

Challenges in Teacher Education in South Africa: Do Teacher Educators and Teachers Effectively Prepare Student Teachers to Perform their Roles as Educators?

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KEYWORDS Quality Education. Teaching Practice. Role Model. Policy Requirements. Learners

ABSTRACT The Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications provides criteria for designing curricula for initial teacher education. This policy emphasizes that the roles that teachers have to fulfill should be interpreted as functions carried out by the collective of teachers in a specific school. The purpose of this research was to explore how effective student teachers are prepared to fulfil their multiple roles as teachers. A qualitative research design was employed by making use of focus group interviews. The findings indicate that teacher educators and teachers do not model the required roles of teachers and therefore fail to prepare student teachers adequately to fulfil these roles. The findings from the data will be discussed in this paper.

INTRODUCTION

Only teachers who are motivated and well trained will be competent to perform the seven roles of a teacher as defined in the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications. Quality education is a basic right of every South African child, though despite many positive changes in the country since 1994, the legacy of low-quality education in many historically disadvantaged parts of the school system remains.

Given the unsatisfactory level of learner achievement in South Africa, it is to no surprise that the quality of teacher education itself is becoming a crucial point of debate (National Education Evaluation and Development Unit 2013). Evidence is increasingly sought to prove that all student teachers are prepared in such a way that they will be able to positively affect learner results, especially at Grade 12 level. Korthagen et al. (2005) and Smith (2010) claim that in the light of the increasing attention paid to the nature of teaching and teachers' work, there has also been an increasing focus on the quality of teacher education and the professional expertise of teacher educators themselves.

Many teacher preparation programmes concur that knowledge of subject matter is the foundation for good teaching. However, knowledge of subject matter alone does not make one an effective, compassionate teacher. The South African Department of Higher Education and

Training (2011) asserts that too often, teacher education programmes focus on the academic ability of candidates while neglecting dispositional aspects. Effective teachers have intangible qualities or dispositions that are difficult to define and to assess. In addition, teachers need a moral compass that can enable them to follow through their commitments to all learners (Grant and Gillette 2006; Breaux 2013). To care within the context of schools means that teachers should focus on improving their own knowledge and skills, should impart pre-determined knowledge to their learners and should also spend significant time and energy on nurturing and sustaining each of their learners.

In South Africa all teachers have to fulfill seven collective roles (Department of Higher Education and Training 2011). In addition, a set of basic competences required of newly qualified teachers is specified. Teacher educators are responsible to equip student teachers with the knowledge that will enable them to perform these roles and competences effectively. During teaching practice, teachers take over this responsibility.

It is disturbing to note, that despite years of research, experimentation and intervention there are still many teachers who fail to provide quality education for our nations' youth regardless of learners' ethnicity, race, gender, religion, language or socio-economic status (Grant and Gillette 2006; Department of Higher Education and Training 2011). If poor school performance is caused by teachers who are unable to fulfil

their roles, then something is seriously wrong with teacher education (National Education Evaluation and Development Unit 2013).

The researchers want to argue that there is not sufficient modeling of or focus on the roles of educators in teacher education programmes to prepare student teachers to perform the roles expected of them. Furthermore, it could be that practicing teachers are not well informed about the extent and practical application of these roles and therefore also do not model these roles to the required extent during everyday teaching. This would lead to ineffective modeling of these roles during the teaching practice periods of student teachers.

No empirical research could be found to provide confirmation or contradiction to the above argument. This research aims to fill the gap in literature. The research question that will guide this research is: *'Are student teachers equipped with the knowledge and skills to enable them to effectively fulfil their roles as specified in the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications?'*

The focus of this research will be on the following two roles of teachers:

- ♦ Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner

'The educator will achieve ongoing personal, academic, occupational and professional growth, through pursuing reflective study and research in their field, in broader professional and educational matters, and in other related fields' (Department of Higher Education and Training 2011).

- ♦ Community, citizenship and pastoral role

It is specified that 'the educator will practise and promote a critical, committed and ethical attitude towards developing a sense of respect and responsibility towards others and will uphold the Constitution and promote democratic values and practices in schools and societies. Furthermore, the educator will display a critical understanding of community and environmental development issues' (Department of Higher Education and Training 2011).

Answers to the above research question could guide teacher educators, teacher education institutions and teachers to prepare student teachers more effectively and to assist them in such a way that they will be able to positively affect teaching, learning and learner results.

The Nature of Teacher Education

Teachers are the pillars of a sound and progressive society: they pass on knowledge, skills and values and prepare the youth for further education and their roles in society (Motshekga 2011). Professional teacher education must enable student teachers to develop an effective system for learning that will facilitate their transition into practice and must further ensure that teacher educators' professional and policy based knowledge is translated into the practices of teacher education and educators in a more general manner. However, research over the past few years has shown that the alignment of teachers' instruction with policies is weak to moderate (Department of Higher Education and Training 2011; Polikoff 2012). Many teacher education researchers argue that teachers' implementation of standards and policies should be contextualized in the school setting (Friedrichsen et al. 2009; Anderson and Stillman 2013; Polikoff 2013), implying that 'perfect' implementation of standards and policies may look different from school to school, classroom to classroom and teacher to teacher.

Talbert-Johnson (2006) states that it is important that student teachers are prepared to align their pedagogy with their learners' and their communities' cultural experiences and needs. Not only do teachers influence their learners' achievement and cognitive development, but they also influence their self-concept and attitudes. Student teachers should understand the larger social context in which they work. Academic and social achievements do not occur in a vacuum and is affected by and affects societal structures (Grant and Gilette 2006).

When considering literature, it seems that although many beginner teachers regard instructional alignment as important, they find it difficult and as a result the actual alignment of instruction with policies remains low (Hamilton and Berends 2006). According to Brouwer and Korthagen (2005), school students' learning is the central concern of teachers and it is crucial that teacher educators build programs from an analysis of what is known about classroom practice and about how classroom practice is linked to improved student learning outcomes. A counterargument could be that preparing teachers who can produce high-quality learning outcomes is only one among many purposes of teacher

education. This is indicative of the confusion with which teachers and teacher educators engage in their work and probably at the core of some of the problems with teacher education.

In South Africa all teachers have to fulfill the following collective roles:

- ♦ Specialist in a phase, subject discipline or practice
- ♦ Learning mediator
- ♦ Interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials
- ♦ Leader, administrator and manager
- ♦ Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner
- ♦ Assessor

Community, citizenship and pastoral role (Department of Higher Education and Training 2011).

In addition, a set of basic competences required of newly qualified teachers is specified. For example, newly qualified teachers must:

- ♦ know who their learners are and how they learn;
- ♦ have highly developed literacy, numeracy and information technology skills;
- ♦ understand diversity in the South African context in order to teach in a manner that includes all learners;
- ♦ have a positive work ethic and display appropriate values; and
- ♦ be able to reflect critically, in theoretically informed ways and in conjunction with their professional community of colleagues on their own practice in order to constantly improve it and adapt it to evolving circumstances (Department of Higher Education and Training 2011).

Teacher educators are responsible to prepare student teachers to be able to fulfill these roles and competencies effectively. Teacher educators who educate future teachers are the people who instruct, teach and provide support to student teachers. They need to cope simultaneously with teaching, training students to teach and to be role models (Smith 2010; Mayer et al. 2011). Teacher educators themselves need to be doing the same in their teaching as that which they expect of their student teachers in practice (Loughran 2010). Smith (2010) posits that creating a pedagogy of teacher education depends on teacher educators being conscious of not only what they teach but also of the manner in which their teaching is conducted.

Teacher Educators

According to Koster and Dengerink (2001) and Swennen (2008) teacher educators have long been recognized as a group who live between two worlds. In Australia the role of teacher educators has changed from being teachers of the craft of teaching to having a more scholarly and theoretical focus (Aspland 2006). However, literature suggests that research is one of the most stressful professional development activities of teacher educators. According to Smith (2010) and Mayer et al. (2011) there are several constraints that influence the research activities of teacher educators: time and resources, a lack of support in a very competitive environment, confidence and intrinsic motivation.

In a study done by Liston et al. (2008) interviews were conducted with teacher educators. The first interview question was: 'Whom do you call teacher educators?' The definition that most of these teacher educators agreed on was 'Everyone who teaches, mentors or guides teachers in 'pre service' as well as 'in service' teacher education'. Some of the participants argued that teacher educators have to be committed to their students as well as to their future pupils and therefore have to model a sound pedagogy. They also indicated that teacher educators need research knowledge and need to be able to look at social phenomena and social practices from various points of view.

Based on the above responses it might be inferred that professional development of teacher educators is a rather straight forward process. According to Johnson (2013), professional development is not easy, it takes time and it demands sacrifice. Engaging in professional development is a mindset, it has to become a habit and eventually an integral part of a person's personality achieved through an openness to lifelong learning' (Johnson 2013).

The literature that was reviewed revealed that there is an increased focus on the quality of teacher education as well as the quality of teacher educators themselves. Phillips and Hatch (1999) and Tok (2011) argue that many teachers choose teaching because they like children, enjoy challenges and want to make a difference in children's lives. The researchers are of the opinion that this might also be true for many teacher educators. Nonetheless, liking students and wishing to make a difference in their lives do not

guarantee quality teacher education or effective preparation of these students to fulfill the roles that they are required to perform.

In many countries standards for teacher educators are developed, often as a reaction to the wide criticism of teacher education (Koster et al. 2005; Smith 2010). Professional development of teacher educators is not limited to expanded theoretical knowledge in a specific subject, but is a whole person development with cognitive and affective aspects.

The teaching of teaching is not only about the delivery of information and ideas of teaching, but rather about the teaching of knowledge of practice through careful and purposeful creation of situations in which that knowledge is borne out in experience of practice (Lougharn 2010).

Teaching Practice

‘Teaching practice’ is such a long established practice that it is easy to assume that all those involved in it have a clear notion of what it is and how it should be operationalized and managed’ (Quick and Siebörger 2005). According to Kiggundu and Nayimuli (2009) teaching practice is a period of time when students are working in the relevant industry to receive specific in-service training in order to apply theory in practice. Teaching practice in general aims to achieve the following objectives:

- ♦ provide opportunities for the student-teacher to experience actual teaching in different levels of schooling according to the dynamics of learner’s needs;
- ♦ recognize and test the student’s teaching skills and competencies translated in actual teaching sessions; and
- ♦ analyze and record the entire teaching experience of the student teacher in relation to the understanding of the entire education process in a classroom and school setting.

According to many students, teaching practice plays an important role in their preparation for teaching. However, merely providing the practice setting for student teachers is not sufficient, especially given the complexities and challenges of teaching in today’s schools. Schools and teachers should be full partners in teacher education programmes, rather than only providers of classrooms for students to teach in.

Shared understandings should be developed regarding the roles, responsibilities and expectations among teacher educators, schools and teachers. ‘Intensive co-operation between teacher educators, schools and teachers refer to the fact that university lecturers and co-operating teachers maintain regular contact to achieve coordination between activities in the teacher education institution and activities in the practice school, as well as informing each other about the learning processes going on at both sites’ (Brouwer and Korthagen 2005). To this end, plenary meetings of teacher educators and co-operating teachers should be organized periodically for all of the personnel involved in the programs for each school subject.

In this regard teachers who participated in a study conducted by Quick and Siebörger (2005) reported that the university does not always need to train mentors but needs to give more information and instructions on what schools are to do. According to these teachers the university should provide guidelines in order that schools can develop a policy guiding teaching practice at their institutions. The student teachers who participated in the study agreed with teachers when they reported that there should be more contact with the schools and the school liaison person prior to teaching practice. They were also of the opinion that the teachers were unprofessional and were taking advantage of student teachers. They were of the opinion that teachers used them as ‘personal assistants’ and did not provide them with the learning opportunities that they expected.

Dreyer (1998) studied the expanded use of mentor teachers in a South African context and concluded that the minimum requirement for mentorship to be effective is that a very close relationship/partnership between the training institution and the mentors should be established.

Teacher education and career experience variables should ensure substantial gains in student teachers’ curricular knowledge, their ability to align instruction with standards and policies and their ability to adapt knowledge and skills to specific school contexts. It is equally important that teacher educators and teachers are models of practicing the roles that teachers are required to fulfill. If not, their knowledge will stay theoretical and transition into practice will remain a requirement in a policy document (Brouwer and Korthagen 2005).

In the teacher education institution that this research was conducted it is expected that student teachers behave in a professional manner during teaching practice, including:

- Respect the dignity, beliefs and constitutional rights of learners
- Acknowledge the needs of each learner
- Execute authority with compassion
- Refrain from any form of child abuse
- Refrain from any form of sexual relationship or harassment of learners
- Act to elicit respect from the learner

Before student teachers at this institution go to schools for teaching practice or observation, they have to sign a code of conduct. The code of conduct stipulates for example, that each student:

- Values the dignity, faiths and constitutional rights of learners
- Steers clear of any type of embarrassment and abuse
- Speaks to learners by using proper language
- Dresses in a way that will evoke learners' respect
- Applies relevant authority with care

Teacher education must equip student teachers with an effective system for learning that will facilitate their transition into practice and must also integrate research activities with professional education. However, participants in Gordon's study (Talbert-Johnson 2006) perceived their teacher education programmes as 'a waste of time' and as detached from the realities of schools with diverse student populations.

Teacher educators and school teachers are expected to model professional behaviour as well as all stipulations expected from the student teachers in the code of conduct. They must also model the roles that educators are required to perform. Accordingly, this research focuses on two roles of an educator:

- ♦ Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner; and the
- ♦ Community, citizenship and pastoral role.

As has been stated previously, no empirical research could be found to provide confirmation or contradiction as to whether teacher educators and teachers model such behaviour. In order to find answers to the research question, a qualitative research design was utilized.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research design was used for this research. Creswell (2009) defines qualitative research as multi-method focused, involving an interpretive, constructivist, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. A qualitative research design was suitable for this research as it takes into account the context and the participants' categories of meaning. It further allows for examining complex issues, is dynamic and researchers can generate explanatory theory about a phenomenon.

The research population comprised of fifty teacher educators and one thousand four hundred student teachers at a teacher education institution in South Africa. Participants were selected by means of non-probability, purposive sampling. According to De Vos et al. (2002), this type of sampling is based on the judgement of the researcher, in that the sample is composed of elements that represent the most characteristic, representative attributes of the research population. The research sample comprised of all teacher educators and four hundred student teachers (28% of the student teacher population) (Creswell 2009).

De Vos et al. (2002) define a focus group as a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions regarding a specific area of interest in a non-threatening environment. Data is collected through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher. In this research focus group interviews served as the principle source of information.

The researchers acknowledge the limitations of focus group interviews:

- ♦ Participants' share personal information with other group members (Greeff 2005).
- ♦ Participants might be influenced by other group members (Nieuwenhuis 2007).
- ♦ Participants might be inclined to answer according to the norm (Greeff 2005).

The following strategies were implemented to overcome or minimize these limitations:

- ♦ Informed consent was gained from all participants.
- ♦ The researchers encouraged participants not to be influenced by or influence other group members.

- ♦ The researchers asked the participants to talk about their own experiences and not to answer according to what they think might be expected of them.

The focus group interviews were conducted with all the participants in order to gain a deeper understanding of the context and the participants' categories of meaning. Pre-determined open-ended questions on an interview schedule were developed to guide the researchers during the interviews.

Student Teachers Were Asked the Following Questions

- ♦ How do your lecturers (teacher educators) model and prepare you for your role as scholar, researcher and lifelong learner?
- ♦ How do your lecturers model and prepare you for your community, citizenship and pastoral role?
- ♦ During teaching practice, how do teachers model and prepare you for your role as scholar, researcher and lifelong learner?
- ♦ During teaching practice, how do teachers model and prepare you for your community, citizenship and pastoral role?

Teacher Educators Were Asked to Answer the Following Questions

- ♦ How do you model and prepare your students for their role as scholar, researcher and lifelong learner?
- ♦ How do you model and prepare your students for their community, citizenship and pastoral role?

Participants were encouraged to share their experiences and views. Through conducting focus group interviews with the participants, the researchers established a relationship with them and also gained their co-operation. The focus group interviews were audio-taped and hand-written notes were used to support the recordings. This assisted in the transcription for the purpose of data analysis (Maree 2010).

All the participants were informed about the nature and aim of the research and all completed informed consent forms. The participants were assured that their personal information would be treated as confidential and that they could withdraw from the research at any time. The participants gave permission that the research findings could be published.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data collected was analysed and coded. During the process of analysis the following stages of content analysis were adhered to (Creswell 2009):

Stage 1: The data was scanned and sorted, and the verbal interviews were transcribed (Creswell 2009).

Stage 2: The data was read to obtain a general sense and understanding of the overall meaning of the information (Creswell 2009).

Stage 3: The data was coded. Coding entails a process where data is organised and clustered into specific themes or categories (Creswell 2009). Making use of multiple coders enhances the trustworthiness and accuracy of the research results (Maree 2010).

From these processes, a number of themes emerged. The data obtained from the focus group interviews with teacher educators and student teachers, have been analyzed and coded separately, and will be reported separately.

Theme 1: Preparation and Modeling for the Role of Scholar, Researcher and Lifelong Learner

Teacher Educators

One participant indicated that:

'Teacher training institutions must equip students with the newest methods of teaching. South Africa is far behind other countries. The knowledge of a child starts by the teacher.'

A few participants indicated that:

'We are prepared to do the induction programme when we start as lecturers, but they take it too far. We already know a lot and these people think we know nothing. I hope when our students start teaching they will not have to do such training'.

A participant stated that:

'We know how to teach. Rather show how the technology at the university works as I did not have it at school. Student teachers must also learn this and always keep up with the newest technology'.

A participant argued as follows:

'We have a heavy workload, but we can teach. Don't waste our time with these extra training sessions. I also tell my students when they are teachers they must focus on teaching and not on studying'.

Another participant revealed that:

'I have to complete my qualifications to get promotion. I always tell my students how much I hate it'.

One participant said:

'I think a teacher must be a teacher and only if they want to leave teaching they must do extra courses or better qualifications'.

Teacher education is a conservative enterprise and reform has been slow. More focus on strengthening and refining the knowledge base of teaching and teacher education could enhance the status of teachers, teacher education and teacher educators. Teacher educators have historically occupied a lower status than other academics within the academic environment. Many have extensive experience in schools, it is not uncommon that teacher educators have less and are less interested in disciplinary training and qualifications than other academics' (Brouwer and Korthagen 2005).

Based on the above responses from teacher educators, the researchers want to argue that teacher educators do not fulfill their own role as scholar, researcher and lifelong learner, resulting in the fact that they do not sufficiently address the preparation and modeling of the student teacher's role as scholar, researcher and lifelong learner. The strengthening of the knowledge base of teacher educators, its connections to both practice and theory and its capacity to support the development of powerful teaching, will strengthen their identities as knowledgeable and effective teacher educators, enhance their fulfillment of the roles expected of them and will most probably result in well prepared student teachers.

Student Teachers

The manner in which teacher educators prepare student teachers for their role of scholar, researcher and lifelong learner:

A participant revealed that:

'We hear about this in one or two modules. The other lecturers never talk about this'.

Another participant said that:

'Some lecturers tell us that they hate it to study further and that it is not necessary for us to think about that'.

One of the participants argued that:

'Many lecturers say the courses that teachers have to attend is a waste of time. They hope we will not have to do that.'

A participant stated that:

'One of the lecturers said that when we are teachers we must focus on teaching and not on improving our qualifications...that is not our job'.

The manner in which teachers prepare student teachers for their role of scholar, researcher and lifelong learner:

One of the participants said that:

'The teachers don't care if learners don't do homework. I also did not have to do so much'.

A respondent stated that:

'The teacher said I must not follow her example.....because she is not a good teacher, but also will not study anything more'.

Another participant reported that:

'Teachers say u are stupid to do teaching....the money is not enough, even if you have more qualifications'.

A participant revealed that:

'The teachers have to attend courses but they say it is a waste of time. I hope we will not have to do that'.

One of the participants argued that:

'Teachers must do research to know more about their subjects. Many of the teachers said that they do not do it, they know their work'.

As it has been stated previously, the Department of Higher Education and Training (2011) requires that all educators will achieve ongoing personal, academic, occupational and professional growth, through pursuing reflective study and research in their field, in broader professional and educational matters and in other related fields. The above responses from student teachers unveil that teacher educators as well as teachers do not model or prepare student teachers for their role as scholar, researcher and lifelong learner in a sufficient and required manner.

Theme 2: Preparation and Modeling for the Community, Citizenship and Pastoral Role

Teacher Educators

A participant stated that:

'Social problems, poverty, HIV and general social degradation. There are more demands on the teacher to fulfill his social/pastoral role in the school context'.

Another participant argued that:

'Love, empathy and leadership is needed as learners do not get it at their homes. The child's only safe haven is at school and the teacher is the 'father/mother' figure in the child's life'.

A participant said that:

'It is important to train student teachers whose passion it is because it is not a profession that you do for money. The harm that teachers without passion do is 'child abuse'.

It was surprising to note that one participant responded to the question in the following manner:

One participant indicated that:

'It cannot be expected that teachers solve all the social problems of their schools. But, they must be willing to improve themselves in at least one of the seven roles as stipulated in the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications. They must have a holistic approach to their learners'.

Ben-Peretz et al. (2010) posit that teachers need to be able to look at social phenomena and social practices from various points of view and that teacher educators need to learn how to interpret students' behaviour, how to listen to the voice of the 'other'. When teachers use knowledge about the social, cultural and language backgrounds of their learners when planning and implementing instruction, the academic achievement of such learners will increase.

The responses from teacher educators suggest that most of the participants place a high value on the pastoral role of teachers and it seems that they take responsibility for preparing their students to be able to perform this role.

Student Teachers

The manner in which teacher educators prepare student teachers for their community, citizenship and pastoral role:

One participant stated that:

'The lecturers say that we have to respect the power that we will have to affect positive change/growth in our lives and the communities'.

Another participant said that:

'A lecturer told us that we must understand that we must teach to shape the future of South Africa'

Another participant argued that:

'In one of my modules the lecturer said that the school is the only safe place for some learn-

ers and that we must be fathers and mothers for those learners'.

A participant revealed that:

'There is a lecturer that teaches us that we must give our learners love and leadership because many of them do not get it at home.'

One participant indicated that:

'Some lecturers say that the poor teachers cannot change everything for the learners. The social problems are too many'.

Another participant reported that:

'We are told that we must choose one role of the teacher and rather be good at that one',

A next participant stated that:

'Some lecturers say we can do the roles of the teacher but only if we want to'.

A participant argued that:

'In some modules lecturers explain that social problems, poverty and AIDS will make it difficult for us to fulfill our social/pastoral role in the school context'.

The manner in which teachers prepare student teachers for their community, citizenship and pastoral role:

One of the participants said that:

'The teachers don't care how learners behave and they swear at the learners'

Another participant stated that:

'Teachers want to have relationships with learners. They also want to have relationships with us'.

A participant responded as follows:

'Some teachers don't refrain from any form of sexual relationship or harassment of learners. They don't stay away from child abuse'.

The above statement is supported by a participant who said that:

'I don't think that all teachers respect the dignity, beliefs and constitutional rights of learners. They don't acknowledge the needs of each learner'.

One of the participants argued that:

'Some teachers have no relationship with learners and they show no respect for other teachers'.

A participant said that:

'Some teachers do not execute authority with compassion. They are very harsh'.

The responses from the student teachers in this study support the findings of Kiggundu and Nayimuli (2009). Student teachers in the study of these authors reported the following:

'Learners were very unruly because there were no effective disciplinary measures taken against misconduct'.

'Learners gave an impression that we are their age mates so they don't respect us. There is no discipline at all'.

'Learners are rude. It is not easy to control the class. Even when the teacher is there, learners would be playing cards and eating in class'.

The Department of Higher Education and Training (2011) requires that educators will practise and promote a critical, committed and ethical attitude towards developing a sense of respect and responsibility towards others and that they will uphold the Constitution and promote democratic values and practices in schools and society. Educators should also display a critical understanding of community and environmental development issues.

Student teachers should understand the larger social context in which they work (Talbert-Johnson 2006). Academic and social achievements are affected and affect societal structures (Grant and Gilette 2006).

The above responses from student teachers suggest that most teacher educators place a high value on the pastoral role of teachers and it seems that they take responsibility for preparing their students to be able to perform this role. However, the researchers want to argue that many teachers do not fulfill their community, citizenship and pastoral role to the extent that is required of them. Student teachers are therefore not well prepared for this role during teaching practice.

CONCLUSION

In South Africa all teachers have to fulfill seven collective roles and it is the responsibility of teacher educators to equip student teachers, who later become teachers, with the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to do so. Teacher educators' roles are numerous and diverse. They need to cope simultaneously with teaching, training students to teach, assessing teaching practice, doing research and being role models of the kind of teaching that they promote in order to support their students' learning but also the learning of their students' future learners. It is also important that teacher educators prepare their students to fulfill the roles that teachers are required to fulfill, to develop a sense of re-

spect and responsibility towards others and to uphold the Constitution and promote democratic values and practices in schools and societies. This implies inventing a pedagogy of teacher education where the problems of practice are central and where the question of what it means to know and learn is integrated in ongoing work with students. Although teacher education is often regarded as the key to preparing qualified teachers who are able to educate learners for the demands of the twenty-first century, not much attention has been paid to the teacher educators who are responsible for this task. The findings from this research make it evident that many teacher educators do not put sufficient emphasis on the preparation and modeling of the student teacher's role as scholar, researcher and lifelong learner. It is however, positive to note that most of the teacher educators place a high value on the pastoral role of teachers and that they take responsibility for preparing their students to be able to perform this role.

During teaching practice, teachers also have to accept that they have a professional obligation towards the education and induction of student teachers into the teaching profession. If we are to sustain the teacher education profession and ensure that student teachers are well prepared for their task, we need to consider the responses of the participants in this study. The findings from this research indicate that many teachers do not model the teacher's role as scholar, researcher and lifelong learner and that they do not fulfill their community, citizenship and pastoral role to the extent that is required of them. It also became clear that teachers could and would add much value to the school practice experience of student teachers if they are given more guidance about what is expected of them. The researchers want to argue that this is a relatively easy matter to correct if there is wider consensus about the minimum expectations of what experiences ought to be provided for student teachers during teaching practice.

Teachers and teacher educators must take some responsibility for failing to produce teachers who have sufficient clarity about educational goals, adequate strategies for achieving them and being able to fulfill the role of scholar, researcher and lifelong learner, as well as the community, citizenship and pastoral role. By taking collective responsibility for working towards the vision of quality teaching and learning, we can

enhance the manner in which we prepare our student teachers to teach.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings of this research, the following recommendations are made:

Teacher educators and teachers should focus more on modeling, strengthening and refining student teachers' knowledge about their role as scholar, researcher and lifelong learner. Teacher educators should continue with modeling and preparing student teachers for their pastoral role. The roles of an educator should be addressed in all the modules included in the teacher education curriculum and teacher educators should not only discuss, but also model these roles. During teaching practice, teachers should be modeling the roles of the educator in the manner required by the Department of Higher Education and Training.

It is crucial to strengthen the relationship and co-operation between teacher education institutions, schools and teachers where student teachers do their teaching practice. The role of teachers in the education of student teachers must be clearly stipulated by teacher education institutions.

The researchers hope that this research will draw attention to the importance of modeling and preparing student teachers for their roles as educators, but also to the importance of quality relationships and co-operation between teacher education institutions, schools and teachers.

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