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INITIAL PRIMARY TEACHER EDUCATION IN LESOTHO

Multi-Site Teacher Education
Research Project (MUSTER)

Country Report Two

J. Pulane Lefoka with E. Molapi Sebatane

March 2003

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Abbreviations

APTC	<i>Advanced Primary Teachers Certificate</i>	MUSTER	<i>Multi site Teacher Education Research</i>
ATC	<i>Advanced Teachers Certificate</i>	NCC	<i>National Curriculum Committee</i>
ADEA	<i>Association for the Development of Education in Africa</i>	NHTC	<i>National Health Training College</i>
BED	<i>Bachelor of Education</i>	NTTC	<i>National Teacher Training College</i>
COSC	<i>Cambridge Overseas School Certificate</i>	PH	<i>Primary Higher Certificate</i>
DANIDA	<i>Danish International Development, Assistance</i>	PhD	<i>Doctor of Philosophy</i>
DIFD	<i>Department for International Development</i>	NUL	<i>National University of Lesotho</i>
DEP	<i>Diploma in Education (Primary)</i>	NQTs	<i>Newly Qualified Teachers</i>
DPE	<i>Diploma in Primary Education</i>	PSLC	<i>Primary School Leaving Certificate</i>
DTE	<i>Diploma in Technology Education</i>	PTC	<i>Primary Teachers Certificate</i>
DRTs	<i>District Resource Teachers</i>	STC	<i>Secondary Teachers Certificate</i>
FTE	<i>Full-time Equivalent</i>	SIMS	<i>Self Instructional Materials</i>
GNP	<i>Gross National Product</i>	TP	<i>Teaching Practice</i>
ICT	<i>Information Communication Technology</i>	TPP	<i>Teaching Practice Preparation</i>
ESL	<i>English as Second Language</i>	STTC	<i>Secondary Technical Teachers Certificate</i>
IE	<i>Institute of Education</i>	TSU	<i>Teaching Service Unit</i>
JC	<i>Junior Certificate</i>	UK	<i>United Kingdom</i>
LCE	<i>Lesotho College of Education</i>	UNDP	<i>United National Development Programme</i>
LIET-PTC	<i>Lesotho In-service Education for Teachers (Primary Teachers)</i>	UNESCO	<i>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</i>
LIET – VI	<i>Lesotho In-service Education for Teachers (Principals)</i>	UNFPA	<i>United Nations Fund for Population Activities</i>
LPTC	<i>Lesotho Primary Teachers Certificate</i>	USAID	<i>United States Agency for International Development</i>

Preface

The Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER)

MUSTER has been a collaborative research project co-ordinated from the Centre for International Education at the University of Sussex Institute of Education. It was developed in partnership with:

- The Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast, Ghana.
- The Institute of Education, The National University of Lesotho.
- The Centre for Educational Research and Training, University of Malawi.
- The Faculty of Education, University of Durban-Westville, South Africa.
- The School of Education, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine's Campus, Trinidad.

Financial support has been provided over four years by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID).

The Multi-Site Teacher Education Research project (MUSTER) has explored initial teacher education in five countries – Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, and Trinidad and Tobago. National research teams have collected and analysed data on key dimensions of the training process including the characteristics of those selected for training, the curriculum processes they experience, the perspectives and working practices of those who train teachers, the outcomes of training, the reflections of newly trained teachers in schools, analysis of supply and demand for new teachers, and projections of the resource and cost implications of meeting national targets to universalise primary schooling.

MUSTER has been designed to provide opportunities to build national research and evaluation capacity in teacher education through active engagement with the research process from design, through data collection, to analysis and joint publication. Principal researchers have led teams in each country and have been supported by Sussex faculty and graduate researchers.

This volume is one of a series of Country Reports summarising the findings from each country. The more detailed studies on which these are based have been published in a series of 35 Discussion Papers, which are listed at the end of the report.

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Multi-site Teacher Education Research (MUSTER) project is a collaborative endeavour investigating teacher education in Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, Trinidad and Tobago and South Africa. It was initiated and co-ordinated by the Centre for International Education at the University of Sussex, in the United Kingdom, and sponsored by the British Department for International Development (DIFD). The preparatory work for the study started towards the end of 1997 while fieldwork took off in 1998, and the whole project reached completion in December 2000.

The main aim of the project was to study four areas in primary teacher education, namely characteristics of student teachers, the teacher education curriculum, careers and perspectives of teacher educators, and the cost and financing of teacher training in the five countries. In Lesotho, the study focused on primary teacher education as offered at the only teacher training college in the country, the National Teacher Training College (NTTC), with particular reference to the new Diploma in Education (Primary) (DEP). The College was in the process of phasing out one of its oldest programmes, the Primary Teachers' Certificate (PTC), and introducing the DEP programme. The specific research areas that the Lesotho study addressed were guided by the overall MUSTER project objectives and were grouped as follows:

- (1) The entry characteristics of new student teachers and what they bring in terms of their experiences, images, perceptions, and motivation;
- (2) Some aspects of the primary teacher education curriculum as documented, as delivered, and as experienced by the student teachers themselves;
- (3) The impact of teacher education: how the newly qualified teachers (NQTs) value the programme, how far it changes them, and what sources of support are afforded the novice teacher.
- (4) The College: the career patterns, professional development and views of the lecturers, and some aspects of management
- (5) The NTTC primary teacher education programmes, the College output in relation to national demand and supply of teachers, and its internal organisation, cost and efficiency.

Research Design and Methods

Each of the above mentioned research areas with the exception of the 'Colleges' study was broken down into sub-studies (see Chapter 2 of this report). A variety of instruments and procedures were used in the collection of data, which included questionnaires, written essays, classroom observations, interview schedules and review of documents.

Executive Summary

A large number of stakeholders participated in the study. These included NTTC students, lecturers, administrators and Teaching Practice coordinators; principals of primary schools, District Resource Teachers; newly qualified teachers; unqualified teachers; and members of the Parents in Education Association.

The research was carried out in two phases. The first phase was a baseline study, which involved a review of documents. Specifically, the study reviewed documents related to teacher education in Lesotho. The data collected through the review of documents was not only useful in its own right, but it also formed a basis for the second phase of the research, which involved a variety of sub-studies carried out in different ways.

Information from most sub-studies was captured and analysed using a variety of methods, including computer statistical packages. The study was carried out by a team of four research staff from the Institute of Education (IE) at the National University of Lesotho (NUL) and five researchers from the National Teacher Training College. There was one research assistant, based at IE. Three, and later two, members of the University of Sussex Research Team assisted with parts of the study. This Lesotho chapter of the project was co-ordinated by the Institute of Education.

Summary and Conclusions

1. The entry characteristics of student teachers and what they bring in terms of their experiences, images, perceptions and motivation.

The findings of this study indicate that the primary student teachers are mostly female, in their early twenties, and are drawn from modest family backgrounds, often in the rural areas. Many are upwardly mobile in that they reach higher educational levels than their own parents. Although the DEP has higher admission standards compared to those of the PTC programme that it is replacing, its first cohort of the student teachers came with relatively low academic achievements.

The study also revealed that over a quarter of the student teachers had taught before joining NTTC, usually for less than two years. Their knowledge of teaching was therefore mainly drawn from their own schooling, which seems to have been of a fairly 'traditional' kind, where discipline was often harsh, and teaching styles lacked variety. Few appeared to have experienced the kind of 'child-centred' interactive learning approaches discussed at the College, and were seldom able to analyse what makes a teacher effective. They come with well-developed attitudes and rich experiences gained prior to entry into the college. Many indicated that they would model themselves on their own teachers, whom they evaluate more in terms of personal characteristics than of professional knowledge and skills.

Executive Summary

Regarding teaching as a career, most student teachers were ambivalent. On the one hand, they offer idealistic views, talking about teachers as role models and as serving their country and improving education. On the other, they are aware that the job involves working hard under difficult conditions, and that the community may make impossible demands upon them, while their financial rewards are not commensurate with their efforts. Yet the great majority of all the groups surveyed expressed their intention to stay in primary teaching. Very few indicated a wish to leave the teaching profession altogether, although some, mostly male students, wanted to switch into secondary teaching.

The findings summarised here raise a number of issues. The low academic achievement in Cambridge Overseas School Certificate (COSC) means student teachers need help at the College to master the basic content knowledge and skills, to learn how to learn and to bolster their own self-esteem. Unless the trainees can understand how and why they should adopt new methods of teaching, they are likely to replicate traditional teaching styles commonly used in Lesotho primary schools.

Knowledge based on practice is not acknowledged in the documented curriculum, neither do lecturers tap this knowledge during their course delivery. Images of good teachers that students model themselves on are also neither discussed nor challenged. This means that the student teachers' apparent focus on relationships needs to be complemented by a sharper understanding of how teaching can enhance learning. Their positive attitudes and idealism could form a very good foundation for developing teachers. It is also essential to help trainees to develop appreciation of the teacher's instructional responsibilities, which at present are lacking.

2. The NTTC DEP curriculum as documented, as delivered, and as experienced by the student teachers themselves

The curriculum of the DEP programme seems to have two main aims: to raise academic standards and to produce teachers capable of taking on an 'extended professional role'. Thus, it aims at providing Lesotho schools with teachers who are well-rounded and well-grounded in the theory and practice of teaching in order to enable them to tackle classroom challenges. The study however, found several contradictions and mismatches between the design of the curriculum, the way it was taught, and the perceived needs of the students, a situation which may militate against the achievement of the programme aims.

Aims and objectives:

The study has revealed that there is an apparent disjunction between the overall aims and objectives of the entire programme. The overall aims are based on the 'reflective practitioner' model of the teacher. They are framed in terms of broad professional competencies, indicating a teacher with a high level of knowledge and skills and the ability

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to act as a change agent within Lesotho schools. The objectives, on the other hand, are more narrowly conceived, mainly in terms of subject content, and only distantly related to the professional classroom competencies. Thus, the objectives seemed to be based on a 'behaviourist' model, giving little space for reflection, self-evaluation, or implementing classroom change. There was nothing in the documented curriculum to show how theory and practice would be integrated through teaching practice or related activities.

Content:

The DEP is a 3½ year programme. It includes a one-semester bridging course which focuses on study skills, information communication technology (ICT), and the core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science. This development was highly valued by the students sampled, as it seems to go some way towards meeting the need to upgrade their content knowledge. However, it would seem that this effort is not adequate since later in the course students were struggling, especially in Science.

The curriculum comprises eight subject areas, designed with a 70:30 ratio of content knowledge to professional knowledge and practice. It appears that 'pedagogic content knowledge' or 'methods' aspect is patently not integrated with subject studies. Knowledge seems to be compartmentalised by subject and the lecturers focus on their respective areas without relating them to other parts of the programme, even where this might be appropriate. The curriculum appears to be overloaded and somewhat traditional in design.

Teaching and learning methods:

Classroom observation confirmed the conservative nature of the programme in that, in practice, most teaching at the College is transmission-oriented, and there is little emphasis on independent learning, critical analysis, creative thought or learning to exercise professional judgement. The interaction between students and tutors during lectures involves a question-and-answer approach, but questions are restrictive and do not allow for full independent thinking for students. Additionally, while group work appears to be common, it is neither well organised nor guided, and students are frequently left on their own. Lessons are not always well structured and often end abruptly. The lecturers' time keeping is often poor.

Teaching and learning materials:

In the majority of the classes observed the students relied solely on handouts from the lecturers in the form of photocopied texts or notes, as well as on the chalkboard. This scenario contradicts the picture painted in the documented curriculum, which tends to suggest the provision of textbooks and reference materials for independent study. It also contradicts the assertion made by lecturers that students use the library for assignments.

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Assessment:

The findings of this study indicate that assessment procedures are problematic and reflect the main teaching approach of the College, that is, the lecture method. Inherent in this method is the predominant use of tests relative to other forms of assessment. Student teachers themselves complain of some of the assessment methods followed at the College, including the type of tests used, assignments given and co-ordination of assessment as a whole. They maintain that the College tests can be passed by memorising materials. They also indicate that they spend too much time doing assignments. It would seem that the assessment approaches, including assessing teaching practice, which the College should adopt in future should be consistent with the theory that underpins the DEP programme.

Teaching practice:

Although student teachers greatly value the opportunity to practise teaching, the findings indicate that few feel they enjoy sufficient support from the schools. On the whole, teaching practice is badly planned and poorly managed in that the parties involved do not play their respective roles as fully as it is expected in a relationship of this nature. At the school level, student teachers were often left alone to cope, treated like children, and ignored or criticised rather than encouraged. On the other hand, some reported that some heads and teachers helped, usually with planning scheming, and resources. Tutors too do not have adequate time to provide professional support at school level. In the end only 15% of students were visited the stipulated four times, often by different tutors, and feedback was reported to be rushed and incomplete. The College will have to review all previous consultancy reports on its teaching practice and try to implement their recommendations.

In summary, the above findings suggest a number of concerns. First, overall and subject aims seem to come from different discourses or paradigms. The overall aims propose a 'reflective practitioner' model of teacher preparation, while the subject aims relate to the 'effective instructor' model. Second, some findings indicate that some student teachers continue throughout the programme to view themselves as low achievers, suggesting that they need support throughout their study period at the College. Third, since lecturing is a predominant method of teaching in the NTTC classroom, as a result of which lectures are characterised by teacher-centred instruction, it is unlikely that student teachers will follow a learner-centred teaching style after graduation. Fourth, the type of teaching and learning materials used at the NTTC indicate a problem of dependency on the part of its students and graduates alike.

In sum, this study has revealed that the College as a whole does not itself seem to practise a student-centred approach. There appears to be some contradiction between its 'espoused theories' and its 'theories in action'. Very few tutors seem able to create a learning situation that would help students envisage a primary school classroom situation. The findings of the study also show that the curriculum is not helping students to relate college learning to a

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school situation. Few tutors were found to make reference to teaching and learning at primary school level.

It would seem therefore that NTTC is sending out to Lesotho primary schools teachers who are likely to both use teacher-centred methods in their style of teaching and be insensitive to the needs of a primary school child. Very clearly, there are contradictions between the espoused curriculum and curriculum in action.

3 The impact of training

The study found that, in spite of the above criticisms, the NQTs value their programme and feel it had prepared them well for teaching, though they would have liked more time on methods of teaching. They consider the professional studies courses the most useful, especially topics such as lesson planning and record keeping.

Moreover, they have been found to teach differently from unqualified teachers, although they seem to model some of both the good and poor qualities of teaching learned at the College. The Principals seem to value the graduates as sources of information and ideas, particularly in new areas of the curriculum. Another group that seems to value the NTTC student teachers are the unqualified teachers, who admired the knowledge and skills of the College graduates.

Observations suggest that although NQTs managed their classes well, maintained good relationship with the pupils, and for the most part knew the subject matter, their lessons were teacher-centred and often boring for the pupils. Most of them used question-and-answer routines, allowing pupils little interaction with teaching and learning materials or with each other. Neither did they use groupwork.

The Ministry of Education does not have a structured induction programme for newly qualified teachers. Consequently, NQTs experience varying reception in schools. There was little formal induction for NQTs, although some received informal introduction and briefings. In the first years of teaching, the principal is the main source of help, with some support coming from class teachers. More help is apparently given on matters such as scheming and recording work and assessment than on how to manage a classroom or deal with individual students. The latter were found to be problematic areas for the NQTs.

The effects of training are always difficult to measure and the findings of this study were no exception. Cross-sectional comparisons of agreement or disagreement with a common set of statements about teaching, taken from the surveys, suggest that the NTTC training programmes had not led to significant shifts in trainees' attitudes or professional self-concept. However, the NQTs seem to be able to articulate much more sophisticated ideas

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about teaching than was the case with the entering student teachers. They still emphasise the personal, nurturing elements of teaching, but they are more aware of the need for teaching for achievement.

Overall, the NQTs' satisfaction with the programme seem to be based on a rather technicist and utilitarian view of training, in which they would be provided with content and methods rather than taught to use their professional judgement or to improve practice. College and school views of good teaching seem largely to coincide along fairly traditional lines, although NQTs are welcomed in order to keep schools up to date with the curriculum changes. Finally, it seems that the NTTC tutors have to work very hard if they are to change the preconceived ideas developed by the entering students during their earlier experiences.

4 The College: the career patterns, professional development and views of the lecturers

The College lecturers who participated in the study come from a variety of background and experiences. They are predominantly female, and middle-aged. Almost all are graduates, many with Masters degrees. Most trained as secondary teachers and therefore had little first hand experience of primary teaching when they arrived at the College.

The study did not find a clear structure or regular programmes for the College staff development. Tutors, with the exception of those who had been trained specifically for Early Primary Specialisation through regional workshops and study tours, do not receive relevant training in either the programmes they are supposed to teach, or the new theories such as 'reflective practice' that the College is keen to apply. A few had been sent overseas for post-graduate studies, while others had studied locally on a part-time basis. There was no staff induction programme for new tutors. Newly recruited tutors had to rely on their memories of teacher training and learn on the job, with sporadic help from colleagues.

While most tutors could articulate their own ideas and theories in relevant ways, these were very diverse and in a way confirmed the fact that the college does not have a widely shared philosophy of teacher education and its implementation. In practice lecturers work in isolation and do not therefore seem to be guided by an overriding philosophy of teacher education.

NTTC as a whole does not seem to be the kind of 'learning institution' where innovation and renewal are part of the ethos. It may be that the strong departmental organisation and hierarchical structures are responsible for the observed situation. Steps must be taken to foster collaboration among the College departments, based on a common frame of reference, and to develop a shared vision of teacher education and its implementation. Such a vision must take into account both international and local contexts and ideas. Appropriate

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induction, refresher and upgrading courses are essential. Additionally, strategies need to be developed to address staff welfare. In particular, procedures for selecting, appointing and promoting tutors should be transparent and be based on careful analysis of both the needs of the institution and qualities of the individuals.

The findings of this study show that the College tutors' job satisfaction is low, their frustration being related to the conditions of service and to the way the College is run generally. The College, as an academic institution governed by Government, seems to lack the culture of intellectual debates and research that would otherwise contribute to improvement in academic development. This state of affairs confirms that the NTTC organisational management is weak on a number of fronts.

5 Supply and demand, costs and efficiency

The analysis of supply and demand for new primary teachers reveals the challenge that confronts the NTTC and other elements of the training system. Though the precise pattern of growth in enrolments at primary level is uncertain, it is clear that numbers will increase in the short to medium term as the effects of fee-free primary education policy increase retention, and net enrolment rates move towards 100%. The projected growth in the size of the school age cohort is modest and may be less than 1%. The net result of this and other factors is that there is a substantial demand for new teachers which greatly exceeds current output (see Lewin et al. 2000 for a detailed discussion).

Levels of new teacher demand will be determined by the number of primary pupils enrolled, the target pupil-teacher ratio (40:1), and the attrition rate for existing teachers (estimated at 5%). Reasonable estimates of the demand for new primary teachers based on these assumptions lead to the need to qualify about 1,200 per year. If pessimistic assumptions are made about attrition rates, to take into account the possible effects of HIV/AIDS on teachers, this number might rise to 1,400. With a three-year full-time pre-career training programme this would require total enrolments of between 3,600 and 4,200 in training.

The current and recent output of new teachers from NTTC has averaged less than 150 qualified primary teachers per year, not all of whom appear to be teaching. Targeted output from the DEP programme is 250 per year by 2003. The comparison with projected demand is striking, and projected output from NTTC is less than 25% of the numbers needed. Unless more teachers are trained pupil-teacher ratios will remain well above 40:1 and will deteriorate.

Two factors may increase demand further. First, the primary teaching cadre contains over 20% (1,800+) unqualified teachers and this proportion has not been declining since too few new teachers are being trained. All untrained teachers could be qualified over five years at an

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additional annual training rate of about 360 per year, but this would require a special programme of some magnitude. Second, there is some evidence that a proportion of primary teachers retrain and upgrade their qualifications to become secondary teachers. If this trend continues it creates additional demand for new primary teachers.

On the supply side there are limits to the numbers who can be recruited into primary teaching. The numbers obtaining appropriate COSC passes in 1998 were less than 2000. This is clearly insufficient to provide large enough numbers electing to be primary teachers to meet the projected demand of 1,200-1,400 per year.

The other limitation on expansion in supply relates to costs. The costs per trained teacher at NTTC are estimated to be about 10,400 Maloti excluding trainee fees, equivalent to about US\$1,500 (1998). These are costs per year. The full-time course lasts for three years and thus the cost per trained teacher graduate, assuming no failure, is three times greater i.e. about US\$4,500, excluding stipends. These costs also do not include trainees' allowances. We estimate that including these would raise costs to about US\$2,500 per year, or US\$7,500 per trained teacher. This is as much as 13 times GNP per capita, making it one of the most expensive training systems in southern Africa. The costs of expanding the existing training system to meet demand are unsustainable. To do so would require 15% of the MOE recurrent budget at current cost levels. This excludes the cost of training the unqualified.

Opportunities exist to increase effectiveness. In 1998 there were 43 lecturers in the Primary Division, giving an overall staff: student ratio of 1:14. However, class sizes vary widely among subjects and courses, from 187 when a whole pre-service cohort comes together, to less than 20 for some subject options in the in-service DEP. Staff contact hours per week range from 2 to 15 hours, with an average of 7.6 hours per week. In addition, staff must prepare and mark students' work, and visit schools for TPP and TP. Large teaching groups are a function of both organisation of the time-table and staff deployment. There is scope to have smaller groups that are more conducive to interactive instruction. Teaching space is well utilised during semesters, but remains under-occupied during vacations. There is now hostel accommodation for 1,000 students, but full-time enrolment is less much than this.

New policy related to the Education Sector Development Plan identifies a range of targets for the MOE which will increase primary participation and retention, reduce class size and pupil-teacher ratios, improve the transition rate into secondary and ensure that all teachers are trained. These targets are ambitious. The analysis suggests that in order to reach the targets the output of the training system will have to increase substantially and the costs per qualified teacher will have to fall.

It is clear that in principle the cost of a trained teacher could be reduced (or conversely more teachers could be trained for the same cost) if the length of training was reduced to less than

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three years full-time. This could produce pro-rata reductions in costs per trained teacher and greater output. Increased periods of teaching practice might also produce savings (and professional benefits, especially for those without teaching experience), assuming that student teachers contribute significant teaching time to schools. This could be coupled with more use of mixed-mode and distance delivery of some parts of the training programme.

Some economies of scale should also be available in NTTC if it increased its enrolment up to its planned capacity of 1,100 from its current full-time equivalent of no more than about 750 FTEs (full-time equivalent) and worked at higher effective student/staff ratios. Analysis of the internal efficiency in NTTC suggests that there is scope for efficiency gains. Some consideration should be given to dedicating NTTC to primary teacher training, and transferring secondary training to the NUL. This would increase volume and reduce unit costs. It might also lead to a situation where more primary than secondary teachers were being trained in Lesotho, which is not currently the case, despite the much greater demand for new primary teachers.

It has been proposed that NTTC becomes more of a self-governing institution than a budgetary centre of the MOE. The current historic funding system does not provide incentives to increase efficiency and effectiveness. Formula funding based on an appropriate algorithm of admissions, output and successful employment might encourage greater efficiency. However, it would seem inevitable that most of the recurrent costs will continue to be supported by government subsidy directly, or through subsidies to students. Teachers' salaries are unlikely to move to levels where private rates of return would generate sufficient applicants for full cost recovery. The case for self-government may not be as strong as that for introducing elements of performance-related contracting by NTTC to train given numbers of teachers within an agreed framework of quality assurance.

In conclusion, there are a number of critical issues that should be regarded as challenges facing NTTC and other stakeholders in teacher education. These challenges vary in demand and urgency, but the one that is of utmost importance is equipping the DEP teacher educators with skills to be able to assist the College to realise its aspiration through this programme.

Recommendations

The MUSTER project has investigated a number of pertinent issues pertaining to teacher education in the context of Lesotho. A study of this magnitude would not be complete without coming up with recommendations to guide future efforts aimed at offering high standard teacher education programmes for the Lesotho education system. This section of the Executive Summary therefore proposes recommendations to be considered in reforming teacher education programmes in Lesotho.

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1 Entering Students

- 1.1 Since the College will continue to have to accept weak students, the bridging course should continue and some elements of language support and study skills should be extended throughout the first year.
- 1.2 In designing and implementing the curriculum, the College should ensure that the experiences and images of teachers and teaching that new entrants bring along with them are acknowledged, challenged, and built on in ways that will develop the students as 'reflective practitioners'.

2 Curriculum Structure

- 2.1 The NTTC Curriculum Committee should review the DPE curriculum to address the following issues: the content-to-pedagogy ratios, the teaching methods, assessment procedures, the teaching practice module.
- 2.2 It should seek ways of ensuring that the theory promoted in the curriculum document (the constructivist theory) permeates through the goals and objectives of the programme as a whole and in all the different subjects offered.
- 2.3 The DEP curriculum should make provision for some degree of integration of subjects offered in order to offer students an opportunity to learn in practice how the primary school subject content can be integrated.

3 Teaching and Learning

- 3.1 The College teaching and learning strategies should as much as possible relate to those of primary school and should be modelled in the lecturers' own teaching.
- 3.2 The methods should challenge student teachers' intellectual ability, allow them to share their experiences, and enable them to tackle classroom problems, through such methods as groupwork, debates, role plays and discussion.
- 3.3 The programme should include personal development and enrichment elements

4 Assessment

- 4.1 The NTTC should formally adopt students' independent study approach as a strategy to reduce their over-dependence on tutors.

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4.2 The Assessment Committee of the College should review the assessment procedures and align them with the 'constructivist' approach, using a wider variety of assessment methods.

4.3 A suitable structure for co-ordinating assessment activities should be set up to avoid student overload.

5 Teaching practice and partnership with schools

5.1 As a general recommendation, the College must review and implement the findings and recommendations of the previous consultancy studies concerning the reform of the teaching practice programme as a whole. The teaching practice co-ordinators should study the said recommendations, prepare a paper and then organise a workshop for stakeholders to develop a strategy for implementing the recommendations.

5.2 There is need to invest in short but on-going capacity building workshops for principals of schools, co-operating teachers, and mentors, to ensure that the College training is a continuum, and that schools take more responsibility for the training of newly qualified teachers.

5.3 The College should spell out, jointly with the co-operating schools, more detailed and realistic objectives for TP, including roles and responsibilities of tutors, schools and co-operating teachers.

5.4 The way the TP assessment instruments are used needs to be monitored carefully. In particular, in allocating marks for TP, evaluators must have visited each student teacher the number of times stipulated in the TP guide. The final marks should be moderated to ensure fairness. Purely supervisory school visits could be separated from assessment ones.

5.5 Based on the theory of reflective teaching practice, the College should consider introducing the system whereby students document their teaching experiences for purposes of reflecting on them through the use of instruments such as portfolios, journals and/or diaries.

6 Induction and support for new teachers

6.1 NTTC, in collaboration with the various stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education, should introduce and support an induction programme for newly qualified teachers who enter the school system, including the training of mentors.

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6.2 Schools need to create an enabling environment for NQTs by organising more structured support relevant to their needs.

7 The Impact of Training

All presently serving unqualified teachers should be trained so as to bring them up at least to the standard of their qualified counterparts.

8 The College and its Staff

8.1 There is need for the NTTC to create an environment that is supportive of teacher educators in the business of the College: planning, teaching and assessment, teaching practice, engaging in relevant research, and capacity building through induction and short-term training courses.

8.2 NTTC should embark on capacity building for various categories of staff, including management. Short-term training in the form of workshops should follow relevant training modules.

8.3 As a matter of urgency, the College should introduce an induction programme for new tutors.

8.4 With regard to the DEP programme, the College should mount training on the ‘reflective practice / constructivist approach’ as a new paradigm promoted in the curriculum document for the training of primary school teachers. There will be need to engage an outside consultant to help facilitate the process.

8.5 There is a need to develop a code of ethics to be adhered to by lecturers and the management.

8.6 The College should review its current instructional approaches with the aim to merge innovative ones with good traditional teaching strategies. One way would be for lecturers to observe each other’s lessons and give each other feedback. Thus they will be directly demonstrating to their students how to relate to co-workers and/or to other professionals.

8.7 NTTC teacher educators should create a collegial atmosphere at the College and demonstrate how it operates to their own students.

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9 Supply and Demand, Costs and Effectiveness

- 9.1 The MoE should establish a system of monitoring enrolment growth and teacher supply and demand on a continuing basis. This can be used to shape admissions and deployment policy to allow stated targets on enrolments, pupil-teacher ratios, and costs to be achieved.
- 9.2 The Ministry of Education should introduce a formula funding based on an appropriate algorithm of admission, output and successful employment. Using this formula might help increase efficiency and effectiveness of the teacher education system. It should help reduce the unit costs of training and increase output.
- 9.3 A new system of funding should be linked to targets and incentives to focus management time and energy on improved performance and greater output. Large group teaching in classes of over 100 should be discouraged if it co-exists with student-staff ratios of 14:1. Any expansion of the staff of NTTC should be coupled to substantially increased enrolment of trainees.
- 9.4 Consideration should be given to dedicating NTTC to primary teacher training to increase volume, reduce unit costs, and improve quality. Secondary teacher training could be transferred to NUL.
- 9.5 Mixed-mode and distance programmes should be developed actively to extend the reach of NTTC and the number of trainees it can support. This would seem the only way of increasing output at sustainable levels of cost. NTTC should develop outreach programmes of training and upgrading untrained teachers at a distance, along with other providers who may have the capacity to offer this mode of training.
- 9.6 The length of full-time pre-career training should be reduced to no more than two years. Unless the length is shortened, and the savings used to increase the number of trainees in training, the pupil-teacher ratios in primary schools will increase and class sizes become even greater than they are at present.
- 9.7 NTTC facilities should be used for the maximum number of weeks in the year. It may be possible to enrol two cohorts of trainees simultaneously if longer periods of teaching practice are co-ordinated with staggered entry.
- 9.8 The future supply of qualified applicants willing and able to become primary teachers who hold COSC passes is a constraint on expansion. Consideration should be given to methods of increasing the numbers of qualified applicants. This might include bridging courses for the under-qualified, opportunities for mature returners to the

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labour market who obtained COSC or the equivalent in previous years, and dedicated bursaries for those willing to commit to teaching for a fixed number of years.

10 Policy on Teacher Education

- 10.1 There is an urgent need to formulate a comprehensive policy on teacher education in Lesotho. The Teacher Education Task Force established in April 2002 has this goal and should proceed on a fixed timetable towards a plan that can be integrated into the Medium Term Budgetary Framework of the Government of Lesotho. The plan should include both costed projections of supply designed to meet demand, and commitments to modes of training and curricula specifications that can be used to define future provision.
- 10.2 Clear strategic decisions are needed about how to expand supply to meet demand whilst maintaining and improving quality. The current system of training cannot supply enough new teachers to meet likely demand. It has high costs and the research indicates concerns about aspects of quality.

11 Prospects for research studies

- 11.1 A longitudinal study should follow the same group of trainees through training and three years into their first appointments. This would help understand in more detail what difference training has made to the competencies, skills and attitudes of Newly Qualified Teachers and how curriculum reform might enhance quality and relevance.
- 11.2 The DEP programme at NTTC should be subject to formative evaluation year on year to contribute to cycles of continuous modification and improvement. Such an evaluation should include contributions from a mix of stakeholders as well as an NTTC perspective. Part of its concerns should be to explore and consolidate the pedagogical and philosophical assumptions held by different groups and facilitate the process of developing a shared view.
- 11.3 Individual members of NTTC and groups should be encouraged to undertake small-scale action research on their practice with a view to sharing results and feeding them into improved learning and teaching.
- 11.4 NTTC and the Institute of Education at the National University of Lesotho should engage collaboratively in policy research to inform decision on teacher education policy and support the work of the national Teacher Education task Force.

Chapter One

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Country

Lesotho is a small country covering a total of 30,355 square kilometres (11,720 square miles) of land area. The country is completely landlocked and entirely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. Its prominent feature is the mountains, which cover over two-thirds of the country, with peaks rising up to 3,482 metres (11,000 feet) above sea level. Only 9% of land area is cultivatable. The major ecological zones of the country are mountains, foothills and lowlands. (Chabane, Lefoka & Sebatane, 1989) The population of Lesotho is estimated at slightly over 2 million and grows at a rate of 2.6% per annum. This high growth rate may be responsible for some of the arable land being allocated to residential sites. It also has serious implications for resource provision for the education sector (Sebatane & Mabud, 1995).

In economic terms, Lesotho is classified as one of the world's poorest countries. According to a report by Sechaba Consultants (Gay, et al., 2000), the number of Basotho men employed in South African mines was 107,200 in 1994 with another 14,900 who were believed to be employed in other South Africa enterprises. The authors however, indicate that retrenchment of mineworkers has reduced the average number to 47,302 between 1993 and 1999. This trend is said to threaten the livelihoods of Basotho. The report further shows that Lesotho Government employees at the end of 1998 amounted to 35,414 while business enterprise employed 23,320. In 1994 (Gay et al., 1994) the Lesotho Government was considered the largest domestic employer, with roughly 10,200 teachers and 15,000 persons in the civil service on its payroll. The manufacturing sector employed a labour force of 14,300 in 1992. A total of 161,300 persons were employed in the informal sector, while casual labour supported 6,100 households. There is a brain drain problem which, among other things, implies that formal education also contributes to the movement of human resources into better paying jobs, particularly in South Africa.

1.2 Formal education system

Most schools in Lesotho, that is, 98% of primary schools and 92% of secondary schools, are church-owned. Provision of formal education is therefore understood to be a joint responsibility between the government, the churches and the community. The Ministry of Education is responsible for paying teachers' salaries, formulating educational policies, passing laws, and drawing up regulations that govern schools. It also oversees the development of infrastructure; develops curricula and monitors their implementation; and provides supervision of teaching. Churches, on the other hand, not only own most schools and the property on which they are erected, but are also responsible for their day-to-day operations. They participate, through the Schools Secretariats, in high-powered government structures such as the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) and the National Curriculum Committee (NCC). The community, especially as it refers to parents with children in

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schools, pays school fees and at times contributes financially to the provision of infrastructure. It is also supposed to be represented in School Advisory Boards.

However, the implementation of the concept of shared responsibility in education is always questioned by many educators in Lesotho. Government and churches appear to have more powers than the community, whose contribution is mostly financial. The Education Act of 1995 is supposed to empower communities by enhancing their participation in school activities at the local level.

The education system is organized into three cycles according to level and type. Primary education, the first level, extends over seven years and constitutes the basic education phase. The primary school cycle leads to the Primary School Leaving Certificate (PSLC), which determines access to secondary education. The second level consists of junior secondary which extends over three years and leads to the Junior Certificate (JC), and a two-year high school programme which leads to the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate (COSC). The third and highest level provides post-secondary and higher education. The main institutions of higher learning are the National University of Lesotho (NUL), the National Teacher Training College (NTTC) and the National Health Training College (NHTC). There is also a range of other vocational and technical institutions (Sebatane et.al., 1992, p.3).

The Lesotho education system is highly pyramidal. It has a broad base of enrolments, narrowing sharply at the top. It is an inefficient system in that large numbers of students are lost along the way. Primary education is terminal for the majority of pupils, although recent estimates suggest that by mid-1990s the situation had improved. Of 1,000 pupils entering grade 1, about 450 completed grade 7 (Bureau of Statistics, 1996). The average primary graduate had spent nearly nine years in the system (rather than seven) and the average pupil who dropped out had only completed four years of schooling.

Schools are expanding in an unplanned manner, a situation which impacts negatively on the quality of teaching and employment of personnel. In 1998 there were 1,264 primary schools in Lesotho with an enrolment of 369,515. About 76.3% of the schools offer a full primary education course. During the same year, the teaching force was 8,170, of whom 87.2% were qualified, while the pupil: teacher ratio stood at 45:1. Problems that continue to plague the primary education system include low and deteriorating quality of education, low levels of staffing, a paucity of suitable facilities, a high wastage in terms of drop-out and repetition rates, particularly in the lower grades; multi-standard teaching, and poor management.

1.3 Overview of the main characteristics of the teacher education system

In Lesotho formal teacher education is confined to two institutions: the National Teacher Training College and the National University of Lesotho through its Faculty of Education

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and Institute of Education. Since 1984 primary teacher training has been offered only by the NTTC. However, with the re-introduction of a part-time Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) degree programme offered by the Faculty of Education and the Institute of Education in January 2000, the university is also involved in training primary school teachers.

1.3.1 Early developments

There used to be seven teacher training colleges in Lesotho, all of them owned and operated by the churches, with government assisting with the payment of staff salaries. The churches were responsible for the day-to-day administration of these colleges as well as the recruitment, transfer, promotion and dismissal of teachers. The following programmes were offered

- (a) Three-year Lesotho Primary Teachers Course (LPTC), which admitted students who had completed the then 8 years of primary school education;
- (b) A two-year Primary Higher course (PH) which targeted students with junior certificate; and
- (c) A two-year Advanced Teachers Certificate course (ATC), which was designed for students with high school education.

1.3.2 The National Teacher Training College

The National Teacher Training College was established by Government Order in 1974 to replace the church-owned teacher training colleges. The move to establish a national teacher training college was taken in response to a long-felt need for a centralized teacher training institution that would cater for both pre-service and in-service needs. It was to be a national, secular college, offering a 'modern' type of curriculum for both pre- and in-service training, which would meet the needs of a developing education system in Lesotho (Otaala & Letsie, 1986). In setting up the College, the Government of Lesotho sought support from international funding agencies such as United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United Kingdom (UK), and the Danish International Development Assistance (Danida). Since its establishment in 1975, the College has been a department of the Ministry of Education.

The roots of the current NTTC curriculum, therefore, only go back as far as the foundation of the College in 1975. According to the College curriculum framework at the time, teaching methods were to be diversified and modern technology such as television for micro-teaching used. In practice, whole group lectures for 100-150 students were followed by seminar discussions for 20-25 participants, and tutorial groups of less than 10 students were also set up. Where appropriate, 'practical' sessions were run, and everyone did micro-

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teaching during Year 1. Tapes, slides, cassettes as well as books were provided, but staff and students were encouraged to develop ‘self-instructional materials’ (SIMS) to provide locally relevant sources for independent study. In preparation for internship, ‘subject kits’, in the form of short schemes of work and lesson plans, were developed, with the aim to enable students to experience interactive and independent learning. Thus, courses were framed in terms of behavioural objectives, and the assessment pattern followed this approach. An item bank for objective-type as well as essay-type questions were set up. Continuous assessment counted equally with end-of-term examinations towards the final mark.

At first the NTTC used to offer two primary education programmes: the Primary Teacher Certificate (PTC) and the Advanced Primary Teacher Certificate (APTC). It was argued that to produce an ‘effective teacher’, sustained periods of supervised school practice were required (Matsela, 1986). The PTC programme was therefore structured on an IN-OUT-IN model, whereby an internship year was sandwiched between two residential course years.

However, the NTTC history shows that evaluation of teacher education programmes, especially primary ones, has been an on-going process ever since the College was established and that the reforms in primary teacher education have been a response to these evaluation efforts. One example of the contributions of evaluation studies to programme changes at the NTTC was the phasing out of the APTC in the early 1990s and its replacement by a new programme, Diploma in Primary Education (DPE). The rationale for this move was to enhance the capacity of teachers in the schools, including those serving as senior teachers in large schools, principals of medium sized schools, and resource persons and models of good practice. Specifically, the programme aimed at improving the student teachers’ skills in Sesotho and English, developing their ability to undertake independent study, and enhancing their effectiveness as change agents in their respective communities.

A later evaluation study focused on teaching and learning at the College and was undertaken in 1994 by a team of consultants (Burke & Sugrue). These authors reported, among other things, that the PTC programme was offering 14 subjects in all, with the professional studies having been allocated more time (19%) than other subjects, and that it was examination-oriented. They point out that ‘the proliferation of assignments, classroom tests and terminal examination places considerable burden of work on both staff and students’ Burke and Sugrue (1994:13). For the DPE, they pointed out that 72% of the learning time was allocated to subject content and 28% for the education course with its three components: Educational Foundations (7.8%), education administration (11.8%), and statistics, research methods and project (8.5%).

Currently, NTTC is offering four full-time teacher training programmes of a three-year duration each. The first programme is the Diploma in Education (Primary) (DEP) which was introduced in September 1998 to eventually replace the Primary Teacher Certificate,

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which is being phased out. It provides initial training for students holding a COSC. The second programme is the Diploma in Primary Education (DPE) and is designed for those who have teaching experience and hold a PTC or an equivalent professional qualification. It is a three-year programme in which student teachers can specialise in two teaching subjects. Additionally, the DPE students spend one semester on school attachment. The aim is to enable them to observe school administration in action, concentrate on their two areas of specialisation, be supervised on their class work, and carry out other prescribed tasks and relevant research. As in the case of PTC, DPE students are assessed equally on coursework and final examination. The last two pre-service programmes offered by the College relate to teaching in secondary schools. These are Secondary Teacher Certificate (STC) and Diploma in Technology Education (DTE).

The College also runs two part-time programmes, one for unqualified teachers and the other for principals. The former programme is the Lesotho In-service Education for Teachers (LIET PTC) while the latter is known as LIET VI. Both programmes follow a combination of distance mode, face-to-face teaching and district workshops during school sessions. The duration of the LIET PTC is three and a half years while that of LIET VI is two and a half years.

As of 1998, the College had produced a total of 4,521 teachers in its full-time programmes. The output consisted of 1,481 at STC level; 2,518 at PTC; 156 at the former Secondary Technical Teacher Certificate (STTC); 66 at DTE; 271 at the former APTC and 92 at DPE level.. Recent changes at NTTC have led to the phasing out of one of the longest pathways for teacher training in Africa. Formerly, trainees could spend three years acquiring a PTC, teach for some time, return for an APTC, teach again and then enrol for a Diploma level programme. Now there is direct entry from COSC to the DEP programme.

The NTTC is affiliated to NUL, which ratifies its programmes and awards. Preparations are underway to make the College autonomous, after which it will be known as the Lesotho College of Education (LCE).

1.3.3 Other teacher training pathways

The Lesotho Government has taken drastic steps towards reducing the number of un-certificated teachers. However, progress is slow, partly due to the NTTC's low capacity to run in-service programmes. As a consequence, many teachers turn to external institutions for further studies in teacher education. These include the College of Preceptors in the United Kingdom, South African colleges and universities, and some locally-based private institutions affiliated to some American universities like New Port University. One drawback with these alternative training approaches is that the institutions involved follow distance education methods and do not provide for supervised teaching practice. Most of them are commercially oriented and might not have the needs of Lesotho teachers at heart.

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1.4 The MUSTER Project

1.4.1 MUSTER as an international project

The idea of a Multi-site Teacher Education Research (MUSTER) project was originally conceived by the University of Sussex in the United Kingdom (UK). The study was financially supported by the British Department for International Development (DFID) and undertaken by researchers in the following institutions and countries:

- The Centre for International Education, University of Sussex Institute of Education, UK
- The Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast, Ghana.
- The Institute of Education, The National University of Lesotho.
- The Centre for Educational Research and Training, University of Malawi.
- The Faculty of Education, University of Durban-Westville, South Africa.
- The School of Education, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine’s Campus, Trinidad.

At the inception of the project, the University of Sussex Research Team observed that issues such as teacher education curriculum, teacher identity, the role of the teacher in different cultural contexts, and the costs incurred in training teachers had not been systematically investigated, particularly in developing countries. The aim of the study therefore was to analyse teacher education systems in Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, Trinidad and Tobago and the teacher education programme at the University of Durban Westville in South Africa.

1.4.2 Rationale for the MUSTER project

Research into various aspects of teacher education in Lesotho, especially as offered by the NTTC, has in the past been undertaken by either individuals or commissioned by Ministry of Education (MOE) and/or funding organisations. Such studies focused on specific aspects of teacher education at the College. Thus, there is lack of information that presents a holistic perspective about academic and other programmes at NTTC. The Multi-site Teacher Education Research Project therefore took as a point of departure the need to understand teacher education perspectives at the primary level of NTTC. The study examined the offering of teacher education with a view to unpacking the factors that influence and constrain that offering. In order to conform to the procedures agreed upon by the MUSTER research team at the international level, but without prejudice to the Lesotho context, the study adopted the input-process-output approach in analysing the various aspects of teacher education at the College. The project’s overall aims as agreed at the international level were:

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- (a) To enhance an understanding of how new teachers acquire the skills needed to teach in different systems, and identify which professional learning experiences and practices are most useful and valuable in this regard; and
- (b) To identify the associated patterns of overall costs per qualified teacher, and consider implications for internal efficiency.

In Lesotho the study aimed at determining the process by which NTTC students acquire and learn to apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to become effective professional practitioners. The following are some of the specific questions addressed by the study, grouped by theme:

1 The characteristics of entering students

- How are students recruited for primary teacher training?
- What are their characteristics and background?
- What are their career expectations and plans?
- What relevant images and experiences do they bring to their training?

2 The curriculum of teacher training

- What is the nature of the prescribed DEP curriculum?
- How is the curriculum delivered in the college classrooms and on TP?
- How do the student teachers perceive and respond to the curriculum experience?

3 The impact of training

- How do the College graduates perceive and value their training in retrospect?
- How do they experience the transition into teaching, and what kinds of support do they get?
- How has the NTTC training affected the way its graduates teach?
- How have their perceptions of themselves and that of the profession changed?
- How are they perceived by the stakeholders' community?

4 The National Teacher Training College and its tutors

- How is the college organised and managed?
- What are the characteristics of the lecturers, in terms of qualifications, experience, and attitudes towards their careers?
- How do they perceive their work, with particular reference to their views on how young teachers acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need?

5 Costs, efficiency, and supply and demand

- How is teacher education funded at NTTC?
- How are its resources utilised?
- What are the likely patterns of supply and demand for teachers?
- How can these needs best be met?

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1.4.3 MUSTER process in Lesotho

The starting point for the project was a baseline study that analyzed the Lesotho education system using secondary data. At the same time this exercise helped identify pertinent teacher education issues on which the study would focus.

In the case of Lesotho, this study could only be undertaken at the National Teacher Training College because at the time this was the only institution in the country that was responsible for pre-service training for primary school teachers. In addition, only two of the three NTTC primary education programmes, namely the new Diploma in Primary Education and the Primary Teachers Certificate, were found suitable for the study.

The project required a combination of various methods of collecting data. Information was collected from students upon entry and exit, newly qualified teachers (NQTs), college lecturers, internship coordinators, serving teachers, principals of primary schools, District Resource Teachers (DRTs), as well as members of the Parents in Education Association. Document analysis, particularly for the baseline study, teaching practice and the cost and financing of teacher education sub-studies, provided baseline information and background to the study.

The Lesotho Research Team was drawn from both the Institute of Education (IE) of the National University of Lesotho (NUL) and the National Teacher Training College. There were four staff and a research assistant from the Institute, and six teacher educators from NTTC. The study was co-ordinated by the Teacher Education Division of the Institute of Education. The project duration was three years, that is, from 1998 to 2000, although the preparations started in 1997.

1.5 Overview of the report

This report is designed around the main findings. Chapter 2 outlines the research design and methods used, explaining some of the limitations and constraints on the researchers. Chapter 3 looks at who enters primary teaching training at the NTTC, how they are selected, and the kinds of experiences, attitudes and images of teaching they bring with them to the college. Chapter 4 draws on several sub-studies to give a broad descriptive analysis of the curriculum for primary teachers, including the practical elements. Chapter 5 outlines the indications given by the data on the impact of the college training, although much of this remains tentative given the difficulties of evaluating such results. Chapter 6 focuses on the NTTC itself, with particular reference to the careers paths and perspectives of the lecturers. Chapter 7 reports what could be established about what it costs to train a teacher at NTTC, and sets this in the context of the estimated supply and demand of teachers. Finally Chapter 8 summarises the findings, draws together the conclusions and makes some recommendations for the future.

Chapter Two

2 Research Design and Methods

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses how the research was planned and carried out, describing the sample used, the methods of collecting and analysing data, and the limitations of the study.

The study was carried out in two stages. In the first stage a baseline study was conducted using secondary sources. For the second stage, the main framework for the research design agreed at the first international MUSTER workshop in March 1998 was followed. Four 'strands' for the research had been identified, and these were divided into three phases: input, process and output. The resultant matrix allowed the research to be broken down into a number of sub-studies, adapted for each country. Table 2.1 presents the sub-studies undertaken in Lesotho for stage two, using various data collection instruments and approaches.

Table 2.1: MUSTER Strands and Sub-studies

STRAND	INPUTS	PROCESS	OUTPUT
Becoming a teacher	Characteristics and views of entering students	Views of students midway through the programme	Characteristics and views of exiting students and NQTs
Curriculum	Curriculum as documented	Curriculum as enacted in the college classrooms	Impact on knowledge and competence of NQTs
Costs	Selection procedures, sources of funding, supply and demand for teachers.	Budgets; distribution of costs; internal efficiency	Completion and attrition rates; deployment; indicators of effectiveness
Colleges	Characteristics and career paths of lecturers	Lecturers' perspectives on their work	The impact of training on student teachers' ability to teach in primary schools

2.2. Selection of samples

The research team encountered a number of challenges regarding the selection of samples. The first challenge was that the pre-service programme was in the process of changing from the old PTC to the new DEP programme. In August 1998 the first cohort of DEP students entered the college. The research team therefore decided that the study should focus mainly on the new cohort and the new curriculum as far as possible. The PTC graduates were used in situations where it was not possible to use the new DEP students. For example, only the PTC group could respond to questions related to the teaching practice process because the DEP students at the time did not have the required experience to be able to participate in the teaching practice sub-study. The second challenge was that the study was too broad. It therefore had to be divided into manageable sub-studies, most of which required different approaches to sampling.

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2.2.1 Entry characteristics

In order to select a sample for the entry characteristics sub-study, the whole entering DEP cohort (104 students) was asked to answer a questionnaire that solicited information on their bio-data, experience, and views. Of the 104 questionnaires only 90 were returned.

2.2.2 'In-depth' sub-study

In order to gather more information an 'in-depth' sub-study was undertaken. From the 90 questionnaires returned for the 'entry characteristics sub-study', a stratified sample of 27 student teachers was selected to represent the entire group, the stratification variables being gender, age, academic level and home district. Data was collected from them at various points during their first year.

2.2.3 Curriculum sub-studies

There were two curriculum sub-studies, the curriculum as documented by the college and as enacted in the classroom by the tutors. For the first one, the programme document was analysed. For the curriculum as enacted, the sample was opportunistic in that it depended on lecturers' goodwill. The eight lecturers chosen included three men and five women of widely differing ages, experience and qualifications, teaching the core subjects of English, Maths, Science and Education.

2.2.4 Teaching Practice sub-study

Three groups of respondents participated in this sub-study. These were all the 121 third year PTC students who had just returned from teaching practice, 10 opportunistically selected lecturers and 2 teaching practice coordinators, one for primary and the other for secondary. All the relevant Teaching Practice (TP) documents were studied.

2.2.5 The Colleges sub-study

All the 44 lecturers in the Primary Division were surveyed with a response rate of over 80%. A stratified sampling technique, on the basis of gender, rank, length of service and department (English, Mathematics, Science and Education) was applied to select 14 out of the original group of 44 for intensive interview.

2.2.6 Newly qualified Teachers and the Cost and Financing of Teacher Education sub-studies

The Lesotho practice in which teachers apply for posts instead of being posted makes it

2 Research Design and Methods

almost impossible to know which schools employed new teachers in any given period. It was therefore decided to send questionnaires to 200 schools for purposes of this sub-study. This sample was stratified bearing in mind the location of schools and proprietor. Only 70 newly qualified teachers returned completed questionnaires. Additionally, opportunistic sub-samples were selected, comprising the following: 6 NQTs, 3 unqualified teachers, 9 District Resource Teachers, (DRTs) 21 principals (some six principals and all the 9 DRTs were students at NUL), together with newly qualified teachers who had just completed their studies and were attending their graduation ceremony at the College.

2.3 Data Collection

2.3.1 Instruments

The data collection instruments used for the study included the following: document analysis, questionnaires, interview schedules, classroom observations, autobiographical essays, student diaries, and discussions with focus groups. Face validation was used for most instruments, while some instruments were adapted from elsewhere. Some sub-studies used multiple data collection approaches.

- (a) The following instruments which, had been drafted by the MUSTER Team were adapted: Entry, Exit and NQT questionnaires, 'midway' questionnaire and an instrument for analysing the documented curriculum. With the exception of the entry characteristics questionnaire, which was pre-tested at NUL, they were face validated. The tutors' questionnaire was piloted with the NTTC members of the research team. The observation schedule was adapted from a study that was undertaken by the NUL Institute of Education (Chabane et.al, 1989) and was thereafter face validated.
- (b) Interviews used for data for MUSTER study were mostly drafted by the Sussex Team and face validated by the Lesotho Team or vice versa. All the interview schedules were face validated. The tutors' interviews were piloted among the NTTC researchers.

2.3.2 Procedure for data collection

As already pointed out, the MUSTER project was carried out in two phases. The first phase was a baseline study drawing on published sources. This study was aimed to investigate the extent to which research on teacher education had been undertaken in Lesotho, and to raise issues that could be studied further. The second phase involved undertaking various sub-studies under each of the four strands: curriculum, becoming a teacher, the college with its staff, and the cost and financing of teacher education. Most of these sub-studies used multiple data collection approaches.

2 Research Design and Methods

2.3.3 Document analysis

Relevant documents were collected and reviewed for the baseline study, as well as for the sub-studies on Curriculum as Documented, Teaching Practice and the Cost and Financing of Training. Specifically, for the Curriculum as Documented sub-study, the DEP curriculum document was used. In analysing the curriculum document, Eraut's (1976) framework was used, which focuses on aims, objectives, content, teaching/learning materials, and assessment, seeking for the relationships between them. For the Teaching Practice sub-study, due to extensive evaluation and other consultancy studies undertaken on this area, various documents as well as instruments for assessing TP, were consulted. For the Cost and Financing of Training sub-study, documents used included national statistical reports, impact assessment reports, and budget allocations from the Ministry of Education and NTTC accounts. The NTTC graduate lists were matched with salary print-outs from Government Accounts Department to trace teachers in the system. Additionally, student administration records, admission lists and admission interview documents were used for the same purpose of tracing teachers. The aim was to supplement other approaches used in collecting data for this sub-study.

2.3.4 Questionnaires

The questionnaires used in the survey of the characteristics and views of students on entry and exit and for the NTQs, were designed by the main MUSTER research team for use by all participating countries. The Lesotho team then adapted them for its own context. All began with a section on biographical information relating to age, sex, religion and family background. For the entering students, additional sections focused on school experiences, college life and career plans. There were a number of open-ended questions requiring longer answers. The questions for the exiting students required mainly short answers, and focused on their experiences at the College. The NQTs were, in addition, asked about their first teaching job and how they settled into the schools. A common feature of all the questionnaires was a section comprising a Likert-type scale. The questionnaire for the NQT was adapted and administered to the DEP students who were midway through the programme. The questionnaire for the PTC students about Teaching Practice, drawn up in Lesotho, comprised mainly closed questions. All the student questionnaires were administered in the College hall, with the exception of those for NQTs, which were mailed to them in schools, with stamped self-addressed envelopes provided to facilitate their return by mail.

For the college lecturers, the questionnaire was adapted from a central MUSTER one. It elicited information on qualifications, experiences and career patterns, views on the college curriculum and on good teaching, as well as on various aspects of their work. It was comprised mainly of closed or limited response questions, and contained a section of Likert-type statements.

2 Research Design and Methods

2.3.5 Interviews

Intensive interviews, lasting for about an hour each, were conducted with 14 out of the 44 Primary Division lecturers. They were tape-recorded, and the transcripts returned to the subjects for correction and comment. Interviews with key informants, such as the TP coordinators and the management staff of the College, focused on such issues as teaching practice, documentation, and college organisation and finances. The TP co-ordinators and the lecturers were interviewed on aspects that emerged from the documents on teaching practice. These interviews lasted for about forty-five minutes each.

2.3.6 Classroom observations

A total of 18 classroom teaching sessions conducted by eight lecturers were observed. These lecturers represented the departments of Science, English, Mathematics and Education. The observers took notes at five-minute intervals on all classroom activities. As a pilot, four researchers observed the same class, and then compared notes. Thereafter, six lessons were observed jointly by two researchers, another six by two, and nine by a research assistant. For all the observations, activities were tape-recorded for purposes of supplementing the notes.

Six graduates of the College who had been in the field for two to three years were also observed while teaching a variety of subjects such as English, Mathematics, Agriculture and Religious Education. The exercise was facilitated by the fact that a primary school teacher in Lesotho normally teaches all subjects for a given grade. Classroom observations also focused on teaching methods used, knowledge of content being taught, teaching and learning materials, assessment strategies, whether or not reference was being made to prepared lesson plans, classroom and time management, and other issues such as confidence in teaching. The six lessons were observed by one researcher. Additionally, two out of the three unqualified teachers were observed teaching.

2.3.7 Essays and Diaries

Selected DEP students wrote autobiographical essays about good and bad memories of their own schooling, which complemented the survey data. Later, they were invited to use diaries to document their experience at the College, focusing on their perceptions of teaching and learning, with particular reference to Science, Mathematics, Education and English. Although most of the entries were quite short, this method provided valuable insights into student perceptions of both the official and the hidden curriculum.

2 Research and Methodology

2.3.8 Discussions with focus groups

A couple of group discussions were held with the DEP students who were participating in the In-depth sub-study. The intention here was to elicit their experiences of the curriculum and to supplement the information they were documenting in their diaries. Another focus group comprised representatives of the Parents in Education Association. The purpose of engaging this group was to solicit its views on the type of teacher produced by the College. In this latter case, the discussions were tape-recorded and thereafter transcribed.

2.3.9 Tests

Tests in English and Mathematics were drawn up using questions from COSC examination papers, and administered to the DEP students during the first semester and again a year later. A pedagogy test was also devised but was abandoned after piloting showed it to have little validity. There were also some doubts about the validity of the subject tests, since the curriculum of the College differed from that of COSC. The debate on the validity and relevance of the tests led to abandoning the idea of presenting the test results in this report, even though a lot of time had been invested in the administration and marking of the tests written by the entering students.

2.4 Data Analysis

Different data analysis strategies were employed. Firstly, some of the questionnaire data was processed and analysed through a computer, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), while the rest was analysed using qualitative approaches. Secondly, information from observations, essays, interviews and diary entries were analysed thematically to produce descriptions of all the issues that were being studied. For example, the observation data brought to the surface findings on issues such as teaching style, content, resources used, and assessment practices.

The analysis of the Costs sub-study consisted of exploring different types of costs and the effectiveness of different training pathways. The cost of training in full-time programmes was compared to that for the part-time programmes. The variables, which were looked at in calculating costs, are student/teacher ratio, teaching loads, recurrent salary costs for academic and support staff (including senior administrative staff), and student fees.

Mathematical formulae which were gleaned from documents from the University of Sussex were used to calculate costs per student using taught time, student/teacher ratios, number of student teaching periods per week, and average salary per teacher.

2 Research Design and Methods

2.5 Some Strengths and Limitations of the Methodology

2.5.1 Strengths

The study was the largest ever to be undertaken on teacher education in Lesotho. It led to the first collaboration between researchers from the Institute of Education on the one hand and NTTC on the other. For the NTTC staff participating in the study, this was an opportunity to learn to undertake research of this magnitude. The Institute of Education researchers were able to sharpen their skills and at the same time to participate in an area that is very relevant to their mandate. Thus, the study both provided an opportunity for professional growth and yielded information for possible policy guidelines on teacher education. However, the study, was also faced with certain constraints and did not achieve all its aims.

2.5.2 Limitations

(i) Restricted study population

The fact that NTTC was the only institution that could be studied posed some problems related to both the selection of the sample (in terms of the subjects/informants and programmes) and the development of some data collection instruments. For example, NUL first-year students enrolled for a teacher education programme had to be used for pilot-testing an instrument for the sub-study on Entry Characteristics of New Students because no other suitable group could be found.

(ii) Measuring the effects of the training programme

One major purpose of the research was to establish whether teacher education makes a difference and it was hoped that some ways could be found of measuring the 'value added' by the college education. However, this proved difficult. Firstly, the period of data collection was much shorter than the 3½ years of the programme, so it was not possible to undertake any 'before and after' studies with the same group of students, nor to monitor a cohort throughout the whole programme. Secondly, the changes in the curriculum meant that any cross-sectional studies carried out with different cohorts would not be directly comparable. As explained above, the some of the studies had to be undertaken with PTC graduates rather than DEP ones. Thirdly, some students were reluctant to take extra tests. Attempts to evaluate academic progress by administering English and Maths tests to entering and exiting cohorts of the inservice Diploma in Primary Education (DPE) – the only programme that was not changing – foundered on students' unwillingness to complete them.

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(iii) **Teaching practice sub-study**

Initially the plan regarding the Teaching Practice sub-study was to observe student teachers' school-based activities during the Teaching Practice Preparation and the Teaching Practice periods. Doing so would have provided some insights into the impact on trainees' knowledge and competence midway through the programme. However, due to lack of time, it was not possible to conduct these observations.

(iv) **In-depth sub-study instead of a longitudinal sub-study**

The idea of conducting a longitudinal sub-study focusing on the process of teacher education as perceived and experienced by student teachers was abandoned. The reason for this was that the time allocated for the MUSTER project was shorter than the three years normally required to complete NTTC teacher education programmes. It was therefore decided to undertake an in-depth sub-study rather than a longitudinal sub-study.

(v) **Research fatigue and time factor**

There is evidence that student teachers were probably suffering from research fatigue and ended up being reluctant or refusing to cooperate. For example, in the In-depth sub-study only 10 out of 27 students submitted diaries. When a questionnaire was administered to these students, they claimed to be exhausted and expressed their unwillingness to continue participating in the project. Only 14 of them completed and returned the questionnaires. A similar observation was made with regard to the exit questionnaire. This whole situation could have affected the authenticity of the responses received from the student teachers.

Research fatigue was not confined to students. It was also observed among some members of the research team who complained about the time they were to devote to the project, given that they were still engaged full-time in their substantive jobs. The NTTC researchers, for example, were not released from any duties while undertaking this research. They were further concerned that the project was too demanding and that they were not provided with any incentives. This situation adversely affected their level of commitment and was responsible for either non-completion of assigned tasks or deadlines not being met. Some of them even deserted the project, while others never submitted reports on their respective sub-studies. Another contributory factor to delays was the fact that the team was composed of a mixture of inexperienced, semi-experienced and experienced researchers. The physical distance between the Institute of Education and the NTTC, and the lack of transport available to the college team of researchers added to the difficulties.

It was not possible to observe all lecturers 5 times each as had originally been planned because some lecturers were not cooperative. Most importantly, it was not possible to

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engage alternative lecturers because of the time factor. On the whole, time allocated for the entire MUSTER project was not adequate, given the scope of the project itself.

(vi) **Un-anticipated national events**

The political and civil unrest experienced in Lesotho in 1998 delayed the start of the fieldwork at the College by a full semester, and therefore curtailed some of the activities. For example, there was not enough time to observe student teachers' school-based activities during both the Teaching Practice Preparation and the actual Teaching Practice.

3 Characteristics of Entrants into Pre-Service Training

Chapter Three

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings related to the following issues:

- How students are recruited for primary teacher training;
- The characteristics and background of those selected;
- Their career expectations and plans; and
- Relevant images and experiences they bring to their training.

It draws mainly on the questionnaire administered to the first DEP cohort, and on the autobiographical essays written by a selected sample of them. For comparative purposes, some of the data from the exit and NQT questionnaires has been utilised. Other background and contextual information comes from interviews with key informants at the College and representatives of parents.

3.2 Selection and admissions procedures

Entry criteria at NTTC have been raised with the upgrading of the pre-service training programme from certificate to diploma level, although both were designed for school-leavers with little teaching experience. For the DEP, the minimum requirements are four COSC credits and a pass in a fifth subject. All the candidates in the first cohort were interviewed, either in Maseru or in their home districts, by a panel consisting of two or more NTTC tutors. The criteria included previous experience; the ability to communicate orally, especially in fluent English; physical and emotional fitness; self-presentation in terms of dress and behaviour; and whether there was any history of drug abuse. The weight given to the various criteria is unclear.

A relationship analysis between entry qualifications and characteristics on the one hand and College performance on the other was determined for three cohorts of PTC students entering in 1993, 1994 and 1995, respectively. The findings show that non-cognitive variables do not significantly predict trainees' performance at college, and that COSC performance seems to be the best predictor of performance, though the correlations are weak.

3.3 Characteristics and background

3.3.1 Gender

Primary teachers in Lesotho are predominantly female. Over the last few years, women have comprised, on average, over 80% of the NTTC primary pre-service students. The first DEP cohort had a comparatively high proportion of men (29%).

3 Characteristics of Entrants into Pre-Service Training

3.3.2 Age

Students usually enter the College in their late teens or early 20s. Most (72%) of the DEP cohort were between 19 and 22 years of age, with the rest mainly in their twenties. Only five were 30 years old and over. The age profile of the exiting PTC cohort, now three years older, showed a similar pattern.

3.3.3 Socio-economic origins

While some primary teachers come from relatively well-educated homes, many others belong to poorly educated or even illiterate families, with parents living from subsistence agriculture or working in the informal sector. Among those parents with regular, white-collar jobs, a high proportion are teachers. There are thus perhaps two distinct groups among the student teachers: those who are the first generation in their family to enter tertiary education, a substantial proportion of them having illiterate parents, and those who are following in an established family tradition. There is probably an overlap, where those from poorly educated homes model themselves on better-educated members of the extended family. These findings have implications for the College, both in curricular and pastoral terms.

3.3.4 Academic qualifications

The students come with relatively low academic achievements, although in view of the large number of 'no response' in the exit and NQT groups this data must be treated with caution. However, the overall pattern shown in Table 3.1 is clear: over the five cohorts of NTTC students sampled here, not one single person had an A grade in any of the three core subjects, and relatively few (6% - 33%) had credits (B – C). The most common grade reported was D, followed by E.

Table 3.1 COSC Grades of Surveyed Groups

	English			Maths			Science		
	DEP	Exit	NQT	DEP	Exit	NQT	DEP	Exit	NQT
A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B	3%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	13%	6%	2%
C	3	8	13	13	14	20	20	9	20
D	28	19	27	16	11	28	24	16	28
E	42	20	16	18	14	7	13	16	7
F	20	3	11	48	5	4	26	-	4
U	-	2	2	-	8	-	-	2	-
No response	4	45	29	4	46	39	4	51	39
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
number	90	64	71	90	64	71	90	64	71

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Of particular concern are the low grades in English (6 – 15% with credits). It can also be seen that in English and Mathematics the proportion of students with credits has been falling over the last few years. The new DEP group is little better than previous PTC cohorts, apart from having higher grades in Science.

3.4 Motivations for teaching and views of the profession

The data reveal an interesting mixture of idealism and realism, and of altruistic, intrinsic and practical orientations to the job.

When asked why they were training to be teachers, most of the DEP group gave idealistic or altruistic reasons, such as *'I want to improve education in Lesotho'*, or *'to teach children to read and write so they can get jobs'*. A few gave intrinsic reasons, such as: *'I enjoy working with children'* or *'I have always wanted to teach'*, and others emphasised that they wanted to further their own education. Only one or two mentioned the salary, or that it was easy to get a job. However, asked directly what they saw as the advantages of being a teacher, more frequent themes concerned the ease of getting a job, the long holidays and the (relative) financial security, although some continued to emphasise serving the community, and the opportunities for personal learning.

They were, however, also aware of the disadvantages. Hard work, stress, and poor conditions of service for teachers were salient themes, epitomised by the student who wrote: *'Teachers work hard but the government does not bother to raise their salaries'*. Half agreed that *'teaching is a very difficult job to do well'*. Asked to choose from a list of 'challenges' what they saw as most problematic, they identified overcrowded classrooms and poor behaviour among pupils as their main difficulties, followed by poor conditions of service and unfriendly living conditions. It is interesting to note that hard work and the linguistic or cognitive demands of the job, as well as low status, seemed less salient for the group of entering students.

Another theme that emerged quite strongly was their ambivalent relationship with other stakeholders and the community. *'All people come to you if they have problems and expect you to solve them'* but *'when students have failed, the teacher is blamed'*. They seem to be indicating that the society has high expectations of them as role models, and if they do not live up to them, they face criticism or even hostility from the community.

The student teachers seemed rather unsure about their own professional position. Only just over half (60%) agreed that *'teachers have more status than other professions such as policemen'*. Two-thirds agreed that their friends think they are fortunate to be training to be teachers. Interestingly, only a quarter of the DEP group indicated that they would rather have gone to NUL, but this answer changes with time and with gender. In the exit group a third, and among NQTs nearly a half, wished they could have gone to university. The regret seems

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strongest among the men, with two-thirds of male NQTs indicating such an ambition.

3.5 Future career plans

The good news is that, whatever their reasons for entering NTTTC, the great majority of all the groups surveyed declared their intention to stay in primary teaching, although at the same time many said they hoped to further their studies.

This broad pattern does show some variations across the groups. Almost all the DEP group said they intended to teach after leaving the College, with about a quarter indicating they would like to study further, perhaps at NUL. Relatively few wanted to move into secondary teaching, though this varied by gender, with nearly half the male DEP students, but very few females, hoping to move into secondary schools. There is some evidence from the ‘midway’ study that the DEP group feel pleased to be on a Diploma Course rather than a Certificate, because this may open doors to advancement.

What such advancement might mean is shown in Table 3.2 below. Asked which professional roles, out of a given list, might attract them, a third indicated primary teaching, but nearly as many ticked primary principal or college lecturer. Smaller groups were attracted by administrative/supervisory jobs at national or district level.

Most of the exit and NQT groups also expected to be teaching in primary schools for at least five years, with a few hoping to move to secondary. But, most noticeably, a very high proportion also expected to be *‘furthering their studies’*. Exactly how they thought this would come about, given the present limited availability of options in Lesotho, is unclear, but it must indicate a very keen desire for further learning, even if there is no explicit intention to leave primary teaching.

Table 3.2: Career Ambitions and Expectations

Roles carried out by teachers	Frequency	Percent
Primary school teacher	32	36
Teacher training college lecturer	29	32
Primary school principal	28	31
Ministry of Education official	18	20
Secondary school teacher	11	12
District education officer	11	12
University teacher	10	11
Secondary school principal	4	4
NGO/Development Agency worker	1	1
Total	144	*

* As respondents were allowed to tick as many as they pleased, the response rate is calculated out of the total number of students (90) rather than responses.

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3.6 Experiences, attitudes and images

Just over a quarter of the DEP group had taught before, usually for less than two years. Most of their experiences and models of teaching come therefore from their own primary schooling. This section is based mainly on the open-ended questions about the best and worst experiences of schooling, and about their memories of their own good teachers, along with the essays which invited them to describe good teachers, bad teachers and their 'ideal', that is, the kind of teacher they would like to be.

3.6.1 Experiences of schooling/memories of good teachers

Two of the key themes about teachers' professional skills, which reappeared constantly through the data, were the ability to explain clearly enough for all to understand, and giving attention to individuals, especially slow learners. Some had these to say about good teaching experiences:

- *she could explain a lesson until everyone heard and understood it*
- *he was always ready to offer help to every child, either in academic problems or personal problems.*

Good teachers are remembered for helping pupils pass examinations, but also for their ability to encourage and inspire. Descriptions of bad teachers refer to these same themes but in the negative.

It would seem that their good memories mainly focus on achievement: learning to read and write, the subjects they did well in, or passing examinations. Although sport often comes up, socialising with friends or having 'fun' is a comparatively minor aspect.

3.6.2 Descriptions of bad schooling experiences and worst teachers

The issue of discipline, and in particular of corporal punishment, emerged as an important issue, and one full of contradictions. Their memories of the 'worst things' about primary school, as well as their descriptions of bad teachers, were full of accounts of harsh punishments, often by whip or cane.

Asked if corporal punishment should be available in school, most of the DEP group (75%) disagreed. Interestingly, those with some teaching experience disagreed even more strongly than those coming straight from school. Very similar proportions of exit and NQTs respondents agreed that corporal punishment was not useful for helping children learn. However, the statement '*teachers find it difficult to maintain discipline in schools without corporal punishment*', found agreement among 44% of the exiting students, and 36% of the NQTs. It

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seems there is a dilemma here, for all teachers, and students would find it useful to discuss this in depth during their training.

In view of the fact that many NTTC tutors claim to teach child-centred approaches, it is interesting to see what views the entering students hold on such issues. Asked whether they think *'child-centred teaching tends to lower standards'*, over a third agree. Three-quarters agree that the *'most important thing a teacher can do is to teach facts'*. However, nearly as many disagree that *'pupils learn more from listening to the teacher than asking questions'*. The majority of the respondents think pupils will learn better if divided into ability groups. The area of greatest agreement concerns the power and effectiveness of the teacher: nearly 79% think that teachers can *'improve the academic performance of low-achieving students'*. This figure seems to rise with experience: 87% of exiting students and 94% of NQTs hold this view.

The data suggests that the respondents had little experience of child-centred pedagogy, taking this in the sense of starting where the child is and focusing on learning rather than teaching. There are hardly any explicit references in the descriptions of good teachers to child-centred methods. The reports of beating and other kinds of authoritarian behaviour were mentioned frequently. Some mentioned lack of freedom to say what one wanted, especially with regard to making choices about subjects. The scenario presented here shows lack of child-centredness. It is clear that most teaching consisted of the teacher either telling – *'being fed with information'* - or asking the pupils questions. This finding is consistent with other studies of Lesotho primary school classrooms (Chabane, et al.1989).

Schools were not, it seems, particularly happy or pleasant places in general, and poverty made things worse. Some mentioned poor food, hunger, long distances to schools, inadequate buildings or no toilets.

An interesting minor theme concerns language used for teaching and learning at school. The debate over language policy is mirrored in the memories. Asked whether teachers have to use Sesotho in school because the pupils do not understand English, most disagreed, but their own poor command of the language, and the observed frequency of code-switching in both primary and college classrooms, raises doubts about this. There is an opportunity here for the College to use student teachers' concerns to develop both the students' own language skills and their understanding of the debates over first and second language use.

3.6.3 Ideal teacher and ideal situation/school system

Their views of the ideal teacher, the kind of teacher they would like to be, provides strong support for the thesis that students model themselves on their own teachers. However, there seemed a widespread desire to be less authoritarian: nearly half wrote that students should *'feel free'*, implying that students could approach the teacher with personal and social

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problems as well as academic ones. About a quarter stressed their intention to get to know and help all pupils as individuals, and to match the teaching to their needs so they could understand the lesson, especially 'slow learners, of whom I am one'. One said 'teachers are simply helpers', and another hoped her students would 'learn how to learn', but in general there was no clear vision of learner-centred teaching.

Here is one of the longest and most detailed descriptions of what they hope to become, which captures many of the common elements:

I would like to be a quality teacher; one who can keep teacher-pupil relationship in good terms. I would like to be a very patient teacher ... one who is respectful careful, thoughtful and very well-behaved. I would like to be dedicated and devoted to my work; to be able to learn and understand each individual in my class and to be charismatic like my former lady teacher – a kind of teacher who knows what learning and teaching are, why and under what conditions they take place; To be able to meet the requirements of each pupil in my class, and to be a very good example of what kind of life people should lead. To be a fair judge and a good decision-maker; to be parental and lively in all aspects (woman student teacher).

In such visions of an ideal teacher, students put little emphasis on producing good academic results. They are vague about how they will use their own understanding of subject matter in teaching, or about how they will ensure that students learn. The affective and pastoral aspects of the teachers' role are far more prominent for them than academic and cognitive. Indeed, a general 'gap' in these accounts concerns knowledge and how children acquire it.

Teachers are perceived and evaluated as much in terms of personal characteristics as in terms of professional knowledge and skills. The affective domain appears just as important if not more so than the cognitive. Among the 'personal' characteristics there are strong images of the 'teacher as parent', the teacher as a 'social role model', and, combining elements of both these, the 'teacher as counsellor'.

Although NTTC is a secular college, some students made clear their religious beliefs, for example by saying they needed God's help to become a good teacher. A strong idealistic streak reappears in the essays, often expressed in almost missionary terms, even though the ambitions seem to derive from secular notions of development as much as from religious ones. About a third wrote that they wanted to be effective beyond the classroom.

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3.7 Concluding discussion

3.7.1 Images and memories

Several influential Western authors have emphasised the ‘influence of ‘biography on learning to teach’ (Feiman-Nemser, 1990, p.153), and the effects of the long ‘apprenticeship of learning’ which student teachers have already undergone in their own schooling (Lortie, 1975). There have been no detailed African studies of this kind, but it seems logical to assume the same kinds of socialisation processes are at work, and the data reported here indicates that student teachers do bring powerful images and memories with them, often connected to strong emotions, and that they are likely to model themselves on what they have experienced. Their evaluation of teacher are similar in many ways to those of the secondary students studied by Lefoka and Polaki (1995).

3.7.2 College effectiveness

A recent review of North America literature (Wideen et al. 1998) suggests that most teacher preparation programmes in the US do little to change the perspectives or behaviour of beginning teachers, unless tutors are prepared to help student teachers to unpack and examine their own experience and memories, and analyse them in the light of their new knowledge of children, of learning, and of the relationship of schools to society. The findings of this study show that students come not as ‘empty vessels’ but with rich experiences, which could be used as starting points for their further development as teachers. For example, professional studies tutors could explore with students what it means to ‘explain clearly’, in terms of children’s learning at different stages, and subject tutors could develop the theme in relation to their own discipline, focusing on ‘pedagogic content knowledge’. Equally, the topic of discipline could be handled in ways that allowed students to talk about their emotional reactions to corporal punishment, and about alternative ways of managing large difficult classes.

The evidence confirms that many of these young teachers are intuitively modelling themselves on their own teachers. Teaching is known to be a conservative profession. If the aims of the curriculum are to introduce new approaches, the college programme needs to make these very explicit, by discussing and demonstrating and by making opportunities for the student teachers to try out and practice the new approaches in a safe and supported context, both on and off campus. It is also important that the students fully understand the reasons why these are advocated, and that the tutors fully understand the real conditions in the classrooms that militate against change.

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3.7.3 Curriculum implications

Characteristics, experience, attitudes to, and images of, teaching brought by entrants to the College need to be considered, among other key factors, when designing and implementing a teacher preparation programme. Findings reported in later chapters about the DEP curriculum and the way it is being taught, suggest that this Diploma course may be in some ways not well-matched to the needs of the entering student.

Students are young, have low academic achievements, and lack confidence in their own ability – many identify themselves as ‘slow learners’. While this may help them later on to empathise with children’s learning difficulties, it also means they need much help at college to master the basics, to learn how to learn, and to bolster their own self-esteem.

It is interesting how the personal and the professional are so closely linked in the students’ minds, and how the affective aspects are so salient for them. They seem to be saying that the person you are affects the children more than what you do. There is little in the curriculum document about this, though it does feature in tutors’ discourse. Clearly it is essential to help the trainees to develop appreciation of the teacher’s cognitive responsibilities, which at present they lack, but at the same time it must be important not to devalue the trainees’ cherished images of the teacher as nurturer and counsellor, which of course are also crucial aspects of the primary teacher’s role. It is unclear where in the curriculum there are opportunities for personal and social development, or for developing counselling skills, for example.

Given that many trainees are the first generation in their families to go beyond primary school, and come from the areas or from homes with little cultural capital, the curriculum should offer opportunities for general education and enrichment. Perhaps through extra-curricular activities, clubs and societies, visiting speakers, trips to places of local and regional interest, and so forth this view may be realised.

3.7.4 Ambitions and career intentions

The data reveals much ambivalence about the job of teaching. Trainees say they want to make a difference, to be of service, and they are eager to help others as they were helped. They also realise the job is difficult, especially in current conditions, and that the materials and even social rewards are few; they are aware of the falling status of teachers and that many in the community hold them in low esteem. To help them move from these uncertainties to achieve the high aims of the DEP curriculum, including acting as change agents in the community, needs much support, discussion and airing of fears, together with some understanding of the social forces at work in the education system. Where in the curriculum are these discussed?

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There are positive attitudes to build on. Most say they intend to go into primary teaching, and to seek advancement within this field. But many also express concerns about conditions of service, and it may be assumed that if other opportunities opened up, especially for men, they would leave. Another positive aspect is the desire for further study. This might be met by some system of part-time, distance learning towards a B.Ed., such as the one that has been launched by the Institute of Education and the Faculty of Education at NUL. But it is important that the B.Ed. does not become a way out of primary teaching. The government will need to improve conditions of service, particularly salaries, to ensure that the high-flyers will stay on.

3.7.5 Students' experiences of teachers and teaching

These students seem to bring experiences of a fairly traditional primary school, where discipline was often harsh, and there was not a great deal of variety in teaching styles. Given that classes were large, resources few, and that much of the teaching was in the pupils' second language, good teachers were those who actually managed to explain clearly, allowed students to ask questions when they did not understand, and who made time to attend to individual learners' needs. Probably few respondents had experienced the kind of 'progressive' interactive learning approaches espoused by some of the college tutors or written about in Western methods books. These student teachers aspire to do better what they saw their own teachers doing: transmit knowledge clearly and effectively. Yet in many ways they see themselves as teachers of children rather than of subjects: they want to establish good relationships, where they can be a nurturing parent and model good behaviour, and where individual children can approach them with problems. If they are to move beyond this style of teaching towards one that is more participatory and learning-focussed, tutors will have not only to explain, but also demonstrate, and model it in their own professional behaviour.

However, though their experience may be in some respects narrow and limited, the data suggests many do bring enthusiasm, ideals and hopes that they can in some ways serve the community and improve on the education given to them. This provides a potentially strong base on which to base a training programme.

Chapter Four

4 Training Primary School Teachers

4.1 Introduction

The curriculum for teacher preparation is very complex in that it exists in many forms: in printed documents, in the minds of lecturers, as delivered by lecturers in the lecture rooms, and as experienced by the student teachers (Stuart 1999). This chapter presents findings on the process of training primary school teachers at the National Teacher Training College. The following are the main guiding questions:

- What is the nature of the prescribed curriculum?
- How is the curriculum delivered in the college classrooms and on TP?
- How do the student teachers perceive and respond to the curriculum experience?

The findings are based on the analysis of the Diploma in Education (Primary) course document, on the observation of eighteen lessons, taught to the first cohort of Diploma students by 8 different lecturers, and on the perceptions of a small sample of these students drawn from questionnaire responses and from their diaries. A survey of Teaching Practice as carried out with students on the Primary Teachers' Certificate (PTC) programme is also discussed.

4.2 Diploma in Education (Primary)

One of the recommendations of the report by Burke and Sugrue (1994) was that both PTC and DPE programmes should be replaced with a new diploma programme. In keeping with this, the Diploma in Education (Primary) programme commenced in September of 1998, replacing the PTC. The underlying justification for this move was that the new diploma would cater for the complex, challenging and increasingly diverse and difficult role of the primary teacher. It is pointed out in the course document that

The more difficult the context the greater the demands on teachers' initiative, resourcefulness and self-reliance. Primary teachers must be capable of bringing the theoretical and practical aspects of this complex role into productive tension, and be self-critically aware when working in the isolation of the classroom while simultaneously capable of working co-operatively and collaboratively with colleagues (National Teacher Training College 1997, p.9).

The above quotation sets the tone for the offering of the new diploma in education at the National Teacher Training College. The Diploma in Education (Primary) is a new training programme that admits students with good COSC passes. It takes three and a half years, that is, 7 semesters. The first semester serves as an upgrading/bridging course offering only English, Sesotho, Mathematics and Science.

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Table 4.1 shows how the programme is structured. Fifteen (15) weeks are devoted to teaching practice, that is, ten weeks in the second semester of Year 2, and five weeks in the second semester of Year 3.

Table 4.1: Diploma in Education (Primary) Modules and Contact Hours by Subject

Subject	Bridg.Course		Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Total	
	Mods	Hrs.	Mods	Hrs.	Mods	Hrs.	Mods	Hrs	Mods	Hrs
Sesotho	5	75	6	90	4	60	5	75	20	300
English	5	75	6	90	4	60	5	75	20	300
Maths	5	75	6	90	4	60	5	75	20	300
Science	5	75	6	90	4	60	5	75	20	300
Education	-	-	6	90	4	60	5	75	15	225
Applied sc.	-	-	6	90	4	60	5	75	15	225
Expressive art	-	-	6	90	4	60	5	75	15	225
Social science	-	-	6	90	4	60	5	75	15	225
Study skills	4	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	60
Total	24	360	48	720	32	480	40	600	144	2160

4.2.1 Appropriate academic levels

The Diploma in Education (Primary) programme was designed specifically to raise the academic standards of primary teachers. However, many of the students in the first cohort did not have the desired minimum qualifications and some had not done all of the core subjects in high school. There is evidence that some of them were finding the programme quite difficult. Only 60% said lessons were easy to understand, and yet they found the NTTTC examination questions more demanding when compared with high school examinations. Science appeared to give particular problems in this regard. One student commented as follows: *‘My Physics tutor assumes we all know about physics and does not consider that some have not done science at all’*.

Mathematics, Sesotho and Religious Education were also said to pose problems for students. Asked whether the core subjects needed more or less time, 70% of the students indicated that they needed more time for Science, 64% for Mathematics, 50% for Education, and 41% for English. One diary comment amplified this, *‘physics and chemistry [require] understanding and enough time which is not there’*. In general, students seemed to encounter more problems with Science and Mathematics than with other subjects.

It is interesting that relatively few students wanted more time on English and that some thought it easy, yet their level of written English, as revealed in the diaries, was, with one exception, far below that expected of teachers using it as a medium of instruction. Tutors

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considered the low level of English among students as a major barrier to higher achievement (Ntoi and Lefoka 2002). Only one student seemed to be aware of this constraint. He/she made the following comment regarding a scripture union meeting conducted in English *‘what was embarrassing was that not a single student from NTTC participated [in the discussion]. They only showed interest when Sesotho was used’*.

4.3 The curriculum strategy

In analysing the DEP curriculum as documented, Eraut’s (1976) framework was adopted. The framework highlights different aspects of the curriculum, including objectives, content, assessment, pedagogy and resources. These aspects were considered to see whether they form a coherent and consistent strategy for achieving the overall aims of the programme.

4.3.1 Programme aims

The programme has 12 wide-ranging but carefully worded aims which indicate an extended professional view of the teacher, who would have undergone a ‘thorough and rigorous programme of professional education, closely linked to studies of theory and knowledge relevant to the practice of teaching’. The teachers would have a capacity for independent study and for further professional development. They would possess the skills to evaluate their own and others’ work, to become involved in curriculum development and to act as agents of change within their communities (National Teacher Training College, 1997, p.10).

The application of knowledge in context is emphasised. For example, to ‘instil in students an appreciation and understanding of the teaching and learning process as they apply and relate to young children’. The course should foster appropriate attitudes, provide pedagogical experience on which the students can build a ‘sound philosophy and approach’ and enable them to understand Basotho culture (National Teacher Training College, 1997, p.10).

4.3.2 Programme objectives

The Diploma in Education (Primary) has nine objectives, which are derived from the aims. The objectives, however, do not correspond directly to the aims. Instead, they are worded as abilities or in broad terms such as ‘understand the fundamental concepts and principles underlying the primary school curriculum and possess the appropriate levels of teaching skills and the general expertise necessary for their application in primary schools’ (National Teacher Training College, 1997, p.11). The curriculum document provides details of both the aims and objectives, each of which implies that students will have high levels of knowledge and understanding, together with the skills to apply these in context. It is

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indicated in the document that students will ‘possess the ability to recognise, analyse, synthesise and propose solution to a range of practical problems in the school context’. Professional attitudes are also implied; for example, ‘be able to assess the appropriateness of his/her own teaching and collaborate with colleagues for mutual professional development’ (p.11). The programme aims, therefore, seem based on the concept of the teacher as a ‘reflective practitioner’ who will be prepared to use their own professional judgement in the solving of educational problems.

4.3.3 Subject aims and objectives

The aims of the subject courses are stated in broad terms, and usually include some combination of knowledge and understanding, skills and attitudes, awareness and appreciation, and the ability to teach. The specific objectives are stated such that they relate to the content and to cognitive skills. However, some subjects, particularly Science, also emphasise the acquisition of practical skills. Some objectives, particularly those in Educational Foundations, address aspects of classroom practice such as lesson planning and construction of tests. In general, the objectives are phrased in ‘behavioural’ terms and seem to be based on a more ‘technical rationality’ view of the teacher, as one who merely applies knowledge and skills in a routine way.

4.3.4 Content

The programme is academically-oriented and heavily content-biased. In many ways it appears very ‘traditional’. Subjects are clearly demarcated even when they have been combined into one teaching area. For example, in social science, Religious Education and Development Studies are taught by different departments in different semesters. This probably reflects the primary school syllabus. But further demarcations appear between content and methods, and every module has been deliberately labelled as either method or content. The intention is to have an overall balance of 70% content and 30% methodology. Table 4.2 shows how this has been achieved for the core subjects.

Table 4.2: Number of Content and Methodology Modules by Subject

Subject	Number of Modules		
	Content	Methodology	Total
English	15	5	20
Mathematics	15	5	20
Science	14	6	20
Education	8	7	15

However, the justification for the adoption of a 70% content and 30% methodology ratio is not clear. One would have thought that the ratio should be more balanced, if not the other way round. In spite of the imposed common format, there are some interesting differences

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among the subjects. In English, there is a clear emphasis on improving trainees' own English language abilities through the study of grammar and development of their communication skills. English literature is foregrounded, with modules on novel, plays and poems, all of which are to be studied for purposes of enriching the trainees' knowledge and understanding of English and teaching literature to pupils. However, the course is also linked to the primary syllabus, and includes both theories and practical approaches to teaching 'English As Second Language' (ESL).

The Maths syllabus is the most heavily weighted (80%) towards content, which appears to be around COSC standard. Science has 70% content, apparently aimed at augmenting students' high school knowledge. Similarly, there is very little on science education or specific ways of teaching the primary syllabus.

In Educational Foundations, the sequence appears to be to start with introducing students to aspects of classroom teaching such as basic understanding of children, and then moving towards the wider content. The titles of the modules suggest a fairly traditional approach, with sociology and philosophy taught separately rather than being integrated under themes. Children's learning is not highlighted, presumably taught under 'psychology'. Other topics include general methods, lesson preparation, testing, teaching and learning materials, and guidance and counselling. There are also modules on early years, special needs, information communication technology (ICT), and research. One cannot tell where and how, or indeed whether, practical and relevant problems are dealt with, such as handling large or multi-grade classes.

4.3.5 Teaching and learning methods

There is little information in the Diploma in Education (Primary) curriculum document on teaching and learning methods. Under the old PTC curriculum, all subjects were time-tabled in the same way: a weekly presentation to the whole group (up to 250 student teachers) followed by 'small group discussion and/or practical' in classes of around 50 student teachers. Students used self-instructional materials (SIMS) for independent study. It appears that the DEP is time-tabled in similar ways, but interestingly, there is no mention of SIMS or indeed of any form of independent study in the DEP curriculum document. This is strange seeing that the new curriculum rationale advocates such independence in learning.

Scrutinising the content, objectives and assessment patterns of the programme, there is little here to suggest anything other than traditional transmission methods, with occasional practical activities in laboratories or for microteaching. There is no indication that methods suitable for primary schools will be modelled and practised in the College. Again, the sub-study on Curriculum as Enacted (section 4.4. below) shows that teaching methods vary from one lecturer to another.

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One might also question whether students had been given enough guidance on how to carry out research. Observations of classes where this topic was taught suggest that too much ground was covered too quickly, leaving students confused.

4.3.6 Teaching and learning materials

Departments differ in their recommendations of teaching and learning materials to be used. Some list the same books for all three years. In total, the lists vary from 16 to 30 books. With regards to prescribed texts, only English explicitly indicates the primary school syllabus, although Mathematics mentions a number of local textbooks. A worrying aspect is that many of the textbooks may be outdated and/or irrelevant. Few have been published since 1990; and very few indeed are by African authors or even published in Africa, except for local textbooks.

4.3.7 Assessment

In all subjects, coursework and examinations are combined in a 50:50 ratio (except in Year 2 where it is wholly coursework). It is stated that assessment should be criterion-referenced. There are detailed regulations about levels of scores, resubmission, and failing. Teaching practice, which is given a numerical score, also has to be passed. Types of coursework are described and 15 varieties are suggested, from reports on laboratory experiments to different kinds of tests, essays and projects.

The planned assessment procedures for English, Mathematics, Science and Educational Foundations show a wide variety of methods. Each module has a piece of assessed coursework attached to it. Most are in the form of written work, but microteaching, peer teaching, and 'oral discussion' are also listed. What is less clear is whether they are suitable for evaluating the achievement of the objectives stated for that particular module.

4.4 Observing the teaching and learning at the NTTC

The sub-study on Curriculum as Enacted set out to look at how parts of the curriculum are delivered in the college classrooms, focusing on the actual teaching and learning. Table 4.3 shows the number of lecturers who participated in this sub-study. Their college teaching experiences range from 1 to 20 years; their qualifications include bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees; and their ages range from 35 to 67. (According to Government policy, the retirement age is 55 years.) Table 4.3 shows that the majority had served the College for less than 10 years.

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Table 4.3: Number of Lecturers and their Teaching Experience, by Subject.

Subject	Name	Gender		Teaching years
		Female	Male	
English	Lecturer A	F	-	5
	Lecturer B	F	-	2
Mathematics	Lecturer C	F	-	6
	Lecturer D	F	-	20
Science	Lecturer E	-	M	1
	Lecturer F	-	M	
Educational Foundations	Lecture G	-	M	6
	Lecturer H	F	-	13

4.4.1 Class sizes

The DEP programme follows a ‘small group’ approach. All the observed lessons, with the exception of one Mathematics lesson, were given to groups of between 30 and 32 student teachers.

4.4.2 Lesson aims and objectives

The majority of the lecturers observed did not spell out their lesson objectives. However, the observed lessons were related to the curriculum as documented, and were congruent with the general objectives of each subject.

4.4.3 Content

An analysis of the lessons observed reveals that some lessons incorporated more than one content area; others were more biased towards knowledge of skills; and still others were biased towards content knowledge. It would seem that out of all the Mathematics lessons observed, one attempted to demonstrate pedagogic content knowledge while the rest of the other lessons focused on content knowledge. The Science lessons were all on the provision of content knowledge. The same contention can be made about the English lessons. While there were two occasions where it was clear that the tutor concerned was making a deliberate effort to demonstrate pedagogic content knowledge, on the whole the English lessons were focussed on content knowledge delivery.

4.4.4 Pedagogy

Pedagogic practice varied among subjects and tutors, and even among lessons given by one lecturer. For example, Lecturer D used a variety of teaching strategies. She would, even

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within a lesson, be lecturing, demonstrating to students how to use songs to teach a concept, asking students to work in groups, and assigning group activities for reporting back to the class.

In general, however, the underlying model appeared to be transmission-oriented. There was quite a lot of lecturing and presentation by tutors. Although students were often invited to participate, through question-and-answer methods, much of this appeared superficial in that tutors were asking closed or restricted questions. These findings are similar to those of a study on teaching and learning strategies in Lesotho primary school classrooms whereby teachers were observed explaining to students, asking questions, then students answering questions, and teachers expanding on the response or explaining (Chabane et al. 1989). This suggests that teaching at the College follows much the same pattern as in the traditional primary schools, rather than seeking to demonstrate new approaches.

There were, nevertheless, some episodes of interactive dialogue where students asked questions, or where lecturers probed, explored student understanding and even challenged them. This mainly took place during monitoring of class work. Group work was reported in one out of five Mathematics lessons, two out of five English lessons, one out of four of Science and three out of five of the Educational Foundations course. Some of these involved interaction between students and lecturers while in others it involved students only. Observations revealed occasional use of role-play. This was particularly the case with Mathematics and English lessons where one lesson in each case was role-played; the purpose in each case was to allow students to demonstrate how they would teach a class.

4.4.5 Assessment

There was no evidence of homework or formal assignments being given except where students were advised to finish off their outstanding work. In the observation of the fifth English lesson, for example, students were asked to go and complete the task and get ready to present in the next lesson. Quite a lot of checking and correction of students' work took place in the classrooms. This was particularly so in Mathematics, English and Science lessons. The practice provides opportunity for tutor-student interaction. On the other hand, more independent follow-up work by students might have provided both reinforcement of the lesson, and more in-depth learning.

4.4.6 Teaching and learning materials

Chalkboard was the main equipment used. There were no observations of students using any books. They appeared to work from photocopied handouts (in two cases these were not enough to go round). This makes students very dependent on the lecturer. The primary syllabus document was used by a Mathematics lecturer and her students. Bits of papers were

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used by another Mathematics lecturer to demonstrate how to develop a teaching aid, and one lesson in Educational Foundations also concerned making teaching materials. Interestingly, no mention was made of students using the library.

4.4.7 Organisation of lessons

Evidence from such a small sample is inconclusive, but the lessons observed were not very well constructed. Some appeared to wander from topic to topic. There was often poor closure, although Mr. E of Science gave useful summaries in three out of four of his lessons.

4.4.8 Issues emerging from observing tutors at the NTTC

There are very clear themes that emerge from the analysis of the curriculum as enacted. One such theme is the ritualised pattern of classroom behaviour. The challenge for teacher educators is to produce innovative teachers who will go out into the schools to break the mould. Perhaps teacher educators should start by first critiquing the familiar patterns, trying out alternatives and, most importantly, by modelling new kinds of interactions. In observing teaching at the NTTC it was very clear that tutors did not challenge student teachers to critique ritualised practices nor did they suggest new modern ways of communicating with students. This was particularly true for the English lessons whereby the lecturers were observed using traditional methods such as emphasising grammar and working on text rather than assigning students tasks that would enable them to produce texts themselves.

One encouraging observation is that, unlike the old lecturers who seemed to be more comfortable with traditional approaches, the young ones, as exemplified by Mrs. H in Educational Foundations and Mr. F of Science, were inclined to challenge students to ask questions and to allow them to engage in dialogue. Even though such dialogue was not very high level, this might be one of the major issues that need to be tackled by the College, that is, merging the good traditional teaching approaches with new ones. Deliberate effort to model methods of teaching that will develop inquiry-oriented school pupils should be the College's business. Engaging student teachers in modern ways of teaching should help students to move from the old familiar ways of teaching that they enter the College with and therefore tutors need to model new approaches.

4.5 The curriculum as perceived by student teachers

This section discusses the NTTC Diploma in Education (Primary) curriculum as experienced and reported by a small sample of student teachers in the 'In-depth' sub-study, based on survey and diary evidence.

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4.5.1 Content of the curriculum as perceived by the students

Students seemed to value the one semester bridging course. Nearly half of them said it should be lengthened. In their diaries, students commented positively on the programme, praising especially ICT and the study/library skills course. It has to be noted that ICT and the study/library skill courses may have been new to a large number of students entering the College.

One of the key issues in any teacher education curriculum is the balance between the different components: subjects, methods, theory and practice. Most students thought there was adequate coverage of subject content, while over half wanted more coverage of methods. There was an even stronger feeling that the balance between theory and practice was unsatisfactory, with over two-thirds saying there was enough theory and but too little practical activity. Asked how useful they found the different aspects of the programme, the students put methods and education at the top of the list (See Table 4.4). These views are supported by the other surveys of exiting students and NQTs reported in Chapter 5.

Table 4.4: Aspects of DEP Considered Very Useful

Aspects	Frequency	Percentage of responses
Subject methodology	13	93
Education	10	71
Subject content	8	57
Project work	4	29
Group activity work	3	23

In one student's view, *professional studies is the most important subject because [it helps] student teachers apply the information that they've got*. Asked what important things they had learnt, students cited the following topics taught in the Educational Foundations course: lesson planning, handling chalk and facing the audience. They also mentioned theoretical topics such as child development, the importance of reinforcement and motivation, and dealing with different kinds of children including those with disabilities. Students further suggested that the following areas should be added to the programme of study: computer education, teaching children with special needs, administration, career guidance and more subject specialisation. There were students who queried the relevance of some subjects to the primary curriculum, implying that they were more interested in the professional preparation aspects of the programme than in academic content.

4.5.2 Teaching and learning as perceived by students

Students' perception may have been influenced by different approaches followed in teaching various subjects. Approaches used in the teaching of English and Mathematics were rated

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highest, while opinion was divided over the teaching of Science and Educational Foundations. One student indicated, for example, that the Mathematics lecturer was hardworking and also effective in that

She is giving us a lot of work for practice. this is very essential for the people who do not know maths, especially who did not get enough maths background. The pace helps us all to be at the same stage. .. I used to hate Mathematics, at least there is a big difference to my high school'

Few students mentioned 'pedagogic content knowledge' that would help them to teach the subject at primary level. One exception related to an English lecturer who '*sang many songs for children and made us imitate her*'. The one method frequently mentioned was group work. Some commented that Educational Foundations allowed them to participate and give their viewpoint, while in Mathematics they were given opportunities to practise. Analysis of these comments, as well as classroom observations, tend to suggest that there was no proper guidance during students' group work. On several occasions students had been left on their own. For example, one student wrote: '*we were doing group work, and the teacher left us to proceed with the work. We quarrelled until we ended up doing nothing. This made me feel uneasy for I want to understand how to do lesson plan format myself*'. Students were left on their own in at least two of the lessons observed.

Some of the problems experienced by students appeared to be caused by lack of time or poor planning and organisation. For example, they indicated that the Educational Foundations lecturer did not provide sufficient time for them to practise how to draw up a lesson plan.

4.5.3 Assessment from the student view

Coursework counts for 50% of the students' marks. According to the findings of this study, Educational Foundations gives the widest variety of assignments, including project work; English gives essays, tests and group projects; Mathematics uses mainly tests with some project work; and in Science students write reports on experiments, take tests and occasionally essays as well.

Students indicated that they preferred assignments to examinations, and they agreed that one can pass the College tests through memorisation. They were however concerned about assessment practices and some complaints from the diaries indicate that some of the tutors' habits leave much to be desired. For example, one student wrote as follows:

Our tutor entered the class somehow rude ... did not listen to anyone, gave a test we did not know about and/or which we were not prepared – we do not want to be treated like little kids/pupils in primary school. Even those are informed about test dates.

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Science seems to be particularly problematic. One student complained that the biology lecturer had told them to revise the wrong things for the examination. In another case, 70 students failed a physics test, but the lecturer took some of the blame on himself for including extra topics and allowed them to retake the test. On the other hand, according to one diarist, some students cheat on their project work:

The project was supposed to be done in this way. We were supposed to interview the primary school teachers on the system that is being used in terms of grouping and teaching methods that are used. It seemed as if some of the students did not go outside and gather the information. They just used the books and the notes that were given before and then writing in such a ways that it would appear as if they interviewed some of the people because the names of the schools as well as those of people interviewed were there. In other cases, one essay appeared to have been written by more than two people.

Organisation and timing of assignments also create problems. The Arts and Crafts and Home Economics lecturers who both taught practical subjects did not seem to consult each other about the times for assigning students projects. As a result, students were given projects that required extensive time to complete during the same period.

4.6 Emerging Issues

4.6.1 Views about the lecturers

Two kinds of comments about lecturers emerge from the data. First, there are those that relate mainly to their teaching styles and methods, as has already been reported, where it was shown that while some match their teaching to the students' needs, others do not. The second set of comments concerns the lecturers' personal and professional relationships with students. For example, some lecturers appear not to encourage students, or to show them respect. Instead, they often get annoyed with them. One student commented that

The professional studies tutor became so angry with us saying we didn't bring his assignment on time yet on that day he did not come to class. He was so angry that he did not teach saying all sorts of things.

The survey data from the DEP and PTC groups provides a wider context to these views. Although the diary comments are negative, in the survey most of the DEP said their tutors were approachable, two-thirds thought they were more friendly than strict, while half said they were caring. The exiting group was more negative. More than half (58%) thought the lecturers were unapproachable, two-thirds saw them as strict rather than friendly, and only half thought they were caring. These results suggest that staff-student relationships at NTTC could be much more positive than they are.

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4.6.2 Impact of the programmes

Most students seemed to have accepted the ‘progressive’ pedagogy of the College in that they agreed that children learn best in small groups, and that teachers can improve the performance of slow learners. While most thought children learn from asking questions, three-quarters felt that teaching facts is the most important thing to do. On the issue of corporal punishment, they seemed to be divided, with most of them thinking that it doesn’t help children to learn, and half of them maintaining that it is difficult to keep discipline without it. Interestingly, these responses seemed to have changed from the ones they had given a year earlier. In general, however, students seemed to be ‘learning the discourse’ and becoming more aware of the complexities of teaching, as well as the need for hard work, planning and preparation.

4.6.3 Career intentions

Asked to comment on their career intentions, the students said they were glad to be at the College and still wanted to be teachers. Some simply expressed general satisfaction about the course. *‘It has improved my standard of education and knowledge so far’*, said one. The findings of this survey are consistent with those of other surveys, which found that most respondents intended to remain in the teaching profession, and a large majority saying they would teach at primary rather than secondary level. However, most of them also said they would like to further their studies. The DEP students may not be so content to remain in the primary schools as indicated by one of them. One student thought that the DEP programme could open more work avenues for this group, particularly when compared with the PTC.

4.6.4 Relevance of the curriculum to primary teaching

The relevance of the College content to the primary school teaching was determined through studying whether or not lecturers made reference to it in their teaching. Variations on linking learning at the College to primary school teaching and its curriculum were observed. There were lecturers who deliberately ensured that students were constantly made aware that the training was aimed at preparing them for the primary level. Linking learning to primary school teaching was observed in one English reading lesson, as well as in two Mathematics lessons and two Foundation lessons. In an Educational Foundations lesson on child psychology, the lecturer asked students to imagine a situation where they would be admitting standard 1 pupils and then to explain how they would go about it. However, in one lesson on research methods in Educational Foundations the lecturer failed to relate the topic to the primary classroom where trainees might want to undertake research, nor was the methodology discussed very relevant to classroom action research. With regard to two of the five Mathematics lessons observed, both lecturers and students discussed some aspects of the primary school curriculum and how to develop a lesson plan for a standard 7 class.

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These observations tend to suggest that there are efforts by some members of staff to help students realise that there are links between what they are learning at the college and the primary school curriculum and teaching. However, this did not seem to be a main focus of the classes at the NTTC. Thus, the DEP curriculum does not seem to prepare students to relate their training to the realities of school and classroom situations.

4.7 Teaching Practice

This section of Chapter 4 is based on data collected mainly from the PTC students and the documents. This was because the DEP candidates had not been out on TP at the time data was being collected. However, the organisation of TP for the DEP programme does not seem to vary much from that of the PTC.

It has to be noted here that this particular element of the teacher education programme has evolved over the quarter century of the College's existence. TP has taken a direction of a shorter and possibly less effective but cheaper form. The original year-long internship provided students with sustained school-focused support through locally resident intern supervisors trained in clinical supervision. The internship period was integrated into the whole curriculum in that students had to keep detailed records and completed practice-related assignments. The system was, however, said to be too costly because of the extra staff involvement, and there was also a lack of supervisors willing to reside permanently in the rural areas. As a result, the internship was cut to one 15 week-semester, and in future, under DEP, it will be divided into two parts of 10 and 5 weeks, respectively.

Several recent studies have criticised the one-semester teaching practice on various grounds and recommended changes. Asked to comment about the length of teaching practice, students generally expressed the view that it was adequate. Just after TP, respondents were equally divided between wanting more time and being satisfied with the duration. Similar views came from the exiting students, though 13% wanted it to be shorter. The varying views, coupled with the recommendations found in the previous studies, suggest the need to review the offering of the teaching practice. It is rather sad that, as found out by the current study, many of the recommended changes had not been fully or even partly implemented, and that the same criticisms were being made. One such criticism is on linking Teaching Practice Preparation (TPP), Teaching Practice (TP) and the curriculum.

4.7.1 The Link between TPP, TP and the curriculum

There are no clear or strong links between TPP, the teaching practice period itself, and the rest of the training programme. In other words, TPP and TP activities did not seem to be closely integrated into the curriculum, except that Educational Foundations gives students microteaching practice before they go out for teaching practice.

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TPP was found useful by most students surveyed, although they did not rank it very highly. The tutors who took groups out to local schools for TPP remarked that they would have liked to have been with the students during TPP and supervised them throughout TP, so that there was continuity. Nor was there much follow-up out of the College afterwards. According to the survey, after TP discussions were held in some classes, most frequently in English and least frequently in Science and Educational Foundations. In essence, teaching practice does not seem to be linked to any practical assignment or project work.

The College does not seem to clearly relate what it teaches to the school context. Responses to the survey suggest that many students did not feel well prepared for classroom realities. While they found lesson planning and recording relatively easy, scheming was difficult. Classroom control, especially in large classes, gave them problems, as did both the decision on what teaching methods were appropriate and the acquisition of teaching materials. Using appropriate teaching methods with suitable materials is of course one of the most difficult aspects of teacher education, but one that has to be taken very seriously.

4.7.2 Practical and organisational aspects of teaching practice

Students' placement seems fairly disorganised, with 90% of those in the survey choosing their own schools. Thus, the schools selected were scattered in seven out of the ten districts of the country. Permitting students to select schools of their own choice raises many uncertainties, including the quality and suitability of the schools and the extent to which these schools are prepared to cooperate with the College.

Tutors are supposed to visit each student four times. However, the survey data shows that only 15% of the student teachers were seen the correct number of times over a period of roughly four months, with most enjoying just 2 and 3 visits. Those most visited were in the districts of Maseru, Leribe, Mafeteng and Berea, in that order, perhaps because these places are relatively near NTTC. Moreover, there is evidence that the visits were uncoordinated and rushed. Tutors are supposed to fill in an evaluation form, allocate grades, and leave copies with students. While the majority of students interviewed said they received written feedback on one or more of the visits, only half reported being given grades, and a substantial minority got only verbal feedback.

There was also a problem of continuity. Just over half of the students said they were visited by the same lecturer. Over a third had two different visitors, and 16 students (14%) were visited by three different people. This pattern can also be related to the districts. For example, students, doing their teaching practice in Maseru district were being seen more frequently by the same person, while those in Mohale's Hoek were mostly visited by different ones.

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There are conflicting priorities here. If teaching practice is seen as a developmental exercise, a student needs to be supervised by someone who can give regular feedback and record progress. However, if it is just an assessment exercise, a student should be graded by more than one marker. Subject specialists might also be needed to give specific help in certain cases. Students put ‘more visits from tutors’ at the top of their list of suggested improvements. It is not clear whether this is because they value tutor’s support and advice or whether they are anxious to be assessed more frequently. However, as pointed out by Hopkin (1996, p.11), ‘there was universal agreement amongst the respondents that the number of visits made by college staff was totally inadequate’. It would seem therefore, that the problem is complex, but that the College does not seem to have thought through these issues on pedagogic grounds, which would, in turn, ensure that there is a relationship between what the College offers and the realities in the school setting.

4.7.3 Relations between NTTC and schools

There would appear to be a lack of communication and mutual trust between schools and the College. Serving teachers are not seen as partners in the training of new teachers. For example, an attempt to train co-operating teachers at a workshop in 1997 apparently did not succeed due to poor attendance and was therefore not repeated. A survey of tutors’ opinion suggested little desire to engage teachers fully in the training process. Meanwhile, students go out to schools and receive different kinds of treatment. There are wide variations in both the number of lessons they have to teach and the amount of support they enjoy.

While some students reported getting some support from principals and co-operating teachers, particularly in areas like lesson planning, scheming and recording, it was not sufficient. Some of these areas had been identified by the students as presenting problems. Few found the schools offering a supporting environment where they could begin to be inducted into the profession. Students had many complaints about being left alone to cope, treated like children, and being ignored or criticised rather than encouraged.

4.7.4 Students’ opinion on the value of teaching practice

The survey reveals that the students value teaching practice greatly but that it could be made far more effective if organised differently. Many of the young teachers feel that they learn a wide variety of personal and professional skills that they could not learn in the College classrooms. These include the practical aspects of handling the class, how to operate as a member of the school and the community, and the technical and administration side of teaching.

On the other hand, there were many problems. Teaching practice is inevitably a difficult and stressful time. Many students are clearly not getting the support they need from either

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schools or College, a situation which is likely to adversely influence their morale and eventual effectiveness as teachers. Conversely, to some student teachers, schools were better prepared and more willing to take on some responsibility for the training of the next generation of teachers.

4.8 Concluding discussion

A number of inconsistencies appeared between the curriculum documents, the way the course was taught, and how the students perceived it. Although the sample for the 'In-depth' sub-study was very small, the data presents quite a worrying picture of how some students are experiencing the DPE curriculum. This may call for some serious rethinking of the curriculum and of how it is taught. The following are some of the main points emerging:

4.8.1 Structure and content

One aim of the DEP curriculum is to raise academic standards in schools by producing the teachers who possess the subject knowledge well above the level of the primary school curriculum. The bridging course is important in this regard. However, teacher educators have to be cognisant of the fact that teaching at the primary school level should emphasis also 'pedagogic content knowledge' when delivering the content of the programme. This is the kind of knowledge that enables the teacher to *'explain clearly so that pupils understand'*.

When designing and implementing its programmes NTTC should take into account the relevant characteristics of new entrants in terms of experiences, perceptions, attitudes and images they bring along as well as their low academic calibre. Neither the course as documented nor the methods of delivering it seem to start from this point. The links with the students' past experience and with the schools to which they are going need to be strengthened so that the course is truly relevant to their needs.

4.8.2 Teaching and learning

There is a gap between the rhetoric and the practice. Both the aims of the curriculum and the expressed views of tutors (see Chapter 6) indicate a learner-centred approach. But there is little evidence from this study that tutors are *'getting to the level of the student'*, *'taking account of individual differences'*, or *'helping those with difficulties'*. By the same token, students are not learning how to solve problems, or to become creative and reflective practitioners as set out in the programme aims. Examples of professional reflections in the diaries are very rare. Good teaching is shown in some cases to help students to overcome their difficulties, Mathematics being a positive example. But in too many subjects the teaching seems uninspired, and not meeting the students' needs, either as college students or as future primary teachers.

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Teacher educators should be able to demonstrate teaching strategies and how these can be applied flexibly. But this does not seem to be happening much. In particular, students are not taught how to work in groups. This means that it is unlikely that they will in turn be able to use this method fruitfully in schools. Very few tutors are modelling the styles of teaching that should be used in primary classrooms.

4.8.3 Assessment issues

Assessment practices are not satisfactory from a number of angles. There seems to be a good variety of continuous assessment methods used, but co-ordination between subjects is lacking, and tests and tasks are often set at the same time. This results in further stress for students, and probably in poorer achievement. If the College is to implement the reflective practice proposed in the rationale for the DEP programme, then assignments should give students the opportunity to reflect and to become independent learners.

The anecdote about handing in phoney research papers suggests a climate of cheating. Informal discussion with tutors suggests that students often copy even in examinations. The fact that the University Senate has returned examinations results several times because of the highly skewed distribution of marks is a further evidence of this possibility. It is not clear whether such irregularities come from the irresponsibility on the part of students only, or whether lecturers also connive in such practices. What remains a shock for the University Senate is the high rate at which the NTTC students pass. For example, in August 2000, the pass rates of the student teachers in the primary programmes alone were as follows: for the PTC, there were 66 second class and no third class passes, while in the DPE there were 38 first class and 2 third class passes. There were no failures in either programme.

4.8.4 Students' perceptions

One of the saddest findings of this study is that students' perceptions of many tutors are quite negative, though there are exceptions. The evidence here suggests that some tutors are poor role models not only in teaching but also in nurturing and supporting of student teachers through a difficult and demanding curriculum. Such values and practices as punctuality, courtesy, caring, responsibility and professional ethics of some tutors leave much to be desired. One wonders how far the students will internalise these models and eventually reproduce them in their own teaching.

4.8.5 Teaching/learning materials and resources

The National Teacher Training College library is relatively well resourced, and has a good selection of reference books on Educational Foundations. However, some of the practical subjects did not seem to be well resourced, and the survey data indicated a perceived need

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for more laboratories and specialist rooms for art and domestic science. The survey further showed that students need more resources, mainly in the form of primary school textbooks, syllabi and teaching guides.

4.8.6 Overload and organisation

There are certain issues raised by students that are consistent with those brought up by the lecturers (See Chapter 6). For example, it was clear from the diaries that students thought the timetable was too crowded. Students went from one class to another with little time to study on their own, except for occasional revision lessons. '[There are] *too many subjects to be done in a short time, and we are expected to pass them*', observed one student. Some also complained that assignments were badly spaced: '*there is too much work to do now ...each tutor gives us work ... [thinking] it is the only one to be done*'. Lecturers felt that departments work in isolation and that there is little overall co-ordination of the curriculum by the senior management.

In conclusion, it would seem that the curriculum as a whole is overloaded, compartmentalised and somewhat outdated. Students have little study time and little tutorial support while doing their many assignments. A more slimmed down and focused curriculum, with more attention paid to individual student's needs, especially in language and study skills, and with remedial help available in core subjects, might raise students' morale. This might make students more ready and willing to co-operate with each other as well.

5 The Impact of Training: College and School Experiences

Chapter Five

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings on the impact of teacher training on newly qualified teachers. This issue has not been given due attention in the past since there is no formal mechanism for following up the College graduates after they join the teaching force. The chapter addresses the following questions:

- How do the College graduates perceive and value their training in retrospect?
- How do they experience the transition into teaching, and what kinds of support do they get?
- How has the NTTC training affected the way its graduates teach?
- How have their perceptions of themselves and that of the profession changed?
- How are they perceived by the stakeholders' community?

Unlike in previous chapters the findings here refer to graduates of the Primary Teacher Certificate programme rather than to that of the DEP. They are based on a variety of data sources, including the surveys administered to the exiting PTC cohort and to NQTs who had mostly left the College some 3 – 4 years earlier. For triangulation purposes, a small group of NQTs was observed teaching, and their principals were interviewed along with three untrained teachers working in the same schools. Another small group of principals and District Resource Teachers, who were enrolled in the NUL B.Ed primary programme and who had NQTs in their schools, were asked to fill up a short questionnaire.

It is difficult to evaluate accurately the effects of teacher training on practice, and these results, based as they are on small samples, are presented as tentative until further studies can be carried out.

5.2 Profile of the samples of newly qualified teachers and exiting student teachers

5.2.1 Gender

There were 70 NQTs, out of 71, who indicated their gender. Of these 17 (25%) were males and 53 (75%) were females. A total of 61 out of 64 exiting student teachers indicated their gender. Out of these 11 (18%) were males and 50 (82%) females. This finding shows how in the Lesotho teaching force female teachers outnumber their male counterparts.

5.2.2 Age

The age of the NQTs ranged from 22 to 60 years, with the majority (75%) being 32 years or younger. On the other hand, the age of the 58 exiting student teachers who responded to the question ranged from 21 to 33 years, and the majority (79%) were 25 years or younger.¹

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5.2.3 Teaching experience

Most NQTs, that is, 47 (66%), had taught before studying at the College. Of these, 60% had taught at primary and 21% at secondary level. Seven individuals had taught at both primary and secondary levels. More female NQTs (72%) than male NQTs (53%) had taught prior to attending the College. A total of 24 (34%) of the NQTs had not taught before. Most of the NQTs who had prior teaching experience were over 30 years old.

Over 80% of the exiting student teachers had not taught before entering teacher training. Most of those with teaching experience were over 26 years old, and were female.

The figures given above suggest that teachers who trained some time ago were much more likely to have had some informal experience of teaching than those who have recently entered training, because applicants are now usually taken direct from high school. This has implications for the curriculum, as discussed in Chapter 3.

5.3 Views about aspects of the teacher education programme

The views of the two groups are quite similar. The overall impression is that NTTC graduates value their training greatly, find most of it useful, especially the professional studies and methods components, and rely heavily on what they have learnt when they enter teaching.

5.3.1 Length of training

There was a difference between the groups here. Most of the exiting student teachers (64%) wanted the length of training to be decreased, while approximately 39% of the NQTs wanted it to remain the same, and nearly half thought it should be lengthened. One interpretation might be that the initial period could well be reduced, but supplemented by more in-service training at a later date.

5.3.2 Perceived usefulness of the components and the balance between them.

The message is not entirely clear. In general, both groups claimed almost everything to be useful. Professional Studies (PS) and methods courses topped most of the lists, and this was reinforced by the value NQTs accorded to the various kinds of general pedagogic knowledge they were taught.

Asked to comment on the 'balance' between content v. methods, and theory v. practice, both groups want more time on methods, and the NQTs also thought more time should be

¹ As explained in Chapter 2, the NQT questionnaire was sent to schools and was distributed by the headteacher. From the returns, it seems likely that a small number of questionnaires were inadvertently filled out by older teachers, hence the wider age range.

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given to content. Both groups agreed that the amount of theory was about right, but that more time was needed on 'practical activity'. How they interpreted this last phrase is not clear, since they do not seem to value practical activities such as micro-teaching, teaching practice preparation (TPP) or even teaching practice (TP) so highly. Certainly their priorities for improving the course put more methods courses at the top of the list, followed by more subject content, more books and more help with exams. It is interesting that the new DEP prioritises content over methods, in direct contrast to these views.

Further evidence about how they value the training is shown by the fact that both groups claimed to feel confident about most aspects of teaching, especially in subject content, lesson preparation and class control. Most doubt was expressed over dealing with individual needs and assessing pupils' work, and the exiting group expressed some doubts about methods.

5.3.3 Additional ideas for inclusion in the training programme

With regard to teaching practice both the NQTs and exiting student teachers indicated that they wanted more support from the College tutors rather than from the schools. This confirms evidence quoted above in Chapter 4. Other suggestions included the following: increase of class hours, opening of the library around the clock, raising the programme to degree level, follow-up of students after training, and more methods of teaching English.

5.4 Transition into teaching

5.4.1 Deployment

In Lesotho most teachers apply for their jobs, either directly to a school, or to one of the Church Secretariats that own most of the schools. Of the NQTs, 70% found their jobs this way. Otherwise they answered an advertisement or heard informally of vacancies.

5.4.2 Kinds of schools - School physical facilities

Availability of facilities and furniture vary greatly from school to school. The observation data shows that some schools have adequate and good quality furniture in the form of desks, tables and chairs. The reverse is true for other schools, to an extent that pupils use their laps for writing. In situations where furniture was in place, it was observed that the seating arrangement for pupils was in rows, where desks were placed one after another, leaving only a walking space for the teacher. Such an arrangement neither encourages maximum pupil participation nor allows the teacher to interact with all pupils. However, it is a very common seating arrangement, even at the College itself. Although the Educational Foundations course teaches about the merits and demerits of various seating arrangements, it may not be

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possible to apply the theory in the real world because of crowded classrooms in most primary schools in the country.

5.4.3 Class size and classes taught

In the survey, NQTs reported that their class sizes ranged widely from 4 to 170. Roughly a quarter taught in classes with < 30 pupils; half taught in classes with > 40 pupils. A quarter had classes of over 60. The classes observed ranged from 5 (a Special Unit) to 72.

Most of the surveyed NQT (>85%) taught only one class. They were spread over all 7 standards, although over 60% were concentrated in standards 5-7. About 10% taught standard 1. This finding might reflect a tendency to put NQTs in higher standards. Of those who taught more than one standard, most reported teaching standards 2 and 3.

5.4.4 Support from the professional and community

(i) Induction into teaching

It appears that very little professional induction of NQTs goes on in schools. Most commonly, NQTs are shown round and introduced to people – sometimes just to teachers and pupils, at other times to important community groups or representatives. Two NQTs mentioned being given accommodation. A few just said they were *'oriented'* or *'briefed about the situation here'*; but others gave more details. For example, three specifically mentioned being helped on lesson planning, scheming and classroom management. Three others said they were given what was needed for their class. Finally, there were others who stated that they were given 'official books' and shown how to use the record books.

Issues that were most frequently cited in terms of induction programmes and which were found useful included assessment of pupils, keeping records, information about the school and relationship with other teachers, disciplining pupils, information about the community, and, to a less extent, information about where to go to get help. Interestingly, 25% of the respondents reported that classroom teaching and school and community relations were not among issues investigated in the induction exercise. Perhaps it is assumed that these should have been fully attended to during training at the College. It has to be noted here that the topics that are high on the agenda are largely administrative, or have to do with control and management. The principal was said to be the main source of help, followed by the co-operating class teacher and then other teachers.

It appears that most schools supply NQTs with all or most of the official documents such as syllabuses and textbooks, while some also provide them with teachers' guides, and reference materials. It would seem that the provision of teaching and learning materials varies from school to school.

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(ii) The role of cooperating teachers and mentors

According to the school principals, the current practice is that NQTs are attached to class teachers so that the two can share responsibilities and observe each other. This is intended to provide support to NQTs. However, contrary to what the principals said, NQTs pointed out that the co-operating teachers did not render much classroom support but only worked closely with them during *'scheming of work to be covered, setting examination or test questions'*. In addition, the NQTs consider co-operating teachers' support to be more appropriate than that of the principals. The NQTs' suggestion that the co-operating teachers be provided with necessary skills seems to be valid. Thus, those who are charged with the responsibility of helping NQTs in the schools can do so effectively only if they are properly trained.

(iii) Problems and concerns

Newly Qualified Teachers reported meeting a wide range of problems, particularly those related to classroom management. Several of them found it difficult to deal with individual needs, especially in cases where there was a wide age range among pupils. Some encountered problems in introducing a lesson, time management, using methods taught at NTTC, planning, scheming and keeping records of work done. A few had curricular problems such as teaching all subjects, or dealing with standard 1, and one or two found it hard to *'make pupils understand'*. Some NQTs also made reference to pupils' poor English. Others mentioned personal problems, such as lack of confidence in various forms or feelings of isolation, and six referred to relationships with other teachers.

Concerns expressed by the principals focused on the following issues, punctuality, practising of corporal punishment, and lack of skills required to handle pupils with disability. They complained that NQTs experience difficulties in managing time, the tendency being to teach for a longer time than allocated for a lesson period. From this evidence, it would seem that not all principals are aware of the difficulties faced by new teachers.

5.5 Newly qualified teachers in practice

All NQTs reported that the teaching strategies learned at NTTC were either very useful or quite useful. Lesson planning came top (94%) as being very useful, followed by 'introducing a lesson' (90%). Others included 'scheme of work' (87%), 'keeping records' (85%), 'group work' (74%), handling 'question/answer' sessions (72%), and 'closing a lesson' and 'methods of assessment' (68% each). It is interesting to note that respondents rated 'introduction' high and 'closure' sections of lesson presentations low. Observations of College lecturers' teaching tend to suggest that few of them bring a closure to their lessons. This finding probably demonstrates that the NQTs could be reflecting what they observed and internalised at the College.

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Overall, NQTs seemed to value what they were taught at the NTTC, and claimed to teach in similar ways to how they were taught in College. Most differences were felt to be in dealing with individual pupil needs, classroom management, and disciplining pupils. This section will draw on the observational data to see how far NQTs are putting into practice what they say they have learnt.

5.5.1 Introducing lessons

Observing NQTs in practice revealed that they vary in the manner in which they introduce their lessons. The tendency is to begin by greeting pupils, writing the date, subject and standard on the chalkboard. This practice is very common in Lesotho primary school classrooms. Thus, the NQTs could be reproducing what they have internalized throughout their schooling period.

5.5.2 Subject/content knowledge

Most of the NQTs who were observed seemed to adequately master the subject content. However, there were situations where they could not sufficiently explain concepts to the pupils. For example, the ideas of ‘profit’ and ‘enterprise’ were not understood by the class.

5.5.3 Teaching methods

The classroom observations revealed that the most common method of teaching followed by NQTs is question-and-answer. All questions come from teachers, with pupils’ response usually given in chorus. Another common method was explanation/lecturing. No groupwork was seen. As another sub-study clearly shows (see Chap.4) lecturers at the College are inclined to use the lecture method most frequently, and although they do use groupwork, it is not well implemented. It may be that NQTs have not experienced successful groupwork and therefore are not ready to use it themselves. In some of the classes observed pupils were not relaxed and there was no visible interaction among pupils themselves. However, there were other teachers who had good interaction with the children.

5.5.4 Teaching and learning materials

The NQTs say they rely heavily on notes and on teaching and learning materials developed at the College, but much less on books. Some NQTs claim to use the libraries and teaching materials available in neighbouring schools, showing that they had learned from the College that libraries hold relevant materials that can be used for teaching and learning purposes. However, when observed, most of these NQTs tended to prefer to handle the materials themselves and only required pupils to observe. Teaching young children becomes more effective if they are allowed to explore materials and use all their senses to interact with them

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so that learning can occur. Additionally, in the majority of the observed classes there was no visible display of pupils' written work, even though the 'learning centres' or corners earmarked specifically for display of materials for a particular subject area were visible, well assembled and adequately resourced.

5.5.5 Classroom management

Despite the fact that pupils were often noisy and inattentive during lessons, some observed NQTs satisfactorily maintained good discipline among pupils, and used neither corporal punishment nor heavy reprimand. It can be argued that some NQTs manage their classrooms skilfully. Most of the principals expressed the view that generally most NQTs had good classroom control and management.

5.5.6 Assessment

Asked to comment on the different assessment approaches they used at school, NQTs in the survey ranked them as follows: short-answer type (87%), practical work (70%), true/false (54%), multiple choice (45%), essay (36%) and projects (25%). Presumably, the methods of assessing pupils vary according to the grade taught. In addition, classroom observations revealed that written students' work was adequately checked and marked, although there were differences among various teachers in the way they handled this task. Checking students' written work is a common practice in Lesotho primary school classrooms. Pupils are assigned tasks individually and are expected to show their answers to the teacher (Chabane et al. 1989).

5.5.7 Comparisons with unqualified teachers

Compared with the NQTs, the unqualified teachers interviewed and observed seemed less confident that they could handle the job. In dealing with the syllabus, they were relying on their high school knowledge, and on methods remembered from their own schooldays. Surprisingly, one was acting as cooperating teacher for an NQT; she admitted she had learnt from the NQT, and as a result was planning to go for training.

From all this it would seem that the NQTs have indeed brought relevant knowledge and skills from the College into the schools, and were more effective teachers than those untrained. However, there is little evidence that they were able to act as change agents, or to develop their practice in new ways to meet the challenges of difficult classroom conditions.

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5.6 Attitudes and perceptions

The perceptions and views of NQTs and both the entering and exiting student teachers on issues related to teachers and teaching were gathered through a Likert-type instrument administered as part of the questionnaires. The instrument had four response options which ranged from ‘strong agreement’ which was coded 1, ‘agreement’ coded 2, through ‘disagreement’ coded 3, to ‘strong disagreement’ which was coded 4. For each statement, the expected mean response was 2.5. A response mean below 2.5 was considered to indicate some level of agreement with the statement, and vice versa for the mean above this figure. The instrument was administered to a total of 70 NQTs, 90 entering students and 50 exiting student teachers.

Table 5.1: gives the statements and the results for the three groups.

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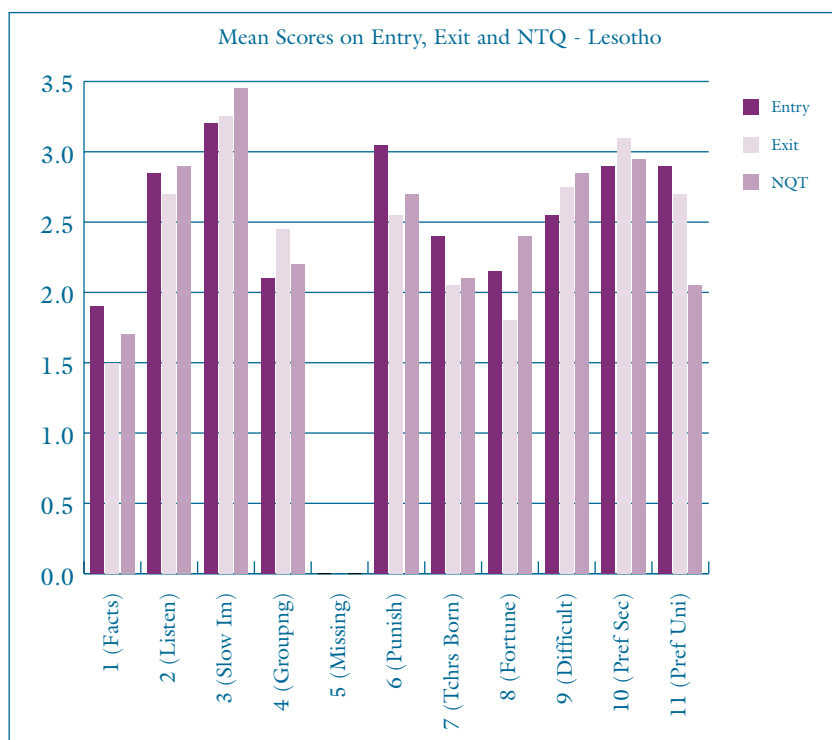
Table 5.1: Perceptions and Views of Entering and Exiting Students and NQTs on Teachers, Teaching and Learning

Statement	Entering Student Teachers			Exiting Student Teachers			NQTs		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
1. The most important thing a teacher can do is teach pupils facts that they need to know.	89	1.94	0.98	59	1.51	0.73	68	1.71	0.79
2. Teachers cannot do much to improve the results of slow learners.	87	3.18	0.97	59	3.22	0.95	68	3.46	0.74
3. Children need to be divided into ability groups to be taught well.	88	2.10	1.04	27	2.44	1.01	69	2.17	0.95
4. I think it will be easy to use new teaching method in my school				27	1.78	0.75	68	2.00	0.67
5. I find it difficult to make teaching and learning aids.				27	3.22	0.85	70	3.04	0.71
6. After teaching lessons in school, I write down how to improve next time.				27	1.67	0.62	70	1.77	0.57
7. There is no time in the school for teachers to plan lessons well.				27	2.85	1.06	70	2.86	1.00
8. School pupils learn more from listening to the teacher than from asking questions	88	2.88	0.98	58	2.69	0.88	70	2.93	0.79
9. School children learn best when in small groups.	85	3.04	0.88	59	1.39	0.53	68	1.21	0.41
10. Teachers find it difficult to maintain discipline in schools without corporal punishment.				592.61	1.11	70	2.67	0.93	
11. Corporal punishment is not useful for helping children to learn				26	1.88	1.07	70	2.01	0.96
12. People who are good at teaching do not need much training				27	2.96	1.06	70	3.21	0.78
13. Teachers are born not made.	86	2.37	0.96	56	2.09	0.98	70	2.14	1.04
14. I feel (felt) well prepared to start my teaching career				27	1.59	0.63	70	1.63	0.68
15. I need more training to be an effective teacher.				27	1.77	0.85	70	1.54	0.74
16. All you need to do well in college tests is good memory				59	2.03	0.78			
17. Doing well in college examinations is easier than doing well at secondary school.				58	2.65	1.05			
18. Examinations are a fair test of what I have learnt at college.				27	2.00	0.68			
19. I prefer being assessed through assignment than through end-of-term examinations.				26	2.23	1.07			
20. Teaching is a very difficult job to do well	89	2.52	1.01	56	2.73	0.96	70	2.86	0.69
21. Teaching is easier than many other jobs I could do.				27	2.44	1.09	70	2.69	0.93
22. I think being a teacher is the best job I can get.				56	2.20	1.07	70	1.96	0.94
23. Primary school teachers are respected in the community				37	2.00	0.91	70	2.13	0.74
24. My friends think I am fortunate to be (trained to be) a school teacher	84	2.19	1.06	27	1.85	0.82	69	2.39	0.89
25. I would rather teach in a secondary than in a primary school.	89	2.90	0.95	56	3.13	0.96	70	2.96	0.69
26. I would rather have gone to university than teacher training college	90	2.93	0.98	56	2.73	1.00	70	2.54	1.00
27. I know many teachers who would prefer to do other jobs.				56	1.98	0.86	70	2.09	0.83
28. Women make the best primary school principals				27	2.44	1.12	70	2.21	0.87
29. Men make the best primary school class teachers.				56	2.52	0.87	70	2.71	0.78

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A further analysis was carried out on the ten items common to all three groups. This helps to highlight whether, and how, the teachers' views may have changed through their training and early years of experience. Since the samples were different, the comparisons are cross-sectional rather than longitudinal, so the results are suggestive rather than firm. Fig. 5.1 summarises the results in graphical form.

Figure 5.1: Comparisons between the attitudes of entering students, exiting students, and NQTs



Details of items

1. The most important thing a teacher can do is teach pupils facts that they need to know (Facts)
2. School pupils learn more from listening to the teacher than from asking questions (Listen)
3. Teachers cannot do much to improve the academic performance of low achieving students (Slow In)
4. Children need to be divided into ability groups to be taught well (Grouping)
- 6 Teachers find it difficult to maintain discipline in schools without corporal punishment (Punish)
- 7 Teachers are born not made (Tchrs born)

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- 8 My friends think I am fortunate to be training to be a school teacher (Fortune)
 9 Teaching is a very difficult job to do well (Difficult)
 10 I would rather teach in a secondary school than a primary school (Pref Sec)
 11 I would rather have gone to university than teacher training college (Pref Uni)²

As can be seen, the mean responses did not vary greatly. Typically the range in mean score is 0.5 or less between the greatest and the least. This suggests that in the main the attitudes expressed here are fairly stable. However, there are some potentially interesting changes, and three items – 3, 9 and 11 – show a consistent direction of difference between entry, exit and NQT.

5.6.1 Views on Teaching and Learning

Most respondents agree with importance of *‘teaching students facts’*, but the entering students seem least certain, while the exiting students agree most strongly. Opinion is more divided on the statement that *‘pupils learn more from asking questions than from listening to the teacher’*; though all groups tend to disagree, the exiting group are least sure. The majority of respondents agree that *‘children need to be grouped according to ability’*, though again the exiting students are least certain. There is much stronger agreement among NQTs and the exit group that children do *‘learn best in small groups’*, though whether this is actually done in practice is doubtful, from the classroom observation. On the evidence presented here the College course seems to reinforce traditional approaches: a focus on facts, transmission methods, and whole class teaching. This was indeed what was observed among the NQTs.

Exiting students and NQTs share similar views about their teaching: they tend to think it is *‘easy to use new teaching methods’*, and claim to *‘write down how to improve’* their lessons. They disagree firmly that *‘making teaching/learning aids is difficult’* but are less sure that there is enough *‘time in school for teachers to plan lessons’*. The strongest disagreement, for all the groups, is with the statement that *‘teachers cannot do much to improve the results of slow learners’* and this increases from entry through to NQTs. It is heartening that their training apparently helps young teachers to feel more confident of their effectiveness.

5.6.2 Corporal Punishment

There is some ambivalence about using the cane. Given the statement *‘teachers find it difficult to maintain discipline without corporal punishment’*: the entering students disagree significantly*³ more strongly than those who have been through the training. On the other hand exiting students and NQTs agree quite strongly that *‘Corporal punishment is not useful for helping children to learn’*. It seems they believe it is wrong but a number feel it is still necessary.

² Adapted from Coultas and Lewin (2002). No.5 was not applicable to Lesotho.

³ Chi square where *= $p < 0.05$

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5.6.3 Nature of the teacher and attitudes to training

A majority of respondents in all the groups believe *'teachers are born not made'*, though the entering students are least sure. However, responses to further statements suggest most of those who have experienced professional training see it as important. Thus while exiting and NQTs groups said they felt *'well prepared to start teaching'*, they also agree they *'need more training to be effective'* and that even those 'good at teaching' should be trained. These results seem to confirm the other evidence that respondents value their training; they believe it is both necessary and useful, and that it helps them to do their job more effectively.

5.6.4 Assessment

The exiting student teachers agreed that *'all one needs to do well in College tests is a good memory'*. This could be a reflection of the low quality of recall type of questions in the College's tests and examinations. The student teachers marginally disagreed with the statement that *'doing well in college examinations is easier than doing well at secondary school'*, but tended to agree that examinations are a *'fair test'* of what they have learnt. They also agreed that they prefer *'being assessed through assignment than through end-of-term examinations'*.

5.6.5 Perceptions of the teaching profession

The responses appear to show considerable ambivalence. The statement *'teaching is a very difficult job to do well'* elicits mounting disagreement among the three groups, suggesting confidence increases with training and experience. On the other hand, NQTs seem less likely than exiting students to agree that *'teaching is easier than many other jobs I could do'*. Both groups tend to agree that *'being a teacher is the best job I can get'*, and that *'primary school teachers are respected'*.

On the whole, the groups agree that their friends *'think I'm fortunate to be a teacher'*. This is most strongly marked among NQTs and least among the exiting students. Most indicate they would not *'prefer to teach in a secondary school'*, again this being most strongly indicated by the exiting group. However, when asked if they *'would rather have gone to university'*, there is a clear trend over time towards agreement, and the NQTs are significantly* more likely to wish they had. This is consistent with their yearnings to *'further their studies'* in some way.

Thus most seem relatively satisfied with a career in primary teaching, though with experience comes an increasing regret they had only been to the College. Some dissatisfaction is indicated by the way the exit and NQT groups also agree they *'know many teachers who would prefer to do other jobs'*.

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On the gender question, there is a tendency to agree that *'women make the best primary school principals'*, and to disagree that *'men make the best primary school class teachers'*.

Care must be taken in interpreting these patterns, given the problems of sampling, respondents' interpretation of the statements, and construct validity. However, certain patterns seem to emerge:

- The training course does not seem to produce radical shifts in their views.
- Some changes in attitudes may be reversed after they have moved to schools.
- In some aspects, more traditional attitudes seem to be reinforced rather than challenged.
- Most seem relatively content to be primary teachers.

These findings cannot be considered conclusive. However, they are not inconsistent with other data from the questionnaires (see next section), and from the classroom observations.

5.7 Emergence of a new role identity

The Likert items can be complemented by further data from the survey, including answers to open-ended questions, which throw some light on the new teachers' perception of their emerging professional identity

5.7.1 Life as a teacher

When NQTs were asked to comment on their life as teachers, many expressed positive feelings. For example, they reported a feeling of respect towards them as teachers (90%), confidence in contributing to some changes in the school system (70%), settling quickly into the job (67%), feeling that pupils understand quickly (64%), finding pupils easy to manage (60%), and enjoying their work (58%). Asked what they considered their greatest success, almost a quarter highlighted pupils' achievements, and a substantial number wrote about creating good relationships with pupils; fewer mentioned new teaching methods.

5.7.2 Important things learned

Asked to identify important things they had learned, the majority mentioned aspects of a broad and reflective nature, while others were more focussed on practical classroom skills, or routine tasks of a teacher's life.

Some reflected on their own personal development: *'I've changed a lot, become more polite, tolerant and sympathetic'; 'I'm improving my English'; 'I feel confident to help solve people's problems'*. The relationship theme appears again in *'I must be a friend to the students'*. Others phrased their learning in a more general way, echoing perhaps the 'ethics' or role model

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theme found in the tutors' discourse: *'A teacher must have initiative'*; and *'a teacher must love his work and be patient'*.

Some of the comments indicate a growing awareness of the complexity of the role: *'The profession is challenging'*; *'slow learners need endurance'*; In some there appears a readiness for life-long learning: *'The more one teaches, the more one learns – from pupils, teachers and the community'*. Only a couple sounded disillusioned: *'Teaching is badly paid, one has little chance of further study'*.

About a quarter focus on some practical aspect of teaching. This may be straight skills, such as *'grouping method is best'* or *'setting questions'*, but others describe high level, complex skills, showing how awareness and technique have to be integrated: *'pupils do not fall under one category so ... I have to unite them and make them ... ready to learn and enjoy that learning'*.

Such answers provide some evidence of the effects of training and how it leads to a new sense of identity as a teacher. One notes there is a difference at the level of discourse; in these comments and reflections the NQTs are able to articulate much more sophisticated ideas about teaching than the entering students in their essays. At the same time, one can note that there is still a strong emphasis given to the personal, nurturing aspects of teaching, similar to that expressed by the entering students (see Chap.3). In many ways, these new teachers seem to be following in the same tradition.

The question remains, as to how far they fully understand the implications of what they have learnt, and whether they can apply their ideas in practice. This may depend crucially on the school ethos and environment, and the present study did not pursue this thread.

5.7.3 Career plans

A large majority wanted to further their studies, but few said they would move from primary to secondary, and even fewer (5%) wanted to leave teaching. The College seems to have confirmed them in their professional ambitions.

5.8 How they are perceived by stakeholders

The principals and DRTs were not at all unanimous. In general, they praised NQTs' energy and commitment, but some complained about poor punctuality and time management. The heads believed that NQTs have good content knowledge and particularly appreciated their understanding of new curriculum subjects like art and health education; they also mentioned their *'good teaching methods'*, but criticised their blackboard work and record-keeping. On the issue of language, there were conflicting responses in that some principals were of the view that NQTs were fluent in English while others expressed a strong feeling

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that NTTC should place more emphasis on the mastery of the English language.

Some stakeholders feel that the interest and enthusiasm of the NQTs does not last beyond the first two years, and that thereafter they are not performing as they should. This should be seen in the light of interviews held with two representatives of the Parents in Education Association. These did indeed express the view that teachers were responsible for the kind of student produced in the schools, and criticised the teachers for lack of creativity, saying that they failed to foster ‘inquisitive minds’ among students.

A national question is therefore: what contributes to the observed decline in teaching and professional ethics? If indeed NQTs demonstrate willingness to contribute to school development, are innovative and bring new ideas to schools, but these are not sustained throughout the life of a teacher, then something is wrong. Collaboration between the pre-service and the in-service institutions with the aim of ensuring that work ethics are maintained, is desirable.

5.9 Concluding discussion

One big question addressed by the MUSTER project through the ‘Impact of Teaching’ sub-study, among others, was the extent to which teacher education makes a difference. The sub-study has established that NQTs seem to be able to articulate much more sophisticated ideas about teaching than is the case with exiting students and those who are at the entry level. Additionally, NQTs have been found to perform differently from unqualified teachers (UTs) in the way they teach. However, the answer to the complex question: *‘does teacher training make a difference?’* calls for a longitudinal type of investigation, which was not possible in this project. Thus, the findings should be considered tentative until further empirical studies are undertaken.

It is also important to note here that most of the data used here was obtained from the PTC graduates. The findings therefore may not apply to the graduates of DEP. During the time of the study this programme had not yet produced graduates.

5.9.1 How the new teachers evaluate their training

The findings show that exiting student teachers value teaching and the teacher education programme. They feel confident that they can teach well. The main problems they encounter include lack of skills in classroom management and in dealing with individual pupils’ needs, especially in large heterogeneous groups. The implication here is that the College should address problems experienced in the school system. These teachers enter the College with varying experiences, some having taught and all having been students of the Lesotho primary school system. Relating their experience more closely to their world of

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work might go a long way towards preparing them for the problems they are likely to experience.

5.9.2 Entry into work

The lack of a formal induction programme into teaching is a serious gap. Nonetheless most NQTs seem to settle fairly easily into their new jobs. Even though less than half received any organised induction, they seem to have had a lot of help from the principals, and rather less from other teachers. Normally, syllabuses and textbooks are provided for them, while reference materials and other related resources are not.

Material resources do not seem to be the main problem. Rather, it is more the lack of confidence on the part of NQTs, particularly when faced with the realities of the classroom situation. One begins to question the extent to which teaching practice prepares trainees to better achieve the objective of becoming confident. Nonetheless, some responses tend to suggest that NQTs have acquired the ability to reflect and articulate professional ideas, and that they are concerned about their pupils, can manage their classes, feel respected, are reasonably content with their job, and show commitment to their work.

Many of the difficulties reported are issues to which the College curriculum could pay more attention. Trainees could be better prepared to face potential school problems through case studies, role plays and discussion, although confidence and expertise only come with practice. Perhaps the idea of peer support among NQTs should be explored.

5.9.3 Observed effects on teaching

While there is no doubt that the NTTC graduates leave the College with content and pedagogic knowledge, it seems that the main methods of teaching that they eventually get to use most are explanation/lecture and the question-and-answer. Because of large class sizes they have to cope with, NQTs resort to those teaching methods that enable them to reach all students but which allow little attention to be paid to individual students' needs.

The NQTs are able to choose relevant content and present it systematically and confidently to learners. They show clear understanding of the use of a school syllabus, manage their classroom fairly well, are to a large extent able to plan their lessons and use suitable resources, and assess students and provide them with necessary feedback. In short, the College training has an impact on the graduates, particularly in the acquisition of pedagogy and content.

There are certainly perceived differences between NQTs and unqualified teachers concerning issues that are pertinent to the teaching profession. NQTs are capable of using

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their acquired pedagogic and content knowledge while untrained teachers have to rely on their high school content knowledge. The interview data suggests that unqualified teachers wish to emulate the NQTs.

5.9.4 Changes in attitudes and perceptions

College training seems to have enhanced young teachers' confidence and enabled them to fit reasonably well into the existing school system, where most of them intend to stay. It has inducted them into a new discourse with which to think and talk about their job. At the same time, the evidence suggests that deep-rooted attitudes to teaching and to the profession have not changed much. If anything, their more conservative and traditional views have been reinforced. This confirms what was said in Chapter 3 about how important it is to recognise what students bring with them, and how often their views remain unchanged. If the new DEP students are to be different, and to fulfil the ambitious aims of the new programme, the College must explore seriously ways of challenging and reshaping such views.

5.9.5 How they are perceived

Finally, perceptions of stakeholders with regard to the NTTC graduates are contradictory. There is definitely a group that tends to view NTTC graduates positively in many respects. There is however another group that is of the view that the College needs to work harder to produce quality personnel for the Lesotho primary school system. These different views about the NTTC graduates might be a message for the College to engage in a nation-wide impact study in order to get a full picture of how its products are being evaluated.

6 The National Teacher Training College and its Tutors

Chapter Six

6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the College and its staff. It sets out to answer the following questions:

- How is the college organised and managed?
- What are the characteristics of the lecturers, in terms of qualifications, experience, and attitudes towards their careers?
- How do they perceive their work, with particular reference to their views on how young teachers acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need?

It draws on both survey and interview data, as well on document analysis.

6.2 College structure, management, and staffing

6.2.1 College structure and management

The College has a very strong departmental structure, a situation which has both positive and negative aspects. Tutors seldom teach more than one subject, though some have in the past moved between Mathematics and Science, or between their respective subjects and professional studies, or even from Secondary to Primary Division. Staff appeared to work in groups of 2-6 in their individual departmental offices, rarely meeting with their counterparts from other departments. Within departments, some appear to have developed the culture of collaborative work, meeting regularly or frequently; still some share workloads evenly while others do not. Few tutors reported activities or responsibilities outside their teaching, such as pastoral roles, extra-curricular activities, or involvement in the College committees. The comment: *'one just does her work'* seemed to sum up one aspect of the College ethos.

The lack of collaboration between subject areas on the one hand and Educational Foundations on the other was said to adversely affect the teaching of the curriculum. On the positive note however, respondents said that although there were no formal links between some subject areas and Educational Foundations, tutors might be persuaded, through informal contact, to liaise with Educational Foundations in their subject areas. In such situations, the practice contributed to students being taught in their subject areas how to apply concepts learned in Educational Foundation courses.

Staff perceptions of college management appeared rather negative. There is a clear hierarchy of roles, and staff remarked on the distance between 'us' and 'them'. Those coming in from other institutions commented on the apparent disorganisation at the College: meetings called and cancelled at short notice, lack of a clear agenda, and lack of information on both

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the new DEP programme and the impending changes in the College status, that is, from being a department of a government ministry to becoming an autonomous institution. Others complained about the difficulty in getting materials, the lack of vehicles for teaching practice, and many other issues. It was suggested that the situation might improve once the College became more independent from the Ministry of Education and controlled its own budget.

It was reported that in staff meetings issues are presented in top-down fashion, and that no Heads of Department meetings are held to thrash out common problems. When the new DEP was mooted, a Task Force, drawn from all departments, was set up to advise the donor and the senior management team, and consultative meetings were held. However, it was not clear at the time of the study the extent to which there was a sense of 'ownership' of this important change among the staff of the College. Neither was it obvious that staff development activities were being undertaken in preparation for the implementation of the change.

6.2.2 Staffing

At the time of the study the NTTC had a complement of 106 academic staff for its pre-service and in-service programmes, comprising 19 senior lecturers, 44 lecturers and 43 assistant lecturers.

Staff qualifications ranged from diploma to Ph.D., with the majority holding Bachelors degrees, and a substantial minority holding Masters degrees and above. However, the criteria for grading academic staff are not clear. Some tutors with Masters degrees are assistant lecturers; others with junior degrees are lecturers. There appears to be no system of staff appraisal and no clear guidelines for promotion; it is not uncommon for a staff member to stay in one rank for more than ten years and then be surpassed by someone who has just joined the college. This might be one reason for the high turnover of staff. By the end of the 1990s an average of 15 staff members left the College per year. About 5% can be accounted for by retirement, but if there is 10% turnover amongst younger staff this may be some cause for concern in building stable programmes with consistent teaching inputs.

In terms of age, 21% were below 40 years of age, 40% between 40-50, 21% were between 50-60 and 8% were over 60 years old. Half have been at the College for less than 5 years, while 29% have been there for over 10 years.

6.2.3 Gender issues

Among the NTTC staff 71% were women. Of the Senior Management, three were men (including the Director) and two women (including the assistant Director for Academic

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Affairs). At the time of the study, out of 11 Heads of Department (HOD) in the Primary Division, 9 were women and 2 men. During interviews, only one respondent thought it was easier for men than for women to get promotion; two (both men) were of the opinion that there was positive discrimination in favour of women, and two that there were equal opportunities, while five were unsure or vague. The vagueness could be attributed to lack of clarity over promotion criteria.

The great majority of students are women. Anecdotal evidence was quoted that men are more likely to drop out of the course, or go into other jobs after graduating. If they stay, said one *'it is because they believe they will become principals'*. At the national level, male primary teachers, as is the case in many other countries, occupy a disproportionate number of management posts.

Regarding gender and the syllabus, it appeared that there is nothing in the college syllabus about gender awareness. Both men and women students take all courses, and a home economics tutor commented that male students who have been herd boys in their youth can crochet very well, as they used to make grass hats while in the mountain pastures. But no one mentioned making any other use of such experiences.

6.3 Characteristics of the Primary Division staff

The Primary Division at NTTC, although headed by a male Assistant Director, was manned by predominantly (66%) female staff. Just over half the tutors were between the ages of 36-45 years, and another third were older, with six being over 50. The females tended to be slightly older than their male counterparts. Most were Lesotho nationals, but there were four expatriates, one from India and the other three from other African countries.

All but two of the staff were graduates with a third of them holding Masters degrees. A third of the tutors did not have any professional qualifications, and these tended to be in the younger age bracket. The two non-graduates, and some of those without teaching qualifications, taught practical subjects. Five were Senior Lecturers, and the rest in lower ranks, that is, Lecturers and Assistant Lecturers.

Most of the tutors had gone through several training stages, often interspersed with periods of school teaching, as opportunities opened up or as higher qualifications were demanded. Typically, they trained at NTTC – only four had attended the former church related colleges - and later went to NUL to do a B.Ed degree. Some then proceeded to pursue M.Ed. either at NUL or abroad.

The decision to teach at NTTC was in most cases taken by the individual concerned. Typically, they answered an advertisement, and were then interviewed by the Public Service

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Commission. Tutors gave a variety of reasons for applying for work at the College. Some just wanted a change, others saw this as a chance to further their studies. One or two were so keen to join NTTC that they accepted posts in departments or divisions other than the ones in which they had applied or for which they were qualified. A teaching job at the NTTC is perceived as being of a higher status, and to be less stressful, than school teaching, and most agreed that *'my friends think I am lucky to be a lecturer'*.

Most tutors were trained as secondary teachers, with only 40% having some primary teaching experience. Some said they ended up in the Primary Division because of staff shortages there. Overall, few of these tutors have their roots, or their interest, in primary education. Indeed, the survey respondents overwhelmingly agreed that *'most tutors do not know much about teaching primary pupils'*. This is a worrying situation, particularly because there seems to be a tendency for the younger tutors to be even more oriented towards secondary education than their older counterparts.

6.4 Induction and continuing professional development

None of the tutors had been specifically trained as teacher educators, although two had done the Diploma in Primary Supervision specifically designed to train intern supervisors. NTTC has no formal induction programme for new tutors. On arrival they are usually given course outlines and then left to do their own reading and research. Informal induction is sporadic and varies according to department, with some offering more help than others. In English, tutors with only secondary training may start teaching content and move later to methodology. Otherwise, people just learn on the job, drawing on memories of their own training and using what books they can find. In the case of Educational Foundations, some tutors appear to have relied largely on what they had been taught at NUL. This would imply that what is being offered to NTTC students may be 15-20 years out of date.

It was clear that when they first came to the College many tutors did not know what to do, and did not always get the help they needed. One reported a conversation with a colleague thus:

I asked him: What kind of things do we do here at NTTC? He said: 'just teach as you have always taught, there is nothing new here'. But whenever I got to class, I would realize that teaching at tertiary level and training a teacher needed some kinds of skills, which I thought I lacked and, honestly, I don't know how I survived. But in the department, there was a lady who was very helpful. I learnt a lot from discussions with her. Sometimes she would be talking about things she had just been doing in class and that is how I picked a few things here and there and tried to implement them in class.

A particular difficulty was for those trained for secondary teaching to reorient themselves to

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a primary approach. A recently arrived tutor reported that she had to adjust the way she actually taught in the past to an extent of having to put herself in the position of a primary school teacher, particularly at the time she was preparing her course outline. She had to think of some of the approaches that she thought might be appropriate for teaching in the primary school.

A more experienced tutor explained how she thought about it:

I was put into the primary programme, so I had to re-learn, to teach myself how to teach students who were going to be Primary Teachers. I had to imagine ... how I would behave if I were a Primary School teacher. So I tried to teach these trainees as if they were my Primary School pupils when I am teaching pedagogy for example, I say, 'Now you are my class in a Primary School, so how would you approach this lesson?'; So we do it naturally. It works.

These scenarios point to the fact that tutors are not inducted into an up-to-date discourse about the values and principles of primary teacher education, nor are they helped to acquire a holistic picture of the programme. Consequently, they work out their methods in their own way, usually looking backwards to their own schooling and training rather than forwards to a vision of change – although there are some individual exceptions.

There seems to have been no consistent staff development policy at the College. Only half reported any in-service training, and this was mainly in the form of short courses of less than three weeks duration. A few had been sent to do graduate studies overseas, sometimes under donor-funded projects at the College. Others had, on their own initiative, followed part-time post-graduate courses while remaining on the job. An exception was in the field of Early Primary Specialization Programme, where six staff members were sent on short courses and study tours.

The impact of the staff training at NTTC is hard to evaluate. The overseas training in particular, though stimulating, was not always relevant. An older tutor told how she had been sent to the USA to be trained for a specific role, but how on her return she found the project had ended and she went into a different kind of job. Another who studied in UK said, only half jokingly, that although the course had been an 'eye-opener', he had to 'reverse what he had learnt' because of the lack of resources in Lesotho schools. By contrast, study tours to neighbouring countries were rated as very interesting and relevant.

6.5 Current job satisfaction and future plans

While the picture is somewhat mixed, and overall College morale was not particularly high, many showed enthusiasm for their work, and for most the advantages seemed to outweigh the drawbacks. Many expressed strong intrinsic satisfaction with their job, indicating, for

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example, that it is rewarding to teach people who will be teaching thousands of children. Thus, in their words, teaching at the College is challenging and enjoyable.

The frustrations of the job relate mainly to conditions of service and to the way the College is run. Starting salaries are on a par with high school teachers, and since there is only one college, opportunities for promotion are limited. Officially, posts are advertised and insiders compete with outsiders on equal footing, but there are suspicions that *‘who you are matters more than what you can do’*. Those without postgraduate degrees complain that there is no fair selection procedure for scholarships.

In spite of such problems over half would stay on at the College, particularly if salary and conditions could be improved. Some would like to move within the tertiary sector or go to the Ministry, but only five people (12%) considered leaving education. This suggests relative satisfaction, although it must be remembered that a number were nearing retirement. Closer analysis, however, revealed a strong gender difference. While only a third of the women would consider moving, half of the men would. Of the women, 70% thought it is the best job they can get, but only 27% of the men expressed that sentiment.

6.6 Tutors’ perspectives

The picture that emerges is complex. The tutors come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences, and expressed a wide range of views. At times the survey data was inconsistent with what was said in the interviews. No one model of teacher training emerged. The College does not seem to have a widely shared philosophy or a sense of purpose. As one interviewee pointed out, there is no ‘mission statement’ anywhere. In this atmosphere, many tutors had developed their own ‘personal theories’ and in the interviews most were able to articulate their ideas. However, the classroom observations suggest that few put their personal theories into practice.

6.6.1 Perceptions of the good teacher

Asked to describe a good teacher, there was a fair degree of consensus, with most tutors embracing a person-oriented approach. There was a much stronger emphasis on personal and professional attitudes such as kindness, patience, dedication and commitment than on either skills or knowledge. The skills mentioned tended to be complex interpersonal skills such as involving and motivating pupils, diagnosing and dealing with pupils’ needs, and supporting slow learners, rather than the discrete technical skills of lesson planning or delivery. The teacher’s knowledge base seemed to be of less importance, and expressed vaguely as *‘knowing the subject’* and *‘understanding children’*. Many described the good teacher in terms of ‘holistic’ images. The most common description was that of a facilitator or interactive teacher, where *‘teaching is dominated by doing’*, and who *‘creates an environment*

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conducive to pupils giving their own opinions.' Another common phrase was that they should be an exemplar or role model for children. Others said: *'like a parent'*; *'makes pupils feel at home'*; *'makes learning pleasant and untbreathening for pupils'*; or *'has the spirit of teaching'*. One summed it up: *'a teacher who involved her students in learning, who kept the students motivated, who brought the students' experiences into class'*.

Thus the ideal teacher nurtures pupils with loving care and dedication; she runs a child-centred classroom using a variety of methods, has good social and interpersonal skills, and adapts the curriculum to the needs of individual learners. She has high 'professional' –moral and ethical - standards of behaviour and acts as a role model. It is assumed she knows the subject content and something about child development, but she is not expected to develop or change the given curriculum.

This picture is quite similar to that drawn by the entering trainees (see Chapter 3), but with one noticeable difference in that the trainees overwhelmingly emphasised that a good teacher *'makes things clear so that all students can understand'*. This emphasis on 'teaching for meaning' did not appear so salient for the tutors.

It should also be noted that such views of the teacher are rather different from those outlined in the Preamble to the new Diploma in Education Primary curriculum document. Here the aims indicate an 'extended professional' view of teachers, who would be capable of developing the curriculum and evaluating their own and others' work, and who would 'act as agents of change within their communities.' The curriculum document lays much more emphasis on cognitive skills and the ability to solve professional problems, rather than just dealing with children and their needs in the classroom (National Teacher Training College 1997:11) (See Chapter 4). Perhaps the new image, with its different requirements, had not yet permeated the College discourse.

6.6.2 The College products

Interestingly, tutors are not sure how far the reality of training matches their rhetoric. When they were asked more directly what sort of teacher the College aimed to produce and how far this was achieved, a rather blurred view emerged, at least from the subject staff. One of the tutors summarized it:

I really do not know. I think they are well prepared for their work. They have been given enough content, they have been given enough resources, and they have been given enough practice under supervision, so they should be more or less good teachers. As I said, though, it also depends on their commitment.

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Some said that NTTC graduates were better teachers than those trained by the NUL because they had the *'skills to go to the level of the child'*. There were only isolated references to self-evaluation, to teachers as change agents or to reflective practitioners as stipulated in the curriculum document.

This ambivalence about their task is shown in a striking way in the survey, when they were asked to exemplify how the College ensured that students became good teachers. The most common answer was to *'send them on Teaching Practice'*, followed by *'teaching them skills'*, giving them content, and by developing their professional and ethical attitudes, in that order. This suggests an uncertainty, perhaps even a lack of real understanding, about how their own work can and does contribute to the development of young teachers. It is also contradictory, in that many expressed quite negative views of the schools' contribution to training through Teaching Practice.

6.7 Teaching practice and the schools

While 90% of the tutors think teaching practice is the most useful part of the programme, they are very critical of its implementation and organisation. They are doubtful whether the College prepares students properly for teaching practice. About two-thirds think students have good subject knowledge and teaching skills, a quarter feel they can't manage a class, and a third believe students' professional attitudes are poor. Most rate arrangements for TP as less than satisfactory, singling out supervision by College staff and the practical arrangements for student travel and accommodation as being particularly weak.

Many do not feel that the schools selected for TP offer examples of good teaching, nor do they believe that students acquire good quality school experiences. Asked what could be done to improve matters, most highlighted the College role rather than the school: there should be more visits by tutors, more of both preparation and follow-up, and more microteaching. In general, they put less emphasis on efforts from the school side, though a couple of tutors noted how important those school efforts might be. More typically, tutors regard the schools as being old-fashioned, uncooperative or even counter-productive. Only one lecturer seemed to welcome teachers as partners. In the final analysis, though, both lecturers and students did express the need for regular visits of tutors to schools.

In interviews, several explained how difficult or even impossible it was to utilize the supervision time properly due to timetable and resource constraints and to the large numbers of PTC students. By contrast, those teaching the DPE are usually able to visit all their students.

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6.8 Perceptions of their own teaching

It became apparent that there have been up to now two quite different teaching environments at NTTC. In the pre-service programmes – the old PTC and now the new DEP - student teachers are taught in large groups (50-200 for a lecture; 30+ for a class) and this causes considerable frustration to many tutors. In such conditions, they are seldom able to use learner-centered, interactive teaching, which they espouse. They feel forced to lecture, and have little interaction with individual students. On the other hand, teaching on the in-service programme (the DPE) means working with mature, experienced teachers in much smaller, subject-specific groups. Although this can be a challenge for new or young tutors, the older and more experienced ones perceive the students as fellow-professionals, treat them as adult learners, build on their experience, and use a much wider variety of teaching methods. However, the DPE programme is being phased out and, unless other inservice courses are developed, everyone will be teaching the pre-service students using predominantly transmission methods.

6.8.1 Personal theories

The respondents held a wide variety of interesting and often insightful perspectives, but there seemed to be no shared conceptual framework of what it means to prepare a primary teacher, or how that could be done. The tutors seemed to have each developed their own ways of conceptualising their work, partly shaped by their previous careers and partly by their experience so far of NTTC, and in particular of their subject department. The Mathematics tutors who were interviewed articulated some of the most specific approaches. For the PTC course, they used to integrate content and methods carefully, liaising with Educational Foundations. Talking about DPE work, one tutor explained how she had used a form of action research to help the trainees adapt the primary syllabus to small children. Another put forward a critical constructivist approach, saying that the way he teaches them is to try and get them to relate theory with practice by drawing from their own environment things that are happening, and try to derive mathematical concepts from that. The Science tutors tended to support an academic content-based approach. Only one mentioned Science as ‘process’ but found it difficult to integrate content and methods satisfactorily.

There were differing views by the tutors of English, particularly concerning the relationship between content and methods. In general, the two seem to be taught separately. One commented that students have to be given a lot of content because they cannot be given methods for things they do not know. A newly recruited tutor from high school teaching, who was also teaching English, was happy to have been given the content to teach rather than the methods. However, a more experienced tutor explained how she was able to integrate the two.

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For some of the professional studies tutors, the child-centred approaches were considered to be of paramount importance. Their argument was that students should learn to understand and be friendly to their pupils who would in turn be free to share their problems with them. According to the tutors, the basic task is to equip student teachers with skills that would enable them to reach all the pupils in their classroom. Asked how the department would achieve their aims, they emphasized the idea of a role model: *'you make them teachers through the methods that you use – through your own talking to them (and) the examples that you give to them'*. But others were rather more didactic, suggesting that a good proportion of such courses are taught by lecturing.

Although there is some consensus about the good teacher, there seems much doubt and ambivalence about how to train new teachers for the role. Thus, subject tutors are torn between teaching content and teaching methods, and are unsure whether to model primary methods themselves or just teach about them. Most held that there should be an approximate balance between content and methods, and between theory and practice, yet the new Diploma is structured around a ratio of 70% content to 30% methods. The professional studies components did not seem well integrated with the subject disciplines. These are dilemmas familiar to teacher educators worldwide, and every initial training programme needs to develop clear strategies for dealing with them. From the tutors' perspectives, this does not seem to be the case at NTTC.

6.8.2 Tutors' perceptions of the students

Teacher training colleges are often poised uneasily between secondary and higher education. The NTTC sees itself, and is perceived by others, as a 'tertiary' institution, with ambitions to become autonomous and to grant its own degrees. The entering students noted how much more freedom they had than in high school. Staff members in general seem to expect students to work more independently, and to take some responsibility for their learning, but their views appeared somewhat ambivalent.

While most tutors rate students as *'satisfactory'* or even *'better than expected'*, the staff also complain about their low academic standards, particularly in English language, and their apparent lack of motivation. There is general agreement that students lack study skills, but also that the overloaded curriculum, crowded timetable, and perhaps inadequate facilities, militate against independent work. There is no personal tutoring system and a couple of tutors expressed frustration that they had no time to give individual help and advice.

Tutors recognised that many students came to NTTC as a second choice, since their grades were too low for university entrance; it seems that tutors have set out to do the best they could with the poor material, sometimes being surprised by their successes.

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6.8.3 Tutors' views of knowledge and learning

Consistent with their university qualifications, most of the staff appeared open to new ideas, aware of the tentative nature of knowledge and of the need for life-long learning. There was an observation that a teacher cannot just stay on with the theory acquired at high school or university level since theory, content and knowledge keep on changing.

Several spontaneously mentioned an interest in research; the College policy was to encourage research, although no time or other resources were allocated for this. Half of those interviewed could give both title and author of a book they had recently read; three more could talk about a specific book on a topic, but had forgotten one or both of the details; and only three said they read very little then.

There was a general acknowledgement that teacher education was a complex task. One commented that *'you have to have the attitude of a learner as a teacher'*. Overall, there was no great emphasis on reflection, and the term was mentioned only by one tutor. On the other hand, the importance of teachers' practical craft knowledge was acknowledged, especially when teaching in-service courses.

One of the aims of the DEP curriculum is that the graduates should be 'well-educated in terms of general Basotho culture' (NTTC 1997:10). This topic and its relation to the largely Western-derived curriculum did not seem salient for the tutors. Most averred that the ideas they got from overseas could be applied in Lesotho, perhaps with some adaptation. Talking about bringing in ideas from Western books, a Science tutor saw no cultural conflict in teaching scientific process skills, *'whether it's American or African child, he should have the skills to observe things properly.... The ideas can be applied to Lesotho'*. Only one tutor expanded on this topic at length: he wanted Basotho culture to be modified so as to encourage pupils to ask questions and put forward their own ideas with confidence. He hoped traditional taboos about sex would be broken so that pupils could talk more freely about their problems and discuss such things as AIDS. The following exemplifies some of his views:

Our children have been taught to keep quiet and let the parents speak. You only answer if you are questioned or you talk when you are spoken to and that element really bothers me. I would like to see them a little bit more open, a little bit more confident, being capable of presenting their own opinion without fear of reprisal, and appreciation should be shown in that regard once students are capable of coming out.

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6.9 Concluding Discussion

From the above account the following four interrelated problems can be drawn out for discussion:

- the lack of a clear shared college-wide model for training teachers;
- the need for a coherent strategy for induction and professional development of staff;
- the nature of the College structure and management; and
- the processes of change and innovation.

6.9.1 The Model of teacher education

An interesting aspect of the study was the wide variety of individual views expressed on the nature of teaching and learning, and of preparing teachers. Perhaps the history and geography of the College has produced this eclecticism: the aid projects, the overseas scholarships, and the proximity to South Africa, have allowed new ideas to be introduced, but may have also militated against the development of a shared conceptual framework. There seems to be some consensus around the concept of good primary teaching, but not about the process of training teachers to practise it. In the absence of a clearly defined model, the common College pattern seems to be that students are offered selected information, both theoretical and practical, mainly related to a discourse of child-centred learning, which they are then supposed to go and apply in practice. The actual questions about how this is best done, or indeed how far the ideas are relevant or practical in Lesotho schools, are not raised.

It is strange that, in spite of the emphasis given to the ideas of child-centredness, the College as a whole does not seem to practise a student-centred approach to teaching and learning. There appears here some contradiction between their ‘espoused theories’ and their ‘theories in action’. As shown in Chapter 4, most of the teaching is transmission oriented and tutors seldom try to start where their learners are.

6.9.2 Recruitment, induction and staff development

It seems that procedures for selecting, appointing and promoting tutors are ad hoc rather than based on a careful diagnosis of the needs of the institution, or of the individuals concerned. All tutors emphasised the need for proper induction, refresher and upgrading courses, and for more transparent procedures for promotion.

Since tutors must be graduates, the recruitment of secondary teachers to the Primary Division is understandable, but this does cause problems. One solution would be to set up a thorough induction programme at the NTTC in which new tutors are introduced

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systematically to the theory and practice of primary teacher education through workshops, guided reading and perhaps short study tours such as were provided for the tutor for the Early Primary Specialisation programme. A longer term strategy is to ensure that all good primary teachers are trained to B.Ed. level so they can in turn become teacher educators.

If colleges are to be at the forefront of pedagogical change, no tutors should be left to rely solely on memories of their own training; they all need to know about new developments in teacher education, both generally and in relation to their own subject. Time and support could be made available for staff to undertake research and to study part-time. There is evidence of both capacity and motivation for this. Hopes were expressed that the College might be able to offer a B.Ed programme which would itself constitute professional development for interested lecturers.

6.9.3 College management and structure

The issues raised by the respondents are not new, and many of the perceived management problems, and the College ethos, may have their roots deeply embedded in the history and traditions of the institution. For example, there were complaints about large group lectures and suggestions were that this problem could be solved by breaking down classes for teaching purposes, but then staff would have more contact hours. Currently, they have very light loads by international standards, with half teaching eight or less periods a week. This teaching pattern is, however, an established tradition at NTTC.

6.9.4 Change and innovations

The main initial primary training programme was undergoing substantial change at the time of the study and few tutors interviewed were as yet involved in teaching the new Diploma. It was noticeable that their discourse and ideas seemed much more in tune with the old courses than with the aims and objectives of the DEP. Of course, such changes are uncomfortable and pose threats to well-established ways of doing things; good management and leadership are required to give direction and steer the process through.

The evidence reported here suggests that the NTTC is not, and has not been for many years, a 'learning institution', that is, a place where the staff regularly reflect together on their practice, identify problems, and look for more satisfactory solutions and work towards them. The culture, ethos and organisation do not seem conducive to such approaches. In the absence of good induction and staff development programmes to challenge ways of thinking, new staff are socialised into the same traditions. There is little incentive, particularly under the current conditions of service and promotion, to fight for change and renewal.

Chapter Seven **7 Costs, Efficiency and Supply and Demand**

7.1 Introduction

This chapter collects together insights into how teacher education is funded at NTTC, and how resources are utilised. It then develops projections of supply and demand to reach conclusions about how teacher education needs to develop if it is to meet the objective of a fully trained teaching force.

The guiding research questions were:

- How is teacher education funded at NTTC?
- How are its resources utilised?
- What are the likely patterns of supply and demand for teachers?
- How can these needs best be met?

7.2 The system of college funding and sources of costs

The education sector in Lesotho is funded by a mixture of public funds, parental contributions and donor monies. The GOL has designated the World Bank as the leading donor agency for education (World Bank, 1999). Generally speaking, recurrent expenditures in the school system are covered by the government and parents, while most capital costs are met by donors. The NTTC is run like any other department of the MOE. Through its various departments the College prepares budget estimates, which are submitted to the MOE. Here they will be subjected to cuts and/or revisions to keep them within budgetary limits while ensuring that priority items are funded. Budgeting is thus conducted essentially on an historic basis with each year being allocated an incremental gain on the previous year. Table 7.1 presents the college's expenditure and the institutional unit cost.

Table 7.1: NTTC Expenditure and Unit Costs (1992 – 1997)

Year	Expenditure (Maloti Millions)	Cost per Student (Maloti)
1992/93	5.0	6,901
1993/94	5.6	7,457
1994/95	7.3	9,385
1995/96	7.7	10,116
1996/97	7.7	9,514
1997/98	10.3	11,922

Salaries account for about 50% of recurrent expenditure. Upkeep of the institution is the largest other cost at about 20% of the budget which, taken with other operating costs, accounts for about 40% of expenditure. Initial budget estimates for 1997/98 requested 13.46 million Maloti. Actual expenditure appears to have been less than this estimate. Some of the difference is explained by vacant posts. The revised budget for 1998/9 was 14.1 million Maloti and for 1999/2000 the approved estimate was 13.7 million Maloti. Crude

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unit costs have tended to be around 10,000 Maloti in recent years.

Student fees provide the second source of funding for NTTC after the MOE. Boarders pay M1,086, M660 and M1,162 in the first, second and third year of study, respectively. Day students on the other hand pay M794, M482 and M870. Table 7.2 shows a breakdown of student fees. Total fees for boarding students represent about 10% of the total cost per student.

Table 7.2: Student Fees at NTTC (Maloti)

	Boarding			Non Boarding		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Registration Fee	16	16	16	16	16	16
Tuition fee	437	292	437	437	292	437
Room/Boarding Fee	525	265	525			
Lunch Fee				233	81	233
Activities Fee	58	43	58	58	43	58
Caution Fee	50	50	50	50	50	50
Graduation Fee			76			76
Total	1087	666	1162	794	482	870

In-service accounts do not break down expenditure. PTC in-service students pay M206 per course part (2 parts constitutes an academic year) which comes to M1,442 for the three and a half years programme. LIET VI students pay M1,030 for the two and a half years programme. The last part of both programmes includes a graduation fee of M76. The total for PTC is therefore M1,518 and for LIET VI it is M1,106.

Based on these figures it is possible to estimate the budgeted cost per student. Taking 1998 enrolments leads to the following calculation.

Fee Income	
554 boarding students	= M516, 838
563 non-boarders	= M251, 838
401 in-service PTC	= M608,718
70 LIET VI	= M 77,420
Total Student Payments	= M1,454,814
Total NTTC Budgeted Allocation	= M14,100,000
Total no. of NTTC students	= 1388
Number corrected for part time ⁴	= 1212
Average cost per student (excluding fee contribution)	= M11,633⁵
Average cost per student (including fee contribution)	= M10,430

⁴ Corrected by pro rata adjustment related to teaching hours i.e. student full time equivalents rated by the proportion of a full time student's teaching hours they receive.

⁵ The NTTC does not receive fee income into its budget. However the MOE does.

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This represents the public cost per full-time student per year and is equivalent to about US\$1,660 (including fee contribution). It assumes that there are no other public costs. A report by the Institute of Development Management (1997) draws attention to a variety of methods of calculating costs taking into account different types of student subsidy and opportunity costs. Its estimates are consistent with this analysis. It should be noted that students at the NTTC forego income equivalent to a primary school teacher's salary of M10,000 – M20,000 whilst they are on training. Students receive an allowance for dependants which gives them a full salary for six months and half salary thereafter. For those who qualify the cost of this is likely to be between M7,500 and M10,000.

Two further points need noting. First, these are costs per year. The full-time course lasts for three years and thus the cost per trained teacher graduate, assuming no failure, is three times greater, i.e., about M31,500 or about US\$5,000 or about 25 times GNP per capita. Second, these unit costs are an average across all programmes at NTTC. The secondary training programmes have smaller enrolments and teaching group sizes. They are therefore more expensive. The staffing of NTTC allocates 63 academic staff to the primary and 44 to the secondary programme. Assuming average salary costs are similar across the two groups, then about 59% of salary costs can be attributed to primary and 41% to secondary. However, the number of full-time equivalent students is split in the ratio 73% to 27% in favour of primary. As a result, the weighted average cost of primary students will be about 80% of the calculated figure (M8,360 per annum), and those of secondary about 50% greater (M15,670 per annum). If average secondary lecturers' salary costs are higher than those of primary lecturers, these cost differences will be larger.

Total salary costs to the GOL per student in the full-time and part-time programmes at the primary teacher training level can be calculated by considering the student-teacher ratio and the salaries of teaching staff. There are 43 lecturers on the full-time primary programme and 20 on the part-time, giving student: teacher ratios of 13.9 and 23.6, respectively. Using current lecturers' salaries, the salary cost per student in the full-time programmes is M3,510 and for the part-time programmes it is M1,986. These are costs per year. This is about one-third of the simple NTTC costs per student. Other costs are therefore associated with non-salary and non-teaching salary costs.

It is clear that in principle the cost of a trained teacher could be reduced (or conversely more teachers could be trained for the same cost) if the length of training was reduced, or if the cost of a teaching hour was diminished. It has been suggested that a distance education programme may be introduced under the next World Bank agreement. According to the World Bank Appraisal Document, the Distance Teacher Education Programme which is to be funded by the World Bank would improve upon the existing part-time programmes in that:

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- (a) the length of training required will be reduced from three and a half years to two years for the certificate programme
- (b) certified teachers will progress to the Diploma level after 1-2 years of study
- (c) the annual intake will increase from 200 to 500 teachers
- (d) LIET VI will be upgraded
- (e) most of the training will be school-based.

The programme is yet to be costed. If its length is shorter than existing programmes, it should be cheaper. It cannot be assumed that the costs of delivery are necessarily cheaper per year. Some distance programmes are cheaper than conventional PRESET but others have proved more expensive. It all depends on how they are organised.

7.3 Internal efficiency of the NTTC

The NTTC offers four programmes of immediate interest to this study. These are the DPE, DEP, PTC and PTC Early Primary Specialization (EPS). The number of students in each of these programmes in each year of study was low for 1999 (Table 7.3). The students are divided into groups according to the alphabetical order of their names in each programme and the groups are paired during lectures. The drop-out rate in NTTC is very low, so student groups tend to remain the same size.

Table 7.3: Student Distribution by year in Each Programme in 1999

Programme	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
DPE	48	62	55	165
DEP	101			101
PTC	9	187	114	310
PTC (E.P.S)			20	20
Total	158	249	189	596

Each member of the teaching staff teaches in one or two of the primary programmes. They usually take responsibility for one or two groups in a programme. The overall staff: student ratio is 1:14 for the primary division. This should allow the convening of staff in ways that enables a rich curriculum to be delivered to groups of students that are not excessively large. However, the teaching and groups sizes are unevenly distributed over the different programmes and this gives rise to some problems. Staff members who are teaching the diploma groups are handling smaller numbers than those who are teaching the PTC groups and this causes an imbalance in the loads in terms of student-hours.

Different arrangements are made in different departments to subdivide year groups. Thus, for example, for PTC year 2 there are 187 students. These need to receive 3 hours of Science per week. The group is taught for one hour as a whole group (187), and then subdivided into three groups of about 62 for two-hour sessions. The total Science contact time for the

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students is therefore three hours, and each staff member teaches for seven hours. Similar arrangements exist for other groups. The length of periods varies according to department.

The NTTC follows normal government practice and working hours are from 8.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. with a one hour lunch break. There are therefore 7.5 hours available a day or 37.5 hours a week. The data indicates that on average staff have 7.6 contact hours with student groups each week, or about one and a half hours per day. The range is between 2 and 15 hours per week. In addition to this they must prepare and mark work. The average load is 780 student-hours (the sum of the number of students in each group times the number of hours they are taught) per week. This is equivalent to 7.8 hours teaching with a group of 100. The range is very wide and varies between 98 and 2,600 student-hours per week.

There is no specialisation in the PTC and DEP programmes. Lecturers on these programmes have large student-hour loads since the group sizes are large. The greatest student-hour loads are in Music, Art and Craft and Health. These departments have a history of understaffing in terms of the number of lecturers, so all students are taught by few lecturers. The next largest loads are in English, Mathematics, Science and Professional Studies.

The first semester of the 1999 academic year was 12 weeks long. At the beginning of each semester students are given two days to register, after which classes begin. The 12 weeks making up the first semester include one week for revision and two weeks of examinations. The actual teaching time is therefore about nine and a half weeks, with occasional interruptions due to national holidays.

Students are time tabled for between 25 and 33 hours a week depending on the course. This allows a limited amount of time for self-study and forms of peer learning. Thus, each group in year two of the PTC has 26 hours of contact time plus 5 hours of teaching practice preparation each week for 9 weeks. Each group has 6.5 hours of free time per week based on the 7.5 hours government/civil service working hours per day. This means that these students are on task 31 hours per week.

On average the available teaching space appears to be in use for about 25 hours a week. Analysis suggests that the 28 teaching spaces are well utilised during periods when the NTTC is in session. Out of session (about 20 weeks a year) these teaching rooms will not be occupied by normal course students. It should be noted that if the preceding analysis of contact hours is correct, a total of about 290 hours are delivered each week by 38 primary staff. This would require 28 rooms to be occupied for about 10 hours a week each. The estimates of space utilisation include the space occupied by the secondary programmes. A full analysis would separately account for this. It also needs to account for any space used for teaching practice preparation, student self-study, and the teaching activities of the staff members not currently included in the analysis of contact hours.

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New hostel accommodation has been built at NTTC and the existing accommodation is to be refurbished. When this work is complete the residential capacity will approach 1000 students. An analysis is needed to determine what the constraint will then be on enrolment growth. It may be that teaching accommodation needs to be expanded.

In conclusion, this analysis of internal efficiency draws attention to the profile of teaching loads (averaging 7.6 hours contact per week at primary); the level of student-hour teaching loads (which on average are equivalent to 7.8 hours a week with 100 students); the wide variation in loads between staff members; and the rate of space utilisation (relatively high during semester time). The overall NTTC student: teacher ratio is about 14:1 at primary. There are 43 staff allocated to the pre-service primary section who will graduate about 190 students in 1999. This translates into an output of a little more than four trained teachers per full-time person-year of staff time. A similar analysis for secondary suggests that about 40 staff will graduate a little less than 100 secondary teachers, giving a secondary output of about 2.5 trained teachers per staff member per year.

The questions that remain are therefore whether teaching could be organised more efficiently to provide for greater output with similar numbers of staff. Is it possible to timetable courses such that very large group sizes are minimised to allow for more varied training methods which include more interactive work in smaller groups? Can teaching loads be more evenly distributed and should contact hours be revised? To what extent can space be utilised during periods when the NTTC is not in session?

7.4 Teacher supply and demand

The number of qualified and unqualified teachers in Lesotho is shown in Table 7.4. The proportion of unqualified teachers fluctuated from 26% to 22% between 1993 and 1997 and has not been declining systematically. In 1997 there were about 8,090 primary teachers of whom about 1,820 were unqualified. In secondary schools the number of untrained teachers fell from 27% to 17% during the period 1993-1997. In 1997 there were 3,100 secondary teachers of whom about 530 were untrained.

Over 57% of primary teachers are concentrated in the age range 30-50 with only 18% under 30 years old. Of these 63% are unqualified. The average age of qualified primary teachers is 44 years and of unqualified teachers 32 years⁷. This draws attention to the high average age of teachers and the age profile of the cadre, which suggests that many are approaching retirement age. Fully 16% are beyond or within five years of retirement age, and a further 9% are within 10 years. Fully 10% of qualified teachers are over 55 years old and will presumably retire soon. About 12% of secondary teachers have more than 20 years service. Over 16% remain expatriates especially in the Science area.

⁶ This is already the case but no data was available on the extent of utilisation.

⁷ Assuming the average age of those over 60 is 63

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The main implication of the data is that, especially at primary level, the supply of newly qualified teachers has been insufficient to reduce the proportion of those who are untrained. It may also be a concern that the average age of qualified teachers is so high. Older teachers may be less inclined to innovate and adopt new methods that require retraining and reconceptualising the curriculum.

The number of new primary teachers needed can be estimated with reference to data on the size of the age cohort, the desired pupil: teacher ratio, and the number of unqualified teachers who need to be replaced. It has been noted earlier that enrolments in primary schools have been declining. From a peak in 1995 of 378,000 they contracted to 368,000 in 1997. This represents a decline of about 1.5% per year. The difficulty is that without knowing the reasons for this decline it is not easy to determine whether or not it will continue.

Table 7.4: Teachers in Primary Schools by Age and Qualification 1993 – 1997

Age	1993		1994		1995		1996		1997	
Group	Qual	Unqual	Qual	Unqual	Qual	Unqual	Qual	Unqual	Qual	Unqual
15-19	2	11	1	25	1	9	2	10	5	14
20-24	60	373	51	334	63	379	68	338	77	317
25-29	465	584	411	604	404	682	365	648	451	572
30-34	920	339	889	379	803	473	778	525	800	472
35-39	1065	142	994	173	1068	218	987	230	1036	217
40-44	956	79	1000	71	955	84	1005	102	1015	84
45-49	764	23	800	37	895	52	877	54	969	53
50-54	553	21	602	12	637	12	684	20	671	24
55	128	5	85	3	134	5	70	2	172	3
56	63	2	123	3	82	4	128	5	76	1
57	87	4		60	123	6	82	3	135	3
58	71	5	81	2	63	1	116	5	83	2
59	53	1	69	3	88	2	58	1	124	4
=>60	501	55	536	80	603	96	641	94	658	51
Total	5688	1644	5702	1726	5919	2023	5861	2037	6272	1817
%	78	22	77	23	75	25	74	26	78	22

Some analyses seem to suggest that the decline could be arising from permanent or temporary migration to South Africa of parents and/or pupils and reductions in the size of the primary schools age cohort as a result of a decline in the birth rate. There is no evidence to suggest that declining enrolment is a result of a failure of demand for schooling at this level since it seems unlikely that many parents have become less enthusiastic about sending grade 1 children to school. Nor have changes taken place in repetition and drop-out rates that would explain the decline. It can be anticipated that the migration that may have occurred in the mid-1990s will slow as South Africa becomes more restrictive about

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immigration, and as the main source of jobs for Lesotho nationals (mining) declines in importance. This would have the effect of increasing primary enrolments over what they would otherwise be.

There is evidence that birth rate and therefore the size of the school age cohort is declining. This may be because the propensity to have children has declined and/or because of the effects of high rates of HIV/AIDS in the population. The population projections from the 1996 census have three variants which are shown in Table 7.5. In the low variant the number of 5-9 year olds first grows and then declines as a result of a lower population of 0-4 year olds. This is also true for the medium and high variants over the period.

Table 7.5: Population Projections by Age Group 1996-2006 ⁸

Age Group	1996	2001	2006
Low			
0-4	302474	274865	310314
5-9	286105	295287	268956
10-14	260437	283735	293036
Medium			
0-4	302474	285269	337232
5-9	286105	295116	284211
10-14	260437	283689	292876
High			
0-4	302474	290859	345762
5-9	286105	295241	278652
10-14	260437	283724	292722

Other analyses see the main cause of drop-out and enrolment decline as poverty (Mathot et al., 1999). This is plausible, especially in a period where major retrenchment is taking place, resulting in job losses for migrant workers. Although migrant workers may return with their children, it is thought most left them in Lesotho. The ability of families to pay school fees will decline with loss of income and it may be that this is a significant cause of the enrolment decline.

The neutral assumption used as a starting point at this stage is that the effects of a decline in migration will be offset by a decline in the growth of the school age cohort. If so, the enrolment in primary schools would remain largely unchanged. Projections in the 1997 Education Statistics suggest that the school age population (6-12 years) will grow from 392,800 in 1997 to 408,700 by 2001. This is consistent with the above and is presumably based on the mid-variant. After that time the school age population will begin to decline.

Table 7.6 presents primary teacher projections. First let us consider column A. It shows that

⁸ The reliability of this census data has been challenged e.g. Mathot et al 1999:66. No more recent or reliable projections were available at the time of writing.

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to achieve a pupil: teacher ratio of 40:1 with 1997 enrolments would require 9,225 teachers (line 5)⁹. This is 1,136 more than the number in post (line 6). In addition it would be necessary to replace those who retire, die in service or decide to follow other careers. If the teacher attrition rate is 5%¹⁰, then an additional 461 teachers will be needed (line 8); if it is 10%, then the number is 923 (line 10). Thus the total demand for new teachers in 1997 would seem to lie between 1,597 and 2,059. It should be noted that if all unqualified teachers are to be replaced by qualified teachers, then it will be necessary to train an additional 1,817 (line 12) teachers who are already in service in schools.

Columns B to E show the additional demand for new teachers that will arise from changes in the projected size of the school age group, assuming enrolments follow the same pattern. The number of new teachers required each year from 1998 declines from about 600 to 560 (line 9) or 1,070 to 1,000 (line 11), depending on the attrition assumption. These numbers are in addition to those who need to be trained identified in column A.

The total demand for initial teacher training over the period can be estimated by adding across rows 9 or 11. This produces the result that for 5% attrition 3,942 new teachers would be needed, for 10%, 6,229 would be needed. If these numbers were translated into annual targets for output over each of the next five years they would be 788 and 1,246, respectively. The 1,817 untrained teachers (line 12) would need to be trained at a rate of about 360 per year if they were all to be trained within five years.

Table 7.6: Primary Teacher Projections 1997-2001

		A	B	C	D	E
		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
1	Age group 6-12 years	392800	398500	403100	406600	408700
2	Primary enrolment	369000	374355	378676	381964	383937
3	Qualified teachers	6272				
4	Unqualified teachers	1817				
5	No. needed at pupil: teacher ratio of 1:40	9225	9359	9467	9549	9598
6	No. in post	8089				
7	New teachers needed as a result of growth and achieving 1:40	1136	134	108	82	49
8	Retirement, etc, at 5%	461	468	473	477	480
9	New teachers needed	1597	602	602	581	560
10	Retirement etc at 10%	923	936	947	955	960
11	New Teachers needed	2059	1070	1055	1037	1009
12	No. unqualified needing training	1817				

⁹ 40:1 has been chosen as the target used in the most recent World Bank simulations (World Bank 1999 Annex 4, Scenario 1.

¹⁰ The World Bank uses 5% attrition. This appears not to factor in the effects of rising levels of HIV/AIDS. It is also lower than previous plan estimates. 10% may be more realistic.

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There are a number of considerations that should be noted in interpreting these results. The calculations assume that drop-out and repetition remain the same as currently. Both are planned to fall. The total enrolments in primary in 1997 (369,000) were not much less than the size of the age group (392,000). However, only about half of those who enter grade 1 complete grade 7 successfully. The demand for teachers will be affected by reductions in repetition (enrolments will fall) and drop-out (enrolments will rise). The net effect will depend on the rate at which these events unfold. It may be easier to reduce repetition than drop-out since this is more directly under the control of schools and the MOE. Repetition reduction targets are foreshadowed in the Education Sector Development Plan 1998/99-2000-2001 (1997:12). The plan suggests that repetition should fall to less than 10% by 2000 but to date there is no evidence that this is happening. If it did, it would significantly reduce the demand for new teachers.

The MOE has abolished school fees at primary level beginning in 2000. Demand and retention may be expected to rise. The abolition is being phased grade by grade. The safest assumption at this stage seems to be that this will have an effect on teacher demand as enrolments increase. This may have an immediate impact. Some estimates suggest that as many as 30,000 additional new pupils will enter the system in grade 1 when the policy is implemented. This would generate a need for as many as 750 new teachers. It may also be that repetition in grade 1 will temporarily rise as pupils refrain from entering grade 2 in order to take advantage of fee-free education. The subsequent effects on retention of free education are speculative but seem likely to reduce drop-out (Mathot et al., 1999:67) and therefore increase enrolments.

The estimates of teacher demand do not take into account that some teachers withdraw from teaching to study for higher qualifications (to upgrade to Diploma or higher levels). If they do so full-time this would increase the demand over the period they are studying. The effect will not be large but could increase demand by 5% or so. Neither do the estimates account for the possible increase in retirement rate that is likely to occur with the introduction of pensions for teachers. Previously, primary school teachers did not receive pensions and there was therefore an incentive to continue to teach up to and beyond retirement age. There were over 650 teachers over 60 years of age in 1997. Since 1998 a scheme has been introduced to provide pensions which will encourage those close to retirement to take their pensions.

Some estimates of enrolment growth are higher than the fairly neutral assumption made above. The World Bank (1999, Annex 4) assumes growth of between 1.5% and 2% ¹¹ over the next five years. This would increase the demand for new teachers by up to 200 per year. World Bank projections for teacher demand are however lower than the estimates presented above. They appear not to include the need to qualify the unqualified and they use lower attrition rates. Other projections (Mathot et al., 1999:75) suggest the demand for new

¹¹ This appears to be based on different assumptions about the rate of change in repetition and drop out than those made here where their effects on enrolments are assumed to cancel each other out.

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teachers will be smaller and within the range of current output. The latter assumes improved repetition rates and less drop-out with a net effect that will reduce enrolment growth over what it would otherwise be¹². Attempts to reduce repetition since the early 1990s have not been successful and drop-out appears to have been increasing despite attempts to reduce its incidence.

On balance, the comments above suggest that the estimates presented are reasonable. In the short term the major factors which will influence them upwards (introduction of fee-free education, increased teacher attrition) seem to outweigh those that could reduce enrolments (significant reductions in repetition, shrinkage of the age group). They may therefore be regarded as minimal. It seems unlikely that overall demand will be less than about 800 per year and might exceed 1,200 if enrolments do grow faster than projected¹³.

These estimates of demand for primary training can be compared with the output from the NTTC and data on the destinations of graduates. The fifth Five-Year Plan projected a yearly output of 250 primary teacher graduates. However, lack of adequate hostel facilities at the NTTC and other constraints proved to be an impediment in the realisation of this target. NTTC's primary teacher graduation rate between 1993 and 1997 has varied from about 85 to 185, and has been higher in later years. The new DEP programme, which is designed to replace the PTC, has a first year enrolment of 100. The new recruitment for the DEP course in 2000 should exceed 150. This remains below the historic level of new enrolment of the PTC.

From MOE records we have tried to trace the graduates from primary courses in NTTC from 1993 to 1997. The result is shown in Table 7.7.

Table 7.7: Graduates from NTTC and Career Destinations

	No. Qualifying	No. Employed as Teachers	No. Unaccounted for in Records	% Attrition
1993	84	66	18	21
1994	84	79	5	6
1995	183	153	30	16
1996	149	118	31	21
1997	184	157	27	15

The records show that the output of trained teachers from the PTC and DPE who can be traced into teaching varies from 66 to 157 per year. These may be slight underestimates since

¹² These projections use a target of 1:45 for the pupil: teacher ratio and this is responsible for a large part of the difference in estimates. The 1:45 pupil teacher ratio is likely to imply class sizes averaging well over 50. These lower estimates do not seem to apply an attrition rate to new teacher demand. If so, they are under-estimates. Neither do they account for the need to qualify the unqualified.

¹³ Even if the higher target of a pupil teacher ratio of 45:1 were adopted, rather than 40:1, this would only make a difference to these estimates of about 200 fewer teachers per year.

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it is possible that changes in name have confounded the analysis. Nevertheless, the number of new teachers each year cannot be more than the number qualifying (and DPEs are not new teachers). The implication of the Table is that between 5% and 15% of primary teachers fail to enter the teaching profession after qualifying. In addition, the failure rate on the NTTC training programmes has tended to be between 5% and 15% after resits. It would therefore seem that training targets have to be between 10% and 20% higher than the number of teachers required. Thus, to produce 1,000 new teachers per year may require annual admission targets of 1,100 to 1,200. These figures are up ten times larger than current output (or four to five times projected enrolment on the DEP of 250 entrants each year).

It is therefore evident that the output is significantly below the estimates made above of the need for training and for new teachers. The difference may be even larger than suggested if free primary education has a large impact on demand and attrition rates grow as a result of HIV/AIDS and other factors¹⁴. This implies clearly that the pupil: teacher ratio will rise in the future unless the output of qualified teachers is increased substantially to a number nearer the level of projected demand.

Currently the cost per year of teacher training at primary level is about M10,000¹⁵. To produce 1,100 new teachers a year in the existing system would require an enrolment of 3,300 at a cost of about M33 million. This would represent more than 7% of MOE total expenditure without including the cost of secondary training, or of qualifying the unqualified.

In addition to these costs the resources needed to upgrade the unqualified have to be considered. It is proposed that the successor to LIET PTC should enrol about 250 students on an annual basis from 2001 (LIET PTC accepted 450 into a three year cohort every three years). This would generate a similar output to the existing system spread over three years. The salary costs of the existing programme appear to be about half of those for full-time courses. Other costs depend on how the new programme is organised. If residential time is reduced (through the greater use of out-reach centres) and travel, allowances and material costs are controlled, it may be that this training can be delivered for half or less of the unit cost per full-time initial student. This suggests that training of this kind might build up to a recurrent yearly cost of somewhat less than M4 million (excluding start up costs).

The supply side of the teacher training equation affects both primary and secondary teacher supply. The numbers passing COSC have grown only slowly (Table 7.8). There were 1,980 successful candidates in 1998 who obtained class 1, 2 or 3 passes. It is clear that the

¹⁴ Other countries in the region, which appear to have experienced high rates of HIV infection earlier than in Lesotho, have seen teacher attrition grow rapidly. This may or may not prove to be the case in Lesotho.

¹⁵ If the NTTC primary unit costs are adjusted to take account of failure and early years attrition, this would seem an appropriate estimate.

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recurrent demand for primary and secondary teachers cannot be met on a recurrent basis from these graduates. However, full COSC certification is not required for entry to teacher training. Four credits and one pass suffice. The reason many candidates are not fully certified is that they fail in English. In recent years almost all those admitted to NTTC have met these minimum requirements. Some have higher aggregates than those obtaining full certification. The new DEP programme has been able to recruit without finding difficulty in meeting its target numbers for 1999 (about 180 have been selected). The target from 2000 for this programme is 250 which is judged achievable without changing admissions standards. Two points are salient. First there is some level at which the supply of qualified applicants may be problematic. It is difficult to ascertain what this is but it may well be below the level of demand projected, especially if it is remembered that the pool of qualified applicants includes those training for secondary who have similar entrance requirements. Second, the situation with regard to English passes may give rise to some concern. It may be that the COSC English examination is not a good indicator of proficiency sufficient to teach in English as a medium of instruction. If it is not, then there would seem to be a case to develop an appropriate standardised test to perform this function.

Table 7.8: Pass Rates at COSC 1990-1998

	Class 1	%	Class 2	%	Class 3	%	Total SC	%SC Pass	GCE	%	Fail		Total
1990	74	2.3	243	7.5	581	18.0	898	27.8	2195	68.0	136	4.2	3229
1991	72	2.1	347	10.1	694	20.2	1113	32.3	2155	62.6	174	5.1	3442
1992	65	1.8	325	9.0	641	17.8	1024	28.4	2401	66.5	176	4.9	3608
1993	94	2.4	365	9.3	547	13.9	1006	25.6	2851	72.6	69	1.8	3926
1994	150	3.7	444	11.0	957	23.6	1551	38.3	2436	60.2	60	1.5	4047
1995	86	1.8	410	8.7	856	18.2	1352	28.8	3252	69.2	93	2.0	4697
1996	93	1.8	529	10.1	1181	22.5	1803	34.3	3343	63.7	105	2.0	5251
1997	95	1.8	598	11.0	1279	23.6	1972	36.4	3338	61.5	114	2.1	5424
1998	55	0.9	605	10.1	1319	22.0	1979	33.0	3903	65.1	110	1.8	5992

7.5 Summary

The implications from this analysis of supply and demand can be summarised.

First, the primary teaching cadre contains over 20% (1,800+) unqualified teachers and this proportion has not been declining significantly. At secondary level the numbers of unqualified teachers have diminished from 27% to 17% during the period 1993 – 1997. The remaining unqualified teachers need training.

Second, the growth rate in primary enrolments is uncertain. It seems most likely that numbers will increase at around the projected rate of school age population growth. They may temporarily exceed this during the transition to free primary education.

7 Costs, Efficiency and Supply and Demand

Third, reasonable estimates of the demand for training at primary level appears to be at least 1,000 to 1,200 per year and may be more depending on the assumptions made. This translates into annual admission targets of about 1,200 – 1,400, accounting for wastage and early career attrition. It implies that total enrolments in primary training would need to be between 3,600 and 4,200 if three-year courses are maintained.

Fourth, current and recent output has averaged less than 150 qualified primary teachers per year, not all of whom appear to be teaching. Targeted output from the DEP is 250 per year by 2003. The comparison with projected demand is striking. Unless more teachers are trained, pupil: teacher ratios will rise.

Fifth, all untrained teachers could be qualified through in-service over five years at an annual training rate of about 360 per year.

Sixth, the policy on teacher recruitment needs to recognise that there are limits imposed by the numbers of qualified candidates graduating from secondary schools who are likely to choose teaching as a career. It may also need to reconsider admission criteria relating to competence to teach using English as a medium of instruction.

7.6 Concluding Discussion

This analysis raises a number of issues relevant to costs and efficiency in planning the future of teacher education in Lesotho. The authors are aware that many of these are matters of current discussion. This research seeks to contribute to the debate on the ways forward.

This study has indicated how the teacher education system in Lesotho has developed. It has drawn attention to the evolution of initial training from a complex multi-stage process to one which provides a single pathway for school graduates into primary teaching and an upgrading route for those with PTC wishing to reach Diploma level. The output of new primary teachers has fluctuated but seems set to be consolidated at about 250 per year. NTTC has increased its residential capacity and will shortly have facilities sufficient for more than 1,000 student teachers.

These changes have taken place against a background of educational development policy which has favoured the development of participation and quality improvement at primary level, but which has proved difficult to implement successfully. Progress has been slow on several fronts and hoped-for reductions in repetition, drop-out and class size have not been achieved to date. Macro-economic conditions have not been favourable to real growth in the education budget. Poverty, and hence the ability to pay school fees and those levied by the NTTC for tuition, has probably been increasing, not least as a result of retrenchment in South Africa.

7 Costs, Efficiency and Supply and Demand

New policy related to the Education Sector Development Plan identifies a range of targets for the MOE which will increase participation and retention, reduce class size and pupil: teacher ratios, improve the transition rate into secondary and ensure that all teachers are trained. These targets are ambitious. The analysis suggests that in order to reach them the output of the training system will have to increase.

Following are eight issues that have been selected for further comment in drawing this study together.

First, it is clear that there is a need to continuously monitor enrolment growth and teacher supply and demand. The existing data is patchy and sometimes conflicting on key parameters that will affect teacher demand and supply. The key uncertainties have been identified. These include the extent of migration of families and pupils to South Africa, the characteristics of the demographic transition that may be taking place to lower birth rates, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS amongst different groups including teachers, the rate of take-up of teaching posts and attrition, in-service of qualified teachers, the effects of fee-free primary schooling, and the impact of policy to reduce repetition and drop-out. All of these need careful periodic assessment to chart their impact on teacher demand.

Second, it appears that teacher supply is inadequate to meet projected demand. The situation at primary level is serious if targets are to be met. Output would need to exceed 1,000 new teachers a year (implying an enrolment on three-year courses in excess of 3,000). This can be compared with the current output of less than 200 per year and projected output of 250.

Third, the costs of expanding the existing training system are unsustainable. Meeting the lower level of projected demand for both primary and secondary teachers could consume nearly 15% of the MOE recurrent budget at current cost levels. This excludes the cost of training the unqualified.

Fourth, if planned targets are to be met then new teachers will need to be trained at lower costs and upgrading will have to be achieved efficiently. The capacity of primary initial teacher education will need to be expanded significantly. Demand appears to exceed the likely capacity of NTTC for full-time residential courses if this is bounded by a maximum of 1,000 – 1 200 equivalent students.

Fifth, it is possible that increase in internal efficiency could result in NTTC output of perhaps double the existing level of less than 200 primary and 100 secondary teachers through time-table and course rationalisation, and more efficient deployment of staff and facilities. This alone would not generate enough additional capacity to meet plan targets. It

7 Costs, Efficiency and Supply and Demand

would reap economies of scale on fixed costs and lower the costs per trained teacher. Greater increase in output might require additional staffing.

Sixth, consideration should be given to reduction in the length of full-time tuition during training to the extent that these are consistent with maintaining quality. Reduction in course length could produce pro-rata reductions in costs. Increased periods of teaching practice may also produce savings (and professional benefits especially for those without teaching experience). The latter depends on how teaching practice is organised, whether it is remunerated, and how it is supported.

Seventh, mixed-mode part-distance supported initial teacher training may be considered as an option to extend the reach of NTTC and to reduce the costs of training per qualified teacher. Currently, this mode is used for in-service upgrading of unqualified teachers and this is likely to continue under a new pattern of course organisation. It is difficult to see how likely demand can be met without exploring ways of increasing the capacity of NTTC to support initial training. It should however be remembered that mixed-mode delivery may or may not result in cost savings which can be translated into greater output. This depends on the methods adopted and may have implications for quality.

Eight, it is proposed that NTTC becomes semi-autonomous. This could be beneficial if it results in greater internal efficiency. The current historic funding system does not apparently provide incentives to increase efficiency and effectiveness. Formula funding based on an appropriate algorithm of admission, output and successful employment might be advantageous. It would seem inevitable that most of the recurrent costs will continue to attract government subsidy directly, or through subsidies to students. Teachers' salaries are unlikely to move to levels where private rates of return would generate sufficient application for full cost recovery.

The implications from the analysis of this chapter lead to the conclusion that serious consideration should be given to some radical approaches to meeting the demand for newly trained teachers at sustainable levels of cost. Significant growth in output could be achieved by ensuring NTTC recruits up to capacity; dedicating its facilities to primary teacher training; making more intensive and efficient use of staff time and its facilities (possibly by two staggered cohorts each year); and by reducing the length of full-time, residential, pre-career training by a year. This would still fall short of likely demand. More radical options include making greater use of mixed-mode and distance support for on-the-job training and upgrading which can be offered at less cost per trainee than full-time residential programmes. All these options should be considered, or the goal of universalising primary education at reasonable ratios of pupils to trained teachers will remain unattainable.

Chapter Eight 8 Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

The MUSTER Project framework in Lesotho was informed by the nature of the joint project carried out by the five participating institutions. The project was aimed at studying the various facets of primary teacher education at the NTTC. It employed a number of data collection instruments and approaches. This chapter presents a summary of the findings as well as conclusions and recommendations.

The NTTC as an institution and the programmes it offers have been extensively researched through commissioned consultancy studies. However, none of these studies has hitherto investigated all the various facets of the College. Many of them have focused on attempts to reform its programmes, particularly primary teacher education programmes. We learn from Burke and Sugrue's (1994) critique of the PTC and the DPE programmes that the introduction of the latter did not bring much change in terms of the content taught at the College. A similar observation based on the findings of this study can be made about the new DEP programme.

Innovations at the NTTC seem to be superficial and cosmetic since they refer more to changes of names of programmes than of the content and strategies. Neither are these innovations fully debated by those concerned in order to address a number of pertinent questions. For example, should the College be concerned with mastery or just coverage of the content offered?

Proponents of change point to the fact that the task of preparing teachers is a complex and challenging one. Indeed, in designing teacher training programmes, difficult decisions have to be made on a number of fronts: the structure and content of the courses; the point at which experience in school is best introduced and how students are most appropriately prepared for it; the role of the various personnel involved; and how student teachers are suitably assisted in coming to terms with the substantial demands of the school and the classroom.

This study has narrated the historical development of the teacher education system in Lesotho. It has drawn attention to the evolution of initial training from a complex multi-stage process to one which provides a single pathway for school graduates into primary teaching and an upgrading route for those with PTC wishing to reach a Diploma level.

The study has, however, not answered the fundamental question, namely the extent to which NTTC as a department of a government ministry in a country that does not have a national policy on teacher education, is at liberty to institute and implement reforms. We are inclined to conclude that both the management structure of the College and lack of a policy militate against academic freedom and, consequently, against the liberty to change

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programmes on the basis of, among other things, newly developed theories. The absence of policy in particular renders full implementation of innovation difficult.

The following sections summarise the findings from the different parts of the study, and present some recommendations.

8.2 The entry characteristics of student teachers and what they bring in terms of their experiences, images, perceptions and motivation

The findings of this study indicate that the primary student teachers are mostly female, are in their early twenties, are drawn mainly from modest family backgrounds and often rural-based, and many are upwardly mobile in that they are reaching higher educational levels than their own parents. However, many are also following in the footsteps of relatives who are, or were, teachers. Additionally, although admission standards for DEP are higher compared to those for the PTC programme that it is replacing, the first cohort of the student teachers came with relatively low academic achievements. In other words, even though these students may have met the minimum entry criteria, very few had COSC credits in the core subjects. For example, two-thirds of them had grades of E or below in English and Mathematics.

The low academic achievement in COSC might explain the student teachers' view that they lack confidence in their own ability and that many identify themselves as 'slow learners'. While this kind of background may help them later on to empathise with children's learning difficulties, it also means they need much help at college to master the basics, to learn how to learn, and to bolster their own self-esteem.

On the issue of teaching experience that student teachers enter with, the study revealed that over a quarter had taught before, usually for less than two years. Their knowledge of teaching was therefore mainly drawn from their own schooling, which seems to have been of a fairly 'traditional' kind, where discipline was often harsh, and there was not a great deal of variety in teaching styles. Few appeared to have experienced the kind of 'child-centred' interactive learning approaches discussed in college, and they were seldom able to analyse what made a teacher effective. In essence, the findings show that student teachers come to the NTTC not as 'empty vessels'. They come with attitudes and rich experiences gained prior to entry into the College. Many indicate they will model themselves on their own teachers, whom they evaluate more in terms of personal characteristics than of professional knowledge and skills. In many ways they see themselves as teachers of children rather than of subjects. That the personal and the professional are closely linked in the students' minds and that the affective aspects are salient for them go a long way towards explaining the way the student teachers view a teacher. Their views seem to be saying that the person you are affects the children more than what you do. Thus, they want to establish good relationships, where they can be a nurturing parent and model good behaviour, and where individual

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children can approach them with problems.

Regarding teaching as a career, the data tends to suggest ambivalence. On the positive side, most student teachers suggest idealistic views; they write of teachers as role models, serving their country and improving education. In more practical terms, they are pleased to be getting a training to take them into relatively secure although low paid jobs, but which may enable them to continue learning in that they hoped to further their studies and therefore get promotion. On the negative side, they are aware that the job involves hard work, means working in stressful conditions, and that the community may make impossible demands upon them, while as already pointed out, their financial rewards will not be commensurate with their efforts. Yet the great majority of all the groups surveyed indicated their intention to stay in primary teaching. Very few in any of the groups indicated a wish to leave the teaching profession altogether, although some, mostly male students, wanted to switch into secondary teaching.

Knowledge based on practice is not recognised in the documented curriculum, neither do lecturers tap this knowledge during their course delivery. Images of good teachers that students model themselves on are also neither discussed nor challenged. Such experiences could be used as starting point for their further development as teachers. Thus, the challenge for the NTTC tutors is on being aware of the fact that students bring with them expectations of teacher education and that they might want to build on these rich memories and personal ideas. Making use of such experiences would no doubt enrich the knowledge base of tutors and students as well, and therefore make teaching meaningful and relevant.

Regrettably, there is little in the curriculum documents that deals with links between the personal and the professional to embrace among other things the affective aspects of teaching. Clearly, it is essential to help the trainees to develop appreciation of the teacher's cognitive responsibilities, which at present they lack. But at the same time it is important not to devalue the trainees' cherished images of the teacher as a nurturer and counsellor, which of course are also crucial aspects of the primary teacher's role. Confronting questions such as: Where in the curriculum are the opportunities for personal and social development? How can the students develop their counselling skills? might enable the College to go a long way towards addressing pertinent issues that may be of interest to students.

8.3 The NTTC DEP curriculum as documented, as delivered, and as experienced by the student teachers themselves

8.3.1 Aims and objectives

The curriculum of the DEP programme seems to have two main aims: to raise academic standards and to produce teachers capable of taking on an 'extended professional role'.

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Thus, it aims at providing Lesotho schools with well-rounded and well-grounded teachers in the theory and practice of teaching in order to enable them to tackle classroom challenges. The extent to which this noble goal will be met depends, by and large, on what takes place at NTTC in the process of teacher preparation. The aims are not to be taken lightly. The study however, found several contradictions and mismatches between the design of the curriculum, the way it was taught, and the perceived needs of the students, which may prevent these aims from being achieved.

Taking the issue of aims further, the study found that there was an apparent disjunction between the overall aims and objectives of the entire programme. The overall aims are based on the ‘reflective practitioner’ model of a teacher and are framed in terms of broad professional competencies. They show the teacher who would have high level of knowledge and skills and who would be able to act as a change agent within Lesotho schools. On the other hand, the objectives seem to be narrowly conceived, mainly having to do with subject content, and only distantly related to the professional classroom competencies. Thus, the objectives seemed based on a ‘behaviourist’ model, giving little space for reflection, self-evaluation, or implementation of classroom change.

There was nothing in the document to show how theory and practice would be integrated through teaching practice or related activities. For example, no course refers to learning to solve practical problems in school. The only mention of ‘reflection’ comes in one of the Science objectives. This finding is in line with the one which shows that the theory of reflective practice is not built into the courses offered, nor do tutors practise it. This means that both the documented and the enacted curriculum contradict the programme rationale, which sets the standard for the programme, by not capturing the reflective practice being promoted. Reflection is therefore an aspired concept whose practice is yet to be seen. Additionally, it is not clear where and how students are going to learn skills of co-operation or to serve as a change agent in the community as promoted in the curriculum document.

In a nutshell, the two sets of aims seem to come from different discourses or paradigms. The overall aims propose a ‘reflective practitioner’ model of teacher preparation, while the subject aims point to the ‘effective instructor’ model. Shifting from the transmission mode of delivery to the constructivist paradigm was going to be difficult under these circumstances.

The study found other contradictions with regard to the curriculum. On the one hand, there was superficial similarity across the different subjects, although some subjects appear more internally consistent than others. On the other, knowledge appears compartmentalised by subject and the lecturers focus on their respective areas without relating them to other areas of the programme, even where this might be appropriate. It was also observed that some lecturers address content and methods simultaneously while others, especially in Science, separate the two. Furthermore, despite the fact that the programme rationale explicitly calls

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for the teachers who can integrate theory and practice, in the curriculum document the two seem deliberately separated. This is a strange contradiction in that tutors are expected to practise an integrated curriculum yet this idea is not captured in the written documents. Thus the bureaucratically neat curriculum document might, as long as theory and practice are separated, distort the essence of what the lecturers actually intend to teach.

The situation is probably aggravated by what seems to be lack of an encompassing philosophy, which guides the practice of lecturers at the College. The *'creation ... of a learning community'* which is promoted in the DEP curriculum document seems to be far from realisation. Unwillingness to be observed, disinterest in what is happening in schools, and satisfaction with routine and average performance are far from modelling an effective teacher for a primary school.

8.3.2 Content

Unlike the PTC the DEP programme has introduced a bridging course, which course focuses on study skills, ICT, and the core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science. This move was highly valued by the students sampled, as it seems to go some way towards meeting the need to upgrade their content knowledge. However, the attempt to upgrade the student teachers' academic knowledge without taking into account their individual learning difficulties may be counter-productive. It would seem that this effort was not adequate since later in the course students were struggling, especially in Science, though the Mathematics department was praised for helping them to understand a difficult subject. English was labelled as relatively easy, yet the diaries revealed that many students had poor writing skills. In fact, the findings indicate that some students go throughout the programme and continue to see themselves as low achievers. By implication this view tends to suggest that low achieving students might need special tutoring type of support throughout their period of study at the college.

The DEP comprises eight subject areas, and was designed with a 70:30 ratio of content knowledge to professional knowledge and practice. The study found that 'pedagogic content knowledge' or 'methods' component is patently not integrated with subject studies. The situation is aggravated by the fact that the admission policy guidelines were bent, hence the low academic background that students enter the College with. This in turn indirectly leads to the delivery of a content-biased curriculum. Thus, regardless of the bridging course, teaching in most departments is biased towards content at the expense of methods.

8.3.3 Teaching methods

Regarding teaching methods, the study found that there was an almost complete absence of any discussion of pedagogy in the documented curriculum. There was little guidance on

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how to accommodate the topics to students' needs, how to help them internalise principles of good teaching, and teaching approaches that might foster the attitudes and dispositions mentioned in the overall aims.

Classroom observation confirmed the conservative nature of the programme in that, in practice, most teaching was transmission-oriented, and there was little emphasis on independent learning, critical analysis, creative thought, or learning to exercise professional judgement. In essence, lecturing is the predominant method of teaching in the NTTC classrooms and as a result, classes are characterised by teacher-centred instruction. It is unlikely that the student teachers will follow an individualised teaching style after graduation since the message conveyed is that knowledge comes from a lecturer or from the books. The interaction between students and tutors during lectures involves a question-and-answer approach, but questions are restrictive and do not allow for full independent thinking for students. Additionally, the questions are of a low-level type. While group work appears to be common, it is neither well organised nor guided, and students are more often than not left on their own. Because of limited assistance and supervision by the lecturers, students seem unsure how to work cooperatively. Lessons are not always well structured and frequently end abruptly. The lecturers' time keeping is often poor.

8.3.4 Teaching and learning materials

In the majority of the classes observed, NTTC student teachers relied solely on handouts from the lecturers in the form of photocopied texts or notes. Thus, the chalkboard and photocopied handouts were the main teaching aids, although students were said to use the library for assignments. The practice of 'spoon-feeding' which Burke and Sugrue (1994) observed at the College still persisted during the course of the study. This scenario contradicts the picture painted in the documented curriculum, which suggests the provision of textbooks and reference materials for independent study. The observed contradiction tends to be supported by another finding that NQTs were found to be relying on notes they took as students at the College. This situation might be an indication of the problem of dependency on the part of the NTTC students and graduates alike.

8.3.5 Assessment

The findings of this study indicate that NTTC assessment procedures are problematic and reflect the main teaching approach of the College, that is, the lecture method. Inherent in this method is the predominant use of tests relative to other forms of assessment. It is not clear whether the examination items used are suitable for evaluating the achievement of the objectives stated for particular modules. Interestingly, student teachers themselves complain about some of the assessment methods followed at the College, including the type of tests used, assignments given and co-ordination of assessment as a whole. They maintain that, the

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College tests can be passed by memorising materials, and also that they spend too much time doing assignments. Assessment approaches that the College should adopt in future should be more consistent with the theory that underpins the DEP programme.

Continuous assessment was found to constitute 50% of the final marks. However, students have few periods for independent study, and seemed unable to manage their assignments effectively. Thus, the 50% continuous assessment weighting is likely to be affected by the failure on the part of the College to provide student teachers with adequate time for independent study and assignments.

Regarding the assessment of teaching practice, one of the findings is that the College has a useful set of evaluation instruments for all parties concerned, that is, tutors, school principals, co-operating teachers and student teachers themselves. Another finding is that the College allocates numerical marks in assessing teaching practice, a policy that goes against the trend of assessing teaching competence 'holistically'.

8.3.6 Teaching practice

It is important to note here that since the DEP student teachers had not yet gone on teaching practice, the study used PTC III students instead. The findings indicate that little had changed since the Hopkin report of 1996, which had proposed major improvements in the way the TP was run.

The essence of the teaching practice is to provide professional support to student teachers as they apply the theory learned at the College. Lecturers say that teaching practice enables trainees to learn to practise what is taught at College, including how to prepare lessons, how to implement lesson plans in real classrooms, and how to collaborate with other teachers at the school level.

An interesting finding is that, although student teachers greatly value the opportunity to practise teaching, few feel they receive sufficient support from the schools. On the whole, TP is badly planned and poorly managed in that the teaching practice partners do not play their respective roles as fully as it is expected in a relationship of this nature. At the school level, student teachers are more often than not left to cope by themselves, treated like children, and ignored or criticised rather than encouraged. There is, however, another finding which indicates that some heads of schools and class teachers helped student teachers, usually with planning, scheming, and resources. Thus, the mode of operation is not clear, while the provision of assistance is minimal and, most importantly, not clearly articulated. Tutors do not have adequate time to provide professional support at school level. For example, the number of visits by tutors varies from district to district, some student teachers are visited by the same tutor more than once while others are seen by different

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tutors, and activities undertaken during such visits are not uniform. In the end only 15% of students were visited the stipulated four times, often by different tutors, and feedback was reported to be rushed and incomplete. The College will have to review all previous consultancy reports on its teaching practice and try to implement their recommendations.

8.3.7 Linking the training programme with the schools' and trainees' expectations

One of the most critical areas to be considered during training has to do with making teaching at the College relevant to the school situation. There seems to be some consensus around the concept of good primary teaching, but not about the process of training teachers to practise it. In the absence of a clearly defined model, the common practice at NTTC seems to be to offer students selected information, both theoretical and practical, mainly related to a discourse of child-centred learning. They are then supposed to go and apply that information. The important issue here is the degree to which this approach is successful, or indeed the extent to which information gained is relevant to or practical in Lesotho schools.

This study has revealed that the College as a whole does not itself seem to practise a student-centred approach. There appears to be some contradiction between its espoused theories and its 'theories in action'. Very few tutors are cognisant of the value of creating a learning situation that would help students envisage the primary school classroom situation. In other words, tutors do not seem to be role models of good practice with regard to teaching at this level. Yet, as literature bears out, teaching by example might be the best thing to do since student teachers tend to learn better through modelling good practice. Modelling by the College tutors could be in the form of professional and/or ethical practice, demonstration lessons or particular teaching strategies.

The findings of the study also show that the curriculum is not helping students to relate college learning to school situation. Few tutors were found to make reference to teaching and learning at primary school level. Thus, NTTC seems to be sending out to Lesotho primary school teachers who are not versatile and creative in their style of teaching. These are teachers who are likely to use teacher-centred methods and to be insensitive to the needs of a primary school child. Very clearly, there are contradictions between the espoused curriculum and the curriculum in action.

8.4 The impact of the training: How student teachers value training and how far it changes them; early experience on the job and support for novice teachers

The study found that the NQTs value their programme and feel it prepares them well for teaching, though they would have liked more time on methods of teaching. They consider the professional studies courses as the most useful, especially topics such as lesson planning and record keeping. The school principals value the NQTs particularly as sources of

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information and ideas, particularly in new areas of the curriculum. The principals complimented the new teachers for their hard work, subject knowledge competence, and teaching methods, although they criticised their competence in time-keeping and record keeping. Another group that seems to appreciate the NTTC student teachers are the unqualified teachers. They also admired the knowledge and skills possessed and/or demonstrated by the NTTC student teachers paired with them during these students' teaching practice.

On the other hand, the NQTs, although they managed their classes well, maintained good relationship with the pupils, and for the most part knew the subject matter, gave lessons which were teacher-centred and often boring for the pupils. Most of them used only question-and-answer routines, allowing pupils little interaction with teaching/learning materials or with each other. Neither did they follow any groupwork approach.

The effects of training are always difficult to measure and this study was no exception. The cross-sectional comparison of agreement or disagreement with a common set of statements about teaching, taken from the surveys, suggest that the NTTC programme does not lead to significant shifts in trainees' perception or professional self-concept. However, the NQTs seem to be able to articulate much more sophisticated ideas about teaching than was the case with entering student teachers, although they maintained similar views about the importance of the personal and nurturing elements. As already alluded to, they have been found to teach differently from unqualified teachers, although they seem to model some of both the good and poor qualities of teaching learned at the College. Thus, they used methods commonly followed by their former tutors. Their views of the ideal teacher, that is, the kind of teacher they would like to be, provide a strong support for the thesis that students model themselves on their own teachers.

On the issue of sources of support afforded the novice teacher, the study found that MOE does not have a structured induction programme for newly qualified teachers. At the school level NQTs experience varying kinds of reception. There is little formal induction for them, although some receive informal introduction and briefings. In the first years of teaching, the principal is the main source of help, with some support coming from class teachers. More help is apparently provided on such matters as scheming, recording work and assessment than on how to manage a classroom or deal with individual students, areas which the NQTs found most problematic. Thus, although most NQTs claim to have had a relatively easy entry into teaching and to feel respected in their jobs, some admit to various personnel and professional problems such as lack of confidence, loneliness and difficult relationships with colleagues, pupils or the community.

Although the findings on this section are not conclusive, they bring out several issues pertaining to the relationship between the College and schools as institutions charged with

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teacher education. Overall, the NQTs' satisfaction with the programme seem to be based on a rather technicist and utilitarian view of training, in which they would be provided with content and methods rather than taught to use their professional judgement or to improve practice. The College and school views of good teaching seem largely to coincide, along fairly traditional lines, though NQTs are welcomed in order to keep schools up to date with the curriculum; there is little sign here that the College graduates are agents of fundamental change. Finally, it seems that the NTTC tutors have to work very hard if they are to shift preconceived ideas developed by the entering students during their earlier experiences.

8.5 The College: Career patterns, professional development and views of the lecturers

There were 44 staff in the Primary Division at the time of the study. Their ages ranged from 30 to over 50, with the majority (58%) aged between 36-45; two-thirds were women. Almost all were graduates, a third had Masters degrees, and one a doctorate. While most had taught in schools, the majority were trained as secondary teachers and only 40% had any primary experience. Half had been at the College for less than 5 years, while 29% had been there for over 10 years.

The study did not find a clear structure or regular programmes for NTTC staff development. Thus, tutors, with the exception of those who had been trained specifically for Early Primary Specialisation through regional workshops and study tours, do not receive relevant training in either the programmes they are supposed to teach, or modern theories such as 'reflective practice' that the College is keen to apply. For example, the College, as indicated in the rationale for the DEP programme, expresses a great interest in reflective practice yet it is doubtful whether tutors are actually knowledgeable in this concept. This means that in practice, opportunities for further professional development were scarce; only half of those who participated in the study reported any in-service training, mostly in the form of short courses. A few had been sent overseas for post-graduate studies, while others had studied locally on a part-time basis. The worst scenario is that there was no staff induction programme for new tutors. They had to rely on their own memories of teacher training and learn on the job, with sporadic help from colleagues.

While most tutors could articulate their own ideas and theories in relevant ways, these were very diverse and in a way confirmed the fact that the College does not have a widely shared philosophy of teacher education or its implementation. In practice, lecturers work in isolation and do not seem to be guided by an overriding philosophy of teacher education. Working in isolation goes against the philosophy of the DEP programme which, rather, is supposed to provide opportunities for personal study and reflection as well as dialogue and debate on a range of educational issues. We found little evidence of this approach at the College.

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The findings of this study show that the College tutors' job satisfaction is low, their frustration being related to the conditions of service and to the way the College is run generally. Dissatisfaction and high staff turnover at the College were attributed to such factors as the starting salaries, which were said to be similar to those of high school teachers, and to unclear promotion criteria.

As tutors in the Primary Division were initially trained for teaching in secondary schools, many of them, particularly the younger ones, did not know much about teaching primary pupils when they arrived. Students' perceptions of many tutors are quite negative, although there are exceptions. It seems that some tutors are poor role models not only in teaching but also in nurturing and supporting student teachers through a difficult and demanding curriculum. Punctuality, courtesy, caring, responsibility and professional ethics of some tutors leave much to be desired. One wonders how far the students will internalise these models and eventually reproduce them in their own teaching career.

The College, as an academic institution governed by Government, seems to lack the culture of intellectual debates and research that would otherwise contribute to improvement in academic development. This state of affairs confirms that the NTTC management is weak on a number of fronts. For example, and as has already been pointed out, tutors are not receiving the academic and administrative support that would enhance their capacity to implement the College's programmes effectively.

NTTC as a whole does not seem to be the kind of 'learning institution' where innovation and renewal are part of the ethos. It may be that the strong institutional structures militate against its becoming a self-reflective institution. Steps must be taken to foster collaboration among the College departments, based on a common frame of reference, and to develop a shared vision of teacher education and its implementation. Such a vision must take into account both international and local contexts and ideas. Appropriate induction, refresher and upgrading courses are essential. Additionally, strategies need to be developed to address staff welfare. In particular, procedures for selecting, appointing and promoting tutors should be transparent and be based on careful analysis of both the needs of the institution and qualities of the individuals.

8.6 Supply and demand, costs and efficiency

The analysis of supply and demand for new primary teachers reveals the challenge that confronts the NTTC and other elements of the training system. Though the precise pattern of growth in enrolments at primary level is uncertain, it is clear that numbers will increase in the short to medium term as the effects of fee-free primary education policy increase retention, and net enrolment rates move towards 100%. The projected growth in the size of the school age cohort is modest and may be less than 1%. The net result of this and other

8 Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

factors is that there is a substantial demand for new teachers which greatly exceeds current output (see Lewin et al. 2000 for a detailed discussion).

Levels of new teacher demand will be determined by the number of primary pupils enrolled, the target pupil-teacher ratio (40:1), and the attrition rate for existing teachers (estimated at 5%). Reasonable estimates of the demand for new primary teachers based on these assumptions lead to the need to qualify about 1,200 per year. If pessimistic assumptions are made about attrition rates, to take into account the possible effects of HIV/AIDS on teachers, this number might rise to 1,400. With a three year full-time pre-career training programme this would require total enrolments of between 3,600 and 4,200 in training.

The current and recent output of new teachers from NTTC has averaged less than 150 qualified primary teachers per year, not all of whom appear to be teaching. Targeted output from the DEP programme is 250 per year by 2003. The comparison with projected demand is striking and projected output from NTTC is less than 25% of the numbers needed. Unless more teachers are trained pupil-teacher ratios will remain well above 40:1 and will deteriorate.

Two factors may increase demand further. First, the primary teaching cadre contains over 20% (1,800+) unqualified teachers and this proportion has not been declining since too few new teachers are being trained. All untrained teachers could be qualified over five years at an additional annual training rate of about 360 per year, but this would require a special programme of some magnitude. Second, there is some evidence that a proportion of primary teachers retrain and upgrade their qualifications to become secondary teachers. If this trend continues it creates additional demand for new primary teachers.

On the supply side there are limits to the numbers who can be recruited into primary teaching. The numbers obtaining appropriate COSC passes in 1998 were less than 2,000. This is clearly insufficient to provide large enough numbers electing to be primary teachers to meet the projected demand of 1,200-1,400 per year.

The other limitation on expansion in supply relates to costs. The costs per trained teacher at NTTC are estimated to be about 10,400 Maloti excluding trainee fees, equivalent to about US\$1,500 (1998). These are costs per year. The full-time course last for three years and thus the cost per trained teacher graduate, assuming no failure, is three times greater i.e. about US\$4,500, excluding stipends. These costs also do not include trainees' allowances. We estimate that including these would raise costs to about US\$2,500 per year, or US\$7,500 per trained teacher. This is as much as 13 times GNP per capita, making it one of the most expensive training systems in southern Africa. The costs of expanding the existing training system to meet demand are unsustainable. To do so would require 15% of the MOE recurrent budget at current cost levels. This excludes the cost of training the unqualified.

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Opportunities exist to increase effectiveness. In 1998 there were 43 lecturers in the Primary Division, giving an overall staff: student ratio of 1:14. However, class sizes vary widely among subjects and courses, from 187 when a whole pre-service cohort comes together, to less than 20 for some subject options in the in-service DEP. Staff contact hours per week range from 2 to 15 hours, with an average of 7.6 hours per week. In addition, staff must prepare and mark students' work, and visit schools for TPP and TP. Large teaching groups are a function of both organisation of the time-table and staff deployment. There is scope to have smaller groups that are more conducive to interactive instruction. Teaching space is well utilised during semesters, but remains under-occupied during vacations. There is now hostel accommodation for 1,000 students, but full-time enrolment is less much than this.

New policy related to the Education Sector Development Plan identifies a range of targets for the MOE which will increase primary participation and retention, reduce class size and pupil-teacher ratios, improve the transition rate into secondary and ensure that all teachers are trained. These targets are ambitious. The analysis suggests that in order to reach the targets the output of the training system will have to increase substantially and the costs per qualified teacher will have to fall.

It is clear that in principle the cost of a trained teacher could be reduced (or conversely more teachers could be trained for the same cost) if the length of training was reduced to less than three years full-time. This could produce pro-rata reductions in costs per trained teacher and greater output. Increased periods of teaching practice might also produce savings (and professional benefits, especially for those without teaching experience), assuming that student teachers contribute significant teaching time to schools. This could be coupled with more use of mixed-mode and distance delivery of some parts of the training programme.

Some economies of scale should also be available in NTTC if it increased its enrolment up to its planned capacity of 1,100 from its current full-time equivalent of no more than about 750 FTEs and worked at higher effective student/staff ratios. Analysis of the internal efficiency in NTTC suggests that there is scope for efficiency gains. Some consideration should be given to dedicating NTTC to primary teacher training, and transferring secondary training to the NUL. This would increase volume and reduce unit costs. It might also lead to a situation where more primary than secondary teachers were being trained in Lesotho, which is not currently the case, despite the much greater demand for new primary teachers.

It has been proposed that NTTC becomes more of a self-governing institution, rather than a budgetary centre of the MOE. The current historic funding system does not provide incentives to increase efficiency and effectiveness. Formula funding based on an appropriate algorithm of admissions, output and successful employment might encourage greater efficiency. However, it would seem inevitable that most of the recurrent costs will continue to be supported by government subsidy directly, or through subsidies to students. Teachers'

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salaries are unlikely to move to levels where private rates of return would generate sufficient applicants for full cost recovery. The case for self-government may not be as strong as that for introducing elements of performance-related contracting by NTTC to train given numbers of teachers within an agreed framework of quality assurance.

This section of Chapter 8 has presented summaries and conclusion based on the previous chapters of the Lesotho MUSTER project report. The conclusions reveal a number of critical issues that should be regarded as challenges facing many institutions and individuals with a stake in teacher education, particularly NTTC itself. The challenges vary in demand and urgency, but the one that is of utmost importance is empowering the DEP teacher educators with skills to be able to assist the college to realise its aspiration through the DEP programme.

8.7 Recommendations

The MUSTER project has investigated a number of pertinent issues pertaining to teacher education in the context of Lesotho. A study of this magnitude would not be complete without coming up with recommendations to guide future efforts aimed at offering high standard teacher education programmes for the Lesotho education system. This section of Chapter 8 therefore proposes recommendations to be considered in reforming teacher education programmes in Lesotho.

1. Entering Students

The fact that, for the student teachers, the affective aspects of teaching are more salient than the cognitive aspects of pupil learning, cannot be ignored. When designing and implementing its programmes NTTC should therefore take into account the relevant characteristics of new entrants in terms of the experiences, perceptions, attitudes and images they bring along as well as their low academic calibre.

In order to promote learning based on experiences, tutors might want to address questions such as: How can we draw lessons from past experience? How does a teacher learn from a classroom intervention or event that she considers successful? What does it mean to learn well from past experience? And how might someone be helped to learn from past experience? How can lessons gleaned by tutors from answers to these questions be made relevant to the students' needs? It is therefore recommended:

- 1.1 Since the College will continue to have to accept weak students, the bridging course should continue and some elements of language support and study skills should be extended throughout the first year.

8 Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

- 1.2 In designing and implementing the curriculum, the College should ensure that the experiences and images of teachers and teaching that new entrants bring along with them are acknowledged, challenged, and built on in ways that will develop the students as 'reflective practitioners'.

2. Curriculum Structure

One aim of the DEP curriculum is to raise academic standards in schools by producing teachers who possess the subject knowledge well above the level of the primary school curriculum. Moreover, training to teach at the primary school level requires an approach that focuses on pedagogic content knowledge. This is the kind of knowledge that enables the teacher to *'explain clearly so that pupils understand'*.

Teaching is known to be a conservative profession. If one of the aims of the DEP curriculum is to introduce new teaching approaches, the College programme needs to make this very explicit by discussing, demonstrating and making opportunities for the student teachers to try out and practice them in a safe and supportive environment, both on and off campus. It is also important that the students fully understand why these approaches are advocated. Similarly, tutors should fully understand the classroom conditions that militate against change. Therefore:

- 2.1 The NTTC Curriculum Committee should review the DPE curriculum to address the following issues: the content to pedagogy ratios, the teaching methods, assessment procedures, and teaching practice module.
- 2.2 It should seek ways of ensuring that the theory promoted in the curriculum document (the constructivist theory) permeates through the goals and objectives of the programme as a whole and in all the different subjects offered.
- 2.3 The DEP curriculum should make provision for some degree of integration of subjects offered in order to offer students an opportunity to learn in practice how the primary school subject content can be integrated.

3. Teaching and learning

NTTC tutors do not demonstrate appropriate teaching strategies and how these can be applied flexibly. In particular, students are not taught how to work in small groups. It is unlikely therefore that they will in turn be able to use this method fruitfully in schools.

The mixed group of lecturers with different age groups, varying experiences of teaching in primary schools, different approaches to teaching at the College, and lack of collegiality all

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pose the greatest challenges to the College administration. Addressing issues that work against the realisation of the programme objectives should be a priority area, especially given that the lecturers are poor models on a number of very critical issues. For example, the majority of them do not bring a closure to their lessons and have poor time management skills.

The poor modelling portrayed by the NTTC lecturers is passed on to the school system through the College graduates. While the expectation would have been that NQTs would model good practice and in the process break the 'mould' of practice in the school system, the reverse is true. Newly qualified teachers duplicate lecturing and question-and-answer as their only methods of teaching. The tutors will have to first of all deliberate on the methods of teaching suitable for the primary school system if their teaching is to make an impact that will be relevant to the real problems in the school system. Therefore:

- 3.1 The College teaching and learning strategies should as much as possible relate to those of primary school and should be modelled in the lecturers' own teaching.
- 3.2 The methods should challenge student teachers' intellectual ability, allow them to share their experiences, and enable them to tackle classroom problems, through such methods as groupwork, debates, role plays and discussion.
- 3.3 The programme should include personal development and enrichment elements

4. Assessment

If the College is to implement the reflective practice proposed in the rationale for the DEP programme, then assignments should give students the opportunity to reflect and to become independent learners. All assessments should be consistent with the overall approach. Therefore:

- 4.1 The NTTC should formally adopt students' independent study approach as a strategy to reduce their over-dependence on tutors.
- 4.2 The Assessment Committee of the College should review the assessment procedures and align them with the 'constructivist' approach, using a wider variety of assessment methods.
- 4.3 A suitable structure for co-ordinating assessment activities should be set up to avoid student overload.

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5. Teaching practice and partnership with schools

Failure on the part of the College to articulate the TP objectives and to provide support to the programme implementation implies lack of commitment on the part of the NTTC administration to ensure proper running of the programme. The College needs to explore much more aggressively the type of partnerships it has with schools. Therefore:

- 5.1 As a general recommendation, the College must review and implement the findings and recommendations of the previous consultancy studies concerning the reform of the teaching practice programme as a whole. The teaching practice co-ordinators should study the said recommendations, prepare a paper and then organise a workshop for stakeholders to develop a strategy for implementing the recommendations.
- 5.2 There is need to invest in short but on-going capacity building workshops for principals of schools, co-operating teachers, and mentors, to ensure that the College training is a continuum, and that schools take more responsibility for the training of newly qualified teachers.
- 5.3 The College should spell out, jointly with the co-operating schools, more detailed and realistic objectives for TP, including roles and responsibilities of tutors, schools and co-operating teachers.
- 5.4 The way the TP assessment instruments are used needs to be monitored carefully. In particular, in allocating marks for TP, evaluators must have visited each student teacher the number of times stipulated in the TP guide. The final marks should be moderated to ensure fairness. Purely supervisory school visits could be separated from assessment ones.
- 5.5 Based on the theory of reflective teaching practice, the College should consider introducing the system whereby students document their teaching experiences for purposes of reflecting on them, through the use of instruments such as portfolios, journals and/or diaries.

6. Induction and support for new teachers

A solid and a well thought-out partnership that is systematically implemented should continue beyond the teaching practice period. Entering into teaching is a delicate situation whose success depends on a proper induction structure. Induction programmes are typically developed to orient the new teachers into the profession of teaching. It is therefore a component of the learning continuum and an extension of the teacher education curriculum

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designed to form a bridge between the pre-service and the in-service teacher education. Thus, it encompasses the professional development of teachers throughout their career.

The ways in which new teachers meet the challenges of forming their identity as a teacher and understanding both their role and the magnitude of teaching in general, are important in deciding how teachers are eventually shaped, their satisfaction levels and whether they stay or opt out of teaching. Therefore:

- 6.1 NTTC, in collaboration with the various stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education, should introduce and support an induction programme for newly qualified teachers who enter the school system, including the training of mentors.
- 6.2 Schools need to create an enabling environment for NQTs by organising more structured support relevant to their needs.

7. The Impact of Training

Although the NTTC programme does not lead to significant shifts in trainees' perception or professional self-concept, the NQTs seem to be able to articulate much more sophisticated ideas about teaching than was the case with entering students. The unqualified teachers interviewed and observed seemed less confident in handling the teaching job. In dealing with the syllabus, they were relying on their high school knowledge, and on methods remembered from their own schooling. Therefore:

- 7.1 All presently serving unqualified teachers should be trained so as to bring them up at least to the standard of their qualified counterparts.

8. The College and its Staff

A collegial atmosphere that encourages constant revision of the mission of the College and of schooling generally, and infuses that mission in its teaching, will help empower the teachers. Such an empowerment is important in improving primary education in Lesotho.

The NTTC lecturers have varying experiences in primary school teaching. There are inconsistencies in the way they go about their business. Conceptualising reflective practice, holding regular dialogue and practising professional knowledge and how to impart it, all require capacity building efforts for teacher educators. Beyond the development of human beings and institutions, capacity development also entails the use and continuous refinement of effective practices. The College might want therefore to take stock of its human resource training experiences, particularly the extent to which it is relevant to the programmes it offers.

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The College's effectiveness will be determined by the extent to which the management is aware of the problems that militate against progress and the extent to which it aggressively addresses such problems. Therefore:

- 8.1 There is need for the NTTC to create an environment that is supportive of teacher educators in the business of the College: planning, teaching and assessment, teaching practice, engaging in relevant research, and capacity building through induction and short-term training courses.
- 8.2 NTTC should embark on capacity building for various categories of staff, including management. Short-term training in the form of workshops should follow relevant training modules.
- 8.3 As a matter of urgency, the College should introduce an induction programme for new tutors.
- 8.4 With regard to the DEP programme, the College should mount training on the 'reflective practice / constructivist approach' as a new paradigm promoted in the curriculum document for the training of primary school teachers. There will be need to engage an outside consultant to help facilitate the process.
- 8.5 There is a need to develop a code of ethics to be adhered to by lecturers and the management.
- 8.6 The College should review its current instructional approaches with the aim to merge innovative ones with good traditional teaching strategies. One way would be for lecturers to observe each other's lessons and give each other feedback. Thus they will be directly demonstrating to their students how to relate to co-workers and/or to other professionals.
- 8.7 NTTC teacher educators should create a collegial atmosphere at the College and demonstrate how it operates to their own students.

9. Supply and Demand, Costs and Effectiveness

At present the cost of producing a primary teacher at NTTC is one of the most expensive in Africa. At the same time, the College output is insufficient to meet the demand for primary teachers, particularly if demand rises through FPE. Therefore:

- 9.1 The MOE should establish a system of monitoring enrolment growth and teacher supply and demand on a continuing basis. This can be used to shape admissions and

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deployment policy to allow stated targets on enrolments, pupil-teacher ratios, and costs to be achieved.

- 9.2 The Ministry of Education should introduce a formula funding based on an appropriate algorithm of admission, output and successful employment. Using this formula might help increase efficiency and effectiveness of the teacher education system. It should help reduce the unit costs of training and increase output.
- 9.3 A new system of funding should be linked to targets and incentives to focus management time and energy on improved performance and greater output. Large group teaching in classes of over 100 should be discouraged if it co-exists with student-staff ratios of 14:1. Any expansion of the staff of NTTC should be coupled to substantially increased enrolment of trainees.
- 9.4 Consideration should be given to dedicating NTTC to primary teacher training to increase volume, reduce unit costs, and improve quality. Secondary teacher training could be transferred to NUL.
- 9.5 Mixed-mode and distance programmes should be developed actively to extend the reach of NTTC and the number of trainees it can support. This would seem the only way of increasing output at sustainable levels of cost. NTTC should develop outreach programmes of training and upgrading untrained teachers at a distance, along with other providers who may have the capacity to offer this mode of training.
- 9.6 The length of full-time pre-career training should be reduced to no more than two years. Unless the length is shortened, and the savings used to increase the number of trainees in training, the pupil-teacher ratios in primary schools will increase and class sizes become even greater than they are at present.
- 9.7 NTTC facilities should be used for the maximum number of weeks in the year. It may be possible to enroll two cohorts of trainees simultaneously if longer periods of teaching practice are co-ordinated with staggered entry.
- 9.8 The future supply of qualified applicants willing and able to become primary teachers who hold COSC passes is a constraint on expansion. Consideration should be given to methods of increasing the numbers of qualified applicants. This might include bridging courses for the under-qualified, opportunities for mature returners to the labour market who obtained COSC or the equivalent in previous years, and dedicated bursaries for those willing to commit to teaching for a fixed number of years.

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10 Policy on Teacher Education

The above recommendations have a bearing on, among other things, the Lesotho policy on teacher education. NTTC has officially been granted autonomy by Lesotho Government, although the implementation of the decision is not yet finalised. It is anticipated that this development would positively impact on the implementation of the recommendations of this study.

It is a welcome coincidence that, although MUSTER focused on one programme only of the NTTC, DIFD has, through sponsoring the study, contributed in meaningful ways towards highlighting the need to have in place a national policy on teacher education. Therefore:

- 10.1 There is an urgent need to formulate a comprehensive set of policy guidelines on teacher education in Lesotho. The Teacher Education Task Force established in April 2002 has this goal and should proceed on a fixed timetable towards a plan that can be integrated into the Medium Term Budgetary Framework of the Government of Lesotho. The plan should include both costed projections of supply designed to meet demand, and commitments to modes of training and curricular specifications that can be used to define future provision.
- 10.2 Clear strategic decisions are needed about how to expand supply to meet demand whilst maintaining and improving quality. The current system of training cannot supply enough new teachers to meet likely demand. It has high costs and the research indicates concerns about aspects of quality.

11 Prospects for research studies

MUSTER has explored a wide range of research questions. It has not been possible to illuminate all of these in depth. More research is needed in a number of areas. These include:

- 11.1 A longitudinal study which can follow the same group of trainees through training and three years into their first appointments. This would help understand in more detail what difference training has made to the competencies, skills and attitudes of Newly Qualified Teachers and how curriculum reform might enhance quality and relevance.
- 11.2 The DEP programme at NTTC should be subject to formative evaluation year on year to contribute to cycles of continuous modification and improvement. Such an evaluation should include contributions from a mix of stakeholders as well as an NTTC perspective. Part of its concerns should be to explore and consolidate the

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pedagogical and philosophical assumptions held by different groups and facilitate the process of developing a shared view.

- 11.3 Individual members of NTTC and groups should be encouraged to undertake small-scale action research on their practice with a view to sharing results and feeding them into improved learning and teaching.
- 11.4 NTTC and the Institute of Education at the National University of Lesotho should engage collaboratively in policy research to inform decisions on teacher education policy and support the work of the national Teacher Education Task Force.

Appendix: Report on the Dissemination Seminar/Workshop

REPORT ON
JOINT SEMINAR ON DISSEMINATION OF THE MUSTER
PROJECT FINDINGS AND WORKSHOP TO FACILITATE THE
FORMULATION OF POLICY ON TEACHER EDUCATION IN LESOTHO

2nd-3rd April 2001

Sun Cabanas Hotel, Maseru, Lesotho

Summary

This joint seminar and workshop was hosted by the National University of Lesotho Institute of Education in collaboration with the University of Sussex Centre for International Education (CCIE), and sponsored by the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

The objective of the seminar was to disseminate the findings of the MUSTER study to the stakeholders, while the workshop was intended to facilitate the formulation of teacher education policy in Lesotho, and the setting up of a Task Force to spearhead this important national endeavour.

The two-day seminar/workshop was attended by 36 participants on the first day and 32 participants on the second day. Participants came from the Ministry of Education and its departments, the National University of Lesotho, the Centre for International Education at the University of Sussex, the National Teacher Training College (NTTC), the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) and representatives of Teachers' Trade Unions and of Batsoali Thutong, among others.

The first day was given over to reports on the MUSTER project. These included an outline of the 5-country research framework, summaries of the findings of the Lesotho studies, some key issues from Malawi and from South Africa, and comparative analyses of the costs and the curriculum aspects of teacher education, using insights from all five countries. The second day was devoted to teacher education in Lesotho and the formulation of policy. After two presentations on these topics, the participants formed discussion groups to consider the topics: 'The governance of teacher education', 'The Curriculum and Training', and 'Norms and Standards for Teacher Education'. The groups later reported back, with recommendations, to a Panel Discussion on the Way Forward.

At the end of the second day it was agreed to set up a steering committee or Task Force on Teacher Education Policy, to include representatives of School Proprietors, Teachers' Trade

Appendix: Report on the Dissemination Seminar/Workshop

Unions, Parents' Associations, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Local Government, National University of Lesotho, Examinations Council of Lesotho, National Teacher Training College, Student Representatives, and Early Childhood Care and Development.

It was agreed that the Task Force should consult with the stakeholders at all levels of the process of formulation and that the Institute of Education would co-ordinate the whole process and activities.

SEMINAR/WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

April 2nd, 2001

SESSION 1

08.30 – 08.45 Introductions: Mrs. V.Ntoi, Acting Director, IE
08.45 – 09.00 Official Opening by the Honourable Minister of Education
09.00 – 09.30 The MUSTER framework: Ms.J.P.Lefoka and Prof. K.Lewin

Tea/Coffee Break

SESSION 2

10.00 – 11.15 Summary of the Lesotho Project findings: Mrs. E.Sebatane, Ms.
J.P.Lefoka, Prof. H.J.Nenty, Dr. J.S.Stuart
11.15 – 11.45 MUSTER International: some key issues from Malawi: Mr. D.Kunje
11.45 – 12.15 Discussions
12.15 – 12.45 Analysis and Insights from exploring the Costs and Supply and Demand
for Teacher Education: Prof. K.Lewin
12.45 – 13.00 Discussions

Lunch Break

SESSION 3

14.00 – 15.00 Recent Policy Changes in South Africa with regard to Teacher
Education: Dr. Y.Sayed

Tea/Coffee Break

15.30 – 16.15 Curriculum Perspectives on the MUSTER project: Dr. J.S.Stuart
16.15 – 16.30 Discussions

Appendix: Report on the Dissemination Seminar/Workshop

April 3rd, 2001

SESSION 1

- 08.30 – 09.00 Teacher Education in Lesotho – the state of the art: Mrs.M.Molise
09.00 – 09.15 Discussions
09.15 – 09.45 Articulating the Process of Policy Formulation on Teacher Education in Lesotho: Prof. E.M.Sebatane
09.00 – 10.00 Discussions

Tea/Coffee Break

- 10.15 – 13.00 Group Discussions

Lunch Break

SESSION 2

- 14.00 – 15.30 Feedback from groups followed by discussions

Tea/Coffee Break

- 15.45 – 16.15 Way Forward: Discussions by a Panel of the Group Chairpersons
16.15 – 16.30 Formation of Steering Committee/Task Force on Teacher Education Policy
16.30 – 16.45 Overview of the Workshop: Mrs. V.Ntoi
16.45 – 17.00 Official Closing by the Vice-Chancellor, National University of Lesotho

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