

Introduction

Commonwealth countries differ widely in terms of their geography, demography, political and economic frameworks, and development situations. They vary widely also in terms of their education systems and strategies. They share, however, a substantial and growing concern for major reform in the procedures by which they train education personnel. Most are seeking to expand education systems rapidly and cheaply in the interests of national development, political cohesion and social justice.

Some of the older Commonwealth countries face very different problems arising from the need to contract education systems in line with demographic trends. However continuing economic difficulties and consequently limited resources have resulted in demands for greater accountability and cost effectiveness of provision, in which respect their position is increasingly similar to that of new countries.

New patterns of teaching

Existing patterns of teacher training involving the use of expensive residential courses of initial training constitute in a number of countries a serious bottleneck and these countries have in consequence been compelled to employ large numbers of teachers who are considered to possess inadequate personal education and professional training. The proportion of underqualified teachers has shown a rising trend during the last decade, demanding exceptional and innovatory responses.

Dissatisfaction with the scale, quality and efficiency of existing education systems is compounded by the conviction in many countries that major shifts in the nature and function of schooling are necessary if these systems are to meet the needs of their changing societies most effectively. In a very real sense even trained teachers have been rendered out of date and 'underqualified' by changing educational ideas and development strategies.

Training for
new roles

New roles both within and outside the classroom are being proposed for the teacher for which current initial training does not prepare them and for which it is increasingly believed once and for all training at the beginning of their professional careers can never adequately prepare them. These new roles may, in some countries, require them to transform themselves from instructors to co-ordinators of learning activity, in discovery learning situations or in the use of new techniques such as those pioneered in Project Impact intended largely to cope with considerably increased pupil-teacher ratios. In some countries it is intended that they involve themselves more fully in community education both by reorientating the content and the methodology of classroom work with young people and by making the school a vigorous participant in the life of the community it serves. Non-formal approaches to adult education and the need to promote self-reliant forms of community development, to be fused in a relationship of mutual reinforcement with the school, appear to demand that the teacher serve as a change agent outside the walls of the school.

Training for
new tasks

The urgent need to prepare teachers to cope more effectively with the problems of disadvantaged groups within both urban and rural areas and including both women and the handicapped, has been urged by international seminars whilst it has simultaneously been argued that education needs to be brought into closer relationship with the world of work through curricular and organisational reform which will prepare young people more realistically for the fields of employment likely to be open to them and to meet the changing demands of a technological age. Whilst we only identify in broad terms the directions which educational change will take in the coming decades, there is little doubt that educational change will be a continuing process presenting new and often unconventional challenges to teachers throughout their careers.

Training
professionals

An important theme in the current debate is the contention that teacher education has in the past been too isolated from the realities not merely of the schools but more significantly of community

life and development needs. It has recruited its students from the schools, processed them through a further stage of schooling, and returned them to the schools from which they came in a closed cycle more suited to the perpetuation of existing practice than to changing it. Young teachers have been sheltered from experience of the often harsh world outside their classrooms yet have been charged with responsibility for preparing their pupils for life in that world. They have often tended to fall into the work patterns of their older colleagues, to adopt the circumscribed conceptions of the educational process which have characterised many school systems, and to regard themselves as a disadvantaged and isolated group of civil servants rather than as professionals sharing with others the task of social transformation. Insensitive administrative systems and remote, directive and inspectorial hierarchies have sometimes contributed to low standards of morale and commitment. Yet it is increasingly being urged that qualitative educational change must depend largely upon the quality of the teaching force, that such changes as are envisaged can only be brought about successfully where serving teachers are ready and able not merely to implement the plans of their superiors but to adapt and complement these through on-going incremental and self-initiated change.

Need for
administrative
competence

At the same time there is growing recognition of the fact that past attempts to reform education systems have been impeded not merely by the limited competence and flexibility of teaching staff but also by deficiencies in stocks of managerial expertise at all levels of educational administration. The experience of Sri Lanka, where it has been found necessary to retrace the steps taken in the far-reaching educational reforms of 1972 because a burden of change was imposed upon the school system that it has not been able to absorb, has parallels in other Commonwealth countries. The need to provide adequate training for staff promoted to higher levels of responsibility for which their original training has not prepared them has long been recognised but in recent years has acquired a new urgency. It has further been recognised that the modes of operation

of current administrative systems are usually geared primarily to maintaining rather than to changing the existing patterns of education and may therefore impede successful innovation. There may therefore be an additional dimension of need in staff development, to equip administrative and planning staff with new perceptions of their role and new skills relating to this role, rather than merely to upgrade traditional skills.

Motivation

The transformation of education is recognised to necessitate a transformation of education staff of all kinds and at all levels. Yet it is also being urged that the quality of such staff depends not merely upon their knowledge and skill, but also upon the degree of their motivation to utilise this knowledge and skill and upon the extent of the opportunity realistically available to them to do so. Consequently qualitative improvement demands consideration of a wide range of factors relating to the selection and utilisation as well as to the training of education staff, the provision of adequate incentives in the form perhaps of status, career progression, financial remuneration and professional belonging-identity, and the creation of genuine opportunity through the provision of support services, adequate resources, and, perhaps most important of all, opportunities to participate in the making of decisions affecting their work.

The reform of training processes and particularly the provision of in-service opportunities to sharpen existing and develop new skills is a vital component of the process but must be seen in this wider context since improvements in training procedures alone, as past experience has demonstrated, are unlikely to be sufficient to bring about the transformation sought.

Defining INSET

For the purposes of this study in-service education of teachers (INSET) is to be defined as the whole range of activities by which serving teachers and other categories of educationist within formal school systems may extend and develop their personal education, professional competence, and general understanding of the role which they and

the schools are expected to play in their changing societies. INSET further includes the means whereby a teacher's personal needs and aspirations may be met as well as those of the system in which he or she serves.

Structure
of the survey

The study is based primarily upon recently published and readily available material, including official reports submitted to international conferences and seminars as well as research studies. It is not intended to present a comprehensive country by country survey but rather to provide a more useful, analytic and regional perspective. Regional surveys are therefore presented for African and Asian Commonwealth countries. A regional approach is also retained for the Caribbean and Pacific countries but here it was thought valuable to include a wider perspective, that of island communities which might provide fuller insight into their common problems. In dealing with the older Commonwealth countries it was found helpful to group them together as countries regionally dispersed but sharing social and developmental characteristics which differentiate them significantly from newer Commonwealth countries in general.

Purpose

Each regional survey seeks first of all to analyse current provision and trends according to a number of key issues revealed as both important and common in the preliminary stages of the study. These include an examination of the various purposes for which in-service education is being provided and of the relative

Priority

priority accorded to these purposes and to INSET generally in different regions. It is argued that where resources are limited it is of the greatest importance that these be allocated where most needed and that commonly this is impeded by lack of clarity in determining purposes and priorities. Systematic planning of

Costs

INSET provision may also be reflected in financial allocations or impeded by the absence of adequate financial data; regional surveys will therefore also take this factor into account. Fourthly

Responsibility
control and
co-ordination

the studies will look at the question of responsibility for and control and co-ordination of INSET, to examine how and how successfully the problems of co-ordination and planning are being

Motivation of teachers	tackled where commonly INSET is provided by a wide range of agencies to a wide range of clienteles for a variety of purposes. Fifthly, experience in a number of countries suggests that particular attention needs to be paid to the question of how teachers may be motivated to take up INSET opportunities effectively, and how they may be involved more effectively in the management and provision of their own in-service training and how the personal needs of the teacher may be reconciled effectively with system needs. Finally attention
Evaluation and follow-up	must be paid to evaluation and follow-up, to examine the extent to which we are able to build on to our own experience and take advantage of the experience of others.
Innovations	The second major aspect of each regional survey will seek to draw attention more directly to more innovative approaches to INSET adopted by various countries. Whilst the scale of this publication prohibits the inclusion of detailed case studies, it will seek to present sufficient information to suggest to those responsible for INSET where instances of innovatory approaches have been adopted which may be relevant to the needs and circumstances of other education systems.