

The Rigor and Relevance of the Mathematics Component of the Teacher Education Programmes in Jamaica: An Evaluative Approach

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Abstract : For over fifty years there has been widespread dissatisfaction with the teaching of Mathematics in Jamaica. Studies, done in the Jamaican context highlight that teachers at the end of training do not have a deep understanding of the mathematics content they teach. Little research has been done in the Jamaican context that targets the advancement of contextual knowledge on the problem to ultimately provide a solution. The aim of the study is to identify what influences this outcome of teacher education in Jamaica so as to remedy the problem. This study formatively evaluated the curriculum documents, assessments and the delivery of the curriculum that are being used in teacher training institutions in Jamaica to determine their rigor -the extent to which written document, instruction, and the assessments focused on enabling pre-service teachers to develop deep understanding of mathematics and relevance- the extent to which the curriculum document, instruction, and the assessments are focus on developing the requisite knowledge for teaching mathematics. The findings show that neither the curriculum document, instruction nor assessments ensure rigor and enable pre-service teachers to develop the knowledge and skills they need to teach mathematics effectively.

Keywords : relevance, rigor, deep understanding, formative evaluation

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