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ABSTRACT

In 1969 800 questionnaires were sent in four languages to governmental and non-governmental agencies dealing directly with adult literacy in 123 countries. The purpose was to receive details on methods and techniques used. Only 80 replies were received, 73 of which provided information for the study. Replies were classified in seven main categories: organization; programs (courses); methods; materials; participants; dropout; and instructors. Emphasis is laid on the aspect of dropout. The dropout rate has been discussed and analyzed according to the factors that affect it: duration of course; content of the course; responsibility for the payment for educative materials; teacher's salary; implementation of radio and television as a teaching aid; and time of the start of the project. The last part of the document is devoted to tables that contain information on the seven main categories of replies. Further statistical work will be done and interesting details will be reported in the final report. (PT)

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ADULT LITERACY METHODS
Established by Unesco and the Government of Iran

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Ref.:
Teheran,

PRELIMINARY REPORT

ON

THE REPLIES RECEIVED TO THE INSTITUTE'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Issued in 1969

December 1970

PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE REPLIES RECEIVED TO
THE INSTITUTE'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

In 1969 a questionnaire was prepared to be sent to all governmental and non-governmental organizations dealing directly with adult literacy, as far as their addresses were known to the Institute. Before December 1969 about 800 questionnaires were dispatched in 4 languages to 123 countries.

Total	English	French	Spanish	Arabic
790	400	230	120	40

These figures include copies sent to all the Unesco National Commissions and to Unesco Literacy Experts, as well as various research institutes and interested individuals, which means that the number of literacy organizations approached was considerably less. The Secretaries General of the National Commissions had been requested to send the addresses of such organizations not known to the Institute, while the experts have in some cases assisted the literacy organizations in replying to the questionnaire. We should like to use this opportunity of thanking again both groups for their assistance, and particularly the persons who performed the considerable task of replying to the long questionnaire.

This questionnaire was regarded as an elaboration of some of the points mentioned in the Unesco questionnaire (EDA/70/66 Annex) dispatched on 22nd January 1969.

The purpose was to receive details on the methods and techniques used in various projects, which might be of interest to other programmes. In this way it may happen that even a small improvement will have important

consequences, particularly as one considers that literacy efforts are often undertaken on a large scale, so that the improvement or saving may be multiplied by thousands, or perhaps millions.

However, the present report would limit itself to the general findings, while we have also tried to see how far one important aspect, drop-out, may be statistically related to some particular features of the programme and its organization. This statistical work has not yet been completed, and we intend to pursue the statistical processing to see whether significant relationships can be discovered in various fields.

The present report is therefore provisional in two respects: further statistical work will have to be done, and the interesting details as reported by various projects and shown in the materials they sent, will be discussed in the final report.

It must be admitted that it has taken the Institute rather a long time even to produce this provisional report, which is to be explained by the nature of the questionnaire. In fact, it was especially conceived to invite literacy services to give details, so that a number of questions had to be open-ended which makes statistical processing complicated. Nevertheless, it was felt that a statistical summary would have a certain value, as it may serve as comparative material to see how far facts and figures differ in various countries and programmes.

However, as stated already, the discussion of the various approaches will be of more specific interest, but we thought that this "macro-treatment" of the data would already justify the publication of this provisional report.

The Institute received replies from 80 projects in 57 countries. This might seem to be a rather poor result, if compared with the 800 copies dispatched. However, it should not be forgotten that a very large number were sent to addresses , as explained above, from which no actual answer was expected. The Institute may also be blamed for sending a long questionnaire which may have deterred a number of literacy project organizers, but it seemed difficult to prepare a short questionnaire and to receive, nevertheless, the details which would be really important.

Moreover, in a number of countries complete adult illiteracy hardly exists, although the level of literacy of certain groups of the population may be too low for the socio-economic requirements. On the other hand, a new type of adult literacy is developing, particularly in a number of European countries, among immigrant workers who, barely literate or even completely illiterate in their own language, should become literate in the language of the host country. However, the questionnaire did not aim at

elucidating these problems which, moreover, are only beginning to be realized in the countries concerned.

Replies from 7 organizations in 5 countries were not included because they were not directly related to adult literacy but rather to adult education in general, or they were not sufficiently complete to be included.

The number of countries, organizations, and projects included in this study is as follows:

Areas	Countries	Organizations	Projects	Programmes
Africa	16	17	29	48
Arab States	5	5	11	15
Asia	11	26	26	29
Australia	2	2	8	8
Europe	5	5	5	5
Latin America	13	18	21	28
Total	52	73	100	133

In some countries several literacy organizations have replied e.g. India 8, Iran 6. Some organizations have several projects, e.g. the Ministry of Education in Ethiopia is sponsoring the National Literacy Project and also the Work-Oriented Adult Literacy Project. Information about these two projects was given in one reply. This is the case also in some other countries, e.g. Tunisia, Cuba, Uganda, etc. In this way replies were available for 100 projects. Among these 100 projects there were many which had several programmes, e.g. the Functional Literacy Project in Tanzania provided data on 2 programmes: a Cotton Growers' Programme and a Women's Programme. The total of the programmes amounts to 133. In this study the projects have been taken as the basic unit, but not all projects have answered to all the questions.

General Findings

Replies given to the questions are classified in 7 main catagories and in 7 tables in this report. These catagories are: organization, programmes (courses), methods, materials, participants, drop-out and instructors.

Since most of the questions were open-ended, the headings in each column of the tables indicate the questions and the sub-headings are the items which were mentioned by different projects in answer to the respective questions.

The replies to many questions were not just a single answer but a combination of several answers, e.g. means to draw attention to programmes obviously were several. Another example is the places where sessions are organized. A project might have classes in different places, e.g. in schools, in mosques, or any other place. In this case the frequency of each place is given in absolute figures and in percentage of the total number of replies to that question. When to a question only one reply was possible, its frequency of having been mentioned by different projects is given in absolute figures which can also be regarded as percentages, because the total number of projects happened to be 100. (see tables1 - 7).

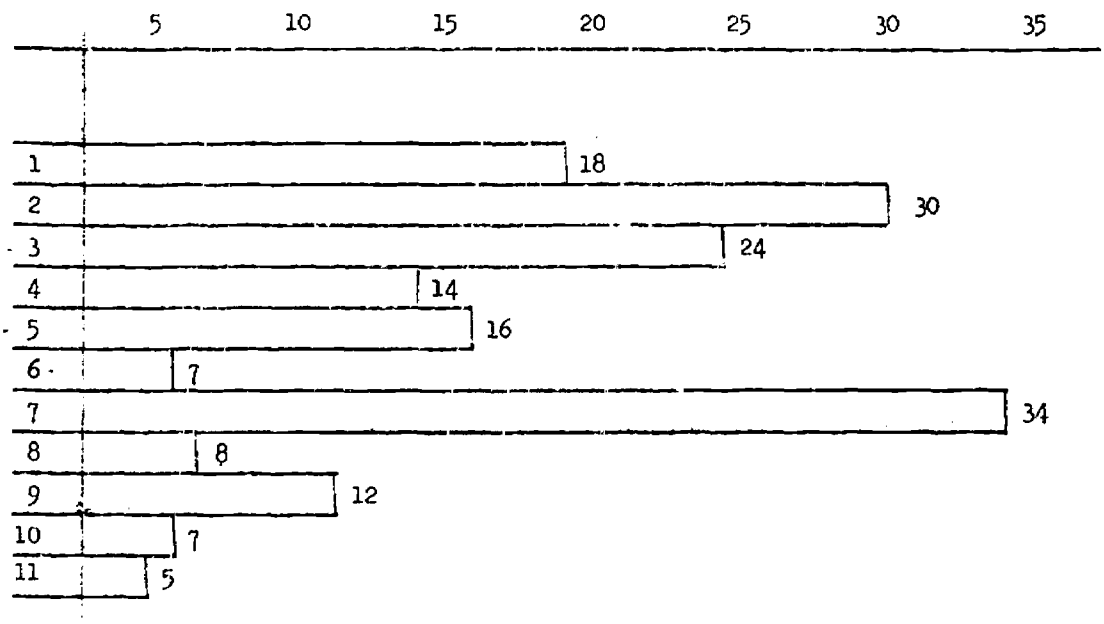
Drop-out

In this preliminary report, as pointed out before, emphasis is laid on the aspect of drop-out as recorded by the one hundred projects. The rate of drop-out was available for 83 projects. The distribution of drop-out is shown in tables 8 - 14, under the statistical results.

Reasons given for drop-out obviously varied, and usually more than one reason was given by each project. Seventy-four projects have given various reasons. One case (General Labour Federation in France) indicated no drop-out and therefore no reason was given, and 25 projects did not give any answer. The variety of reasons for drop-out and their frequency is as follows:

Combination	Frequency	Total of reasons
One reason	24	24
Two reasons	16	32
Three reasons	21	63
Four reasons	9	36
Five reasons	4	20
Total	74	175

Variety of reasons for drop-out and their frequencies



1. Seasonal work
2. Travel and change of place
3. Work problems
4. Bad organization
5. No qualified personnel
6. Shortage of materials
7. Student's low calibre
8. Shyness and other psychological reasons
9. Household reasons
10. Illness
11. Others

As it is seen the peek is for the students' low calibre, which may mean, however, that the programmes were not well adjusted to the participants.

In the questionnaire it was also asked whether drop-outs planned to repeat the course or not, and replies were received from 60 projects as follows:

Drop-outs joining the next course

	Often	Seldom	Do not join	Total
Frequency	21	33	6	60
Percentage	35	55	10	100

It may be noteworthy that two thirds of the respondents have stated that drop-outs would "seldom" or "not" join the next course. This again may be an indication that participants felt that the programmes were not interesting enough to make a real sacrifice in time and effort.

STATISTICAL RESULTS

The rate of drop-out is obviously affected by many factors. In this study the possibility of a relationship between the rate of drop-out and the following variables have been tested. (*)

a) Duration of the course;

b) Content of the course;

c) Students paying for educative materials or not;

d) Teachers being paid or not;

e) Implementation of radio and T.V. as a teaching aid;

f) Time of the start of the project.

a. The first text concerned the possibility of a relationship between the duration of the course and the rate of drop-out. Sixty-nine projects answered to these questions. The duration of the course is expressed in terms of hours and the median for duration for all projects was 300 hours. The distribution of frequencies is shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Rate of Drop-out and the Duration of the Course

Drop-out \ Duration	300 hours or less	301 hours or more	Total
0 - 17%	6	9	15
18 - 33%	13	9	22
34 - 60%	14	14	28
61 - 80%	2	2	4
	35	34	69

d.f. = 3
X^2 = 1.312
C = 0.134
A.M.<300 hours = 33.96%
A.M.>301 hours = 32.71%

(*) The X^2 test and coefficient of contingency was used, while the arithmetical means (A.M.) have also been computed. Dr. M. Bazany and Dr. J. Kaufmann, Unesco evaluation experts, helped the Institute in this statistical part of the study. We should like to thank them sincerely for their valuable cooperation.

The calculated X^2 is insignificant at the 0.05 level of probability. Therefore, statistically a relationship between these two variables is rejected. By looking at the respective arithmetical means (A.M.) one can also see that there is practically no difference in the rate of drop-out in projects shorter than 300 hours and longer than 300 hours. This finding is interesting, since it is often maintained that short courses would show a low rate of drop-out.

b. Rate of drop-out and the content of the course. Out of 82 cases having answered to both questions (drop-out and the kind of content), 23 projects had a technical content and 59 had no special content. The distribution of these two variables is shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Rate of Drop-out and Content of the Course

Drop-out \ Content	Technical content	No special content	Total
0 - 17%	6	14	20
18 - 33%	6	17	23
34 - 60%	9	26	35
60 - 80%	2	2	4
	23	59	82

d.f. = 3
X^2 = 1.129
C = 0.119
A.M., Technical content = 33.58%
A.M., No special content = 32.69%

On the basis of the obtained X^2 and the application of co-efficient of contingenoy, the relationship between the type of content and the rate of drop-out is statistically insignificant. By looking at the respective arithmetical means no tendency can be found either. Although the number of cases with a technical content is relatively small, so that it may not be justified to draw any definite conclusions, it would appear that providing a technical content as such, is no guarantee for a low rate of drop-out. It is possible, however, that the type and quality of the content would be more important than the fact that there is a technical content.

c. Rate of drop-out and paying or not paying for materials. Some projects provide students with free educative materials and some do not. Answers to both questions (rate of drop-out and paying or not paying for materials) were given in 81 cases, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10.

Rate of Drop-out and Paying or not Paying for Materials

Drop-out \ Material	Free	Paid	Total
0 - 17%	7	12	19
18 - 33%	16	7	23
34 - 60%	20	14	34
61 - 80%	3	2	5
	46	35	81

d.f. = 3
X^2 = 4.682
C = 0.232
A.M. (free) = 35.41%
A.M. (paid) = 33.05%

The calculated X^2 is insignificant at the 0.05 level of probability. Therefore, statistically no significant relation exists between these two factors. But by looking at the distribution of frequencies and the arithmetical means one can see that the rate of drop-out is somewhat more in projects in which students do not pay for the educative materials. This difference is not impressive, but it is interesting to note that on 35 cases there are more than one-third showing a very low rate of drop-out (less than 17%) when people have to pay for the materials they use, while it is less than one-sixth (7 on 46 cases), when the materials are free. This might be an indication that there is something to be said for charging a small amount for the materials, although a firm conclusion is not justified.

d. Rate of drop-out and teachers being paid or not. Certain projects do not pay teachers and some do. The possibility of any relationship between this factor and the rate of drop-out is tested and frequencies are shown in Table 11. Seventy-three projects answered to these questions.

Table 11

Rate of Drop-out and Teachers' Salary

Drop-out \ Teachers' Salary	Not paid	Paid	Total
0 - 17%	4	15	19
18 - 33%	5	16	21
34 - 60%	5	23	28
61 - 80%	2	3	5
	16	57	73

d.f. = 3
X^2 = 1.273
C = 0.130
A.M., (not paid) = 35.82%
A.M., (paid) = 33.19%

The value of the X^2 is insignificant at the 0.05 level of probability and no definite relationship between these two variables can be expected. By looking at the respective arithmetic means it is seen that the rate of drop-out is a little more for unpaid teachers, and we might say that there is perhaps a slight tendency to have less drop-outs when teachers are paid. However, the number of cases of teachers who are not paid is 16 only, and it is not justified to draw any conclusion.

o. Drop-out and radio and T.V. - Radio or T.V., or both in some projects are indicated to be either as a means of instruction or as a support to the teacher. Eighty projects replied to both questions (rate of drop-out and use of radio and/or T.V.). The distribution is shown in Table 12.

Table 12

Rate of Drop-out and the Use of Radio and/or T.V.

Drop-out \ Radio & T.V.	Yes	No	Total
0 - 17%	6	14	20
18 - 33%	9	13	22
34 - 60%	11	23	34
61 - 80%	3	1	4
	29	51	80

d.f. = 3
X^2 = 3.362
C = 0.200
A.M., Yes = 34.95%
A.M., No = 29.68%

The value for the calculated X^2 is insignificant at the 0.05 level of probability. Therefore, no statistically significant relationship between the rate of drop-out and the use of radio and/or T.V. is expected. However, by looking at the arithmetical means, we see that there is a higher rate of drop-out in projects where radio and/or T.V. was used, (34.95%), and less when radio and T.V. was not used (29.68%). Therefore, it might be concluded that there is a slight tendency to have more drop-outs when radio and T.V. are used.

It is difficult to give a satisfactory explanation, since one would expect that the usually better quality of teaching via radio or T.V. and the interest of using a special means of communication, would rather attract the participants in a course. It may be, however, that the lack of personal contact and the often lower quality of the monitors would be stronger negative factors. However, as we are statistically not on a firm base, it is not justified to draw any definite conclusion.

f. Rate of drop-out and time of the start of the projects. The oldest programme answered to the replies was started in 1940 and the most recent ones were the ones started in 1969. In testing the time of the start with the rate of drop-out, the time of the start was divided into four categories (1940-50, 50-60, 60-64, 65-69). The distribution of frequencies of these categories in regard to the rate of drop-out is shown in Table 13.

Table 13

Rate of Drop-out and the Time of the Start of the Programme

Drop-out \ Year started	1940-50	51-60	61-64	65-69	Total
0 - 17%	1	1	2	12	16
18 - 33%	4	5	5	9	23
34 - 60%	3	7	12	9	31
61 - 80%	0	0	3	1	4
	8	13	22	31	74

d.f. = 9
X^2 = 5.683
C = 0.258
A.M., 40 - 50 = 31.62%
A.M., 51 - 60 = 36.03%
A.M., 61 - 64 = 42.09%
A.M., 65 - 69 = 25.79%

The value of the calculated X^2 is insignificant at the 0.05 level of probability. Therefore, no statistically significant relationship does exist between the rate of the drop-out and the time of starting the programme. However, by looking at the respective arithmetical means of each category, we see that the lowest rate of drop-out is for the last category (projects started in '65-'69) while the highest rate of drop-out is found in the third category (programmes started in 1961-64).

Because the number of the projects in the first two categories is small, and, moreover, it corresponds approximately with the median percentage, we have tried to see if any significant relationship exists for programmes in the last two categories. The X^2 is calculated in a two

by two table, putting together the projects having a drop-out of less or more than 33%. The number of projects started in 1961-69 is fifty-three. Their distribution in regard to the rate of drop-out and the time they started is shown in Table 14.

Table 14

Rate of Drop-out and Time of the Start of the Project

Drop-out \ Year started	1961-64	65-69	Total
0 - 33%	7	21	28
34 - 80%	15	10	25
	22	31	53

d.f. = 1
X^2 = 6.10
C = 0.332
A.M. (61-64) = 42.09%
A.M. (65-69) = 25.79%

The value of the X^2 is significant at the 0.02 level of probability, as $X^2 > 5,412$, but $X^2 < 6,635$ which would provide a probability at the 0.01 level. Therefore, in this case we can conclude that the newer projects tend to have less drop-out. This conclusion is also confirmed by looking at the arithmetical means: the rate of drop-out is lower for projects started in 1965-69.

It is interesting to note that the newest projects are clearly more attractive than the somewhat older ones (which show a larger drop-out than the median). At present it is difficult to explain why the 22 projects, established between 1961 and 1964 are particularly weak, but the better quality of the newly established projects would seem to indicate that in the last 5 years there has grown a greater awareness among the programme organizers about the actual needs of the illiterates, so that they are less likely to abandon a course.

TABLE 1. ORGANIZATION

	73	governmental	Type of Project			
	22	non governmental				
	5	semi governmental				
	9	1940-50	Year started			
	15	1950-60				
	63	1960-70				
	13	no answer				
43.88	79	pub. org.	Cooperation	Source		
20.55	37	private org.				
20	35	U.N. & agencies				
3.89	7	others				
11.67	21	no answer				
	38	technical		yes	Kind	
	2	financial				
	42	both				
	18	no answer				
	3	no co-operation				
	9	technical	Programme discontinued last 5 years	yes	reason	
	4	financial				
	3	both				
	72	not discontinued				
	12	no answer				
19.18	33	financial	Difficulties in preparing the programme			
25.55	44	personnel				
21.51	37	organization				
12.77	22	material				
9.88	17	lack of st's interest				
3.49	6	others				
4.65	8	no difficulty				
2.91	5	no answer				
39.25	84	speeches	Means to draw attention at beginning			
16.35	35	films				
25.70	55	broadcasts				
2.80	6	political motivation				
13.55	29	newspaper				
2.35	5	no answer				
	13	permanent adaptation	Plans for change			
	22	to functional				
	17	others				
	12	no plan for change				
	36	no answer				
	51	yes	Studies & evaluation made about literacy			
	20	no				
	29	no answer				

TABLE 2. PROGRAMME (COURSE)

%			Content of the course	Language used in the course: Type	Language used in the course: Lang. Problem	Duration of the course	Level attained at the end of full course	Exam.	Certificate	Places where sessions are organized	Classes during working hours	Employer offering facilities	Follow-up course
	24	special content											
	59	no special content											
	14	both											
	3	primary school content											
58.46	76	national											
23.85	31	vernacular											
16.15	21	foreign											
11.54	2	no answer											
	8	yes											
	74	no											
	18	no answer											
	47	300 hours and less											
	38	301 hours and over											
	15	no answer											
14.52	17	no level system											
1.70	2	1st elementary											
3.98	7	2nd "											
13.67	16	3rd "											
26.49	31	4th "											
2.56	3	5th "											
16.25	19	primary certificate											
4.27	5	higher "											
14.54	17	no answer											
	85	yes											
	2	no											
	13	no answer											
	76	yes											
	7	no											
	17	no answer											
35.65	64	schools											
26.76	48	community hall											
10.65	19	factory											
10.-	18	mosque-church											
8.43	15	homes											
2.27	5	open air											
6.21	11	no answer											
	15	yes											
	53	no											
	32	no answer											
	24	yes											
	13	no											
	63	no answer											
22.88	24	higher level											
11.43	12	reading groups											
12.38	13	vocational training											
20.44	22	classes organized by others											
11.43	12	no follow-up											
20.44	22	no answer											

TABLE 3. METHODS

			Teaching method				
%				Method prepared for adults			
16	18	synthetic					
28	30	analytic (global)					
41.5	48	eclectic (mixed)					
7	8	laubach					
1.20	2	key word					
.87	1	no special method					
	4	no answer					
	77	yes					
	15	no					
	8	no answer					
	65	yes		Experiment before adopting the method			
	20	no					
	15	no answer					
	48	yes			Previous study to select content		
	16	no					
	36	no answer					
22.72	30	linguistic				Base for the selection of vocabulary	
34.84	46	daily use					
31.81	42	technical					
2.27	3	others					
8.33	11	no answer					
25.00	63	radio					....Special techniques
8.73	22	T.V.					
14.28	36	films					
13.09	33	slides					
8.73	22	tape recorder					
9.12	23	flannel boards					
17.46	44	charts					
1.19	3	no special techn.					
2.38	6	no answer					
54.10	45	propaganda					
2.35	2	teachers training					
10.6	9	full course					
20	17	help to course					
2.35	2	follow-up					
10.6	9	no answer					

*The percentages for this column are calculated on the basis of the 85 cases where radio and/or T.V. were said to be used. (See previous column).

TABLE 4. MATERIALS

%			Subject of the reading materials and primers
23.26	57	pure literacy	
13.87	34	agriculture	
7.75	19	industrial	
17.55	43	health	
15.52	38	civics	
6.13	15	religion	
15.92	39	general knowledge	
			Arithmetic
	41	adopted for adults	
	34	primary school	
	3	no arithmetic	
	22	no answer	
			Follow-up material
	49	yes	
	3	no	
	48	no answer	
			Cost of material
	47	free	
	40	paid	
	13	no answer	
			Materials produced by
	74	project	
	14	others	
	5	both	
	7	no answer	
			Libraries in villages
	37	yes	
	50	no	
	13	no answer	
			Incentive in Environment
	65	yes	
	30	no	
	5	no answer	

TABLE 5. PARTICIPANTS

%			
18.12	29	professional groups	Participants
11.20	18	urban	
21.87	35	rural	
15.62	25	whole nation	
16.25	26	women	
5.52	9	semi-literates	
6.25	10	others	
5.-	8	no answer	
21.33	32	sex	Classification of students by
28.-	42	level	
12.67	19	age	
19.33	29	interest	
10.-	15	heterogeneous	
8.67	13	no answer	
	11	5-10	Average no. of participants in each class
	22	11-20	
	34	21-30	
	5	over 30	
	5	the number varies	
	23	no answer	
29.82	51	literacy	Reasons for joining the course
22.22	38	economic	
29.82	51	social prestige	
4.04	7	religious	
0.59	1	compulsary	
13.45	23	no answer	
	6	yes	Students paying for the course
	73	no	
	21	no answer	

Table 6. Drop-outs

%			
	20	0-17	Rate of drop-out %
	23	18-33	
	34	34-60	
	5	61-80	
	7	no data	
	11	no answer	
9.-	18	seasonal work	Reasons for drop-out
15.-	30	travel & change of place	
12.-	24	work problem	
7.-	14	bad organization	
8.-	16	no qualified personnel	
3.5	7	shortage of material	
17.-	34	students' low calibre	
4.-	8	shyness & other psycho. reasons	
6.-	12	household responsibility	
3.5	7	illness	
2.5	5	others	
12.5	25	no answer	
	21	often	Drop-outs joining next course
	33	seldom	
	0	never	
	40	no answer	
5.74	7	good teaching	Incentives to complete course
15.58	19	advice	
5.74	7	offering goods	
38.52	47	certificates	
8.20	10	follow-up course	
9.83	12	other rewards	
16.39	20	no answer	

TABLE 7. INSTRUCTORS

%			
40.26	60	school teachers	Selection of instructors
10.05	9	technicians	
16.10	24	students	
15.43	23	volunteers	
6.04	9	military personnel	
1.34	2	missionaries	
6.71	10	others	
4.02	6	no answer	
34.89	67	special training	Training
25.00	48	teachers' meetings	
26.56	51	teachers' manual	
8	16	in-service training	
5.21	10	no answer	
12	15	psychology of adults	Content of training
31.70	39	methods of teaching	
8.13	10	practical training	
4	5	use of A.V. aids	
43.90	54	no answer	
	35	school teachers	Instructors are considered by partic. as
	25	discussion leader	
	29	both	
	11	no answer	
45.73	59	salary paid	Instructors' reward
3.00	4	awards	
27.12	35	certificate	
12.40	16	not paid	
11.50	15	not answered	
48.78	60	inspectors	System of inspection
26.83	33	supervisors	
13.00	16	teachers' report	
4.75	6	nothing	
6.50	8	no answer	