

MUSTER

Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project

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Discussion Paper

8

Lesotho: A Baseline Study
of the Teacher Education
System

**M. Jobo, R. Khiba, P.J. Lefoka,
N. Liphoto, P. Mapuru,
M. Molise, B. Moeti, M. Moorosi,
H.J. Nenty, V. Ntoi, B. Qhobela,
E. Sebatane, T. Sephelane**

Revised September 2000

Centre for International Education
University of Sussex Institute of Education

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Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER)

MUSTER is a collaborative research project co-ordinated from the Centre for International Education at the University of Sussex Institute of Education. It has been 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 for three years by the British Department for International Development (DFID).

MUSTER is focused on generating new understandings of teacher education before, during and after the point of initial qualification as a teacher. Its concerns include exploring how new teachers are identified and selected for training programmes, how they acquire the skills they need to teach effectively, and how they experience training and induction into the teaching profession. The research includes analytical concerns with the structure and organisation of teacher education, the form and substance of teacher education curriculum, the identity, roles and cultural experience of trainee teachers, and the costs and probable benefits of different types of initial teacher training.

MUSTER is designed to provide opportunities to build research and evaluation capacity in teacher education in developing countries through active engagement with the research process from design, through data collection, to analysis and joint publication. Principal researchers lead teams in each country and are supported by three Sussex faculty and three graduate researchers.

This series of discussion papers has been created to provide an early opportunity to share output from sub-studies generated within MUSTER for comment and constructive criticism. Each paper takes a theme within or across countries and offers a view of work in progress.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACL	Anglican Church of Lesotho
APC	Academic Programmes Committee
APTC	Advanced Primary Teachers Certificate
ATC	Advanced Teachers Certificate
BT	Beginning Teacher
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
COSC	Cambridge Overseas Schools Certificate
DPE	Diploma in Primary Education
ECOL	Examinations Council of Lesotho
FED	Faculty of Education
FIDA	Lesotho Federation of Women Lawyers
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GOL	Government of Lesotho
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IP	Induction Programme
JC	Junior Certificate
LAC	Lesotho Agricultural College
LAT	Lesotho Association of Teachers
LDTC	Lesotho Distance Training College
LEC	Lesotho Evangelical Church
LIET	Lesotho In-service Education for Teachers
LTTU	Lesotho Teachers Trade Union
MT	Mentor Teacher
Matric.	Matriculation Exam
MOE	Ministry of Education
NCC	National Curriculum Committee
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NHTC	National Health Training College
NQT	Newly Qualified Teachers
NTTC	National Teacher Training College
NUL	National University of Lesotho
PH	Primary Higher Course
PSLE	Primary Schools Leaving Exam
PTC	Primary Teachers Course
RCC	Roman Catholic Church
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SIMS	Self-instructional Materials
SRC	Student Representative Council
STC	Secondary Teachers Course
STTC	Secondary Technical Teachers Certificate
TPP	Teaching Practice Preparation
TPR	Teacher/Pupil Ratio
TSR	Teacher/Student Ratio
UBLS	University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNISA	University of South Africa

ABSTRACT

This paper begins by giving some background information about Lesotho and its education system, including patterns of enrolment, repetition, and dropout rates. It then goes on to look in detail at the teacher education system, analyse the teacher education curriculum, and examine issues around the supply and demand of teachers. There follows a discussion about the quality and effectiveness of teacher education and a consideration of teachers' roles, attitudes and identities, gender issues, resource issues, and finally a summary of the most important issues in teacher education at the present time. These are regarded as: the position and capacity of the National Teacher Training College, the suitability of the curriculum, questions of equality, particularly in relation to gender, religious affiliation, and Lesotho's relations with South Africa.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Country

Lesotho, once known as *Basotholand*, was a British colony and like the majority of countries that were colonies or protectorates, it has a British heritage in a number of fields particularly in the field of education. Lesotho, although an independent country today, is completely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. Its unique features are mountains with very high peaks and large rivers. As a result of these unique features, Lesotho is currently undertaking one of the world's largest water projects "*The Highland Water Project*" and is selling water to the Republic of South Africa. The *Basotho* people use *Sesotho* and English for communication and for official purposes. It is not uncommon to conduct meetings and workshops in English even where only locals participate in such events. However, there are other minority languages found mostly in the extreme south and north of the country; these are respectively, Xhoza and Zulu. These languages remain insignificant and there is no policy on minority languages.

The Lesotho population is estimated at over 2 million. The Sechaba Consultancy Report (Gay and Hall, 1994: 7) indicated that projections estimated there were "roughly 2.4 million" people. The report also showed that "Lesotho's population is growing at a rate of at least 2.6% per annum" (p.6). The high growth rate may well have an impact on land usage with arable land being allocated for residential sites. Furthermore, underemployment and unemployment problems, as well as fewer opportunities for education, are likely to increase as the population grows.

In economic terms, Lesotho is classified as one of the world's poorest countries. A large number of its population work in neighbouring South Africa. In fact, according to the report by Sechaba Consultants (Gay and Hall, 1994), the number of Basotho men employed in mining in the Republic of South Africa was 107,200. Also, according to this report, the Lesotho government is the largest domestic employer. Government employs roughly 10,200 teachers, and 15,000 persons in the civil service, whereas the manufacturing sector reached a total of 14,300 in 1992. 161,300 persons are said to be working in the informal sector while casual labour supports 6,100 households.

1.2 Background to the Study

Formal education in Lesotho started in 1833 and was an undertaking of the first Christian missions, which came into the country: the Lesotho Evangelical Church (LEC), the Roman Catholic Church (RCC), and the Anglican Church of Lesotho (ACL). The educational philosophy that governed the schools and colleges was denominational. In other words, it was of more importance that teachers in such schools and colleges knew about the church ministry than about teaching and learning in the schools and colleges (Task Force 1982: 2).

Thus, the central purpose of these schools was to develop Christian character. Teachers were evangelists first and pedagogues second, and their character counted more than their knowledge in the performance of their work.

A department of education was established in 1927 and was responsible for the formation of a uniform syllabus and a system of school inspection. Standard examinations for both primary and post-primary schools were introduced. This situation brought “new elements into the mission-based education system; the use of standardised qualifications and credentials. The credentials became the key for obtaining employment in the colonial civil service and the teaching force” (Task Force 1982: 2).

During the colonial period, education training for Basotho was largely directed towards employment in government administration and in the churches as teachers and catechists. There were few employment opportunities in trade and business and even less in commercial agriculture. The requirements for government and church employment were basic numeracy and knowledge of English. The schools and examinations strongly emphasised these two areas and neglected the development of technical and commercial skills. Even during the early 1980s, the terminal examination for primary and secondary education gave English and Mathematics a weighting of about 65% and all other subjects 35% (Task Force, 1982). English, Mathematics and the Science subjects are still classified as subjects that cannot be failed.

Expanding education programmes to include teacher education in order to train local teachers became a focus of the missionaries' work as early as 1915. The challenge for the missionaries was to establish denominational teacher training colleges. The Catholic Church had three colleges: one for male students, another for females, and one for mixed. The latter was to serve the mountain district. The Evangelical church also had one male college and one female college whereas the Anglican Church settled for one female teacher training college. These colleges offered programmes aimed at preparing teachers to teach in the lower and higher primary schools. The first goal of these institutions was to prepare teachers who could continue to teach Religious Education according to the practices of their respective churches. The second goal was to train local people to teach their peers in the three Rs.

The challenge for Lesotho after its independence from the British government on 4 October 1966, therefore, was to change certain aspects of Lesotho Education so that the curriculum was not the same as it was during the British period. The eight years of primary education, for example, were cut to seven years. Subjects such as "nature study, hygiene" and several others either got new names or were phased out of the curriculum.

Another challenge for the Lesotho government after independence was to reform teacher education in Lesotho. Lesotho decided to amalgamate the seven denominational colleges into a single secular public college. The National Teacher Training College (the NTTC) was as a result established in 1975. The college trains Basotho people as a nation with very little emphasis on religious denominations. While there have been advantages in the establishment of a public teacher education college, there are concerns that NTTC has not grown and has failed to set up facilities in the remote areas of Lesotho.

At present the most visible trend concerning education in Lesotho is the rate at which parents are transferring their children to South African schools. Investigation of the extent to which Lesotho children register with South African schools needs to be undertaken in the near future. Information, which might be revealed by such a study, could provide reasons for such a move, including the cost implications as well as the quality of the products of the South African schools.

1.3 Formal Education System

Formal education in Lesotho is understood to be a joint responsibility between the Lesotho government, the church and the community. The Ministry of Education in the Sixth National Development Plan (1997) pointed out that the legal framework, financial and academic control of the formal education and training system are vested in the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, 1997). Thus, the Ministry has a responsibility for the training and payment of teachers' salaries regardless of the fact that the "education system is shared between" the three institutions. It therefore seems that besides financial responsibility, government is mainly responsible for formulating educational policies, laws and regulations governing schools, providing infrastructure, developing, monitoring, and implementing curricula, as well as providing supervision of teaching through an inspectorate.

The church, which is the second partner, contributes by providing classroom facilities. The churches are free to set school fees and use them as they wish and it is not unusual to find church-halls being used as classrooms. The key role of the church in educational matters can be seen in their participation in high-powered government committees, as described in Act No. 10 of 1995:

- (a) Churches are represented in the following committees: Advisory School Committee; Teaching Service Commission; Joint Reference Committee and National Curriculum Committee;
 - (b) Their Education Secretariat organises, co-ordinates and supervises education work in their respective schools; they liaise with the Ministry on matters of management of their schools; they perform other duties as may be assigned to them by the Minister of Education; and
 - (c) They appoint teachers whose salaries are not paid by government.
- (Kingdom of Lesotho, 1995)

The third partner, the community, especially parents with children in schools, pay fees for their children's education and at times contribute financially to the provision of infrastructure. According to Act No.10 the community is supposed to be represented by area chiefs and three parents in School Advisory Boards.

However, the issue of shared responsibility, as indicated in numerous official documents, is often questioned by many educators in Lesotho. Government and church appear to have more powers than the third partner, even in the latest Education Act of 1995, which attempts

to decentralize educational administration responsibility. Thus, although private and community schools are encouraged in Lesotho, the community does not have significant influence on the administration and content of schooling. In fact, if one refers to the documentation of debates in education, it becomes clear that the populace at large has never felt any power or ownership of the education system. While churches are represented in high-powered bodies through their School Secretaries, the community's contribution is mostly financial. Table 1.1 indicates the number of schools by proprietors and reveals that most schools are church owned, hence the strong representation in government committees and/or boards.

Table 1.1 Distribution of Schools by Proprietor

Name of Proprietor	Number of Primary Schools	As % of total	Number of Secondary Schools	As % of total
Government and Community Schools	30	2%	16	8%
Lesotho Evangelical Church (RCC)	476	38%	61	31%
Anglican Church of Lesotho (ACL)	173	14%	32	16%
Roman Catholic Church	505	41%	73	37%
AME	23	2%	5	3%
Other Missions	33	3%	8	4%
Total	1240		195	

(Source: Ministry of Education 1995)

The Catholic and the Lesotho Evangelical churches have the highest proportion of schools at both the primary and the secondary levels. It is not clear whether the category of "Government and Community Schools" includes "private/ English medium" schools so the table above does not give any insight into the number of these schools. Act. No. 10 of 1995 indicates that private schools are classified as those schools, which are owned by individuals, groups of individuals or organizations, and are not funded by the government and it would be useful to be able to distinguish the two types of schools. Table 1 however, does illustrate that most students go to church schools and that the Catholic Church has the highest number of schools and pupils in the whole country. In 1995, for example, it had 2500 more pupils in its schools than the LEC.

In essence, this chapter shows that the Lesotho formal education system has a long history. It has been heavily influenced by the work of missionaries and the period of British rule and, in the majority of cases, schools are owned by the churches. This situation adds to constraints experienced by parents as well as other stakeholders. One such national constraint is that the number of schools has increased in an unplanned manner and the unplanned increase may impact on the quality of teaching and employment of the personnel in Lesotho schools. Moreover, since Lesotho does not have a clearly articulated education policy, education is not free and for most children whose parents cannot afford to pay fees primary education is terminal. High enrolment in primary education, which decreases drastically in higher levels of the education system, is an indication that the drop out rate is also high in Lesotho.

1.4 The Baseline Study

The Lesotho baseline study focuses on a number of broad issues and it makes an attempt to respond to these topics in the following chapters:

- **Chapter 2: Overview of the Main Characteristics of the Education System.** This chapter gives detailed information about the Lesotho educational system and reveals that the educational system is experiencing problems that might be peculiar to Lesotho. Primary education is terminal for the majority of students; and both primary and secondary education operate with a certain percentage of either underqualified or unqualified teachers.
- **Chapter 3: Overview of the Main Characteristics of the Teacher Education System.** This chapter clearly shows that teacher education has been offered at various levels to prepare teachers for the primary and secondary schools. Teachers who teach without a professional qualification have various pathways through which they could upgrade their credentials. The emerging issue is that the extent to which the various programmes are cost effective is still to be established.
- **Chapter 4: Preliminary Analysis of Teacher Education Curricula.** The focus of this chapter is the way that the NTTC has reacted to the challenges facing a developing institution of higher learning: programmes have been initiated, tested and revised or terminated. The college programmes have been scrutinised and departments have been reshuffled so that the major ones are primary and secondary education. The College has recently raised the entrance qualifications in an attempt to raise the standards of the personnel enrolling in the college as well as maintaining education standards in general.
- **Chapter 5: Supply and Demand for Teachers.** Since Lesotho has one college for training primary and secondary teachers, it can be argued that it will take the college a long time to provide schools with sufficient teachers based on projections dependent on pupil enrolment in primary and secondary schools. The statistical information provided by the Ministry of Education Planning Unit is not sufficient for making informed plans. Therefore, chapter 5 emphasises that the output of the college can only be expanded by increasing the intake, requiring the construction of additional facilities. The extent to which the current facilities are used to their maximum potential still needs to be investigated.
- **Chapter 6: The Quality and Effectiveness of Teacher Education.** This chapter contends that the selection methods for teacher education need to be investigated thoroughly. There are occasions when the college has to accept students whose suitability for training is doubtful. It further elaborates on the availability of applicants, noting that there are plenty of applicants and, more often than not, the college finds it difficult to take all those who qualify. The chapter finally alludes to lack of support to the NTTC graduates. Currently the system depends on the University voluntary induction programme, but the

future of this programme is in doubt since it is voluntary. An important question concerns the calibre of the persons joining teacher education, the knowledge they bring with them and the extent to which the college helps its students to acquire content and skills that will enable them to become better teachers.

- **Chapter 7: Teacher Roles, Attitudes and Identities.** This chapter draws attention to both the informal and formal settings where education takes place. Research has shown that students expect teachers to be knowledgeable and competent, to hold high morals, to be committed to work, and to mark and return scripts on time. This chapter is also concerned with the attitude of the general public to teachers and the demoralisation that teachers experience through the poor conditions within Lesotho schools. Both the school culture and the perceptions of the general public contribute to the low morale of primary school teachers. The perceptions of the teaching profession that newly qualified teachers bring with them from college and the prevailing attitudes of those who are already part of the system are identified as areas of potential research.
- **Chapter 8: Gender Issues and Teacher Education.** This chapter highlights some critical issues relating to gender. A distinctive feature of Lesotho is that the female literacy rate is higher than that of males. The chapter provides clear illustrations that there are more women training to be teachers, as well as serving in schools, but that the power-related positions are mostly held by men and that this is true even at the college level. An emerging issue is the extent to which the college is aware and helps candidates to be aware of the current gender developments in Lesotho, at the regional level as well as internationally.
- **Chapter 9: Resources for Teacher Education.** This chapter alludes to the scarcity of natural resources in Lesotho and the need for the country to develop its human resources. It highlights the overall education budget and how it is allocated. It discusses unit costs and cost effectiveness for teacher training. Finally, the chapter indicates that efficiency and quality cannot be effectively addressed at the NTTC when it is forced to operate under civil service regulations. It takes note of the fact that the government has recently passed an Act addressing the autonomy of the college. This covers a wide range of areas, such as having in place a system of governance for internal administration and management, appointment and promotion for all staff. It notes that the Act will allow greater flexibility in many areas and will also increase the capacity of the college to allocate resources according to established priorities and to respond more quickly to perceived needs and problems.
- **Chapter 10: Current Issues.** This chapter draws out some of the themes from the study to highlight their effects on primary teacher education

CHAPTER TWO

OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LESOTHO EDUCATION SYSTEM

2.1 The Lesotho Education System

The education system is organised into three main cycles according to level and type. Primary education, the first level, extends over seven years and constitutes the basic education phase. The main aims of the basic education cycle were identified by the Government of Lesotho in 1988:

The primary school curriculum is universally regarded as the vehicle for imparting basic education and life skills that children need to meet life challenges. In addition to the skills of writing, reading and numeracy, children are expected to be introduced, during their primary school years, to basic messages and concepts on environment, nutrition, health, population and civic education. (GOL Clarification Seminar Report 1988: 3)

The primary school cycle leads to the Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination, which determines access to secondary school. The second level consists of two stages. Junior secondary extends over three years and leads to the Junior Certificate (JC). Upper secondary lasts for a further two years and 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), the National Health Training College (NHTC), and the Lesotho Agricultural College (LAC). Also, there are a range of other vocational and technical institutions (Sebatane et al., 1992: 3). (See Figure1, Lesotho's Education System, in Appendix 1).

Figure 2 (in appendix 2) maps the main structural features of the Lesotho education system. The educational pyramid has a broad base of enrolments narrowing sharply at the top. In the early 1990s more than 88% of the 360,000 students in Lesotho were enrolled in the primary school system. The Education Sector Plan (1991/92-1995/97) draws attention to the extent to which this part of the school system is severely overcrowded and understaffed. Primary education is terminal for the majority of pupils. At the beginning of this decade, only about a quarter of those who entered grade 1 managed to complete primary education successfully. Of those who did complete, approximately 50% were admitted to secondary schools (Chabane et al., 1989). More recent estimates suggest that by mid-decade the situation had improved. Of 1000 pupils entering grade 1, about 450 completed grade 7 (Government of Lesotho Bureau of Statistics 1996¹). 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. By late 1997 the gross enrolment rate at primary was

¹ Other analyses put the graduation rates higher though they arrive at similar average years for graduation and dropouts (MOE Planning and Statistics May 1997 Indicators for Educational Planning and Policy Formation).

estimated to be approaching 100%, and the net enrolment rate was thought to be around 70% (MOE Education Statistics 1977).

Secondary enrolments have been growing faster than primary. This reflects growing demand for access to higher levels of education as access to primary education becomes nearly universal. The Education Sector plan notes a concern that the rate of expansion may have been too rapid to ensure that quality is sustained:

...the demand for secondary education is increasing at high rate and the rapid expansion of this level of education has adversely affected the efficiency in secondary and may partly be responsible for the worsening examination results at O level (Ministry of Education, 1991: 174)

Most recent plan targets (Government of Lesotho Development Plan 1989/99-2000/01) anticipate that the growth in secondary enrolments will continue and will move towards net participation rates of over 40%. Higher education enrolments are very low. The National University has about 2000 students at all levels, representing no more than about 1% of the relevant age group. Selection is therefore very competitive and access is restricted.

The education system in Lesotho is a shared responsibility between state, churches and communities. The great majority of schools are owned and managed by church organisations, whilst the government pays teachers salaries and meets most of the costs of maintenance and learning materials. Primary and secondary schools are fee-paying. It is likely that fees for primary schooling will be abolished in the year 2000.

2.2 Patterns of Enrolment

There were 369,000 pupils in primary schools in 1997 distributed across the seven grades. Secondary schools enrolled about 71,000 pupils. Almost all children are enrolled in Standard 1. The evolution of enrolments from 1988 to 1997 is shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Enrolments at Primary and Secondary 1988-97

Year	Primary			Secondary		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1988	154323	191201	345524	17321	26374	43695
1989	156990	191828	348818	18235	26869	45104
1990	159199	192454	351653	18630	27671	46301
1991	163428	197716	361144	18995	27577	46572
1992	166499	196518	363017	21106	30789	51895
1993	164709	189571	354280	22565	32747	55312
1994	172570	193999	366569	25020	36595	61615
1995	179407	198604	378011	26975	39479	66454
1996	178481	196147	374628	27742	39712	67454
1997	177414	191481	368895	29634	41841	71475

Enrolments at primary have grown at a slow rate over the period, increasing by only 6% over 10 years. In the most recent period enrolment has declined. Secondary enrolments have expanded more smoothly by more than 70% over the same period. Gender disparities in enrolment are apparent at both levels with females consistently outnumbering males. These differences have diminished slightly at primary but have grown at secondary.

It has been suggested that the fall in primary enrolments is related to migration to the RSA and to the arrangements made with relatives to school some children in the RSA where it is believed standards may sometimes be higher. However, there is no data, which enables these speculations to be tested. The 1996 census does show that the size of the school age group was declining in the mid 1990s whilst the number of 12 year olds was about 52,700, the population of 6 and 7 year olds was estimated to be only 45,000 (Government of Lesotho Bureau of Statistics 1996: 31). Some part of the reason for declining enrolments is therefore likely to be linked to these reductions in the size of the age group. Lesotho is located in a region with some of the highest incidence of HIV/AIDS in the world and it may be that part of the reduction in the size of the school age cohort is also related to lowered fertility. The UNDP (1999) reports data, which shows that, amongst blood donors, 11% of high school students and 21% of adults are sero-positive. This suggests that rates in the general population including teachers are unlikely to be much lower. This will have a significant impact on enrolment growth rates over time as fertility declines. It may have a more immediate impact on teacher attrition depending on what rates of infection actually apply.

Lesotho has 1,259 primary schools catering for 368,900 pupils. 8,100 teachers are employed, resulting in an average pupil teacher ratio of 45.6: 1. Of these teachers 22.5% are unqualified. As noted above, most schools are under the management of Church authorities as can be seen in Table 1.1 in Chapter 1.

The fifth Five-Year Education Sector Development Plan, 1991/92 – 1995/96, sought to improve the quality of primary education by reducing pupil-teacher ratios. During the plan period the pupil-teacher ratio was reduced from nearly 60: 1 in 1988 to 46: 1 in 1997. Also, through a massive classroom construction programme the pupil-classroom ratio was reduced from over 100 to 71:1. The number of teachers per class averages about 1: 1. At the secondary level pupil teacher ratios have risen slightly from 20: 1 to 23: 1, as have pupil classroom ratios from 37: 1 to 41: 1. The number of teachers per class is between 1.7 and 1.9 (See Table 2.2).

Table 2.2 Pupil Teacher and Class Teacher Ratios 1988-97

Year	Primary		Secondary	
	Pupil Teacher Ratio	Pupil Class Ratio	Pupil Teacher Ratio	Pupil Class Ratio
1988	50.8	101.8	21.9	37.4
1989	55.6	98.6	21.0	37.0
1990	54.5	99.0	20.9	37.4
1991	54.0	90.9	19.3	36.8
1992	51.4	87.6	21.2	39.2
1993	48.6	82.2	21.9	39.6
1994	49.3	82.1	23.7	41.0
1995	47.7	77.6	24.5	41.3
1996	47.4	75.7	23.9	40.1
1997	45.6	71.2	23.0	41.6

The age distribution of pupils is wide (Table 2.3). The MOE admissions policy for Standard 1 is that children must be 6 years old when they begin primary education. There are situations where pupils start either below or above 6 years old. In extreme cases, children might be as old as 16 years when they enrol for the first time in primary education. Most of the children who start school late are male. This state of affairs is partly due to the responsibilities assigned to boys by their families, as male children are sometimes made to look after animals (See Chapter 8 for further discussion of this issue).

Table 2.3 Enrolments by Age 1997

Age	Grade 1		Grade 4		Grade 7	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
5	623	658				
6	7352	8070				
7	11127	10964				
8	8038	7142	113	205		
9	4446	3541	1207	2498		
10	2356	1669	2669	4514		
11	1221	812	4189	6000	94	205
12	700	397	4940	5544	559	1540
13	420	218	4416	3870	1415	3506
14	195	90	3303	2439	2226	4817
15	121	43	2443	1407	2981	5032
16	91	15	1287	639	2725	3337
17			695	277	2358	2255
18			215	76	1699	1019
19			132	37	796	323
20					380	96
20+					238	40

The transition rate into secondary from the last grade of primary is between 70% and 80%. However, it should be remembered that by grade seven about half of all primary pupils have left the system. Enrolments in the first year of secondary are around 24,000, which can be

compared to grade seven enrolments of 38,000 (both these figures are uncorrected for repeaters). 80% of those who pass the Primary School Leaving Examination are offered secondary school places.

2.3 Repetition and Dropout Rates

Rates of repetition and dropout are high and continue to represent a major source of inefficiency. Both are related to the quality of instruction and hence the effectiveness of teacher education. On average over 20% of students are repeating primary grades. Dropout is high in grades 1 and 6 (10%) and averages 7.5% over the primary cycle. At secondary level, enrolments in grade 8 (Form A), the first year of secondary, are 23,500. By grade 11 these have dwindled to 10,000 and at the end of secondary (grade 12) to 5,900. Thus, as many as 33% of students drop out over the first three years and a further 24% after the fourth year. The pattern of enrolments by grade shows how steep the decline in participation is (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4 Enrolments by Grade 1996

Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Number	70309	63381	58147	53115	45874	40428	37641	23643	18568	13307	10038	5919
% of previous grade		90.1	91.7	91.3	86.4	88.1	93.1	62.8	78.5	71.7	75.4	59.0

Repetition rates have not been declining significantly. In 1996 the pattern by grade reflected the pattern shown in Table 2.4. From Table 2.5 it can be seen that repetition is consistently higher for males than females. It is greatest in grades 1 to 4, and increases in grade 7 as a result of pupils retaking examinations. Average rates of repetition do not seem to have fallen much since 1993 when there was a campaign to reduce the amount of repetition. The only significant changes subsequently have been an increase in the rate of repetition in grade 7 related to the PSLE examination. Some repetition is the result of pupils returning to school to re-enrol after a period and being placed in the class they last attended for a second year, rather than that more appropriate to their age. The argument is that these pupils will not cope with higher level work after a break from schooling.

Repetition is a result of school level decisions on whether to promote pupils based on school tests at the end of each grade. These tests are not standardised and it is likely that decisions on repetition are based on different standards in each school. The amounts of repetition reflect some consensus amongst teachers about the proportion of pupils who have failed to assimilate the curriculum sufficiently to proceed to the next grade. Rates over 25% suggest that there is a curriculum issue, and a teaching and learning problem. If more than one in four children fail to reach a minimum level to proceed in some grades then learning is not effective for as many as a quarter of all children. Arguably, the curriculum is inappropriate for the capabilities of these pupils and/or the delivery of the curriculum fails to recognise their learning needs sufficiently. At the very least this is an issue that teacher education needs to consider seriously.

Dropout rates are also shown in Table 2.5. Again these are consistently higher for males than females. They are greatest in grade 1, and in grades 4, 5, and 6. Furthermore, dropout rates appear to have risen from 1993 to 1995 in all grades. The reasons for this are not clear. There may be an effect related to the democratisation of the RSA if significant numbers of children were placed in schools in the RSA. It may also be that austerity has resulted in a marginal decline in enrolment related to inability to pay school fees. There is no systematic data that enables the reasons for dropout to be unpacked. However, as with elsewhere, several studies show a clear relationship between poverty and dropout so it is plausible that rising school fees in the context of a stagnant economy may have been a contributory factor.

Table 2.5 Repetition, Dropout and Promotion Rates by Grade 1977

	G 1		G 2		G 3		G 4		G 5		G 6		G 7	
	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.
Repetition	26.9	21	26.9	19.1	24.9	17.4	24.5	17.4	18.7	13.8	14.5	11	17.4	15.4
Dropout	10.7	9.1	6	3.6	6.9	4.7	9.6	5.6	9.7	6.7	10.7	8.8	5.3	7.6
Promotion	62.4	69.9	67.1	77.3	68.2	77.9	65.9	77	71.6	79.5	74.8	80.2	77.3	77

Promotion rates between grades in primary schools have fallen slightly since 1993. This is a direct consequence of increased dropout. These rates are consistently higher for females (Table 2.5). In several grades, female promotion rates are fully 10 percentage points better than those for males. Nearly 40% of males are not promoted from grade 1 to grade 2 each year.

2.4 Assessment

Tests and end-of-year examinations characterise assessment at primary level. The MOE encourages the development of school-based assessments and assignments and sees them as feeding in to end-of-year assessment, which determines promotion to the next grade. At the end of seven years of primary schooling, pupils sit for the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE), which serves as selection to secondary schools. Average pass rates for 1995-97 were about 76%. These pass rates were lower than those in the early 1990s which tended to fall between 85% and 90%. The number obtaining first class passes was around 9%, second class 16%, and third class 51%.

Table 2.6 Examination Results Primary Leaving Certificate 1995-7

	No. in Std 7	No of Candidates	1st Class	%	2nd Class	%	3rd Class	%	Pass Total	No Failed	% Passed	% Enrolment Passed
1995	35798	35018	2764	7.9	4619.0	13.2	17774	50.8	25157	9875	71.8	70.3
1996	39271	38216	3762	9.8	7744.0	20.3	18774	49.1	30280	7936	79.2	77.1
1997	38418	36885	3217	8.7	5458.0	14.8	19955	54.1	28630	8255	77.6	74.5

(Note: The pass rates at secondary level are shown in Table 2.7)

Table 2.7 Pass Rates at COSC 1995-1997

Year	Class 1	%	Class 2	%	Class 3	%	Total SC	%SC Pass	GCE	%	Fail	%	Total
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

Although the percentages suggest that students proceed well from the primary education to post-primary, they also reveal that admission into secondary school is difficult. The PSLE results, when studied against the Junior Certificate results, confirm that it is not automatic for Lesotho children to be admitted into secondary education. Whereas 30,280 passed PSLE in the 1996 examinations, only 23,700 enrolled in Form A in the following year (including repeaters). This clearly means that more than 7,000 students could not be admitted into secondary schooling in Lesotho. Admission into secondary school appears to include somewhat less than 70% of the number of successful candidates.

2.5 Teachers

Central issues in any educational system are the type and quality of teaching staff. The levels of achievement and the amount that is learned all depend on the quality and numbers of teachers. Teachers in Lesotho hold various qualifications and some of them teach without a professional certificate, which seems likely to affect the performance of pupils. In 1997 there were 1,817 unqualified teachers and 6,272 who were qualified at primary level. The certificates held by unqualified teachers ranged from primary leaving certificate (Standard 6/7/8) to COSC/GCE. The reality of the matter is that large numbers teach without a professional certificate and the majority of such teachers are women, as are the majority of primary teachers.

Table 2.8 Teachers in Primary Schools by Age and Qualification 1993 – 1997

Age Group	1993		1994		1995		1996		1997	
	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

The practice of employing unqualified teachers is less of a problem, but still significant in secondary schools. Unqualified teachers hold COSC qualifications and in the majority of cases teach the non-science subjects and about 20% are expatriates (Table 2.9).

Table 2.9 Teachers in Secondary Schools by Local or Expatriate and Qualification 1993-1997

Type of teacher	1993		1994		1995		1996		1997	
	Qual.	Unqual.	Qual.	Unqual.	Qual.	Unqual.	Qual.	Unqual.	Qual.	Unqual.
Local	1348	602	1557	535	1737	472	1871	466	2082	498
Expat	502	74	473	32	442	58	429	51	490	31
Total	1850	676	2030	567	2179	530	2300	517	2572	529
%	73	27	78	22	80	20	82	18	83	17

The quality of the teaching force therefore needs to be improved. Unqualified teachers should be trained and the data on pupil-teacher ratios suggests that there is also a need to increase the number of primary teachers to reduce class sizes.

CHAPTER THREE

OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TEACHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN LESOTHO

3.1 Overview

In Lesotho teacher training is confined to two institutions: the National Teacher Training College (NTTC) and the National University of Lesotho (NUL) through its Faculty of Education and Institute of Education. Since 1984 primary teacher training has been carried out only by the NTTC. This chapter will therefore focus on the college, the developments that have taken place there, its current courses and practices, and the changes on which it is now embarking.

3.1.1 Early Developments

Initially, there were seven teacher training colleges that were owned and operated by the missionaries with the government assisting in the payment of staff salaries. The churches were responsible for the day-to-day administration of schools, the engagement, transfer, promotion and dismissal of teachers, the maintenance and improvement of facilities, and the supply of instructional materials. The system was in many ways inefficient, not only because the colleges were small (average enrolment was 105), but also because training was done at three different levels:

- (1) The 3 year Lesotho Primary Teachers Course (LPTC) which admitted students who had completed and had passed the then 8 years of primary school education;
- (2) The 2-year Primary Higher course (PH) which admitted students after junior certificate;
- (3) The 2-year Advanced Teachers Certificate (ATC), which admitted students after Matric./COSC.

The Advanced Teachers Certificate course was offered in one college in alternate years. The system of only taking applicants in alternating the years explains why the intake in these colleges was low. At that time the country only trained teachers for the primary schools. Teachers for higher secondary work were recruited from the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (U.B.L.S.) or from abroad.

3.1.2 The National Teacher Training College (NTTC)

In the years 1974/75 the seven teacher training colleges owned by churches were amalgamated into one teacher training college: the National Teacher Training College (NTTC). The NTTC was established “to provide a common base of training for Primary and Junior Secondary teachers in the country” (Task Force, 1982). The Lesotho government decided that it would be easier to implement curriculum changes if the seven colleges were merged into one college run by the government. The college would then be in a better position to offer a range of modern both pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes. That way, a college graduate would be in a better position to contribute in

meaningful ways to developing the primary and junior secondary school system in the country.

In planning the new establishment, the College planners felt that student teachers must be trained in various aspects of teacher education to enable them to cope with the teaching life after their training. The plan was to provide student teachers with adequate preparation in the subject matter of each branch of study and in the related pedagogy. Student teachers were also to be prepared in other related areas, using all the resources afforded by the social and cultural environment of the college. For example, they were to participate in decision-making processes within the college so that they would be prepared for their future role in the schools and communities that they would serve. Thus, the College was interested in trainees' personal and professional self-development by encouraging them to have a positive attitude to lifelong education.

3.2 Governance of the College

The National Teacher Training College has been until now an institution of the Lesotho Government, under direct control of the Ministry of Education (MOE) and is administered by a Board of Governors (the highest policy-making body), together with senior staff of the college. The Board of Governors consists of the Principal Secretary of the MOE who chairs the Board, the Director of the College who acts as the secretary and the Dean of the NUL Faculty of Education. Other members of the College Board are representatives of churches and of the teacher associations, as well as the student union. Thus, the secretariats of the three main churches of Lesotho: the Anglican Church of Lesotho (ACL), Lesotho Evangelical Church (LEC) and the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) represent the churches, while member of the Lesotho Association of Teachers (LAT) and the Student Representative Council (SRC) represent their constituencies.

In April 1999, the college was scheduled to become an autonomous institution to be known as the Lesotho College of Education. The debate on the autonomy of the college started as far back as 1987 (see Turner 1987) and is still ongoing at the time of writing.

3.2.1 College Affiliation

The college is affiliated to the National University of Lesotho (NUL) through its Faculty of Education. Academic policies, examination results, academic programmes and many other related matters are presented by the Faculty of Education in the relevant committees of the university for approval. The Director of the College sits in the NUL senate meetings where most of the college matters are presented. The affiliation is intended to ensure that the College maintains high standards. For example, the College has in place committees responsible for academic courses and their development. The operational pattern is that new programmes and courses are generated at the departmental level and discussed in the Academic Board meeting. The procedure requires the College to present new programmes to the Faculty of Education at NUL, which in turn will present it to a Senate Committee, Academic Programmes Committee (APC) and eventually Senate and Council. It should be observed, however, that the Board does not have any representation of serving teachers who should be part of decisions made about programmes offered to future teachers.

3.3 College Programmes

The college, since its inception, has been offering both pre-service and in-service programmes. The pre-service programmes are usually of a three-year duration. The first programmes led to the Primary Teacher Certificate (PTC), the Advanced Primary Teacher Certificate (APTC) and the Secondary Teacher Certificate (STC). In 1980 NTTC introduced a new programme aimed at training teachers in technical subjects for secondary schools by providing a teacher training course to those persons that held trade test certificates; this led to the Secondary Technical Teachers Certificate (STTC).

However, new developments have taken place and the College has had to phase out and/or upgrade some of its programmes. For example, there is a move towards replacing Certificates with Diplomas and in 1991 the College replaced the STTC programme with a Diploma in Technology Education. In the same year, the APTC programme ceased recruiting. In 1994, the College launched a Diploma in Primary Education (DPE) programme aimed at providing the PTC holders with higher credentials. The next step is the introduction of a Diploma in Education (Primary), which will eventually replace both the PTC and the DPE.

3.3.1 Admission Requirements

Admission into the various NTTC programmes is stated under each programme in terms of minimum entrance qualifications, though those with higher qualifications have precedence. The trend is towards raising the entry standard.

The Primary Teachers Course (PTC)

Originally, this required a good pass in Junior Certificate (JC). Applicants who had taught before and held the required certificate at the level of pass were also considered for admission; those with in-service qualifications were given opportunities as well. In 1992, the entry standard was raised; instead of a minimum of second class pass in JC, applicants were required to have a minimum of GCE: two (2) credits plus two (2) passes translated into four (4) subject passes.

The Advanced Primary Teachers' (Administration) Course (APTC)

Entrance into this programme was a teacher's certificate with post-training teaching experience. This criterion was important since the course was aimed at training principals of primary schools.

The Secondary Teachers' Course (STC)

Admission into the secondary teachers' programme was a high school certificate with a good pass. The college also considered certificates offered at the Agriculture College, as well as Home Economics institutions, provided a student had at least a good pass at JC. Currently, applicants are required to have a Cambridge Overseas School Certificate (COSC) with 4 credits.

The Secondary Technical Teacher's Course (STTC)

Entrants into this programme were also expected to hold a Cambridge Overseas School Certificate (COSC). The programme requirement was a pass in a Technical Subject taken at COSC level or a craft Certificate (in a relevant Craft Study taken from a recognised Technical Institute).

3.3.2: Diploma in Primary Education

When the programme was launched, a first class pass in PTC or APTC with three years teaching experience was the requirement for admission. Currently an applicant with a minimum of a second-class pass in APTC, PTC or Lesotho In-service Education for Teachers (LIET) level 6 is admissible. Teaching experience is still considered an important element of the admissions criteria.

Diploma in Education (Primary) (1998 entry)

Entry requirements for this new diploma are the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate with credits in four subjects and a pass in a fifth subject. Since the programme is intended for high school leavers, teaching experience is not a requirement.

There is also a general admission regulation concerning the English passes. In the Lesotho context English is one of the subjects, which students of all levels of education have to pass in order to proceed to the second level of study. One of the college admission regulations, therefore, is that applicants with a pass, or credit in English Language or in English Literature have higher chances of being admitted into the college programmes.

In addition, all entrants undergo an Entrance Selection Test, the objective of which is to measure the candidate's aptitude for Teacher Education. The College administers an oral test in order to ensure that the admission policy is fully implemented.

3.4 Enrolment

Table 3.1 indicates enrolment patterns for selected years and shows an overall increase in student numbers. The gender balance during the academic years 1992 to 1997 has fluctuated (see table 3.2) but on average, the intake of students over the past five years has been 24% males and 76% females. The tendency to have more females in various sectors of life in Lesotho is very common. (Chapter 8 provides reasons for the gender imbalance).

Table 3.1 Enrolment at the National Teacher Training College for the years 1993, 1994, 1995 and 1997 by course and sex

NAME OF COURSE	1993		1994		1995		1997	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
PTC	38	320	52	312	130	233	57	358
APTC	6	101	14	90	6	56		
STC	61	132	52	149	64	158	80	184
Dip. In Prim	7	51	8	50	15	90	22	131
Dip Tech. Ed.	7	21	28					
Total	119	632	154	601	249	546	188	678

Table 3.2 Summary of Enrolment Tables by Sex

Year	Male	%	Female	%
1992	165	22.8	558	77.2
1993	119	15.8	632	84.2
1994	154	20.4	601	79.6
1995	249	31.0	546	69.0
1997	188	28.0	678	72.0

3.4.1 Completion rate

The academic years 1990 to 1994 figures show a very low failure rate. For example, as table 3.3 shows, the total number of students from 1990 to 1994 was 1068 and only 18 students failed the examinations outright. There is a need to investigate this issue further in order to establish the reasons that might have contributed to this low failure rate in the years 1990 to 1994 and to find out whether the pattern persists. The assumption is that this might be a result of entry requirements and the quality of the tutors.

Table 3.3 Summary of results for all courses (1990 – 1994)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	TOTAL
No. of candidates	181	283	203	209	192	1068
No. of Distinctions	29	17	31	47	47	171
No. of passes 1 st	74	53	126	95	95	443
No. of passes 2 nd	30	110	38	15	16	209
No. of passes 3 rd		95	1	1	1	98
Resits	43	6	7	46	27	129
Fail	5	2		5	6	18
Total	133	275	196	158	159	921
% passed*	73.5	97.2	96.6	75.6	82.8	86.2

(* Does not include successful resits for which data is not available)

Table 3.4 Certificates awarded at the National Teacher Training College, the total number of candidates and the percentage that passed for years 1991 -1994 for each course

Name of Certificate	1991 Candidates		1992 Candidates		1993 Candidates		1994 Candidates	
	No.	% pass	No.	% pass	No.	% pass	No.	% pass
PTC	179	96.6	106	100	130	64.6	115	73.0
APTC	26	100						
STC	68	97.1	75	94.7	61	96.7	61	96.7
STTC	10	100	13	100	11	100	11	100
Dipl. In Tech. Ed.			9	66.7	7	57.1	5	100
Total	283	97.2	203	96.6	209	75.6	192	82.8
Change (%) from previous year	56.4	23.7	-28.3	-0.6	3.0	-21.0	-8.1	7.2

(Notes: Candidates sat the examination in 1993 and were awarded the certificates in 1994; and the number of passes includes residuals from the previous year)

3.4.2 Certificates Awarded

Table 3.4 shows the total number of candidates and the percentage passes in each course for the years 1991-1994. Missing from this table is any information about students who dropped out during the course or had to re-sit examinations.

3.5 Alternative Pathways for Untrained Teachers to Become Trained

The history of teacher education in Lesotho shows that in 1975, when the NTTC was established, there were 4,250 primary school teachers serving in the country; of these 1400 were untrained. At the secondary level, there were 600 secondary school teachers of whom 200 were untrained (Kingdom of Lesotho 1984/85). The Government of Lesotho has, over the years, worked hard to eradicate the situation in which untrained teachers served in Lesotho schools. Teachers were trained through short courses, vacation courses, on-the-job training, seminar workshops and self-instructional materials.

3.5.1 LIET Programme

The Lesotho In-service Education for Teachers (L.I.E.T) was proposed by the NTTC In-service Committee to the Central In-service Committee of the Ministry of Education (MOE) in 1976. (The National Teacher Training College, 1976). The programme took off in January 1978 with an intake of 360 primary school teachers registered for level I. Seven LIET programmes were offered and at the end of each level, a certificate was offered which would serve as an entry qualification to the next level.

At the initial stage of the programme, the college worked in partnership with the Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre (LDTC) and the entrants were supposed to register and take content courses with the LDTC. Although the English, Sesotho and Mathematics content were for a Junior Certificate student, teachers were not necessarily prepared to write the JC

examination. The intention was to improve their content in the Sesotho, English and Mathematics subjects. However, LIET programmes have, like the pre-service programmes, undergone some changes. Since 1993, the college has been offering two LIET programmes instead of 7; LIET 2 was upgraded to PTC while the Head Teachers' programme was upgraded to Level 6. The PTC programme extends over three and a half years duration while the Head teacher's programme is still two and a half years.

3.5.2 In-service Training and Distance Learning - Colleges outside Lesotho

The Lesotho government has taken drastic steps towards reducing the number of un-certificated teachers found in Lesotho schools through offering in-service courses at the NTTC. However, progress is slow partly due to the fact that NTTC is the only college, which is undertaking such upgrading work on behalf of the government. The College is not able to admit all teachers who apply for in-service programmes. As a consequence of lack of sufficient teacher education colleges in Lesotho, teachers turn to foreign institutions and enrol for further studies in teacher education:

(a) The College of Preceptors

This college is based in the United Kingdom and it offers in-service training to teachers by distance mode. Teachers register with the College through the Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECOL). Since the course is by distance mode, the Lesotho Association of Teachers (LAT) and private sectors organise tutoring at the local level.

b) South African Colleges and Universities

Teachers register with colleges and universities in South Africa. The university, which most people enrol with is the University of South Africa (UNISA). Teachers who enrol with the South African universities have more advantages compared to those who register with overseas institutions because of proximity, which allows them to freely visit these institutions. The South African context is familiar to the majority of Lesotho teachers and the South African Rand is not as expensive as the foreign currencies especially the British Pound.

(c) American Universities

American universities are also reaching out to offer in-service education to teachers in Lesotho. Lately, there are institutions such as New Port, which offers a degree for primary school teachers. The credibility of this particular institution has been criticised locally due to, among other things, its apparently commercial nature; degrees are offered for a shorter time, yet the courses are questionable for the Lesotho context.

The distance education colleges and universities referred to in this section have one common weakness and that is they do not provide for supervised teaching practice for Lesotho teachers. Most of them seem to be commercial and do not have the needs of Lesotho teachers at heart. However, since Lesotho does not have adequate facilities to cater for teachers' needs, teachers have no alternative but to turn to these institutions.

3.5.3 District Resource Teachers

These are teachers recruited from the primary school teachers' pool who are trained to help in under-staffed schools, or in multi-grade schools. They train untrained teachers in various professional aspects, particularly in teaching methods and ways of dealing with multi-standard classrooms.

At the secondary school level, there is a group of resource teachers who are also engaged in helping secondary schools by offering in-service courses to the unqualified post-primary school teachers. It has to be noted, though, that the kind of short courses offered by the Resource Teachers at either primary or secondary level do not go towards a certificate. They are aimed at providing support to teachers who may need such assistance to cope with their day-to-day teaching assignments.

3.6 Management Structure of the NTTC

The Principal Secretary of Education (Chief Administrative Officer of the whole Ministry of Education) is directly responsible for the NTTC. At the head of the College is the Director, who has two Deputy Directors under him. One Deputy Director deals with academic affairs and is responsible for all the Divisions (Primary, Secondary and In-service) as well as the Library. The other Deputy Director is responsible for administrative matters, dealing with the Registrar, the Bursar, and the Student Welfare Officer.

3.6.1. Divisions and Departments

In the beginning, the primary and secondary programmes were administered jointly and staff used to teach in both programmes. This arrangement was seen not to be conducive to the development of specialised skills for primary teaching among either staff or students and also meant that primary might suffer in terms of resource allocation as a result of the usual perception that secondary has higher status. It was therefore decided that the Primary and Secondary programmes should be run as two separate divisions. In 1991, the College implemented the decision, which led to it being divided into distinct departments. The college currently operates with the following structure:

Primary Division: Departments of Agriculture, English, Home Economics, Mathematics, Science, Sesotho, Social and Development Studies, Music, Religious Education, Arts and Crafts, Health and Physical Education, and Professional Studies.

Secondary Division: Agriculture, Commercial Studies, English, Health and Physical Education, Home economics, Mathematics, Professional Studies, Religious Education, Science, Sesotho, Social and Development Studies, Technology Studies, and Computer Studies.

In-service Division: Agriculture, Commercial Studies, Home Economics, Health Education, Mathematics, Professional Studies, Religious Education, Sesotho, and Social and Development Studies.

3.7 Staffing

In the majority of cases, members of staff in the Primary Education Division are those who have experience of working at the primary school level. This was done to allow a greater concentration upon primary education and a more effective development of a specialised primary curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1992).

Table 3.5 The number of teacher trainers employed in the college during the academic years 1992 – 1997²

Year	In-service	Primary division	Secondary division
1992	4	39	33
1993	12	31	36
1994	24	38	37
1995	24	35	35
1997	21	39	38

(Source: National Teacher Training College)

The college has tried to balance the number of lecturers in all the programmes. According to the table 3.6 below, the credentials of people employed at the college vary to some extent. While the Primary Division has lecturers with qualifications ranging from certificate to Masters degree, the Secondary Division qualifications range from diploma to Masters and PhD.

Table 3.6 Qualifications of college lecturers

Inservice Trainers							
Year	Certificate	Diploma	1 st Degree	Honours	Masters	PhD	Total
1992	1	2	1				4
1993		5	6		1		12
1994		4	19		1		24
1995		5	18		1		24
1997		3	17		1		21
PRE-SERVICE PRIMARY DIVISION							
1992	1	12	19	1	6		39
1993	1	12	13		5		31
1994	1	8	22		7		38
1995	1	9	18		7		35
1997	1	6	24	2	6		39
PRE-SECONDARY DIVISION							
1992		2	20		11		33
1993		2	23	1	9	1	36
1994		2	19	4	12		37
1995		2	19	4	10		35
1997		2	19	3	14		38

(Source: National Teacher Training College)

² Information on the academic year 1996 is missing

3.8 Research

The main emphasis of the college, as expressed in its original aims, is the training of teachers, which of course is the essence of any such college. Research has not received much emphasis and yet it is also supposed to be part and parcel of any teacher education programme. However, recently (1996), the College acknowledged the absence of such a critical element of teacher education - engaging in on-going research - and included it in the list of College objectives. Currently the College has a publication in the form of a journal entitled the *Journal of Teacher Education*, which is the first of its kind in Lesotho. This is a giant step towards encouraging the tutors to become rigorous in reflecting on their academic activities, but also, by including student journals, reflecting on their field experiences, facilitating dialogue and thus becoming a valuable document.

3.9 Future Developments and Important Issues

In 1994 a study of teaching and learning at the NTTTC (Burke & Sugrue 1994) recommended that the College should replace all certificate courses with Diplomas, and, in the longer term, develop a four-year B.Ed. for primary teachers. As detailed above, a new Diploma in Education (Primary) is being introduced, and the Secondary Division of the College has also begun to revise and reform their programme in the same direction.

The status of the college has been under discussion for many years. Under recent legislation it was due to become, on April 1st 1999, the 'Lesotho College of Education' with autonomous status. Although still funded by the Government, it will no longer be under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education.

The main issues, therefore, concern improving the quality of teacher training through raising entry standards and upgrading the levels of all programmes.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF THE TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM

4.1 Overall Aims

As the only teacher training college for the primary and secondary level, the NTTC does not have colleges of its level to compete with locally. However, the college is very much aware that its graduates are still being compared with the former denominational colleges. Setting and maintaining high standards, therefore, becomes a priority. In its 1998 Calendar (National Teacher Training College, 1998) the College states:

NTTC has the responsibility to set and maintain high standards of professional performance and aspirations. It strives to guide its students with the best and most practical methods, devices and techniques within its reach and to instil in them a respect and desire for continual learning. On the whole, the College attempts to build as efficient and effective a teaching profession as possible (National Teacher Training College, 1998: 12).

The ongoing developments (the reforms mentioned in Chapter 3) exemplify the determination to set and maintain high standards in the college.

4.2 The Curriculum

When originally set up, the College curriculum was organised in the following areas:

AREA I	LANGUAGES 1. Sesotho (Local language) 2. English
AREA II	SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES 1. Social and Development Studies 2. Home Economics 3. Physical Education 4. Art and Crafts 5. Elementary Technology 6. Health Education 7. Commercial Studies
AREA III	MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE 1. Mathematics 2. Science
AREA IV	PROFESSIONAL STUDIES Professional Studies

It was always envisaged that the College curriculum would be revised from time to time. One of the earliest changes was a shift from a Term System to a Semester System in 1988; another change was that semester subjects or ancillary subjects for the Secondary Teacher Certificate (STC) replaced elective subjects in 1990. Additionally, in 1990 the internship year - originally the whole of the second year of training - was replaced by a period of Teaching Practice Preparation (TPP) during Semester I of Year 2, following by Teaching Practice (TP) throughout Semester II.

This important change from a one-year internship to half a year teaching practice was due to a realization, firstly that teaching practice occurred too early in the programme before the students could acquire enough training to be effective; and, secondly, it was too costly due to payment of stipends to the students. Also, it was seen as divorcing theory from practice because it was too long.

Since its inception, the curriculum has remained fairly close to the developments in the primary school curriculum. College Representatives participate in the National Curriculum Committee, a high-powered statutory committee responsible for studying and approving the national curricula, and on the subject panels run by the National Curriculum Development Centre. In this respect, the College is up-to-date with curricular developments at the school level.

4.2.1 Curricular Reform at the National Teacher Training College

However, by the early 1990s it was felt that aspects of the teacher education curricula were outmoded and unable to meet new demands. This was confirmed in the study "Teaching and Learning at NTTC" (Burke and Sugrue, 1994). In response to this the College hosted a national conference in August 1995 whose theme was "Primary Teacher Training in Lesotho: 2000 and Beyond". The conference in 1995 highlighted the fact that "after 21 years of Primary Teacher Certificate (PTC) programme provision ... there had been little or no change." This concern perhaps signalled the fact that, although education innovations were afoot, the NTTC graduates had effected no change and improvement in schools, thus contributing to the declining educational standards in the country. Therefore, a key resolution passed by the conference was, among others, that "there was a pressing need for primary programme reform [and] the provision of a new diploma, which would be preparatory to a B.Ed. programme, was timely".

It was felt that there was a need in teacher education to provide a curriculum, which had:

...a thorough grounding in all subjects and their attendant methodologies. It should also be capable of rousing children's minds to life in an animated classroom environment, as well as marshalling every available resource in the immediate environment to enrich the teaching and learning experience provided for pupils. (National Teacher Training College, 1996: 9)

4.2.2 Curricular Reform at the National Teacher Training College

As the new Diploma was still undergoing development at the time of writing, details are given here of the two major current programmes: Primary Teachers' Certificate (PTC) and Diploma in Primary Education (DPE).

Table 4.1 PTC Time allocation Per Subject/Per Week in Contact Hours

Year	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
	I	II	I	II	I	II
SEMESTER						
SUBJECT						
Sesotho	3	3	3	TP*	3	3
English	3	3	3		3	3
Mathematics	3	3	3		3	3
Professional Study	5	6	3		3	3
Religious Education	3	3	0		3	0
Health	3	3	0		0	3
Agriculture	3	3	1		2	2
Science	0	0	3		2	2
Arts & Crafts	0	0	3		3	0
Music	0	0	3		0	3
Physical Education	0	0	2		0	3
Development Study	0	0	0		2	2
Home Economics	0	0	0		3	0
TOTAL	23	24	24		27	27

(* Semester II in year 2 is teaching practice)

a) *Primary Teachers Certificate*

Teaching Practice comprises the whole of the second semester of Year 2. At the PTC level, the course, which seems to carry more weight especially during the first year of study, is Professional Studies. Perhaps this is considered the most important course for the primary school teacher who has to teach all subjects offered in the primary school. The PTC timetable provides for a maximum of 30 hours teaching time per week. In practice, the students spend most of their time attending classes and have very few hours left for independent study. Perhaps, the concern here would be whether the graduating teachers are quality teachers, in terms of being independent, creative and innovative.

b) *Diploma in Primary Education*

In this course, the main emphasis (72%) is put on teaching subjects, two of which are taken as 'specialisations' taking up 40% of the timetable. Professional Studies and Educational Administration take up less than 20%. Since this course is designed for experienced teachers and potential heads, one might wonder why so much time is spent revising subject content rather than on further professional issues, such as curriculum development, management and supervision. There is a one-term attachment to a school.

4.3 Patterns of Instruction

In the past, the College engaged in a variety of modes of instruction. Of the five discussed, the first three are still in use, while the last two were practiced in the first years of the college. Currently, the College uses three modes of instruction: large group and small group presentations and practicals.

4.3.1 Large-Group Instruction

A large group lecture may include all students in a year-group regardless of their area of specialisation. Large group presentations are commonly used in lecturing in subjects taken by all students. Courses, such as Professional Studies and English, tend to follow this structure. Large group presentations mainly serve the purpose of introducing students to a topic and they are designed to present general information about a subject to large numbers of students. The full discussion of such a topic takes place in small group presentations. These presentations usually last for half an hour and take place in the hall setting, where the full range of audio-visual aids is available.

4.3.2 Small-Group Instruction

The small group instructions are intended for a small group of students of between 20 and 25 in number. They last for at least one hour and take the form of either tutorial or practical. The new concepts, usually those introduced through a large-group lecture, are discussed and applied. In essence, a small group instruction is seen as a follow-up of a large group presentation; it provides students with an opportunity to follow on what was taught in a large group. The size of the small group suggests that the intention on the part of the college is to provide a forum for students and tutors to discuss the specific aspects of the information presented in the large groups.

4.3.3 Practicals

Practical sessions on the other hand, provide opportunities for students to practice the ideas, concepts and skills introduced to them. The College has several departments that offer practical subjects. Currently, the College has the following departments that have practical elements: Home Economics, Arts and Crafts, Science, Agriculture, Physical Education, Health and Music. The practical sessions are intended to provide students with an opportunity to practice concepts taught during large group sessions.

4.3.4 Self-Instructional Materials (SIMS)

Self-instructional materials were single-topic units. Most SIMS either complemented or supplemented materials presented in large and small group sessions or practical instruction. Each unit contained a specified objective (or objectives) and was designed to be completed without the assistance of a tutor hence the name “self-instructional”. Students were allowed to work at and complete the task set in such materials at their own pace. It is apparent that these materials trained students for independence and self-study, more so because all SIMS were stored in a special section of the library and were permanently on reserve; they could not be used outside the library.

It can also be argued that through the development of self-instructional materials, the College introduced sizeable portions of its curriculum in objectively defined and well-organised topics in a phased way. Moreover, since the self-instructional topics were drawn from the primary and secondary syllabuses the college had an opportunity to orient the students to the national curriculum thereby making them get a feel of what was being taught in the schools.

4.3.5 Subjects Kits

A subject kit was a series of lesson plans (sometimes called a unit of teaching) on a single topic. Kits were made by students at the NTTC and were designed for use by primary or junior secondary teachers. Each subject kit provided for approximately one week's work, thus a subject kit contained somewhere between four and eight lessons. A typical kit contained directions for the teacher, background information necessary for teaching the topic, activities for the children to carry out, visual aids that could be used, equipment and an explanation of how to evaluate the children's work. The production of subject kits provided students with an opportunity for the planning of instruction beyond the single lesson and gave them an insight into the problems, which they were almost certain to have to deal with. Moreover, student teachers were trained to be forward planners who would have a broader picture of the topic and/or topics to be treated over a longer period. Selected examples of these kits used to be placed in the library. The college library therefore served as a real place for reference of materials produced by tutors and by students as well as storing books.

4.4 Teaching Practice

Teaching practice is an important component of the teacher education programme. As it is, all the programmes in the college offer teaching practice to their students in order to prepare them to effectively handle the "task of teaching". Teaching practice is therefore one course which has been changing over the years. Currently it takes three forms: micro-teaching, internship and attachment.

4.4.1 Micro-Teaching

Micro-teaching is a teacher-training technique in which the teacher-trainee teaches in a real, but simplified teaching situation. The lesson time is short – about five minutes in length and the class size is small – from three to six pupils. During the lesson, the student teacher practices a specific teaching skill. At the end of the lesson, the student gets feedback (information) about how well he/she demonstrated and made use of the particular teaching skill. The feedback comes from four main sources: the instructor; the pupils/peers; the trainee's own impressions; and a television recording. This is part of the practical classroom experience that students receive in preparation for their second year internship.

4.4.2 Internship

The internship period is an integral part of the NTTC programme. The purpose of internship is to enable the student teacher to practice various teaching methods in a practical and realistic situation over a period of four months. They are provided with the opportunity to

teach after being in the College for one and half years of full-time study on the College campus. During their internship, the student teachers are assigned classes in the school in which they are posted. The teaching level to which these students are assigned depends on the availability of classes in the schools in which they are posted. Tutors are supposed to visit each student at least four times, but in practice this is not always possible. A study carried out in 1996 (Hopkin 1996) made a number of recommendations, including the establishment of a Teaching Practice Department and the appointment of Teaching Practice Coordinators who could devote most of their time to the administration and development of the programme.

4.4.3 Attachment

For the Diploma in Primary Education (DPE) there is an attachment during the first semester of the third year of study. This is a period of training, of around 12 weeks duration, during which the DPE trainee is attached to the administration of a particular school. During the attachment period, a student works under the guidance of the Headmaster or his Deputy, on such administrative aspects as timetabling, discipline, communication within and beyond the school and other duties of a senior manager.

4.5 Assessment

Initially assessment was the responsibility of the College, but very quickly the College observed that it was isolated if it continued to work alone on issues of assessment. Constructing the examination questions was initially a responsibility of the College Assessment Committee. The College, having realised the need to have outside input, negotiated formal relationships with the National University of Lesotho. The latter would be responsible for moderation of examination papers and for presenting the examination to the University Senate. The College has started another normal procedure for a tertiary institution, which is that of engaging external examiners to do the moderation. The current practice therefore is to engage external examiners from both local institutions and from the SADC region, which has to happen prior to submission of examination papers to the University Senate. These are significant developments, which strengthen the determination to keep high and acceptable standards.

4.6 Quality Standards

The NTTC has often been criticised for producing teachers who are incompetent and inefficient. This was articulated as early as the period of the Task Force (1982) when the newspaper *The Basotho Nation* expressed concerns over falling educational standards and called for training courses that would produce effective teachers who could handle the challenges of education and teaching. There has been on-going concern whether the NTTC programmes offer their trainees quality standards. Some say that the structure of the courses are to blame; Hawes (1986), clearly sums it up when he reiterates that quality standards cannot be expected when teachers in training are time-tabled from morning to night without pause. Such conditions, he says, “inhibit teachers from developing as responsible individuals”.

4.7 Emerging Issues

To address this question of quality, the NTTC has introduced improvements, like the upgrading of entry qualifications into College Programmes, adoption of the external examiners system, and reform of the PTC programme by infusing innovations like Special Education and Early Primary Specialisation modules. The current reconceptualisation of the whole primary training curriculum is aimed at raising the standards through more emphasis on the academic content of courses, while not neglecting the professional and practical aspects.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR TEACHERS

5.1 Projection of Enrolment in Primary and Secondary Schools

The projections of enrolment in primary and secondary schools are those based on the school age population (see Tables 5.1 and 5.2) for primary schools. These show a steady rise in anticipated primary school population from 315,880 in 1991 to 419,323 in 1999 (see Table 5.1), with an annual average increase of about 3.6%. However, the trend in actual enrolment in primary schools tends to be erratic. After an increase of about half a percentage point from 1991 to 1992, there was a 2.3% drop in 1993 and then an average steady increase of about 3.3% until 1995.

In each of the five years (1991-1995) for which complete data are available, the number of primary school pupils actually registered (see Table 5.1) surpassed the projected number available for registration. This is chiefly because a sizeable percentage of those registered are not within the 6-12 years age limit on which the projection was based. The percentage of the 6-12 years age cohort who were actually registered was found to be falling (see Table 5.1). It is evident from the data that whilst the number of primary age children in Lesotho is increasing the number attending school has remained more or less stationary (e.g. 242,577 in 1991 and 241,395 in 1995) over the years 1991-1995. In fact, the Net Enrolment Rate has declined by ten percentage points as illustrated in Table 5.1 in the final column.

There was a steady rise in secondary enrolments over the period 1991-1995. Projections made at that time indicate the increase will continue at about the same rate. The projected secondary school population (of 13 - 17 year olds) is likely to rise from 203,497 for 1991 to 235,544 for 1999. The Net Enrolment Rate at this level increased from 14.5% to 18.9% between 1991 and 1995 and the Gross Enrolment Rate increased from 23% to 31% over the same period.

The overall picture is therefore one where there has been an increase of over 3% a year in the number of pupils which, all things being equal, would require an additional 200 or so primary teachers and about 250 secondary teachers a year. However, this does not take into account the need to train the untrained and to replace those who leave.

Table 5.1: Projected and Actual Primary School Enrolment by Sex for 199-1-99 in Lesotho

Year	Projection (6-12 year olds)			Actual Registration (6-12 year olds)			Actual Registration (Above 12 years old)			Total	Percentage of 6-12 year olds registered
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total		
1991	159118	156762	315880	108698	133879	242577	54730	63837	118567	361144	76.8%
1992	163437	161004	324441	111418	135445	246863	55081	60713	115794	362657	76.1%
1993	168661	166366	335027	110160	132308	242468	54544	57263	111807	354275	72.4%
1994	174545	172480	347025	112024	132115	244139	60546	61884	122430	366569	70.4%
1995	181068	179338	360406	112129	129266	241395	67278	69338	136616	378011	67.0%
1996	188203	186885	375088								
1997	195371	194537	389908								
1998	202564	202027	404591								
1999	209860	20946	419323								

Table 5.2: Projected and Actual Secondary School Enrolment by Sex for 1991-99 in Lesotho

Year	Projection (13-17 year olds)			Actual Registration (13-17 year olds)			Actual Registration (Above 17 years old)			Total	Percentage of 13-17 year olds registered
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total		
1991	101874	101623	203497	9745	19656	29401	9250	7921	17171	46572	14.5%
1992	102643	102126	204769	11896	23035	34928	9210	7754	16964	51892	17.1%
1993	103555	102810	206365	12888	24386	37274	9677	8361	18038	55312	18.1%
1994	104942	103962	208904	11726	23537	35263	13294	13058	26352	61615	16.9%
1995	106765	105562	212327	13757	26264	40021	13218	13215	26433	66454	18.9%
1996	108975	107560	216535								
1997	111620	110041	221661								
1998	114791	113161	227952								
1999	118537	117007	235544								

(Source of both tables: Planning Unit, Ministry of Education, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995)

5.2 Projections of Demand for New Teachers

An analysis of the data available on primary school teachers for 1991 to 1995 (see Table 5.3) shows that the number of qualified teachers increased slowly and unevenly at a rate, which has not kept up with demand. In these years the proportion of unqualified teachers rose steadily from 17% to 25% (Table 5.3). When unqualified teachers are excluded from the analysis (see Table 5.4) the teacher/pupil ratio (TPR) increased from an average of about 1:50 for the five years to about 1:64. To decrease this ratio to a target value of 1:40 (Ministry of Education, 1995) more than 3,500 teachers need to be trained or hired (see Table 5.4). Thus, there is a need for about 60% more qualified teachers in primary schools.

In the case of secondary schools, the rates of increase in the number of qualified teachers across the five years were more erratic. These ranged from a negative rate of 19.3% between 1991 and 1992 to 23.7% between 1993 and 1994. These trends are influenced by uneven patterns of attrition, which are much higher than those for primary teachers. Many go to teach in South Africa and attrition may be as high as 50% after 5 years. When unqualified teachers, who on average make up about 24% of the teaching force, are excluded from the picture (see Table 5.6), the teacher/student ratio (TSR) rises from an average of 1:22 to about 01:30. To bring this to what seems to be a more desirable figure of 1:25, about 450 new qualified teachers need be trained or hired. Thus, the number of trained secondary teachers needs to rise by 20% to 25%.

5.3 Training Capacity

Lesotho has one institution for training primary and secondary school teachers, and one institution for training high school teachers. The enrolment, and hence the output, of primary school teachers from the National Teachers Training College (NTTC) is very low (see Table 5.7). According to the Education Sector Development Plan 1991/92 to 1995/96 (Ministry of Education, 1992), the output of the NTTC can be expanded only by increasing the intake, which, in turn, can be accomplished by the construction of additional facilities. If the number of classrooms and hostel places were to be increased, annual intake could be increased to 1,110. It is estimated that this would cost about M. 21,500,000.00 (US\$4.30M).

If this expansion took place, output could rise to about 350 per year, based on trainees doing a three-year course. This is well below the planned target of 800 teachers per year and therefore, even if 400 trained teachers were produced every year, an additional 400 unqualified teachers would still have to be recruited annually. To provide in-service training for these unqualified teachers, there is a plan to introduce a modular in-service course based upon the old Lesotho In-service Education and Training programme. Under this plan, these teachers will undertake a one-month course, including a one-week face-to-face course, during their first six months in the service. This arrangement is to ensure that their teaching is not left entirely unsupported. After two years on the job, these teachers will be eligible to enrol for the rest of the distance programme. The programme is planned to last for 3 ½ years at the end of which the trainees will receive a primary teacher's certificate (PTC).

Table 5.3: Number of Primary School Teachers by Status and Sex for 1991-1995

(Source for all the following tables: Planning Unit, Ministry of Education, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995)

Year	Qualified			Unqualified			Total			% Unqualified
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
1991	1053	4466	5519	272	894	1166	1325	5360	6685	17%
1992	1090	4483	5573	369	1109	1478	1459	5592	7051	21%
1993	1082	4606	5688	393	1211	1604	1475	5817	7292	22%
1994	1094	4608	5702	445	1281	1726	1539	5887	7428	23%
1995	118	4801	5919	535	1469	2004	1653	6270	7923	25%

Table 5.4: Demand for New Primary School Teachers

Year	Total Pupil Enrolment	Total Number of Teachers	Teacher/Pupil Ratio	Number of Qualified Teachers	Qualified Teacher/Pupil Ratio	Number of Teachers Needed for 1:40 Ratio	Number of Qualified Teachers Needed	Percentage Demand for Qualified Teachers
1991	361144	6685	1:54	5519	1:65	9029	3510	63.6%
1992	362657	7051	1:51	5573	1:65	9066	3493	62.7%
1993	354275	7292	1:49	5688	1:62	8857	3169	55.7%
1994	366569	7428	1:49	5702	1:64	9164	3462	60.7%
1995	378011	7923	1:48	5919	1:64	9450	3531	59.7%

Table 5.5: Number of Secondary School Teachers by Status and Sex for 1991-1995

Year	Qualified			Unqualified			Total			%Unqualified Teachers
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
1991	966	1007	1973	206	228	434	1172	1235	2407	18%
1992	814	778	1592	418	433	851	1232	1211	2443	35%
1993	953	897	1850	318	358	676	1271	1255	2526	27%
1994	1012	1018	2030	253	314	567	1265	1332	2597	22%
1995	1036	1143	2179	262	268	530	1298	1411	2709	20%

Table 5.6: Demand for New Secondary School Teachers if Pupil/Teacher Ratio is Lowered

Year	Total Number of Students	Total Number of Teachers	Teacher/Student Ratio	Number of Qualified Teachers	Qualified Pupil/Teacher Ratio	Number of Teachers Needed for 25:1 P/T Ratio	Number of New Teachers Needed	Percentage of demand for Qualified Teachers
1991	46572	2407	1:19	1973	1:24	1863	-110	-
1992	51892	2443	1:21	1592	1:33	2076	484	30.4%
1993	55312	2526	1:22	1850	1:30	2212	362	19.57%
1994	61615	2597	1:24	2030	1:30	2465	435	21.43%
1995	66454	2709	1:25	2179	1:31	2658	479	21.98%

It is hoped that the teacher attrition rate and pupil repetition rates can be reduced (Ministry of Education, 1992), thus reducing the demand for teachers. The estimated attrition rate among teachers in Lesotho primary schools is about 8%. These teachers leave teaching for various reasons, including unmet requests for: substantial increases in salary; parity with the civil service in terms of salary, gratuities, and other benefits; the introduction of a career structure for teachers; as well as promptness in the processing of salaries by the teaching service department (TSD) (Ministry of Education, 1992).

The preparation of secondary school teachers by the Faculty of Education, the National University of Lesotho, is also limited by the absence of facilities. For the last five years, the average annual number of graduates stands at about 125 (see Table 5.8). With an attrition rate of over 10% per year, this number is grossly inadequate to meet demand (see Table 5.6).

Table 5.7: Enrolment And Graduation Of Primary School Teacher Trainees by Sex, 1991 – 1995

Year	Enrolment			Number of Graduates
	Male	Female	Total	
1991	115	452	567	165
1992	165	558	723	210
1993	119	632	751	189
1994	154	601	755	201
1995	197	562	759	-
1996	-	-	-	244

Table 5.8: Enrolment And Graduation Of Secondary School Teacher Trainers By Sex For 1991 – 1996

Year	Enrolment			Number of Graduates
	Male	Female	Total	
1991	-	-	380	-
1992	98	163	261	115
1993	103	247	350	114
1994	151	290	441	146
1995	179	278	457	155
1996	168	301	469	100

(Source: Ministry of Education Statistics, 1995)

CHAPTER SIX

THE QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHER EDUCATION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss some of the assumptions made about trainees when they join the teacher training college in terms of their qualifications, motivations, and attitudes. While there are no simple ways to measure the effectiveness of the training, some relevant factors will be discussed.

6.2 Assumptions Made About Trainees When They Join Teacher Training

Several assumptions are made about trainees when they join teacher-training courses. These assumptions are made by the public in general, by the tutors at the college, and even by the students themselves. These include completion of high school at a certain level, language skills, and appropriate motivation.

Applicants to the teacher training institutions are expected to have the basic knowledge that will enable them to grasp what the college/university will give them in terms of lectures and assignments. This is why the teacher training institutions stipulate their entry requirements so that the applicants are aware of the type and calibre of person the college wants to train. The assumption is that the would-be-teachers have the basic knowledge required for each course they want to enrol in; for example, a student intending to register for the Primary Teachers' course must have 2 credits and 3 passes at COSC, whereas for the Secondary Teachers' Course they ought to have 4 credits. The college and the public also assume that student teachers have a working comprehension of the English language so that they may be able not only to follow courses, but also to be able to do research, and read and understand what is written in books. The expectation is that such knowledge will enable trainees to develop in the children they will teach, latent potentialities that these children have, because they themselves will have been challenged to think on the job and be critical thinkers rather than mere recipients of content taught at the college.

The College assumes that the entrants into the college do fulfill these criteria. The screening process is tight so as to ensure that those who eventually form part of the college have been carefully selected. The college has a pre-entry interview system in place, as it is not enough to assume that high marks obtained in the school leaving examinations alone are good predictors of suitable candidates for teacher education. If this pre-entry interview system were followed up seriously, it would be a very good practice, but as we shall see later, this is not always the case.

6.2.1 Lack of Motivation

Another assumption about trainees is their apparent lack of motivation. Tutors complain that the trainees are not generally motivated because:

- (i) They (the trainees) do not seem to exert themselves whole-heartedly in their studies. This is proved by their mediocre performance in tests, assignments and examinations, and late submission of assignments.
- (ii) There is apathy concerning the English language – students do not want to speak it, hence generally in the college, English stays in the classroom, it is not used outside the classroom.
- (iii) Even in extramural activities, the NTTTC is not shining. There are playgrounds but no dedication.

Another factor that might contribute to the low morale is the fact that remuneration for teaching is low and therefore not encouraging to prospective teachers. In other words, there are no incentives for the teaching profession. Teachers unlike their counterparts elsewhere, do not have access to incentives such as car loans. No wonder there is a lack of motivation in the trainees and their trainers. Lefoka and Molise's (1998) preliminary findings from the study: "Plunging into Teaching: The Case of Post-Primary School Teachers" clearly indicates that those who are teaching without a professional certificate join for a number of reasons. Some of the reasons they gave centred on lack of jobs in the country, as well as having been socialized into teaching to such an extent that they felt it was easy to teach. Some of these findings might hold even for those who apply for teacher training.

6.3 Reasons for Becoming a Teacher

Many trainees end up doing teaching, not so much because they initially wanted to be teachers, but because they had no other job options. This is evidenced by the fact that once the trained teachers get other job openings, some trainees leave and join services such as the police and the military forces. A tracer study would give more insight into this issue.

6.3.1 It is easy to get a teaching job

One significant feature of Lesotho's education system is the large number of people teaching in Lesotho primary and secondary schools without a professional certificate (see chapters 2 and 3). The proprietors of schools are free to employ private teachers, who are mostly unqualified, to take up teaching positions and they are paid from the funds that the school generates. This practice comes as a result of lack of financial grants from government. The condition for allocating more teaching posts to any school is the size of the school: the larger the size of the school the more teaching posts/grants.

Schools sometimes continue to employ private teachers because they are cheaper to pay. Therefore it can be easier for an unqualified teacher to get a job than for a qualified teacher because parents might find it difficult to pay a salary of a qualified teacher.

6.3.2 Teaching is easy

Prospective students tend to assume that teaching is an easy thing to do. When new entrants come to the college and start attending classes, it is then that they realize that teaching is not easy after all. They find it difficult to complete assignments on time and some fail the tests

or find teaching practice difficult. They might have done teaching as “amateurs” before joining the college, but they discover that professional teaching is not at all easy and demands rigorous training.

6.4 The College, the Schools, and the Trainers

The college lecturers as well as the schools where student teachers go for their teaching practice tend to assume that entrants have had a teaching experience of any kind. Much too often little time is spent on teaching trainees simple things like blackboard writing as it is taken for granted that they know how to use the chalk and the chalkboard. When the trainees go for teaching practice, a lot is also taken for granted by the schools they teach in, both by the teachers and the pupils. The schools assume that the trainees have acquired pedagogical skills including knowledge about the assessment and evaluation of pupils. Experience has taught the college supervisors that the students do not get much help from the co-operating teacher and the principal of the school. Student teachers are instead loaded with duties and responsibilities and they are unwittingly turned into resource persons even before they master teaching.

In a way, people in schools are justified in thinking that NTTC interns are “jacks of all trades” because the college is supposed to prepare its products well for teaching practice and for actual teaching. Theoretically, the college challenges its students to become all-rounders out in the field, but in practice, due to “pressure of work,” many of the academic staff adopt a content-transmission mode in their approach to lecturing. There is little evidence of efforts to develop innovative divergent problem-solving skills on the part of staff or students (Burke and Sugrue, 1994).

6.5 Quantity and Quality of Applicants

The quantity of applicants is more than adequate since the NTTC is the only teacher training college in the country. According to the NTTC Registrars’ office, and that of Admissions there are more applicants than the college can handle. The NTTC draws from the same pool as that of the university and other tertiary institutions. The number of applicants shows that the competition for entrance into the College is fierce since the college has the whole country to select from.

The capacity of the college is now being increased through the erection of new dormitory blocks as well as classrooms. Research might be needed to investigate the extent to which the college is used, especially whether or not it is used to its full capacity.

As far as the Secondary Teacher Certificate is concerned, some of the students who are admitted to the programme are of the same calibre as those admitted into the university. Others, though, have fewer credits than those admitted into the university, or have failed English or have only a pass in English. As a result, they gain entrance into the university after doing well in the STC programme. One would expect that these students who have spent three years at the NTTC would at least be admitted into the second year at the university, but they are treated like fresh COSC students and take the full four years to obtain

a degree. So in total it takes them seven years or more to get a degree (sometimes two years teaching experience is required). One wonders what the NTTC is for if not upgrading students all round. If the university questions the NTTC programmes, since the NTTC is an affiliate of the university, one would expect that the university would take care to ensure that the college maintains acceptable standards. Perhaps one emerging issue is the status of NTTC as an autonomous college, given these perspectives.

As far as maturity and personal qualities of students are concerned, the NTTC has the same problem as other tertiary institutions. Nowadays, the students are getting younger and younger. If it were not for people who have already taught before coming to the NTTC, the image of the College would be that of preparing adolescents to be teachers. Luckily, there are more mature people at the NTTC because of the Diploma students. The PTCs and the STCs are definitely younger and less mature and therefore their motivation is questionable.

6.6 Support to the Newly Qualified Teachers: Existing Arrangements

There is a voluntary Induction Programme (IP) of the National University of Lesotho, which supports Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTS) in Lesotho. The programme is part of the in-service programme of the Science Education Department in the Faculty of Education (FED) at NUL. It aims at helping all the Secondary School Teachers who graduate from NUL, Lesotho Agriculture College and NTTC to fit well in the schools and learn how to teach and reflect on themselves. But the primary school teachers are not yet part of this programme.

During the first year of teaching Beginning Teachers (BTs) have the following support:

A teacher mentor is attached to each BT in school. This mentor oversees everything at school level and acts as an Induction Programme Coordinator (IP) in the school. Among other things she observes BTs in the classroom, helps them to get used to the school environment, to use self reflection tools produced by IP, and provides counselling to the BT where need be.

It has to be noted though that BTs also get support from the IP staff through school visits and seminars and workshops. The visits are found valuable since it is during such visits that the IP staff help to establish the relation between the BT and the Mentor Teachers (MTs). Seminars on the other hand give BTs an opportunity to share their experience about school life, to discuss ways of addressing some of these experiences and to be informed about the Ministry of Education set up and activities.

There are several gaps regarding the programme which need to be filled up still. Currently, the programme is on a “voluntary basis” and this position poses threats to the continuity of the programme. But the primary school teachers have expressed interest in the programme although the chances of including them are not very positive since the institution that runs the programme only trains secondary school teachers. It is apparent that there is no formal scheme for providing the primary school system with such benefits.

6.7 Emerging Issues

There are different views concerning the quality of the NTTC entrants. On the positive side, according to the Registrar's and the Admission's Offices, there is so much competition for places at the NTTC that, even though the stated entry requirements for PTC are COSC with two credits and three passes, in practice more credits are required due to a high level of competition. The college even has students who are university material because of the number of credits they have. There has, therefore, been a lot of improvement as far as the quality of students is concerned.

The other view is expressed by Burke and Sugrue (1994), who indicate that the quality of candidates entering for PTC is one of the most serious issues which both the Ministry of Education and NTTC have to face. They note that "students' achievement level at point of entry set a ceiling to what can be accomplished with them in the training programme" (p.37) and they argue that these students necessitate the allocation of a large proportion of college time in order to upgrade the second level content areas. Their major concern relates to cost since they observe that topping up the second level education at a third level institution has a unit cost on average seven times higher than the provision of the same in high school.

According to the one-to-one interviews with two very senior officers at the NTTC, the methods of selecting trainee teachers at the NTTC are both appropriate and reliable. A certain caliber of students is admitted and there are rigorous interviews so that the careful screening of students may be assured.

However, others think that in spite of all the measures taken to ensure that the best candidates are admitted into the college, the methods of selection leave much to be desired. Even up to 1997 there were students who got into the College, as it were, through the back door. They were Junior Certificate holders who could hardly manage to go through the first year of training even though they had teaching experience. This anomaly is due to corruption. In other words, there must be some members of staff who know how to push such students in through the back door.

What needs to be done to remedy the situation is to check the students time after time to ensure that those who have been admitted do in fact possess the necessary entry qualifications. Already, the academic calibre of entrants holding COSC and admitted into the PTC programme is in question. Burke and Sugrue, (1994: 37) make the following observation:

The most serious drawback of entrants to PTC programmes is their lack of facility in English. While candidates with Junior Certificate only are no longer accepted, and the standard of entry has improved, it is still possible for students to gain entry without a pass in English. Such students experience considerable difficulty in comprehending lectures through English, in completing assignments and sitting examinations. Ultimately their language shortcoming will hamper their teaching out in the schools.

Other emerging issues that could be looked into in detail in other research projects include exploring the use of the NTTC capacity, the affiliation between the College and the National University of Lesotho (NUL) and the induction programme:

- **Is the NTTC used to full capacity?**
One wonders whether it is not possible to maximise the potential of NTTC by utilising all its buildings all the time throughout the entire year. Physical facilities such as the library and classrooms could be used for learning and teaching through evening classes for continuing education students.
- **NUL and NTTC affiliation**
The formal relationship between NUL and NTTC leaves much to be desired. The university, as already indicated in other chapters, approves the college programmes and its Senate is responsible for approving the College examination results, yet admitting the NTTC students to NUL is very difficult. One gets the impression that NUL “belittles” the graduates of the College although it approves of its programmes. Perhaps College autonomy will be an answer to some of the concerns raised about the affiliation.
- **Formal induction scheme for primary school teachers**
The need for an induction programme for the primary school teachers cannot be over-emphasised as prospective teachers in any level of teaching need to start their profession on the right footing. With the phasing out of PTC and the offering of diploma programmes one feels that the need for maintaining high standards is even greater. Future research projects might explore the feasibility of offering this programme as part of the training of a primary school teacher.
- **The NTTC Diploma programmes**
The College is changing its programmes by phasing out old and introducing new programmes. Recently, the College has begun offering two types of diploma programme. One such programme is aimed at upgrading those teachers who enrolled for the Primary Teaching Certificate and the other is offered for those students who do not hold a teaching certificate. There is a feeling that students who enroll in the upgrading diploma are discriminated against in favour of those who enroll for the new diploma. There is a need to engage in an intensive study that looks very closely at the curriculum for the two programmes and the way this curriculum is enacted in both groups.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TEACHER ROLES, ATTITUDES AND IDENTITIES

7.1 Introduction

Historically, the Basotho nation had in place various educational methods for preparing children for the numerous roles that children were to play in their society. Provision of such education was found in both formal and non-formal settings. In the formal setting, young men and women were supposed to go to traditional schools, which prepared them to take up certain responsibilities in their own society. In the informal setting, every adult was expected to play the role of an educator. The practice was that men were expected to prepare boys for future roles whereas women did so for young women. It is in Moletsane (1979) and Matsela (1983) where we learn that the Basotho original education system was based on cultural values, tradition and ideology whereby apprenticeship, tutoring and the relating of oral literature were basically used in informal settings and initiation schools to educate the youth.

The practice through which each adult member was responsible for youth activity was normal because Basotho have a complex social relationship which is probably caused by a high degree of unity and close relationship (Matsela 1983). As indicated earlier the Basotho speak mainly one language and marriage connects the majority of families. While it is true that adults were regarded as teachers in their own right, those who taught in the traditional school assumed the role of a teacher (*Mosuo*). The *Basuo* were those who had gone through the traditional school and had acquired the necessary skills. However, with the arrival of the missionaries and the establishment of the European form of education, the concept of teacher was different from the traditional teacher even though the word *Mosuo* is loosely used for the modern type of teacher. The concept of “teacher” though, seems to be the same: someone who is trained and responsible for imparting knowledge.

7.2 Perceptions and Attitudes

Work in the area of teacher attitudes and perceptions remains a challenge. Preliminary interviews with those who were in the former teacher training institutions (Mr. Pitso, Mr. and Mrs. Hall as well as Mr. and Mrs. Khaketla) reveal that historically, teaching was a highly respected profession in Lesotho. A teacher was considered to be an important figure in society and would assume various roles in the community in which they served. The missionaries prepared them to act as pastors where pastors were not available. Also, they were regarded as a point of reference in the society and were supposed to know the content of what was taught in school. Teachers who trained in the former teacher training colleges had a reputation for practicing high moral standards. In the interview with Mr. Pitso, it became clear that he had learned to become a teacher prior to going to teacher training college because one of his parents was a teacher. One thing he had learned from his father was that a teacher was on duty everyday of the week and, as a consequence, he found himself helping children in the area he served even after school hours. The interviews suggest that besides

being knowledgeable in religion and content of their subjects, the former teachers had a respectable status in society. The interviewees indicated that today's teacher is different from the type of teacher they were in many respects, highlighting a lack of commitment as one of the points that distinguishes teachers who trained in the former colleges from today's teachers.

A research study: "Perceptions of students about teachers they regard as 'best teachers' in three Lesotho post-primary schools" (Lefoka and Polaki 1995) revealed that students share the views expressed by Pitso and others. Students who participated in the study indicated that they expect a teacher to be knowledgeable and competent, to hold high morals, to be committed to work particularly as regards being in class, to be teaching their best and marking and returning marked scripts on time. They want to see teachers who respect themselves and treat students as equals. Certainly, the students still regard teachers as reference points, albeit to a different degree than was initially the case in the past. The students' views imply that a teacher whose practices and behaviour do not conform to expectations is not an acceptable teacher. Students mentioned that they do not like a teacher who participates in strikes, who is seen drunk, who discriminates, has no sympathy, does not come to school regularly and humiliates student in front of other students. It would seem that today's student shares the views of those who trained in the missionary teacher training college. The implication is that the society still regards teaching as a worthwhile profession and expects those who join it to adhere to certain professional standards.

The views of the general public about their perceptions of today's teacher are usually expressed in the media especially the local phone-in radio programme. Listening to such phone-in radio programmes, especially after the examination results have been published, it becomes obvious that the general public distinguishes today's teacher from that of yesterday by their outputs, their general behaviour in education and the rate at which they participate in strikes. A new trend that the general public seem to detest relates to teachers charging for their services, that is making children, who attend extra classes offered by certain teachers after school, pay for such classes. The usual practice is that teachers who provide tutorials after school will make parents pay for such services even if a child attends the school in which the particular teacher teaches. An observation is that in the past such services were provided without pay. The conditions of service and low salaries are some of the factors that contribute to teachers feeling they have to charge parents for their services.

Teachers do also participate in such radio programmes and argue vehemently that the conditions of service leave them with no choice but to charge for the services they provide outside the working hours. Thus, it could be argued that the teaching service is becoming a commercial enterprise in Lesotho. If teaching is a socialising profession, as the literature seems to suggest, then it is possible that students who go for paid classes enter the training college with this attitude, an attitude which implies that teachers go out searching for ways of supplementing their salaries through charging fees outside school hours. One wonders whether the teacher training college is aware of this new trend and whether student teachers are allowed to discuss their feelings about the realities of the teaching service.

7.2.1 Teachers' Association/Unions

Currently, there are two strong teachers' associations/unions in Lesotho. These are the Lesotho Association of Teachers (LAT) and the Lesotho Teachers Trade Union (LTTU). Teachers identify with one or other of the two. As members of these organisations, they are often referred to as professionals who struggle for income increases as opposed to professional development. The strike pattern is as follows:

- The first strike was in 1910 and the concern was for an increase in the salaries.
- The second one was in 1966 and teachers wanted a 90% salary increase
- The latest was in 1995 and it was also concerned with the conditions of service particularly as they refer to salaries.

The latest strike of 1995 has certainly fostered a negative view of teachers. The general public came out very strongly in January of 1996, January 1997 as well as January 1998 to indicate in various forms and arguments that the high failure rate in school examinations is a direct responsibility of the teachers. It is rather unfair, however, to blame poor performance on teaching and teachers alone since there are other pertinent factors which might also be contributing to the poor performances observed in schools.

Many parents seem to have lost hope of educational standards ever improving. Those parents who can afford to pay high fees have taken advantage of the proximity to South Africa and are sending their children to South African schools. The general feeling is that the type of teacher in Lesotho schools is not committed to the service. The real reasons for the current trend are still to be investigated, but it seems reasonable to assume that one of the major reasons might be the attitude that the parents have about the Lesotho Education system.

7.2.2 Teachers' Perceptions

The question is whether the general public knows how teachers feel and perceive their roles. Informal discussions with more than 700 teachers who participated in the Institute of Education July 1997 and January 1998 workshops reveal that teachers are demoralised due to, among other things, the poor conditions of service in Lesotho schools. They view themselves as powerless and as a result have developed a culture of silence; a culture of obedience and accepting the situation as it presents itself. Thus, they are like children who are not expected to quarrel with an adult especially when such an adult has made a final decision. This is a typical cultural practice; although a Lesotho teacher is an adult, he is owned by the church (the church owns schools) and the Lesotho government (which pays the salary). Very often, even when teachers are on strike, they find themselves facing the dilemma of who has the power over them. A concerned educationist (1990) writes as follows:

I close this section with a matter which worries many teachers.
One of them put it this way "teachers do not know who to approach"
There is ambiguity about who their employer is, the
Teachers say. For certain purposes they are church employees.

For others they are Government servants. They add, wryly, “when it suits them” (Mohapeloa 1990 p.39)

The culture of silence might be perpetuated by the insignificant role that the teacher plays in high-powered government committees such as the National Curriculum Committee (NCC), or the Teaching Service Committee. Teacher representation on such committees constitutes a small percentage.

The school culture also has a bearing on teacher attitudes, perceptions and identities. A typical example is related to performance in external examinations and how that contributes to schools being perceived as either effective or ineffective schools. Teachers who teach in schools that have a reputation for producing the best results might have high morale and different perceptions from those whose schools are known to produce poor results.

The teacher training institutions prepare students to fit into the school system, yet the college lecturers do not know much about what transpires in the Lesotho educational system. The college, for example, trains the student to fit into the school system by offering courses that enhance the student’s content knowledge as well as pedagogical skills. Yet, the reality of the school system is that there are situations where teachers are found to be teaching more than one grade, a situation that student teachers might not be able to cope with.

7.3 Teachers’ Roles and Practices

Very clearly, the Teaching Service Department of the Ministry of Education has in place expectations in the form of regulations on the roles and practices of teachers. These regulations place emphasis on presence at work, participation in school activities, and being in the school in which the teacher is posted all the time. Most importantly, teachers are expected not to engage in their private activities during school hours. These regulations are put in place to guide the day-to-day activities of the schoolteachers and like their heads, their job description lets them know what is expected of them. Principals of schools are supposed to be efficient heads of schools even though they are full-time teachers and do not have time to play their administrative roles. Very recently, the Ministry of Education adopted criteria for inspection and self-evaluation (a John Drake’s model) and introduced it in Lesotho primary schools. A quick look at the criteria shows that it is very demanding, showing that the Ministry of Education is ambitious in its expectations of teachers. In reality, nobody can dispute the importance of evaluation, and the value of having an instrument in place cannot be over-emphasised, but teachers do not have time to live up to these high expectations.

7.4 Conclusion

There are obvious relationships between the home culture and the way teachers are perceived in Lesotho as well as the way they perceive themselves. The “culture of silence” is common in situations where the decision-making structures eliminate those for whom regulations and decisions are made. Primary school teachers’ negative attitudes towards their work might be due to the prevailing poor conditions of service.

The perceptions of the general public and the students imply that teachers do not perform up to the high expectations people have of them. Morale is low and it therefore affects one's commitment to one's work. It would be interesting to establish whether the teacher training college emphasises ethics in training future teachers.

The type of teacher in Lesotho schools ranges from qualified, to under-qualified and unqualified. Surely there are more teachers in Lesotho schools than those produced by the teacher education institutions at one particular time in the completion of their studies. The training that newly qualified teachers bring along from the college, might be washed away in the school system because those who have served for a long time might have their own perceptions and attitudes to their roles and pass them on to new comers. This is an area that also needs to be researched further.

CHAPTER EIGHT

GENDER

8.1 Introduction

Lesotho is a developing country, with one of the highest female literacy rates of countries classified in that way. Females tend to be more educated than males and this can be seen especially in primary schools where the population consists of more girls than boys (apart from standards 1 and 2 where there are more boys than girls). However, at the tertiary level of the education pyramid there are virtually equal numbers of men and women in education (see figure 2 appendix 2).

Though women constitute the largest literate or educated group in Basotho society, they continue to be marginalised in all spheres of life. This situation is caused by a number of factors among which are culture, religion, politics, and the economic context. The following tables will illustrate the gender disparities at all levels of teacher education. The 1996 population estimates, according to the Department of Population and Manpower Planning (1996), indicate that out of an estimated total population of 2,124,390, 1,034,959 were males while 1,089,431 were females. Thus there are slightly more women than men in the population.

Table 8.1: Proportions of Women to Men Teachers at Primary and Secondary School for the Years 1991 – 1995

Year	PRIMARY		SECONDARY	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
1991	1,325	5,360	1,172	1,232
1992	1,459	5,592	1,232	1,211
1993	1,475	5,817	1,271	1,255
1994	1,163	4,648	1,265	1,332
1995	1,553	6,270	1,298	1,411

The above table shows that throughout the given period, there have been consistently many more female teachers than male teachers in the primary schools. A similar trend is also noticeable in the secondary schools, where women are beginning to outnumber men. This pattern continues as Table 3.2 in chapter 3 indicates: there are many more female teacher trainees enrolled at the NTTC than male trainees. Also, the following table shows that there were more female tutors than male tutors at the NTTC in 1995 and 1996.

Table 8. 2: Proportion of Male to Female Tutors at the NTTC for 1995 and 1996

YEAR	MALE	FEMALE
1995	30	63
1996	45	54

Table 8.3: Proportions of NTC’s Female Administrative Staff to Male Staff for the years 1994 – 1997

YEAR	MALE	FEMALE
1994	3	3
1995	3	3
1996	3	3
1997	3	3

Table 8.3 shows that between 1994 and 1997, there has been a gender balance at the senior administrative level of the NTTC, but even as it is, the three male administrators occupy higher positions. They are Director, Deputy Director Administration, Deputy Director Academic Affairs, while their female counterparts occupy lower rungs as Assistant Directors for three different divisions and are responsible to the Deputy Director Academic Affairs.

The tables above show an imbalance in the sex ratios among primary school teachers and teacher trainees. However, no comparisons are made between proportions of the each gender at the senior administrative levels in the primary and secondary schools due to lack of information.

The fact that more female students complete secondary schooling may well be one reason for the proportions at the NTTC. It is also interesting to note that even at the university level, the same pattern continues, with more females enrolling. The table below provides a picture of enrolments at the NUL by sex for the years 1992-1996, showing that, despite the fact that boys continue into higher education, they are still outnumbered by girls.

Table 8.4: Enrolments at NUL by Sex for the Years 1992-1996

Year	Male	%	Female	%
1992	745	46%	867	54%
1993	829	46%	969	54%
1994	893	48%	973	52%
1995	918	46%	1083	54%
1996	927	45%	1127	55%

8.2 Gender Issues in the Teacher Training Curriculum

For the purposes of addressing the above question, various documents and reports were reviewed. Two of those related to the NTTC curriculum in the initial years of the college while the others relate to the most recent curriculum reforms undertaken by the same college. What has emerged from the documents is that there seems to have been no special considerations concerning gender issues in relation to what subjects were to be learnt/taught to male or female students. As a result, it would seem there were no special learning

programmes designed to assist teacher trainees to recognise and deal with gender issues in schools.

A quotation from a report written in 1976 by one Home Economics tutor of NTTC, further testifies that there was never any gender discrimination concerning studying different subjects by male and female trainees at the College. It read:

All students were required to take Nutrition and Cookery as a general course. Only specialists took Home Economics in all its aspects. Contrary to expectations, the male students showed considerable interest in the subject, especially in the practical lessons, (p.101)

Finally, it is also to be noted that to date, the professional studies course (Education Foundations) at the NTTC, does not address pertinent issues such as male underachievement and/or repetition rates in the primary schools despite the fact that more boys tend to repeat classes than girls (see Table 8.5).

Table 8.5 Number of Repeaters in Primary Schools by Grade and Sex in 1996

Standard/grade															
1		2		3		4		5		6		7		Total	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
10509	7974	8414	6295	6633	5096	6100	4755	3662	3371	2067	2350	3086	4830	40471	34671

(Source: Education Statistical reports, 1993)

8.3 Gender Issues and General Educational Debate

The above imbalances have not gone unnoticed. The Government of Lesotho, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) including churches, trade unions and several women's organisations and the United Nations Organisations based in the country have made remarkable efforts to address the issues of gender in Lesotho. Before the 1970s and towards the late 1970s the emphasis was on women as they were the most disadvantaged group. The laws of the country were discriminatory against women and that is still largely the case. In Lesotho, women are still regarded as minors legally. No married woman can obtain credit from a bank unless she has her husband's written consent. In the case of a widow, either a son, or a male relative (on the side of the husband) can give such consent. Until 1984, married women were not entitled to a pension in the civil service; they could not hold permanent positions and did not qualify for dependents' allowances if they went for further studies.

Today women still do not own anything in the family because legally they are minors. They not own land (even if they are widowed). Sons are always in a better position than daughters. Mentioning all these inequalities, however, does not mean that men are not disadvantaged. Male child labour is very common in Lesotho with young boys in the rural areas being denied their right to education by being hired out as herd-boys from a very young age (Government

of Lesotho, 1996: 11). That is one of the reasons why at primary school level there are fewer boys enrolled.

The tendency in the past was that boys from 18 years of age would go to the South African mines and parents felt that boys did not need any education at all in order to work in the mines. For boys, therefore, education was irrelevant (it was believed) because mines needed either semi-skilled (skills which could be acquired on the job) or unskilled labour. This has become a problem for the country as more and more men are retrenched from the South African mines.

8.4 Efforts Made to Address Gender Imbalances

The Government of Lesotho has made efforts to eradicate some of the discriminatory gender laws and to put in place - especially in the constitution of Lesotho - laws which provide for non-discrimination on the basis of sex, among others, and establishing the right of equality before the law and equal protection of the law irrespective of one's sex (Section 18 of the Constitution of Lesotho). However, the constitution – according to the draft policy on gender - allows discrimination against women under the law applicable to burial, devolution of property on death, and customary laws.

National Development Plans have provisions for gender equality. As we write this chapter, UNICEF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, are organising a two-week workshop on Gender and Education for high-level and middle-level management of the Ministry, for implementation of the policy on gender.

A policy on the provision of basic education for all is in place; the question remains about whether such a policy will be implemented. The Lesotho Government is part of the international community, which strives to achieve gender equality. In 1974 the government acceded to the 1952 United Nations Convention on Political Rights of Women, and in 1995 it ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) with a reservation to article 2 (1) (Government of Lesotho, 1996: 15). Lesotho also anticipated in the Beijing conference and before the conference the ILO undertook a project in Lesotho and came up with a report titled "Promoting Gender Equality in Employment in Lesotho: An Agenda for Action" (ILO 1994).

At the Beijing Conference the government committed itself to, inter alia, setting up a Law Reform Commission to revise all laws, which discriminate against women, and to incorporate gender issues into the School Curriculum. The Law Reform Commission is now operational (Government of Lesotho, 1996).

8.4.1 Associations and other organisations

Besides the government, associations such as the Lesotho Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) are presently engaged in gender sensitisation campaigns where women are made aware of their legal status and rights. The Lesotho National Council of Women, the Women's Research Collective, Women and Law in Southern Africa, are just some of the

organizations, which have gender sensitisation programmes for men and women. Some are specifically focusing on legal literacy as a tool for empowerment.

Despite all these efforts gender disparities continue unabated. One would like to believe that this situation continues as it is because some discriminatory laws are still in place, and that there is no mechanism for implementation of those which have been abolished. There is hope for further change, however, now that a policy on gender development is being drafted. The final draft of the gender policy calls for an “introduction of an intensive gender awareness education”. (Government of Lesotho, 1996). It is further observed in the policy document that:

The difficulty of detecting gender bias in its various forms arises from the fact that it is deeply embedded in our customs, beliefs, practices, institutions and laws. It is therefore imperative for formal and non-formal gender sensitisation education to be undertaken to arrest and ultimately reverse gender inequalities. (Government of Lesotho, 1996: 20)

The Ministry of Education, the National University of Lesotho, Lerotholi Polytechnic, Lesotho Agricultural College and Lesotho Institute of Public Administration and Management have been singled out in the policy document as some of the institutions that will have to introduce gender studies in their curricula.

8.5 Conclusion

A lot is going on in Lesotho to address gender issues. Students of both sexes are encouraged to choose previously sex-stereotyped professions. People at grass roots level are being educated on gender issues, but one would feel more hopeful if the policy were actually being implemented; a prerequisite is that parliament should abolish all the laws that discriminate against women.

This chapter has presented something of a paradox. It has shown that on the one hand females perform better at all levels of the education system than males, and that women predominate in the teaching force even up to the training college level. On the other hand, women are still discriminated against in various spheres of life.

It could be that Basotho culture and traditions support the view that men are more important in society than women, and therefore boys' upbringing focuses on their social and economic role in life rather than on education. In the past this was reinforced because it was easy for an illiterate man to get a relatively well-paid job in the South African mines. In turn, this meant that boys were sent to mind their fathers' herds while the girls were allowed to go to school. Now that teaching has become a feminine profession, there are fewer role models for boys in schools.

It is to be hoped that the new gender policies will set up a structure within which both sexes can enjoy equal opportunities and equal rights.

CHAPTER NINE

RESOURCES FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

9.1 Introduction

Scarcity in natural resources has led Lesotho to concentrate its efforts on developing its human resources. Indeed, the lifeblood of Lesotho is its people and, as such, high priority has to be given to the education of its citizens if long-term, sustainable economic growth is to be realized. It is for this reason that the Fifth Five-year plan (Government of Lesotho, 1992) focused on improving the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the entire education system, with special attention being paid to primary education.

Although Lesotho has achieved one of the highest adult literacy rates in the Southern African region (male 62%, female 84%), problems of low and deteriorating quality of education, low levels of staffing, a paucity of suitable facilities, high drop-out and repetition rates, multi-standard teaching and poor management continue to plague the primary education system, in particular. The education pyramid continues to be very broad at the primary end and very narrow at the tertiary end. Of the school-going population, 84% is in primary education, 14% in secondary and 2% in tertiary.

Improvements in quality are expected to raise the level of achievement of school leavers while improvements in efficiency are to lead to an improved through-flow in the primary sector. The resulting cost savings will promote access to primary education and increase the number of primary graduates without placing too much strain on the Government's recurrent costs.

The Fifth Five-year plan requires the NTTTC to increase its output of primary teachers from 140 to 250 per annum in order to reduce the unacceptably high teacher/pupil ratio. This number is still much less than the number needed to create a fully trained cadre of teachers. Unqualified and ill-qualified teachers need to be provided with in-service training while at NTTTC and other alternative routes in order to enhance the quality of primary school teaching.

9.2 Overall education budget; proportions allocated to primary, secondary, and tertiary levels; costs per student at different levels

The Government of Lesotho (GOL) allocation to the Ministry of Education (MOE) has been increasing. The MOE's recurrent budget rose from 17% in 1990/91 to 24% in 1995/96 and 29% in 1996/97. Table 9.1 shows the MOE's allocations to primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

Table 9.1: Recurrent and Capital Budgetary Allocation for Public and Private Education by Level and Type of Education and by Purpose of Allocation for the Financial Year 1995/96

Level and Type of Education	Total Recurrent Allocation	% Total Allocation (approx)	Purpose of Recurrent Expenditure						Capital Allocation	% Total Capital Allocation	Per Pupil Cost	
			Teachers' Salaries	Non-Teaching Salaries	Grants and Bursaries	Travel and Transport	Operating Costs	Special Expenditure			Recurrent Budget	Capital Budget
First Level (Primary)	146,503,038,436	51%	103,262,130	6,608,83	1,022,910	2,475,799	7,685,672	2,212,653	24,259,610	45%	388	64
Second Level (Secondary)	79,587,566,237	27%	54,066,510	3,045,721	1,772,418	873,669	5,529,582	1,364,417	22,455,890	41%	1,198	338
Technical and Vocational	22,045,231,066	5%	-	3,541,456	12,881,152	466,728	4,705,478	450,418	942,280	9%	13,583	3,045
Third Level (University)	84,010,558	23%	-	472,704	83,281,558	27,853	178,743	49,700	2,441,220	5%	41,984	1,308
Non-formal Education	3,485,509	1%	-	966,666	1,686,862	114,101	530,667	187,212	73,000	0%	-	-
Total	284,986,520,100		157,328,640	14,635,381	100,644,900	3,958,150	18,630,142	4,264,400	54,172,000	100	-	-

(Note: The 'pupil unit cost' figures exclude 759 students in teacher training. The total budget for the teacher training college was M. 7,677,630 giving a unit cost for the Institution of M. 10,116 per pupil)

9.2.1 Allocations by levels

The fifth five-year plan focused on improving the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the entire education system, with special attention being paid to primary education. Although primary education was allotted half of the education sector's budget during the early years of the plan, since 1994 the primary education budget fell out and the budget for technical and vocational education, and university expenditures rose. Primary education accounted for 43.6% of the recurrent expenditures in 1995, a drop of almost 11% since 1992. Spending on secondary education as a proportion of total MOE expenditures also declined during the planning period from 26% in 1992 to 23.7% in 1995. Technical and vocational education, on the other hand, has increased its share of MOE recurrent spending from 2.6% in 1992 to 6.6% in 1995. The share of MOE expenditures on university education increased from 15.9% to about 25% over the same period. Pressure to limit expenditure at the National University of Lesotho (NUL) met with limited success until 1994. However, the proportion of expenditure spent on university education jumped significantly in 1995.

Allocations to teacher training are contained within the primary, secondary and technical and vocational sectors' allocations.

9.2.2 Unit Costs

Expenditure per primary pupil increased from M239 in 1992/93 to M388 in 1995/96; a 37% per annum increase in per pupil expenditure. The increase in teachers' salaries accounts for most of this increase. Expenditure per secondary pupil increased from M807 to M1198; an annual increase of 24%. The MOE spends almost four times as much on a secondary student as it does on a primary student.

Per student costs at NUL in 1992/93 were M15,786, but had increased to M41,984 in 1995/96. These figures point to the need for additional measures to control the growth of university expenditure. Per unit cost at NTTTC has also been increasing - from M7427 in 1993/94 to M10,116 in 1995/96.

9.3 Allocation to teacher education institution - teaching salaries, non-teaching salaries, non-salary expenditure, capital/development expenditure

NTTC is the only institution in the country, which trains teachers. An analysis of NTTC costs (IDM, 1997) is shown in tables 9.2 and 9.3.

Table 9.2 Isolation of Personnel Emoluments into Academic and Admin Costs

Emoluments	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Administrative	268,200	402,600	429,200	498,400	543,900	649,300	630,800
Academic	1408,100	2113,900	2253,100	2616,900	2855,600	3409,100	3351,100
Total	1676,300	2516,500	2682,300	3115,300	3399,500	4058,400	3981,800

Table 9.3 Summary of Operating Costs

Operating Costs	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Admin Salaries	268,200	402,600	429,200	498,400	543,900	649,300	630,800
Travel/Inst Costs	71,450	115,350	389,200	816,250	283,100	609,950	1241,700
Stdnt Rltd Costs	714,150	925,450	1917,900	1663,250	1493,500	2611,150	3282,800
Total	1053,800	1443,400	2736,300	2977,900	2420,500	3870,400	5155,300

The salaries are allocated according to proportions reflecting 1996 actual academic salaries (IDM, 1997). Operating expenses are assigned to divisions on the basis of total student hours consumed by each division - primary and secondary. Capital development comes through donor funding. Irish Aid provided funds for the erection of an office complex suited to the needs of the College, which was completed in March 1997. The European Union funded a ten-classroom tutorial block, which was completed in April 1996. Hostel accommodation is to be funded through Japanese Aid and a two-year construction programme is due to commence in mid 1998. This development in accommodation facilities will make it possible for NTTC to increase its enrolment.

9.4 Cost Effectiveness of Teacher Training

The issue of cost effectiveness needs to be addressed at NTTC. The initial investment required for providing residential places to students in full-time pre-service courses is very high, in addition to high operating costs. Also, lack of accommodation makes it difficult to expand enrolment. Other alternatives have been suggested, such as expanding the in-service programme, or running two cohorts concurrently in pre-service with alternating teaching practice and on-campus teaching. At present, facilities remain unused for half a year while students are out on teaching practice. If teaching practice were to be extended to one year (as used to happen during the early days of the college) then another group of students could be admitted during that period. This would effectively double the output of NTTC without additional infrastructure costs.

A further area of concern is secondary training. At present, secondary students make up only 25% of the student body, but have more than 50% of the staff devoted to them in the NTTC. Some subject areas have so few students that they could be considered unviable and there is a clear need for a rationalization of secondary training. It has been suggested that all secondary training be undertaken at the university to free NTTC to concentrate upon producing a larger number of well-qualified primary teachers. Presently NTTC is involved in workshops for the review of the secondary curriculum.

9.5 Costs per student for different types of training, changes in costs over the last five years.

The costs of educating an NTTC student were compared with the costs of educating a student at the university (NUL), at the agricultural college (LAC) and at the polytechnic (LP). Tables 9.4, 9.5, and 9.6 below reflect the differences.

Table 9.4: Total Cost

	NTTC	NUL	LAC	LP
1992	4989,400	28912,848	3858,300	3224,400
1993	5594,800	-	2902,200	3554,300
1994	5276,100	47977,522	3463,200	6836,800
1995	7279,500	67202,201	5024,300	6883,700
1996	8506,300	74361,070	4161,200	8193,800

Table 9.5: Enrolment

	NTTC	NUL	LAC	LP
1992	723	1200	238	-
1993	751	-	240	628
1994	755	2000	245	597
1995	671	2000	231	606
1996	804	2000	220	597

Table 9.6 Unit cost

	NTTC	NUL	LAC	LP
1992	6,901	24,094	16,211	-
1993	7,450	-	12,093	5,660
1994	6,988	23,989	14,136	11,452
1995	10,849	33,601	21,750	11,359
1996	10,580	37,181	18,915	13,725

Even though the cost of teacher education looks reasonable in comparison to other sectors of tertiary education, the cost of producing a highly qualified primary school teacher is quite high. The present situation, with primary teacher education is that it takes an NTTC trainee six years of full-time study to acquire a Diploma qualification: three years full-time study is spent in order to receive PTC, after which two years' teaching experience has to be acquired for admission into a Diploma programme, which takes another three years of full-time study. This form of training costs the Government dearly as a student on this diploma is entitled to paid study leave at the same time his/her replacement has to be paid by the Government. This has led to serious criticism of the primary teacher education programmes by various stakeholders.

The study by Burke, Sugrue & Williams (1994) found a lot of duplication between PTC, APTC and Diploma programmes. The College is in the process of implementing the recommendations of this study, which proposed that the present PTC, APTC and Diploma in Primary Education programmes be phased out and replaced by a three-year pre-service programme that will issue the award of a diploma

in primary teaching. The entry levels of the proposed diploma will be raised to those of comparable institutions. It is envisaged that this rationalization will ensure that the College's capacity to meet forecasted requirements will be greatly enhanced in a cost effective manner. According to the IDM study the proposed Diploma in Education (Primary) will have a cost saving of 50%.

The Secondary Teachers' Certificate (STC) programme, like the PTC and APTC, was introduced over twenty years ago and has changed little from that time. STC holders qualify to teach at the junior secondary level in the subjects of their specialization. Many STC holders proceed into the Diploma and Degree programmes of the University so that they can teach at high school level. STC has always been seen as a stepping stone into the University and, as such, it is an expensive pre-entry course for the University. Within the NTTC, the STC is perceived as being inefficient in that a very small number of trainees are attended to by a disproportionately large number of staff. The STC programme does, however, address the needs of the country, especially by offering a double major programme.

It has already been mentioned that NTTC is reforming its secondary programmes. The structure of secondary teacher training will be changed to a programme that will award a diploma qualification. It is hoped that this change will reduce the number of secondary training courses offered at NTTC and thereby increase the efficiency of secondary staff.

The Diploma in Technical Education satisfies the expressed needs of the country in so far as technical and vocational education and training are concerned. While this programme has the highest unit cost of all programmes offered by NTTC it also has the lowest enrolment rate (5% on average).

Table 9.7 shows the total unit cost to the Government of Lesotho per student per programme for the indicated years. These figures are derived from the total student hours required per programme, total lecturer hours per programme, student enrolment per programme and allocated institutional costs per programme (IDM, 1997). To improve the efficiency in providing technical training NTTC is exploring the sharing of teacher trainers with Lerotholi Polytechnic.

Table 9.7 Unit Costs in Maloti by Programme

PROGRAMME	YEAR			
	1993	1994	1995	1996
PTC	5,991	5,435	7,882	9,032
APTC/DPE	6,345	5,961	13,222	10,296
STC	8,351	7,942	11,623	10,526
DATE	16,825	16,080	22,705	18,118

9.6 Ratios of teacher training staff to student trainees on different types of courses in different types of institutions

The 1997 NTTC calendar shows that there are 757 student teachers for all programmes offered. If there are 102 lecturers, this suggests that the college lecturer/teacher trainee ratio is 1:7. However, this institutional ratio does not reflect the load of students per lecturer. Within the secondary division, the ratio depends on the subject offered, which implies the number of students taking that subject. As already indicated, 50% of NTTC staff are devoted to a quarter of the student population. In the primary division, especially with the Primary Teachers Certificate (PTC), every student takes all subjects offered. It is therefore obvious that the lecturer/student ratio is higher in the primary division than in the secondary division. The issue of workload between the primary and secondary divisions is a bone of contention at NTTC and it needs to be addressed soon to curb the simmering tensions among staff in the two divisions.

9.7 Salary Scales for teachers and for teacher trainers

Large salary increases were awarded to teachers at the beginning of 1990/91 in order to bring teacher pay scales in line with civil service scales. Primary teachers' salaries increased by more than 150% between 1990 and 1994 while secondary teachers' salaries increased by 75% for the same period. The average primary teacher's salary is M13,390 and that of the secondary teacher is M19,962.

As a department of the Ministry of Education, the NTTC salary structure follows those of the Lesotho Government. The academic staff are categorised into assistant lecturer, lecturer, and senior lecturer. These three positions are remunerated at grades 9, 10, 11, and 13 respectively. The average salary for an assistant lecturer is M.36,984; that of a lecturer is M.46,812 and senior lecturers get M.59,460 on average. According to the NTTC calendar there are 102 academic staff at the college. They comprise 22 senior lecturers, 40 lecturers and 40 assistant lecturers. It is not clear what criteria are used to grade staff. Some staff with Masters degrees are assistant lecturers, others with junior degrees are senior lecturers. There are also diploma holders who hold lecturer positions. Experience in teacher education also does not seem to be considered in grading and there is no system for staff appraisal and no clear guidelines for promotion. Staff quality is very difficult to determine except to note that qualifications are from diploma to Masters degree level. The only document that spells out qualifications for different positions is the Schemes of Service for NTTC, which was developed in 1987/88. The prospect of staying in the same grade level, with no clear criteria of what is needed to move upwards, can be very demoralizing for aspirant staff and might be the reason for the high turnover of staff at the college.

9.8 Number of working days in the training college year

According to the 1994, 1995, 1996 & 1997 college calendars there are 15 working weeks per semester (150 days). This implies that for a student to complete his/her

programme, he/she has to spend 90 weeks at the college, 15 of which are spent in teaching practice. College lecturers are entitled to 21 leave days per year. Many of them take leave when the students are on vacation, provided they are not involved in in-service teaching.

9.9 Conclusion

It has been stated repeatedly that efficiency and quality cannot be effectively addressed at NTTC when it is forced to operate under civil service regulations. Granting autonomy to NTTC is seen as a step in the right direction. The “Lesotho College of Education Bill” which grants autonomy to NTTC has been passed by Parliament. The Bill covers a wide range of areas including a new system of governance for internal administration and management of the college, and a revised system of appointment and promotion for all staff. The Bill will allow greater flexibility in many areas and will also increase the capacity of the college to allocate resources.

CHAPTER TEN

SOME CURRENT ISSUES IN TEACHER EDUCATION IN LESOTHO

10.1 Introduction

Although Lesotho has relatively high literacy rates, especially for women, and most children start school at some stage, the primary schools are characterised by high repetition and dropout rates. The proportion of unqualified primary teachers remains stubbornly stuck at around 25%. It is therefore not surprising that the key theme running through this study is the need to upgrade the preparation of teachers and to increase their number, in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning in primary schools.

A number of interrelated issues arise around this theme. The main ones concern the position and characteristics of the NTTC as Lesotho's only teacher training college, how the college curriculum is being rationalised and upgraded, and overall questions of quality. There are also some other issues related to Lesotho's unique position and historical development.

10.2 The position and capacity of NTTC

Since its foundation in 1975, the NTTC has been the only institution training teachers for the basic education cycle, but in making one college out of seven the government may have underestimated the future needs for expansion, as to keep up with the rising demand for trained primary teachers the output from NTTC would probably need to rise by a factor of three or four. The physical position of the college as a largely residential campus in Maseru creates some inflexibility. In spite of the original intention to create economies of scale, the extent to which its courses are cost-effective has yet to be established.

As NTTC cannot accommodate all who want to train as teachers, some enrol on commercial distance programmes with institutions in other countries such as SA, UK or even USA. Such teachers do not get face-to-face supervision and the quality of the qualifications thus obtained is open to doubt.

Various ways forward have been mooted, e.g.:

- To open branch campuses of NTTC in other parts of the country
- To increase hostel accommodation (this is being done)
- To return to the year-long internship pattern, so freeing up facilities for another cohort to begin training during that year
- To develop more distance or mixed modes of training serving but unqualified teachers

10.2.1 Tutors' conditions of service

Among college tutors in the Primary Division there is low morale and high turnover. Reasons include:

- They have larger classes and heavier workloads than the
- Secondary Division; although this is more cost-effective, it creates internal strains
- There is a lack of clarity about criteria for promotions, leading to apparent anomalies, such as someone with postgraduate qualifications remaining an assistant lecturer (with a salary similar to a high school teacher) while some with only a B.Ed. is promoted.

10.2.2 Status of the college

For some years, there has been discussion about removing the NTTC from the immediate control of the MOE and giving it autonomy as the Lesotho College of Education. What effects this would have on conditions of service is still unclear. It is hoped that as a separate tertiary college they might be able to offer B.Ed. as well as Diplomas. There is irritation that the University does not grant NTTC graduates exemption from any part of the degree courses and higher status might enable the college to negotiate some form of Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) so diplomates wishing to further their studies, as many do, could take a shorter degree.

10.2.3 Dependence on external funding

Since its inception the NTTC has been largely dependent on donors for investment in new courses and new buildings.

10.3 Curriculum

The curriculum for primary teachers changed little in the first 20 years after independence, apart from the replacement of the internship year with one semester of teaching practice. Concern about the perceived low standards of NTTC graduates then led to the introduction of a three-year Diploma in Primary Education (DPE), but as this recruited PTC graduates with some years' teaching experience, it meant that someone had to spend six years in full-time training to reach this level. The decision in the mid-90s to rationalise courses by replacing the old Teachers' Certificates (and the DPE) with a new 3 ½ years Diploma in Education for Primary (and later for Secondary) teachers, was taken both on ground of costs and in order to raise standards. Some questions remain, however:

- Are there sufficient applicants with appropriate entry qualifications?
- What will happen to serving teachers who have only PTC?
- Will the untrained teachers who are upgraded by part-time or distance courses also study to Diploma level?

10.3.1 Overload and pedagogy

The current programme is criticised for being overloaded. One consequence is that much teaching is transmission-oriented, and out of 30 periods per week students have few periods for individual study. They are often spoon-fed information by lecturers, and do not themselves develop the skills of inquiry-based learning which they are supposed to teach their pupils, nor do they become as creative and innovative as intended.

10.3.2 Effectiveness of the course

It is felt that tutors may not be in touch with primary schools and therefore that the college is not preparing students for the realities of Basotho schools, where large and/or multi-grade classes are common. A further problem is that there is no regular induction programme for NQTs in primary schools. Without such support, much of the college teaching may be 'washed out' and teachers in schools may not welcome the new methods that students have been taught, or large classes may discourage them from using approaches such as group-work.

10.4 Questions of quality

It appears that teachers in Lesotho are no longer as respected as they once were. A vicious circle is in operation: teachers perceive their conditions of service as poor, so they go on strike, and some offer lessons out of school hours to those who can afford to pay. It appears to the public that teaching is becoming a commercial enterprise in Lesotho. Such negative images may in turn affect teacher trainees.

10.4.1 Quality of courses

Programmes are being reformed, as explained above, by the upgrading of entry qualifications, replacing certificates with diplomas, and introducing modules such as Early Primary Specialisation and Education for Children with Special Needs. These are felt to be valuable but not enough is known about their effectiveness at present.

10.4.2 Quality of students

Concern is expressed about the academic level, motivation and commitment of students entering NTTC. In spite of ostensibly rigorous entry procedures, some less qualified applicants are said to be let in 'by the back door'. The level of English language competence is low, with students never practicing English except in class.

Overall, the pool of well-qualified secondary school leavers is too small. One policy implication is to increase the number and standards of secondary schools, which might in turn produce more and better-qualified applicants.

10.4.3 Assessment

In spite of low entry levels, the failure rate at NTTC is also low. Questions have been raised about the validity and reliability of the assessment procedures, although the

college now has an External Examiner, and the exams are monitored by the National University. It may be that the college needs to raise its expectations of students and be prepared to fail those who do not come up to the expected standard.

10.5 Religious affiliation

Lesotho is unusual in that control of education is shared between government, churches and the community, and this affects teachers and their training in spite of the nominally secular nature of the college. Many teachers define themselves, at least in part, by their religious affiliation. Most schools are church-owned, and teachers may find themselves with two masters, the church and the government. It is suggested this may increase their feelings of powerlessness and lead to a culture of silence. This dual system of control may also militate against clear and decisive policies throughout the education system. A further problem is that Church-owned schools can choose to employ untrained teachers because they are cheaper.

10.6 Gender

Overall in Lesotho, girls achieve better educational results than boys, although women are still discriminated against by cultural norms and men hold most of the top jobs. The primary teaching force is predominantly female, though principals are more likely to be men. College tutors are also predominantly female. It appears from the small number of male primary trainees (about a quarter of the average cohort) that men do not want to go into primary teaching. This may be unfortunate in that many boys are underachieving at primary school and might benefit from good male role models. In view of these anomalies and paradoxes, it seems strange that NTTTC does not address gender as an issue, and offers no course in gender awareness as part of the curriculum.

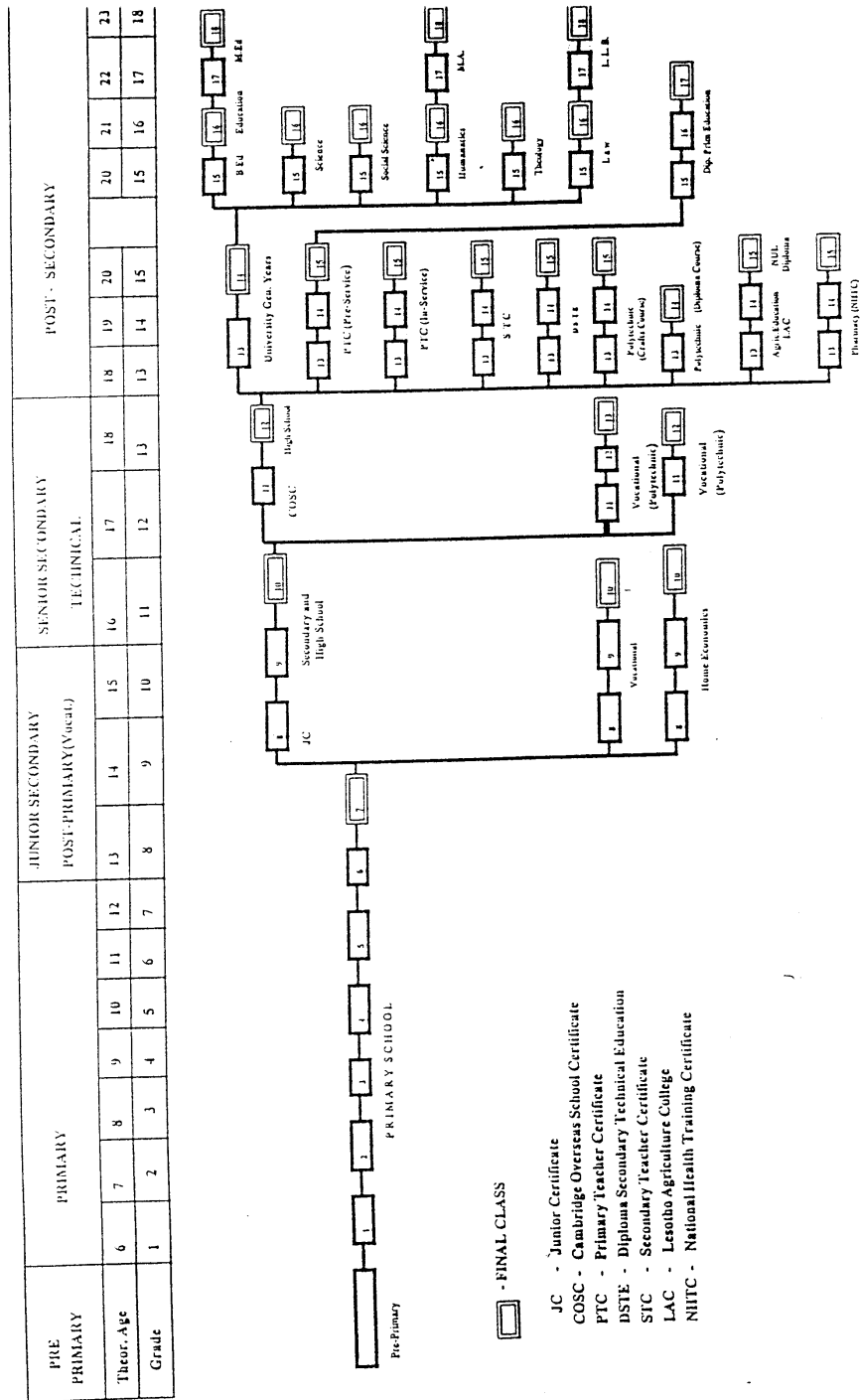
10.7 Lesotho and South Africa

Finally, the country's geographic situation, surrounded by South Africa, creates both constraints and possibilities. Now that the borders are more open, people and ideas can move more freely between the two. The implications of this for teacher education in the future are still unclear. Formerly, Basotho teachers and teacher educators were welcomed in some areas of apartheid South Africa, for example in Bophutatswana, as bringing a more enlightened approach. At the same time, black South African students sought refuge and a better education in Lesotho. As the new South African educational policies for transformation begin to be implemented, this seems unlikely to still be the case. In fact, there is some evidence that Basotho parents are sending their children to be schooled in South Africa. It may be that the NTTTC will find itself competing for students and for staff with teacher education institutions across the border.

Appendix 1: Lesotho's Education System

Appendix 1

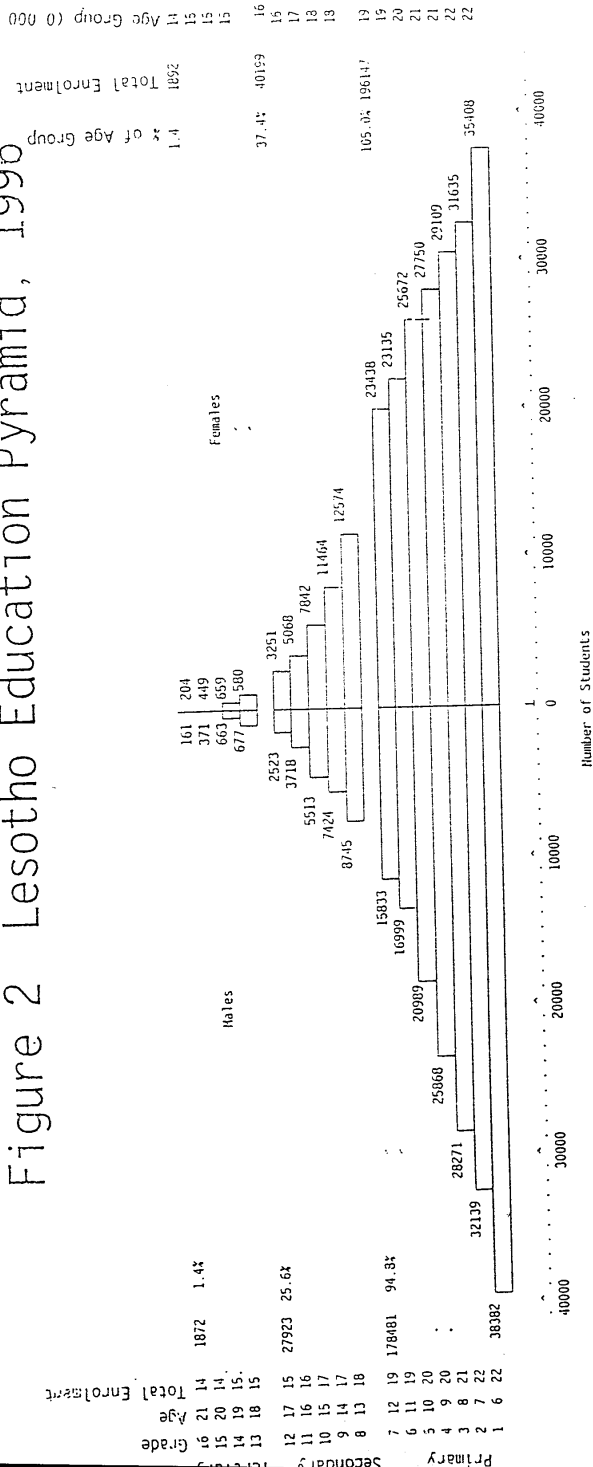
FIGURE 1: Lesotho's Education System



Appendix 2: Lesotho Education Pyramid 1996

Appendix 2

Figure 2 Lesotho Education Pyramid, 1996



Notes: (a) Figures for school-age population are estimates based upon the census of 1986.
 (b) Grades 1 to 7 are Standards 1 to 7.
 (c) Grades 8 through 13 include enrollments in general secondary courses, teacher training courses, and vocational/technical courses.
 (d) Enrollments for all grades include over-age students.
 (e) Students studying abroad at a tertiary level are not included.

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Address for Correspondence

**Centre for International Education
University of Sussex Institute of Education Falmer Brighton Sussex
BN1 9RG UK**

**T +44 +1273 678464
E cie@sussex.ac.uk
F +44 +1273 678568**

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ISBN 0 905414 31 4

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