

INTRODUCTION

In the last decade the steady stream of literature about education in the developing countries of the world has grown into a torrent. A daunting quantity of information, comment and advice is now available in articles, journals, books and reports of innumerable conferences, seminars and workshops. This is true of so many aspects of education; most especially is it true of teacher education in the developing world.

This study is the outcome of an attempt to survey the published material concerning the professional education of teachers in the developing countries of the Commonwealth. It is a modest attempt to identify some of the landmarks in an increasingly crowded field so that those who wish to penetrate further may have some idea of where they might begin. The aim, in short, is to provide a guide to the relevant material rather than a digest of it.

Within that general purpose, the emphasis is upon the process of educating the teachers in their professional role, upon what has been written about the actual education of teachers, upon what the commentators urge should be done in the colleges and institutes. This study, therefore, is not concerned with the control, management and finance of teacher education in various countries; nor is it concerned with the statistical data which the annual reports of ministries of education and comparable organizations provide. The accounts of the actual preparation of teachers or suggestions for its reform are its predominant concern.

To define the scope of the study still further, 'recent trends' have been taken to mean trends reflected in the material published in the last ten years, a period which coincides with the achievement of independence for so many Commonwealth countries. The 'developing countries of the Commonwealth' is an expression more difficult to define, but somewhat arbitrarily those countries which have achieved independence since 1947, or have not yet done so, have been treated here; in this connection, materials concerning teacher education in Rhodesia prior to U.D.I. have been included.

With regard to the varied and changing terminology of teacher education, 'teacher education' has been preferred to 'teacher training'; 'college of education' has been preferred to 'teachers' college' or 'teacher training college' or 'teacher training school'; 'pupil' is used with reference to schools and 'student' with reference to colleges. For the sake of consistency the preferred terms have been used irrespective of local usage; these preferences reflect the bias of the author and imply no criticism of locally accepted alternatives.

II

The method used in the preparation of this study is reflected in its organisation and format. It is based on abstracts prepared from all the relevant material available in the library of the University of London Institute of Education or provided by those concerned with teacher education in places as far afield as Fiji, Barbados and Nairobi. A full bibliographical list of that material arranged in alphabetical order is to be found on pages 40 to 49. A close study of the abstracts revealed that there were more

than a dozen topics about which educationists had been moved to write or speak with sufficient frequency to indicate a 'trend' in either action or thought. These topics form the material for Sections 2 to 18. In each of these sections the references to published material are followed by a number in brackets; thus: S.P. Lo's Teacher Training in Sabah (58). The number in brackets refers to the listed material in Section 19, Bibliography: 58. Lo, S.P. Teacher Training in Sabah.

III

The selection of material for inclusion in this review reflects in part the personal judgment of the compiler. It was also influenced by the availability of books and documents in London and by the generosity of persons engaged in teacher education throughout the Commonwealth. However, there may be important omissions concerning which the compiler would welcome information. Nonetheless, what emerges from an analysis of the available material is that in the developing countries of the Commonwealth, irrespective of geographical location, educationists are predominantly and repeatedly interested in four major aspects of teacher education:

i) Quantity There is widespread concern about the vast numbers of untrained teachers now in schools and about the additional teachers who are, and will be, required to staff not only the existing schools more satisfactorily but also the rapidly expanding systems of education necessary to keep abreast of both popular demand and population growth. In some countries there is the additional pressure to replace the many expatriate teachers in post-primary schools with appropriately qualified local staff. In short, the education explosion in the developing world is forcing educationists to re-examine the conventional patterns of teacher education in an endeavour to discover new ways of educating and re-educating the teaching force so that it becomes more adequate and efficient. In more than one country interest is turning to the possibilities of various patterns of in-service courses, sandwich courses, correspondence courses, courses based on radio and television, and combinations of these approaches. There is the feeling that the demand for adequately trained teachers will soon far outpace the supply unless unconventional approaches are at least attempted.

ii) Quality The interest in quality, however, is even more widespread and insistent than the concern about quantity. Throughout the written material few nouns occur more frequently than the word 'quality'; few nouns are used more earnestly. It is this concern about the quality of teachers which leads writers to reflect upon the academic calibre and the motivation of those who are selected to enter colleges of education, and to examine the ways in which such entrants are selected or might be selected more efficiently. The same concern underlies the frequent references to the calibre and continuity of the staffing of the colleges themselves; from many quarters comes the suggestion that college staffs should be specially trained. Others ask whether in fact the quality of the teaching profession can be improved unless the colleges are increased in size to the point where specialist tutors and special facilities can be made available to the generality of students, and unless the tutor-student ratio is greatly reduced. More than one report is concerned with the way in which many colleges are conducted as schools for pupils rather than colleges for students who will shortly be teachers in the adult world. And most frequent of all is the suggestion that teacher education can no longer be regarded as

a once-and-for-all injection of professional expertise guaranteed to last the teacher's working life; on every side is heard the plea for regular and on-going reinforcement and up-dating of teachers' competences by in-service courses, radio and television. But, basic to all the discussion of 'quality' and the suggestions for its improvement is a re-examination of the conventional curriculum of teacher education.

iii) Curriculum This is regarded as the heart of the matter. Reform of the curriculum of teacher education is seen as the key to the preparation of adaptable and imaginative teachers who will transform those educational systems currently dominated by rote-learning and formalized instruction. There are suggestions that the over-crowded curriculum should be pruned and made more 'relevant', that every teacher should be securely grounded in at least one subject, that 'child-study' should form the core of teacher education, that the curriculum should be 'modernized' in keeping with present trends in educational theory, that courses should be far more practical, and that the over-riding aim should be the preparation of teachers who, if not leaders of community development, are at least aware of, and knowledgeable about, the socio-economic environment in which and for which they will educate the children. There are suggestions for the reform and re-organisation of teaching practice, and for the training of students in the effective use of appropriate teaching aids and teaching materials. There is urgent advocacy of the need to bring 'new-media' to bear upon the education of teachers and to make teachers aware of the educational possibilities of the new technology. The need for more research, and most especially 'action research' related to the realities of the local classroom, is stressed in many a quarter; and the emphasis is upon discovering what is feasible in the local context. The thrust in all these suggestions is away from the preparation of formal taskmasters and towards the education of professionally equipped teachers who are more secure in their knowledge, more adaptable in their approach, more understanding of the children whom they teach, and more conversant with the environment in which they work.

iv) Co-ordination Another major trend is towards co-operation and co-ordination of effort at every level. Internationally, teacher education is regarded as an aspect of education in which external aid and technical assistance can be used to maximum effect for in no other field can comparatively little influence assist so many. At the regional level - in the Caribbean, in East and West Africa, in South-East Asia - there is growing co-operation in teacher education, in which shared experience and shared knowledge are brought to bear upon common problems. And nationally also, in the establishment of an increasing number of institutes of education, the colleges of education are being brought closer together in standards, curricula and endeavour. Indeed it is through the co-ordination of effort at international, regional and national levels that so many of the ideas concerning quantity, quality and curriculum have begun to circulate and begun to take effect.

IV

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