropping. How can I grow more? How can I grow, what will be the fertilization that will be good for my fields, for my crops? And if you go there and you ask who is Prakash? Then they will say he's helping us or like that. He also possesses a great deal of reputation as a teacher (t10). (The name is feigned)

Many of the parents they are not sending the children to the government school, but they are sending them to the center (t10).

In his village it is evident that even the children that are living close to the government school are coming to the NFE instead, this is something Seva Mandir has noticed.

Further education
Several teachers spoke of their sought for and plans to get further education after participating in the course. He is planning to take exam for 10th class (t2). Another teacher is narrating about the college education he has taken on after participating in the NFE certification course.

In 2006 he did BSTC, elementary teachers training course, at Jammu Kashmir. He lived there for two years, 2006 and 2007. (After participating in the course) He had also been studying BA last year. He has giving the exam for B.Ed. (TAT form, teacher ability test) from which he is now awaiting result from. Beside that, he is also doing B.A. as well. He really wants to become a teacher. "I'm trying well to become a teacher. (t3)

After the course she was able to take a private exam for the 10th class. She says that the course made her understand a lot of things but she is unable to explain in which way. (t6)

He is now studying in collage and pursuing B.A. He does that private, meaning he is studying at home and only gives the exam at a college. (t9)

Overview of the changes after the course
Two of the teachers didn’t feel any changes after participating in the course. Due to different reasons they felt that the course did not have any impact on their way of teaching, or their way of life in general. One of them declared that since the NFE certification course is an informal teacher education course he was not able to see any benefits in undertaking it. He only did that for the sake of his students.

As many as half of the teachers claimed that, since participating in the course their self-confidence and their confidence as a professional, had increased. The payment
doesn’t correspond to the work effort, which one teacher so clearly expressed. For
many teachers, farming is the main source of income. To that we should consider
that every single one of the teachers actually is doing farming as complement income
source besides teaching in the NFE-center. And considering farming, because of the
certification course some teachers found that they could improve their farming skills
and increase their return in terms of crops. This newly found knowledge also
contributes a big deal of reputation of the teachers in their villages. A few of them
are expressing that people in the village is now coming and asking them for advice,
for example on how to improve their farming.

5.4 Changes in the teaching approach

The interviewed NFE teachers were asked about how their teaching and teaching
approaches have changed after they participated in the NFE certification course. This
was to investigate the impact of the course on the teachers’ professional lives.

The teachers are expressing that they before the course mainly were teaching by
traditional teaching approaches like rote-learning. As presented before (in 5.1) do the
teachers have a positive attitude against the course, and they do here say that there
have been many changes in their teaching approach.

The teachers' changes in their teaching have been categorized of their content. There
were six categories emerging from the interview material. Three are of approaches
towards the children as individuals and three of them are of new didactical
approaches being adopted by the teachers. The latter will be the first presented,
followed by the categories of the changes in the approach towards the children.

Teaching with words instead of just the alphabet

A couple of teachers are describing how they have changed their way to teach the
children how to read. They are now, instead of just teaching them the alphabet, also
using words and making the children identify the different letters in the words by
their sounds. One teacher is putting it like this:

in Hindi, firstly I make them learn by writing [makan] and then they make
rounds around the [ka]. Instead of just learning them, ka, kha, ga, gha
(translations of the letters in the devanagri alphabet). I ask where is the [ka]? /...

With the charts also, that fruit names (on the wall there is four charts with color
pictures of vehicles, fruits, vegetables, and the human body parts. Both in Hindi
and in English lettering) And about the English topic he is saying that the Seva
Mandir is working on that now, how we can teach them better. Yes, right now
they are working on, the professors is working on that, how to teach English. (t1)

Another teacher is mentioning an activity he uses in Hindi class that he learned in the
course. The activity is teaching the children how to use characters like full stop and
commas.

Just like we have special characters in English, we also have some special
characters in Hindi. He is saying that I am making Hindi special character there
on the blackboard and then I say where should this full stop be in the sentence
and they go and make a circle where. By this process, and this things were
learned by him in the course. (t11)
Teaching by the surroundings

One teaching approach that several teachers are explaining that they have adopted is to teach with the help of the local surroundings. That is, to use things that is common in the surroundings to explain for example mathematics and to use local settings in stories, song and texts. This for the children to feel familiar in the learning process.

The thing is that in the mathematics subject if someone is not getting it, what I am teaching, that time I send them outside and say count any stones and come to inside. Just count ten leaves and come inside. When they come then I say first we put one register here. Keep one and write here. How many is this? One...Take one more and how many is this? It's two. When we count, then how many will it be? Then write two, three, four. By this process I make them understand. By how many they have. They are counting the stones, counting the leaves, counting the things and writing on the paper, and learning. (t11)

Before I did the traditional way of teaching, just go and write on the blackboard. But after the course he feel many changes. Teaching by the surroundings and how to make them learn, how to make them think (t3)

The teacher is also describing that he after the course is feeling that he himself can design teaching materials, and that he now is using games and other activities for the children to learn by. “By playing, a game and by the game they can get it.” (t3)

The first thing is that by the course I learned something, that if the child is not getting something. What I'm teaching them, that time by many things, by the activities. If I want to make them learn how to do addition then I can take some things. Then by these things, it's a five things and if you calculate then how many are they. Then they count. This is the process that has been adopted by me from the course. He always talk to the children in a loveable way. If the child does something wrong then even he doesn't scold them. (t9)

Teaching by visual aids and activities

Three teachers are narrating of using visual aids, like pictures, and using fun activities like games, songs and stories in the teaching now. They also seem to have learned the importance of variation and joy in the children’s learning.

Many changes. First of thing by the paintings, by the diagram, by the photo of things, by filling he blanks, by many things we should make them understand. After the course I learned these things and how can I make them understand by these things. If I do teaching with these things then it will be so good for me and so good for them also. They can easily get, by the pictures, by the singing, stories. (t6)

Before we just write and learn, the same process. Before the course. But now he says that suppose I make the diagram (picture) of a pot, on the blackboard, and then I ask: Hey guys, what is this!?! Then they say pot, in Hindi. (t11)

He explains that he is writing the word and then making them mark the letters.

By this they learn to read in an easy manner. (t11)

This teacher is also mentioning that he learned in the course how to make the children enjoy the study.

You know that children also don't like study all the time. They all the time want to play. So he's saying that when they get bored, that time I make them stand up and sing a song. Stand up and make a poem. Ok leave the study at the side and just play a game. By this manner they do well. (t11)
One thing is that the features of children is that when they study they get bored. He's dealing with the small children and when they study that time they get bored, then I try to make them learn. When I teach to them they get bored. Before I just said that you should learn, by the punishment, by the tough way. But after the course I could come to know how can I make them learn in a better manner. Because some children can learn by the playing matter, some by the songs, by the poems, by stories I can make them learn. (t10)

*Caring of the children*

Four teachers described a change in their way of thinking about the children, to be lovable and caring with them.

He's saying the first thing, that we should be lovable with the children. Lovable. (t8)

These teachers also spoke of what they learned in the course about the importance of our attitude towards the children. One teacher even explains that he now is thinking of the children as his own children. That he is teaching them like he was their father. That is a long way from the punishment and violence that is still often used in schools in India.

How to make them learn. And the next thing he is saying is that he is my son. So like a father can make him understand, a child understand, in which way I make them understand. I'm like a father to this child and I make them understand that I am a father and I teach them that way (t2).

There also have been some changes in the teachers’ way of handle children who time to time loose interest in the current activity.

The one and most important thing is that we should always be polite and always keep smiling when we are teaching to them. And if you are like that, they will get it very fast. When the child doesn’t have any interest, if they don’t have interest to study at that time he makes them stand up and sing a song. After then they sing. And after singing, now you’ve singing a song, can we now study? And by this way, I make it work, and then I teach. (t4)

First I now make a circle with the children, in the circle we have to make them sit and then we narrate some stories and if they are not listening... If they are not giving the proper attention to my teaching there's no need to scold them. We don't scold, or scare them. By a smiling face, by a good nature we have to make them understand hey boy listen to my story it's a good one, or good for you or like that. In this way we have to make them learn there is no need to scold them. (t5)

This teacher specifically spoke of that there is no need to scold the children if they do anything wrong or don't listen. He also explained that teachers should smile and be happy. The way we want the children to be, we should be with them.

*To listen to the children and how to talk to them*

A couple of teachers are speaking of a change in their way of talking to the children and the fact that they now do listen to the children.

Many changes. After joining the course. Firstly, I learned how to talk to them (the students) (t2)

The next thing is what the children want and what I am teaching. We have to look for it, we have to think what they want. If they want something else we
should go for it. There is no need to think that I want this thing, and I want to
teach this thing so, now. And now he don't have desire, and he don't have desire
to learn this thing. So there is no need to do. We should be switch this things to
the next things. Whatever he want to do. He learned this by the course. (t8)

It is an interesting change in attitude and other teachers are, although not so specific,
mentioning the same thing when they narrate about how they before just told the
children what to learn and expected them to learn. If they did not learn it, they rather
gave them a punishment then explained it in a different manner.

**To teach every child as different individuals**

One teacher is apart from narrating about that he before used a traditional way of
teaching the children, explaining that he now sees the children as individuals.
Individuals who are all different and are learning best in different manners.

The first thing is that before the course I just make something like one to ten, and
said read it and then they read it, and this was the process. But sometimes
you know the child has special types of power. /.../And he said that every child learn
differently. Yes somebody learn by poem, somebody learns by the singing this
things. He's saying that I could be able to know how he could learn. Which thing
will be helpful for him, for that particular child. How is this child going to learn?
Teaching in different ways for different children. For all children I have different
ways to teach them. Not a standard way. Children don't learn in the same way!
(t10)

**Overview of the changes in the teachers' teaching approach**

It is evident that compared to the teachers’ earlier experiences with the governmental
school system, some major changes in their teaching approach has been taking place
after participating in the course. The first change that stands out is that after the NFE
certification course they are not only teaching by rote learning. The didactical
strategies differ a bit among the teachers. Some of the teachers express that they start
with words and out of the words the children can sort out the letters and learn how to
pronounce them. Use of stories, the surroundings and other activities are approaches
that many teachers now are using.

Another thing worth pointing out is that many teachers now are declaring that they
are treating the children much more lovable with the children compared to before. As
one teacher express it: “By a smiling face, by a good nature we have to make them
understand”. In the village he can’t get the children to continuously come to school
in any other way. Another teacher is referring to the same manner when he says that:
“there is no need to scold them”. He is referring to how to act when the children are
unfocused or not learning at the moment. Some teachers express that, after the
course, they are not scolding and punishing the children which is a quite common
phenomena in the Indian schools.

**5.5 The teachers’ thoughts and prospects of the future**

To ask about the teachers thoughts of the future before and after the course is another
way to try to find out if the course has changed the teachers’ lives. We also chose to
ask the teachers about their dreams for the future. Since this might reflect some of their personality and what they wish for in a broader perspective.

The teachers’ thoughts of the future before participating in the NFE certification course is presented below and thereafter the thoughts of the future after the course.

5.5.1 Thoughts about the future before the course

The teachers were asked what thoughts they had about the future before they participated in the NFE certification course. What they thought they would do in the future and how their life would look like. The teachers’ answers have been categorized depending on the content of the statements. It might be good to consider that it might not be so easy to know or remember what one thought about the future some time back. The extensive answers of the teachers do indicate that they did have quite a good idea about their future visions that time. A few of the answers indicate that the future thoughts described is not in fact from before participating in the course. Instead they seem to be from before joining the NFE, but since we will still be able to notice any difference in thoughts of the future after the course it will not affect our result considerably.

No thoughts, what I’m doing I will be doing

When being asked about their thoughts about the future before the course, four of the eleven teachers is answering that they did not have much thoughts of the future before the course. The sentence that summarizes their thoughts is: “whatever we are doing we will keep doing” Some teachers are speaking of the work as teachers, others of the work on the fields as something that will continue.

Nothing, before the course she was thinking that whatever she is doing (teaching, house work, fieldwork) she will continue doing. (t6)

They all four seem to not have been putting a lot of thought into the future, but merely living their lives.

Before he didn't think about the future so much. What I should do in my future. I was just thinking that what was going should keep going, like that. (t10)

I want to do something, but what

When asked about the thoughts of the future before the course, two of the teachers were explaining that they wanted to do something different, something else but they did not know what and how.

He's saying that just the thing that, how can I study and what should I do for my future. But he didn't know what. But he wants something. He wants to study. And how can I study. And for my future what can I do? (t9)

Another of the teachers is when narrating a story of his life before joining the NFE telling us of his previous thoughts of the future.

He's saying that before the course and before the NFE I had to go for the labour work, I had to push and pull the stones. And I had to throw from this place to this place, these types of work I had to do that time. That time I was thinking that if I am get a good job that time I can be more easy, I can live my life in a better
manner. This types of things were coming in his mind. So this was his thoughts but he was not able to understand what to do. He was doing the labour work and he was thinking about and wanted to do anything else except the labour work. Something else that would be good for me, but I was not able to say what I would do. How can I make my future secure? (t11)

Kids’ future
One teacher is explaining that he before the course only thought about his children’s future education, that he was not thinking much about his own future.

The main thing is that, before joining the NFE, he thought only about the child, for his children. I thought that I have to make them educated. And then they can secure a good job, government job. This was his future planning. He was also said that, I left my study. I used to attend the NFE school, so after that I had to work, I got tired. That is why I only thought of making them educated. Because he left school of some reason, to do fieldwork. (t1)

Get further education
Three teachers are stating that they would like to get further education, and then mainly to get a complete secondary school degree, to finish 12th grade. One of the teachers is mentioning that he before participating in the course wanted to study and become a government teacher.

He's saying that if I can increase my graduation then I can do more things. The thought was that I should be educated and my family should be educated. (t1)

He is telling that after joining the NFE in 2005. Then I had 12th, no, 10th class only, so I didn’t think anything. I didn’t think anything about my future, that time. So after joining the NFE in 2005, I thought about that I should go for senior school, the 12th class also. And then we should do many things…like that. More and more and more. (t4)

Before joining the course I thought that I have to become teacher. Government teacher. (t3)

I want to get more knowledge
One of the teachers is stating that for the future he wants to get more knowledge. His answer is indicating that he is merely interested in the knowledge. He is not stating any specific qualification or any plan to change job due to further education. Since he in another part of the interview proclaims how much he loves this job that seems to be reasonable.

He's saying that wherever I can get a chance for study, for education I try for it. I always want to get the knowledge /.../ I have looking out for this NFE center for around 20 years so it’s a long time. So I always think for the good things. I always think outside for, if I do this thing. If I go for this qualification it's good (t7).

Overview of the teachers’ thoughts of the future before the course
The teachers did not have many thoughts of the future before they participated in the course. Four of the eleven teachers interviewed were stating that they did not think
about what they would do in the future. They would probably do what they are doing now. Two teachers expressed that they wanted some change in their lives in the future but did not know what change.

The teachers’, who before participating in the course did have a plan or dream for the future, were speaking of thoughts of education in different manners. Three of the teachers spoke of further education in terms of finishing secondary school or becoming a government teacher in the future. The other side of education that is being stated by the teachers are education of the teachers own children.

5.5.2 Thoughts about the future after the course

Below the teachers' thoughts of the future after they participated in the NFE certification course is being presented. Some categories are the same as before the course and some new categories emerged.

I want to do something, but what

There was one teacher that after the course stated that he wanted some changes in his life, but he did not know what. He also is concluding that whatever will be happening in the future still will be happening, so it will be good.

If I can do some changes that will be good. And I ask what kind of change you would like? He wants some changes but what he don't know. He's saying that whatever is happening will happen, and will be good. But he want some changes (t1).

Kids’ future

Almost half of the interviewed NFE teachers mentioned their kids’ education and future as important parts of their thoughts of the future. A majority of them are defining the kids schooling as most important in the plans for the future.

He's saying that I will try to give good education to my sons and my daughter also. It's my dream that they will get a good job and a secure future (t10).

First she wants him to be a literate (her child), and to send him to school, college. Where ever he wants to go. /.../ We will study and my child also will study (t6).

One teacher is when being asked about his kids and family's future stating that:

He's saying that I will try to give good education to my sons and my daughter also. It's my dream that they will get a good job and a secure future (t11).

A couple of the teachers are when narrating about their own children’s future also including the children in the NFE center. They want the children in the village to succeed almost as much as their own children.

And education for the children also, his children and the other children also. He's saying that I'm teacher so I want my sons to be teachers also. This work is good! This is like a dream (t7).
Get a good job

When being interviewed about his thoughts of the future one teacher is stating that: I should get good work, after this. I should get a good work. And that’s his visions also. When being asked if he wants to work as a teacher he answers:

Anywhere where he can make money. And this is a big need. (t1)

The answer is indicating that he is not satisfied with the payment he is getting as a teacher in the NFE center. If this is due to the fact that he usually cannot manage on this money or that he is expecting an increase in his need for money in the future, is hard to tell.

Build a new house

One of the teachers is mentioning that getting a new house constructed is one thing that she wants for the future.

She also wants to build a new constructed house. Now she has a clay house so she wants to make a good house in the future. (t6)

Get further education

Several teachers are stating that they want to get some further education in the future.

Now he's planning to give the private exam of 10th class. Because he have only passed 8th, and he is planning to take the exam of 10th. One more thing is that he wants to open a department store. After completing the education I can get a job. /.../ He was also saying that those guys who are going for like 8th class (in the village), I can call here for the tuition. After the school. (t2)

First thing is that he wants more study. He's saying that there is no, which he's only 8th pass, only 8th pass. So it's not a mean that if I'm 8th pass then I can get a job easily and can get other things. So I wish I could do the 10th and 12th, then I could do better. By this course if I do things then, many things, if some bad things will be removed from this course and some good things being added also, then I would go for that. (t7)

Get a college degree.

When being asked of their thoughts for the future two teachers is explaining that they will get a college degree, they want to go for further study. The reason why we have separated these thoughts from the others of further study is that it is a great difference in future prospects between a college degree and finishing for example 12th grade.

One teacher is stating that he will go for further studies in college.

I will go for the further study. After the course I thought that by the private colleges,... I will not go regularly to the college, but by the private course I will do. (t10)

He is also stating that in the future Seva Mandir should give something more, some more course. Then he would attend that also.
Teacher number 9 who is now studying a bachelor’s course in college, apart from being a teacher and a farmer, is stating that he after this wants to get a teachers education, a B.Ed. He wants to be a teacher in government school in the future.

After my graduation I will go for B.Ed., for the teacher degree of education. This is his plan for the future. Now he has his plan. In Kota. Kota is a main college, good college. University, an open university. /.../ This university is for the job persons, who cannot come regularly. So they have this facility, that there is no need to come. We will send you the stuff. You will just read and when you can come and do the exams. It an agreement. And it's a valid degree. It's a good degree. You can show anywhere and you can get a job. He's planning for that. (t9)

To be a politician, leader of the village

One teacher is narrating about the fact that he would like to be a local politician in the future. He would like to be selected as the leader of the panchayat (the local village democratic system)

He wants to be a politician of this village. Leader of the village, leader of the panchayat. Leader of the village in politics, in government business. This is his desire. (t2)

Overview of the teachers' thoughts of the future after the course

The main subject of the teachers’ future thoughts after the course is education, both their children’s future education and their own. A slight majority of the teachers did speak about that they want to give their children a good education as an important plan for the future. Four teachers are defining their future thoughts as plans for their own further education. Two is planning to pursue a college degree and two are having thoughts about finishing their secondary school degrees, to pass 12th grade.

Other thoughts of the future that is mentioned by individual teacher is to build a new house, get a good job, open a department store and offer tuition to prior students now studying in the government school. The thoughts after the course have a wide range in ambition. From a teacher who is stating that he want to do something but is not able to know what, to another teacher who in the future would like to be the political leader of his village.

5.6 Overview of the general findings

The major general findings are that a majority of the teachers felt an increase in self-confidence after participating in the course. They generally also had more concrete and ambitious future plans and prospects after the course than before it, and they were highly dominated of plans for further education for themselves and their children.

Another major finding is that the teachers felt major changes in their teaching approach after the course. They have learned many new teaching strategies and seem to have changed their attitude against the children. After the course they adopted a caring and considerate way towards the children. The teachers used activities like
games, songs and stories in their teaching as well as taking help of the surroundings when teaching.

*The teachers' thoughts of the NFE certification course*

The major opinion of the course was that “the course was good”. Four teachers thought the course was good because they improved their knowledge in the subjects, especially in mathematics. They also express that they got a better understanding of the meaning of words in Hindi. Another thing was that teachers found that they learned some new strategies in how to teach. One teacher also says that the course was beneficial for himself as a person and it made him eager for more knowledge. As another teacher expressed it the course was good because they could have some influence in the content of the course.

Considering the teachers wanted to change suggestions of changes in the course, there was one major answer that emerged. Quite a few of the interview objects wanted to add some more subjects to the course, other than math and Hindi. As much as seven out of eleven wanted to add English. Three teachers didn’t come up with any suggestions about any changes in the course.

*The teachers' background*

What all the interviewed teachers have in common is that they all are married and have children. Before starting the NFE-schools they were also doing farm work which is something they all still are doing besides the teaching. The prior education level on the NFE teachers’ interviewed varies between 8th and 12th grade. Concerning their ages there is a grate width between 20 and 45 years of age. 12th grade is only passed by two of the eleven interviewed teachers. The majority of the teachers have been involved in some sort of teaching before starting at the NFE. Three of them had worked with adult education. Out of the other five teachers that had teaching experience, four of them had been working at other NGO’s and one was working at a private school. The teachers that had not been working in schools before were working, in other areas nevertheless, and one came directly from 9th class in government school.

*Changes in the teachers' lives of starting to teach in the NFE*

As many as eight out of eleven said that there were some changes in their way of thinking about teaching. And this was before they participated in certification course. They compare their teaching with government school and many of the interview objects express that they have a more friendly approach to their students compared to government school teachers. Some teachers expressed that they were always lovable towards the students and treated them as their own children. Another big change was within themselves, especially as far as self-confidence and reputation is concerned. Two of them stated that after started as NFE-teachers they felt confident in standing in front of other people and talk. Noticeable is also that there were also changes in the professional appearance and in knowledge about the traditions in the society.
Financially four of the teachers express that since starting in the NFE their financial situation got better. Two teachers explain how they now are able to put money in their own children’s education and a few of the teachers express that the monthly payment has had a major impact of their life. It is also evident that the teachers appreciate to be able to teach their own villagers. Two of the teachers say that before they actually had to go outside of their village to work. Now they can stay in the village and doesn’t have to leave their families.

**Changes in the teachers’ lives after participating in the course**

It is evident that the teachers do feel that participating in the course has had a large impact on their teaching and professional life, but also on a bigger scale in their personal lives. As many as half of the teachers claimed that, since participating in the course, their self-confidence and their confidence as a professional had increased. Several teachers also spoke of that they due to the course had learnt ways to improve the farming for themselves, but also that people in the village asked them for advice in the farming.

**Changes in the teaching approach after participating in the course**

The changes in the NFE teachers’ teaching approach consist of as many attitudes towards the children as of new didactical approaches being adopted by the teachers. Almost half of the teachers spoke of their caring attitude towards the children after the course as a major change. That they by the course have understood the importance of treating the children in a loveable and considerate way instead of scolding and punishing bad behavior. Individual teachers explained that they learned how to talk to the children, to treat them as individuals and to listen to the children.

When it comes to changes in didactical approaches findings that stand out is the use of the local surroundings in the teaching and the use of visual aids and activities in the classroom. Several teachers are explaining that they no longer use only rote-learning of the alphabet to teach the students how to read. After the course they have many new strategies, like the use of pictures, word games, songs and stories.

**The teachers' thoughts and prospects for the future**

The teachers’ thoughts of the future have changed considerably after participating in the NFE certification course. Before the course more than half of the NFE teachers did not think about the future or wanted something for the future but did not know what. There were no teachers after the course that did not have any future prospects and only one teacher did want a change but were not able to say what kind of change.

The single future prospect that the teachers spoke of before the course was education. Education for their children and for some of further education for themselves. To educate their children and to get further education for themselves was what a majority of the teachers spoke of after the course also. Interesting is that the ambition level of the further studies increased after the course. The teachers generally had much more specific wishes and plans for the future after the course than before.
6 DISCUSSION

Seva Mandir's NFE certification course is built on two themes where one is developing the subject skills of the teachers and the other is the didactical skill. The latter seems to be mainly based on concrete teaching strategies and activities that are mediated to the teachers. This corresponds well with Nilsson (2006), who means that competence building courses has to build on the undertakers' experience and everyday work. She is also stating in her research that teachers want concrete advice on their teaching and concrete teaching strategies to use. This is though not in line with Wedin's (2007) opinion that teachers are building their competence to teach during the teaching itself. According to her the professional development of teachers is happening mainly in the interaction with the children and the teaching materials in the classroom.

It was from the beginning meant that it in the NFE certification course would be included sessions were the teachers would be observed and given advice in their teaching (Seva Mandir, Report 1, 2006). This would have been a part that would make the course more in line with Wedin's (2007) research, but it was only conducted in the first stages of the implementation of the course. It was probably mainly due to logistic challenges that it was dropped from the course.

6.1 The teachers’ thoughts of the course

When first being asked of their thoughts about the course, all the interviewed teachers are positive in one way or another. The majority of the teachers gave an example of what they were considering especially well. What is interesting however is that when later on being asked if the course had any effect on their lives, two teachers more or less said that the course hadn't have any effect at all. Out of their answers it may seem like they are quite negative considering the course and its purpose. One teacher is saying that he consider himself already educated enough which means that he isn’t of the opinion that the course was beneficial for his profession as a teacher. As he claims he was able to teach in an easy way before participating in the course. This might be a fact according to Wedin (2007) who claims that it is by teaching one can improve one’s teaching competence. This particular teacher, (t1), had previously been teaching in another NGO and by having passed 10th class he is considered relatively highly educated in the village. According to Nilsson (2006) the fact that being able to continuously learn new things which can be beneficial for one’s profession is a big part of teacher development. One of the interviewed teachers said that he became eager for knowledge while participating in the course. He shows that the course not only affected him on a professional stage but also on a personal level that affected his way of thinking about development of knowledge.

Wedin (2007) is claiming that it is of excessive importance that the teachers actually have an actively willingness to improve their knowledge. This is important for the development of didactical knowledge to take place (ibid.). Another teacher is saying that the course doesn’t mean any benefits for him. Since he does not get a bigger payment after participating in the course he feels that participating in the course is only a formality. To this we can put the fact that Nilsson (2006) concludes that what makes teaching interesting and rewarding as a job, it is working with children. The
teacher who doesn’t feels that the course isn’t giving him anything adds that because of the children he did participate in the course. By this we can conclude in one way or another he was of the opinion that the course might be beneficial for his ability to teach, which would be beneficial for the children.

A majority of the teachers wanted more subjects added to the course, especially English. One of them are giving the example that English is taught in government school at an early age which means that the children in the NFE schools are getting behind since the NFE teachers lack a proper ability to teach the language. Since English is getting more and more established in the Indian society it is as beneficial for the children as it is for the teachers to learn Hindi. As one teacher points out, possessing skills in English can give the children better opportunities to get a job in the future. To be able to take part in any higher education, knowing English is a necessity. It is obvious that it is a general opinion of the interviewed teachers that English wouldn’t only improve their profession but would also be beneficial for their personal lives as well.

As Nilsson (2006) declares it is important that teachers experience that they have some kind of influence of the competence development course. Otherwise the motivation and willingness of the teachers to undertake the course can fade which will have a negative effect on their ability to develop their competences. Only one of the interviewed teachers witnessed a situation where he could possess some influence on the course. If the other interview objects had an opinion in this question is uncertain.

There were also many teachers who stated that by the course they learned not only subjects but also different strategies that were useful when it came to make the children understand Hindi and mathematics. Even with the fact that they had been teaching in the NFE-school with the material provided this shows that by some professional guidance they could improve themselves and be able to notice an explicit change as a result. When the competence development courses are concretively defined and its purpose understandable to everyone involved the teachers undertaking the course more easily can relate to, and see the use for, the new knowledge (Nilsson, 2006). Since the teachers when starting at the NFE didn’t have a higher education we conclude that it is of great importance that the competence development courses do focus on what is of most relevance at any given moment.

6.2 The teachers’ background and the changes in the teachers’ lives of beginning to teach in the NFE

A majority of the teachers in Jhadol spoke about changes after start teaching in the NFE. Worth pointing out is that they are referring to the time before they participated in the course. This result was something that we had not predicted. We did predict some changes but not to this extent. Since the average education level among the teachers is around 8th to 10th class, none of the NFE-teachers had participated in any higher academic education before the course. For example, eight out of eleven teachers says that their way of teaching changed since they joined the NFE. Even if they has been working with teaching or similar projects earlier. To start with, many of the teachers express how different their own teaching has become, many times
compared with the government school. The question here is if it really is an effect of just start teaching at NFE or is there something else behind? Since all the teachers are getting their school material from Seva Mandir which are selected to fit the teaching theories and values of Seva Mandir.

In the NFE the teaching material is based on pictures, our surroundings like trees and many other things, which helps the children to learn reading and writing (t3). By this we can conclude that it is very possible that this kind of changed isn’t directly connected to the fact that the interview object has started teaching, but rather where and under which circumstances. By this the teachers are being affected. It is probably not only the work materials, which by itself, has this sort in impact on the teachers. Nilsson (2006) concludes that teachers while exercising the profession of teaching, need to possess of the competences that make it possible for them to continuously develop and grow in their own profession (Nilsson, 2006). By being given the work materials which are based on a specific structure combined with progressing experience the teachers seems to continuously develop their competences of teaching.

No one of the NFE-teachers has actually worked in a government school. They have all nevertheless, undertaken education at different levels, so they all have some frames of references when considering the differences between government school and NFE-school. What also might play a part is that the older teachers has many years of absence from government school environment from that they graduated school until they started at the NFE. One teacher came directly from 9th class to the NFE and the rest of the younger teachers have more or less recently finished their government school education. We are unable to distinguish a significant difference in their answers but we cannot exclude that it might affect the answers either. As far as government school is concerned, it is often very centralized, huge as an organization and moves very slowly. NGO's (like Seva Mandir), which has the funds present, are able to take much quicker decisions (Ravel et. al. 2010).

6.3 Changes in the teachers’ lives after participating in the NFE certification course

Even though the certification course are focused on improving the teachers in their profession as teachers, we found that the major changes after participating in the course didn’t have a directly connection to their teaching. The majority of the teachers declared many different changes in their families, their part in the community and their self-confidence. A few of the teachers talked about that after participating in the course they felt that they had a better opportunity to go for a higher education themselves. Worth pointing out is that the NFE certification course doesn’t qualify the teachers for teaching in government schools. Still, we conclude that the course made the teachers able to improve their knowledge and especially their self-confidence to reach for higher academic education.

Goodson & Numan (2003) says that there are many variables in the background of the teachers that can be useful in the classroom. When considering the statements of the teachers in this study, we conclude that in this case the teachers’ background and phase in life not only is affecting the classroom but also exceedingly affecting the teachers’ personal life and the whole village. The teachers state that their...
confidences, when it comes to playing a prominent part in front of other people have improved. Considering learning teaching skills Wedin (2007) states that there is a correlation between the conditions in which the teachers are working in and their own straining. As one teacher narrates, the course has had a major impact on the teacher’s reputation in the village. The other villagers see the teacher as a source of knowledge not only for the children but also for the rest of the village, for example when it comes to improve their farming. Goodson & Numan (2003) indicate that the teachers’ background also can be a vital factor for the classroom environment depending on local cultural settings. One teacher proudly says that despite his relatively low education level many of his formal students now are studying at higher classes in government schools. We think that by being one of the villagers the teachers more easily can adjust their teaching to a content that the children can relate to. By being one of the villagers the teachers also are someone that the parents can relate to which may be essential for the parents to actually send their children to school.

6.4 Changes in the teaching approach after the course

Wedin (2007) is stating that the building of knowledge in the teachers’ profession is being affected by the teachers' view of the role of being a teacher and their goals with the teaching. This is one reason why it is interesting to look at the changes in the teachers teaching approach after the course. We could see many indications of changes in the teachers' goals, view of their teaching and relation with the students.

In all the NFE schools we visited there were only one that included two teachers, the others were one-teacher schools. These teachers has to alone teach all levels of students, from the ones who are starting to learn how to read to the students who are soon ready to start in 5th grade. This challenge is what both Blum & Diwan (2007) and Bandyopadhyay & Govinda (2008) are discussing in their articles. The latter are stating that multigrade teaching is requiring of the teachers to be innovative. Something that does not seem to be a part of the traditional teaching in the government schools in India. Since none of the NFE teachers had any previous teacher training before the certification course, it is likely that their previous teaching approaches are directly taken from their own schooling in the government schools. It is interesting to see that the changes in the teaching that the NFE teachers' are stating took place after the course are having many innovative and creative parts. They are speaking of using visual aids, pictures and joyful activities like games and songs which they did not before. When describing the new ways they teach the children in it is in many cases as if the teachers got a whole new way of seeing the children on. That must be seen as a way to include strategies for multigrade teaching as well which is stated of Blum & Diwan (2007) to be needed in teachers training to certify a high quality education also in small schools with one teacher. Blum & Diwan (2007) is also seeking more teaching materials adapted to multigrade teaching. The teaching material in the NFE schools is developed by Seva Mandir, and the teachers do use quite a lot of individual work for the students. Although the material seems to be more adapted to the need to keep the children motivated to study then of multigrade teaching.

A problem is that the curricula in the government schools and the teacher training are based on a one-teacher-one class scenario, which in the rural area is not a fact. There
is a need for more teachers’ training and adapted teaching material for multigrade classrooms for the goal of primary education for all to come through (Blum & Diwan 2007).

According to Bandyopadhyay & Govinda (2008) the most disadvantaged group in the Indian education system is tribal girls in rural areas. Only 51% of them are enrolled in schools, compared to 80% of all girls in urban areas. That is interesting since Seva Mandir is working in areas that are not only rural and remote but also inhabited by a big tribal population. The teachers did speak of the fact that many of the children are first generation learners as a big challenge in their teaching and something they had to consider in the teaching.

According to Goodson & Numan (2003) students get better results when teachers elaborate and develop teaching materials according to the local cultural setting. To teach with the help of the local surroundings and the local culture is one of the strategies that the teachers spoke of learning by the course. In an environment like the tribal rural areas in India it is of even more importance than in other settings. The traditional teaching materials are often based on conditions that is far from these children’s’ everyday life. The elaboration of materials is simplified if the teacher shares the same local cultural background with the students (Goodson & Numan 2003), which is exactly what the NFE teachers do. They are from the local community. Another positive effect of that the para-teachers are hired from the local community seems to be that they are personally more engaged in the students, in the development of the community and are more trusted by the adults in the community (Gandhi Kingdon & Sipahimalani-rao 2010).

6.5 The teachers’ thoughts and prospects of the future

When analyzing the NFE teachers’ thoughts of the future before and after the course it is evident that the categories No thoughts, what I'm doing I will be doing and I want to do something but what, that was present before the course is not present after the course. This indicates an increase in the level of prospects for the future. The teachers seem to be having more thoughts and more concrete prospects after the course than before. Although the category I want to get more knowledge, which we interpret as a quite deep seeking of knowledge, is not present, it might also have been upgraded to a sought for knowledge in college education. When it comes to that the thoughts of the future are more concrete, we can see that a couple of categories only emerged after the course. The categories Get a good job, Build a new house and Get a college degree was not at all present before the teachers participated in the course.

It is interesting that although a couple of the teachers did have the formal qualifications to go to college before the course, they did not mention that in their future plans. It seems that quite many of the teachers after this course have increased the believe that they will be able to study successfully. This is not only evident in the new category Get a college degree, but also in the category Get further education. After the course two of the teachers actually were studying a general Bachelors course at college.
6.6 **Implications**

**English**

While considering our experiences in the rural areas and after analyzing the interviews we have come up with a few implications that we consider are of value to point out. The majority of the teachers requested that English should be added to the certification course. Since English as a part in the Indian society is continuously increasing we consider that adding it to the course would help taking the development work another step further. The opportunity of the children to succeed in government school and later on getting a job could greatly increase if English were added. The gap in opportunities between children in NFE-schools and government schools might also be decreased.

**Influence**

According to Nilsson (2006) it is important that the teachers undertaking a development of competence course makes able to possess influence of the organization and the content of the course. Involving the participants in the whole process makes it easier for the teachers to see a true purpose of undertaking the competence developing course (ibid.). When taking advantage of the wishes and requesting’s of the teachers’ the organization behind the course might be able to adjust the content of the course in a direction which appeal to the participants. By doing that, the motivation to undertake the competence developing course can be sustained.

**The camera system**

As far as the camera system is concerned there are positive and negative effects in every way of looking at it. We have noticed that since there is no control of teachers in government schools, at least in the rural areas they tend to lower the quality of their teaching. It is not uncommon with teachers who are absent or are working with something that is not directly connected to teaching. Because the NFE-teachers are requested, on a daily basis, to take pictures three times a day to prove that they are in school and to show how many children who are attending school there are no room for absence there. To that however, we have to consider under which circumstances they are working. In India, especially in the rural and tribal areas, occasions like festivals, weddings and funerals for example are of great importance and involves the whole village. This possesses a problem for the NFE-teachers who find it difficult to make the children come to school. It is possible that the camera system may need to be slightly modified to fit the way of life in the rural areas. We experienced the NFE-teachers as very passionate and caring considering their work and the progress of their students which makes us believes that the camera system could be adjusted so it is more suitable to the life in the villages. Absence of teacher and students cannot nevertheless be of a longer period of time. That might have the effect of children not returning to school.
6.7 Further research possibilities

For Seva Mandir it would be interesting to extend this research to all the five blocks that Seva Mandir is working in. This since the living conditions is so different in the different areas. We saw an extensive difference in our main study compared to our pilot study which was conducted in Bargaon the block closest to Udaipur. The differences in the blocks are mainly depending on the closeness to Udaipur or any main highway to and from the same, but also dependent on local differences in culture as which tribes that are prevalent.

It would be interesting to extend the study by comparing the teachers interviews and their teaching approaches and feelings for the profession with the success of the students in the school. According to one of the NFE teachers, do the teachers in the government schools not come regularly. Moreover they are mostly doing different kind of report work, like counting the population, and surveys. To his opinion they also put too much time in to the Mid-day meal program (t5). This is an impression that we have got confirmed, both from various informal conversations as well as from written sources. It seems that this is a common impression of the government schools operations, at least in the rural areas. Because of this it would also be interesting to compare the results in government school with the result of the NFE.

Beforehand we did not have much knowledge of the conditions in the schools or of the teachers, but this project has taught us extremely much. We have met many engaged teachers that without teachers’ education or much facilities are teaching the children of their village in a loving manner. We have met numerous intelligent children, who are only held back by the conditions in the environment in which they are born. Hopefully this system of schools are giving them the opportunity to a future of their choice and own mind. We hope that many of them will stay in their own village and become row models, just like the teachers of who they are being taught.
7 LIST OF REFERENCES


O’Sullivan M. C. (2002). Action research and the transfer of reflective approaches to in-service education and training (INSET) for unqualified and underqualified primary teachers in Namibia. Teaching and Teacher Education. 18 s.523–539


Interview Questions

1. What's your name?
2. When did you start to teach in the NFE?
3. Are you married?
4. How old are you?
5. Do you have any children?
6. How did your life look like before you started teaching in the NFE? Your background.
7. Did your life change after you started teaching? How, considering:
   - Work?
   - Home conditions?
   - Kids schooling (if any)?
8. Which level of the NFE certification course have you passed?
9. When did you participate in the course?
10. Which grade did you get in the course?
11. What are your thoughts about the course?
12. If you could change or add something about the course, what would that be?
13. Before you participated in the course, how were your thoughts/visions about future prospects?
14. How do you feel your life has changed since you participated in the course
   - Work?
   - Home conditions?
   - Kids schooling (if any)?
15. How do your life look like now, after participated in the course, considering:
   - Work?
   - Home conditions?
   - Kids schooling (if any)?
16. Now after you have participated in the course, what are your thoughts/visions about future prospects?
17. If you could wish, how would your life be like five years from now?
18. (Considering work, home conditions, children, future prospects)
19. How do you think your life will be like five years from now considering:
- Work and career?
- Home conditions?
- Children?

20. Has the course changed your way of teaching, your teaching approach?
   - If yes, can you please tell us how, in which way?

21. Why do you think school and knowledge is important, especially for the children that you are teaching?

22. How would you convince anybody that school and knowledge is important? (kids, parents)