Teacher Education in South Africa

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Context

- The South African educational system has its roots in the apartheid system of separate and unequal development, based on race.

- The most privileged group were the White population with higher socio-economic status, living in middle class neighbourhoods and attending better resourced schools and higher education institutions.

- The African population (majority) lived in poorer communities and there was less spending on education.
Yahwe school is taking a trip.

Educators organised a trip to Khomisani Primary school. Learners were expected to pay R40 for a trip. They were going to have a Friendo game. They were having a programme in order to direct them of what to do.

Learners were very happy that day. Learners enjoyed themselves by sharing with other people. They are going to play football and netball.
Video-recording of class

FirstMathClip.wmv
South African Society

- Population of 44 million

- HDI: 0.6 (high prevalence of HIV/AIDS & low life expectancy)

- Gini Co-efficient: 0.68 (very unequal society)

- 2 societies and 2 systems of education
South African Education System

- 12 million students
- 400 000 teachers
- 28 000 schools
- Organised nationally, provincially, districts.
- 4 phases of schooling: Foundation phase, Intermediate, Senior and Secondary Phase
School Mathematics Performance

Mathematics Performance is low; measured by TIMSS, SACMEQ, and Annual National Assessments.
Teachers & Teacher Education

- Teachers are key for educational transformation.

- Concern about educational qualifications of teachers, especially math teachers.

- Investment in teacher education programmes, both pre and inservice.
Historical overview (Pre-Service)

- Historically, teacher education was offered in colleges of education (2 & 3 years diploma qualification) and universities (4 year degree qualifications at 105 colleges and 20 universities. Quality varied.

- Post 1994 the colleges of education were closed and all initial teacher education took place at 16 university sites. 4 year qualification.

- There has always been a shortage of math teachers
Historical overview (Induction)

- Induction of teachers was supposed to happen at schools.

- Heads of Department should provide guidance to new comer teachers and offer support on how to teach.

- District officials/ ministry subject advisors should offer guidance.

- In practice not happened and no or very little support
Historical overview (In-Service)

- 1976 was a watershed moment for investments to improve quality of education for African children.

- Investment in teacher upgrading. Short in-service courses offered by NGOs, state and universities. Focus on teacher knowledge. Course provision erratic and no quality assurance. No credits received.

- Teacher qualification upgrading efforts. Focus more on pedagogy than on content knowledge.

- Math teacher knowledge is a major concern.
Teacher training at university

- Universities provide initial teacher training that consist of a four year Bachelor of Education degree or a three year Bachelor of Arts or Science followed by a year of Post Graduate Certificate in Education.

- The in-service training of practising teachers are offered by these institutions of Higher Education at different levels depending on the teacher qualification.

- Fundza Lushaka bursaries: financial support from state to attract math teachers
National level governance and standards of K-12 mathematics education

• National curriculum and assessment standard for all subjects, including mathematics. National Curriculum Statements.

• Performance monitoring of mathematics, is through systemic tests conducted at the grade 3, 6 and 9 levels. Participation in regional studies: SACMEQ, International studies: TIMSS.

• Exit level examination (gr. 12) is a nationally set paper.
Curriculum & Curriculum change

• In 1998 country underwent a complete curriculum overhaul and shifted to an ambitious outcomes based education.


• There is curriculum change fatigue.
Mathematics curriculum

- The Revised National Curriculum Statement for grade R-12. Cover five learning outcomes:
  ✓ Numbers, Operations and Relationships
  ✓ Patterns, Functions and Algebra
  ✓ Space and Shape
  ✓ Measurement
  ✓ Data Handling
Teacher unions in education

- There are teacher unions and professional associations. Teacher unions have focused on conditions of service than on professional issues.

- Teachers have the right to strike. Teacher organisations are a powerful force and are included in discussions about major studies involving teachers.

- In 1997 teacher unions joined with the Education department in the formulation and implementation of Curriculum 2005 and in all curriculum revisions, 2002, 2005 and 2010.

- Teacher unions now also concerned about student performance.
National Policies for Teacher Education

- The National Policy Framework For Teacher Education and Development (2006): completion of a B.Ed. degree including a practical component. This completion will lead to registration as a teacher by the South African Council of Education.

- Integrated Strategic Plan for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa for the period 2011 to 2025. This involves various stakeholders for operationalising.
Concluding comments

- Official teacher supply & demand statistics indicate no shortages.
- Shortage in key subject areas and in rural areas.
- After years of very low hiring and attracting teacher education students, there is now a turnaround.
- In 2009 SA graduated 6000 teachers and 60% found jobs the next year.
- Our big question for newly graduated students is where do they go and their experiences in schools in their first years of teaching.