Training Degree Teachers: The Case of Swaziland

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**Abstract**
Teaching is an important profession in the sense that all other professions such as accounting, medicine, engineering, law, architecture, etc. depend on it. For that reason, it is crucial that teachers be properly trained and highly motivated. Teacher preparation programmes have been criticised on a number of fronts such as weak coordination, focus heavily on the process of teaching and less on the subject content, and for licensing teachers without having demonstrated mastery of the subject content and essential professional teaching skills.

This paper reports the findings of a study which looked at the efficiency of the route for training Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) teachers at the University of Swaziland. The objectives of the study were to determine (i) the extent to which the academic qualifications of lecturers in teacher training colleges were qualitatively similar or different from the academic qualifications of lecturers in the Faculty of Education at the University of Swaziland, (ii) the extent to which the entrance requirements into teacher training colleges were similar and/or different from those of the University of Swaziland, and (iii) the extent to which the route of producing B. Ed. Degree teachers through teacher training colleges was efficient.

The findings of the study were that (i) the teaching staff in the Faculty of Education at the University of Swaziland (UNISWA) were qualitatively different from the teaching staff of the teacher training institutions; (ii) entrance requirements to diploma programmes at the teacher training colleges (especially the Secondary Teachers Diploma programme) were not qualitatively different from those of the UNISWA diploma programmes, and (iii) the college route of producing B. Ed. Teachers was too long and needed to be reduced.

It is recommended that the Ministry of Education, the University of Swaziland, and the Teacher Training Colleges should engage in open and frank discussions about the issues raised in the preceding paragraph with a view to find the optimum, cost-efficient and cost-effective way of producing B. Ed. Degree teachers in Swaziland, if not all types of teachers.

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