Practice & Research Digest

Editors**:** **James Keevy, Judy Tate and Vanencia Chiloane**

Practice & Research Digest

Editors**: James Keevy, Judy Tate and Vanencia Chiloane**

Acknowledgements

The editors would like to thank the more than 40 authors who contributed their time and effort to this Digest. Their varied contributions bear testimony to the wide range of practitioners, researchers, government officials and donors that thought of this as a worthwhile effort. Thank you to Maureen Mosselson and Metja Pale for their meticulous work on editing the manuscript in its various iterations, and to Leith Davis for the creative layout and design.

JET EDUCATION SERVICES
THINK EDUCATION. THINK JET.

Table of contents

Introduction

James Keevy, *JET Education Services*
Judy Tate, *Khanyisa Inanda Seminary Community Projects*
Vanencia Chiloane, *South African Council for Educators*

What is TICZA?

Following several consultations and planning sessions between 2017 and 2020, the Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) was formally established with the support of philanthropic funders, namely the Zenex Foundation, the Tutuwa Community Foundation and the Maitri Trust, for the period 2023-2025.

> TICZA is a collective impact project designed to support mutually reinforcing activities across discrete actors in the education sector with varying interests in extended student teacher internships (ESTIs) in South Africa. (adapted from McDonald 2024, 1)

> An ESTI is a teaching internship programme designed for student teachers who are mostly registered for the distance mode Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) and Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) qualifications in accredited South African higher education institutions (HEIs). ESTIs are aimed at providing student teachers with wraparound support during extended teaching experience (WIL) periods in host schools, thus improving the quality of graduate teachers and teacher retention in the South African teaching force. (adapted from McDonald, 2024, 2)

JET Education Services (JET), Trialogue and the Bertha Centre made up the convening group, responsible for overseeing the process in 2018, while the Global Teachers Institute (GTI) moved into the role of a non-governmental organisation (NGO) implementer. From the outset, TICZA was conceptualised as a specific type of public-private partnership (PPP) referred to as a collective impact collaboration (CIC), drawing on the Stanford model (see Kania & Kramer, 2011), with five key organisational features: a common agenda, debated and defined by a wide range of stakeholders involved in initial teacher education (ITE); tools for shared measurement, developed from a co-created theory of change (TOC) and accompanying monitoring and evaluation framework; implementing mutually reinforcing activities; continuous communication and engagement; and a structure providing backbone support, as represented by the convening group (Trialogue, 2022). At the time of the preparation of this TICZA Digest, the collaboration involved the Department of Basic Education (DBE), the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the South African Council for Educators (SACE), three teacher unions, 14 NGO implementers, eight higher HEIs and an expanded

convening group that included the National Association of Social Change Entities in Education (NASCEE).

This compilation of short papers aims to present a reflective opportunity for the wide range of stakeholders and actors involved in TICZA as well as, more broadly, for the different actors involved in teacher internships in Africa and internationally.

The context wherein TICZA developed: vocationalisation as a common theme?

TICZA was conceptualised and implemented in a very specific context in South Africa, which is important to briefly describe here. The training of teachers is a much-debated, researched and even contested area internationally (UNESCO, 2024). South Africa has been no exception (Taylor & Robinson, 2019). During the apartheid years, towards the end of the 19th century, teachers were trained with a strong preference for more vocational approaches delivered through teacher training colleges which had evolved from schools and which served as centres of apprenticeships. This training was offered in a segregated and unequal manner across racial groups, with inferior delivery for non-white student teachers (Wolhuter, 2006).

In the early years after the 1994 democratic elections, the policy shift was to close dysfunctional colleges while integrating the better performing colleges into universities. By 2004, all teachers' colleges were closed, and teacher training had transitioned to being a tertiary education competence (DBE & DHET, 2011; Soudien, 2012). By implication, and perhaps not explicitly intended, this shift also meant that teacher training embraced a more theoretical orientation in the four-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) and one-year Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) programmes. The delivery of these qualifications took place through a full-time, face-to-face mode with part-time and fulltime distance education provisioning growing exponentially.

These developments took place alongside a push for professionalisation, which became more prevalent in South Africa, Africa and internationally through the establishment of teaching councils and teaching professional standards (African Union, 2019; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2016; SACE, 2018). As part of the push for professionalisation in South Africa, Taylor et al. (2017) developed a useful framing of the schooling cycle, illustrated in the following Figure 1. The added information linked to work-integrated learning (WIL) is discussed further below.

An important development in the basic education sector related to TICZA was the conceptualisation of a 'three streams model' (TSM) (DBE, 2020). According to the DBE (2020b), the TSM is a concept developed for the creation of multiple learning pathways (academic, vocational and occupational) that enable learners to make choices about their schooling within the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 offered in schools in South Africa. The TSM is relevant to this discussion on TICZA as it illustrates the strong move in the overall education and training system to better distinguish and, one may add, serve vocationally oriented learners. While it lies beyond the scope of this introductory note to expand on this topic, the expansion of the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) sector accompanied by a focus on the professionalisation of TVET lecturers (Hofmeyr & Vally, 2022) is another example.
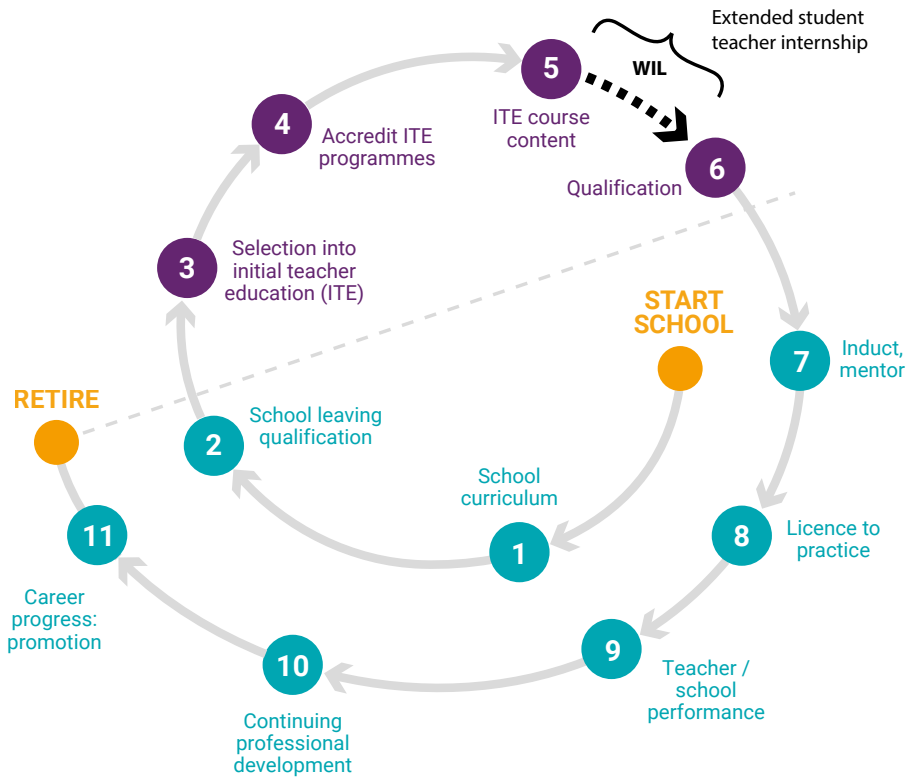
Figure 1: Teacher professional standards in the schooling cycle (Taylor et al., 2017, 13).

Looking back to the description provided in this short introduction, the following trend is observed:

- Teacher training in the apartheid years was undoubtedly more vocationally oriented, even though it was offered in a deeply unequal manner.

- With the closure of the teacher training colleges, teacher training became a tertiary education competence, with a shift towards a more academic mode with the commensurate concerns about quality.

- The shift to professional teaching standards placed an increased emphasis on teaching as a vocation.

- As a country, South Africa is placing increased policy emphasis on vocational pathways, starting with learners in the TSM model, but also in TVET colleges.

Weaknesses in the delivery of some of the teacher training programmes delivered by HEIs, more acutely those being offered through distance education (CHE, 2010; Van der Berg & Hofmeyr, 2017), soon became obvious, and NGOs stepped in to fill the gaps.

These partnerships between HEIs and NGOs took the form of ESTIs, with the NGOs focusing primarily on the wraparound support student teachers needed during the WIL component of their training:

> A student internship in South Africa, according to the directive from the DPSA (2018), is aligned to the work integrated learning (WIL) component included in the Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) (DHET, 2015) that states that WIL must constitute a minimum of 20 weeks to a maximum of 32 weeks of a four-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programme (DHET, 2015). WIL must constitute a minimum of 8 weeks and a maximum of 12 weeks of a one-year Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) programme (DHET, 2015). (adapted from McDonald 2024, 2)

The HEI-NGO partnerships for ESTIs were diverse in nature and by-and-large not aligned to the teacher policy frameworks in South Africa. The type and cost of the wraparound support provided also varied greatly. The extent to which ESTIs are able to interlink with the positive pressures (Fullen, 2010) for improved quality and articulation across vocational pathways is yet to be determined.

This rather complicated situation provided the *raison d'être* for TICZA.

Setting up TICZA as a collective impact collaboration

In 2017, a group of NGO teacher internship implementers, which included the GTI and the support of Trialogue and the Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship, approached JET to partner in the setting up of a collaborative process (Trialogue, 2023), which eventually became TICZA. A key focus at the time was for the improved credibility of the teacher internship route through an evidence-based process. A key consideration was also the cost-effectiveness of the wraparound support in order to improve the sustainability of the implementing NGOs through access to government bursaries and funding, notably the Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme and the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS).

A common agenda for TICZA proved to be most elusive, with at least two distinct iterations across specific periods centred around the notion of ESTIs offered through the HEI-NGO partnerships. In the early conceptualisation period, 2020-2023, the focus was on the *contribution* of ESTIs through increased efficiency, effectiveness and scale of sustainable ESTIs (TICZA, 2022). The initial TICZA TOC was developed based on this approach (Southern Hemisphere, 2023).

The next two years (2024 with the intention to carry this through the end of 2025) saw the focus shift to *institutionalisation* through establishing the ESTI within teacher education policy and practice as an effective, efficient and widely used model for teacher WIL. The TOC was revised in 2024 based on this emphasis and is included in this Digest on page 13.

The contributions to this Digest

This Digest comprises contributions from the wide range of stakeholders that make up the ESTI ecosystem in South Africa. The TICZA Digest covers themes as they relate to TICZA as a CIC focusing on the institutionalisation of ESTIs, namely:

- **Policy impact of ESTIs:** How can ESTIs be institutionalised in South Africa? What progress has TICZA made in this area to date? What is the data telling us about impact? What national processes are impacting on ESTIs?

- **Partnerships to implement ESTIs:** Are there examples of partnerships (e.g., between HEIs and NGOs) that are demonstrating good results? What is not working? Can TICZA be described as a successful CIC?

- **Sustainability of ESTIs**: Which existing partnerships are showing good potential? What funding models can support the institutionalisation of ESTIs?

- **Innovation in ESTIs:** Do we have examples of ESTIs that are well aligned to government priorities? What do ESTIs cost, and how can innovation be used to reduce such costs? Are there examples of innovations in ESTIs from outside South Africa? How is teacher mobility impacted by innovation in ESTIs?

Contributions on the policy impact of ESTIs are from representatives of two government departments (the DBE and DHET) and SACE (see the articles by Lala Maje, Ben Lubisi and Veronica McKay, and Vanencia Chiloane and Michelle Mathey) as well as from three teacher union representatives (Renny Somnath from the South African Democratic Teachers Union [SADTU], Hema Hariram from the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa [NAPTOSA] and Peter Boase from the Professional Educators' Union [PEU]). Overall, the papers in this collection all emphasise the need for greater policy alignment, improved coherence and consistency amongst NGOs and, crucially, the need for evidence to show the success of ESTIs in South Africa.

Partnerships to implement ESTIs is the most contributed to theme, with eight authors, including Gail Campbell from the Zenex Foundation and Rebecca Muir from the Maitri Trust, Sarita Ramsaroop and Nadine Petersen from the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and several from NGO ESTI implementers - Hassiena Marriott (GTI), Lerato Okeyo (Thuto Trust), David Oliphant (Teach the Nation) and Rene` Levinge-Lang (St Peters Intern Programme) - contributing to this topic. Emerging themes from this collection of papers include insights into the principles for sustained collaborations, different forms of PPPs, and a very strong emphasis from the implementers on the insights gained from their partnerships with a wide range of HEIs and how to strengthen these partnerships going forward.

The third thematic area focuses on the sustainability of ESTIs and comprises a wide range of contributions. Fergus Turner from the Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship provides a helpful conceptual background to the development of a common competency framework for ESTIs and what it could mean for sustainability. Tracey Phillips and Nana Davies from Southern Hemisphere with Herman Meyer contribute a vital voice as the external evaluators of TICZA, with the endline evaluation

only to take place in 2025. Jennifer Shindler, Patrick Molokwane and Morris Phundulu from JET provide a useful overview of the number of ESTIs in the South African system – crucially, they point out that the research to date has not yet been able to provide any conclusive evidence on the success of ESTIs. Judy Tate from Khanyisa Inanda Seminary Community Projects (KICP), John Gilmour from GTI, Veronica McKay and Tshidi Taole from the University of South Africa (UNISA), and Zanele Twala from the Tutuwa Community Foundation with Tarryn de Kock from JET all make further important contributions on the sustainability of ESTIs from implementer, HEI and donor points of view.

The fourth and last theme focuses on innovation in ESTIs. Here also there is a wide range of authors, each providing interesting case studies on different forms of innovation linked to ESTIs. Carisma Nel from North-West University (NWU) and Hassiena Marriott from GTI reflect on their NGO-HEI partnership that includes elements of mixed reality. Lee Rusznyak, project leader of Teacher Choices in Action, proposes how the module and its research could support TICZA. There are case studies in which Rakgadi Phatlane writes about the transformative student recruitment strategy at the University of Pretoria (UP); Mia Bunn from Vitatalent and Jeremy Gibbon explain the Jakes Gerwel Fellowship selection design and what this could mean for TICZA; and Alexandra Smith and Brenda Elshove from Teachers Plus explain their emphasis on getting the basics right first. The last two contributions in this section are from Colleen Magner and Mpinane Senkhane from Reos Partners, who provide a very useful example of a partnership framework that could be of value for TICZA, and then Patience Voller, representing NASCEE, who emphasises the important role of ESTIs to advance education equality in South Africa.

The closing contribution is from guest author, Carlos Vargas, who heads up teacher education at UNESCO.

Looking to the future

As this Digest was being finalised, TICZA had gained good momentum, and the common purpose of institutionalisation has become a shared goal. Shared tools 'developed from a co-created theory of change (TOC) and accompanying monitoring and evaluation framework have proven to be useful' (Trialogue, 2022). The common competency framework, the development of which is led by the Bertha Centre, is showing very good potential and may even be useful for other parts of the ITE system due to its close alignment to the SACE professional teaching standards.

The initial quasi-experimental research design for TICZA did not hold up for a few reasons, amongst which the most critical was the difficulty of accessing a counterfactual group of student teachers. Through careful negotiation and facilitation by Reos Partners, the shift towards the institutionalisation of ESTIs is now being supported by a revised research design that includes a cost-effective analysis (CEA) conducted by Trialogue, research into the wraparound support offered by NGOs conducted by a seconded specialist from KICP, and lastly, a meta-analysis of existing research being done by HEIs and some of the NGO implementers. This work is due for completion by mid-2025, which will then also see the endline evaluation being completed by Southern Hemisphere. The remaining few months of 2025 will be used to phase out TICZA in its current form.

Several mutually reinforcing activities have taken place over the years, with many activities becoming more routine and established. These include the external evaluation and review of the TOC, involvement of various actors in the research activities and also the development of the common competency framework. The quarterly steering committee meetings and other planning workshops remain well attended and allow for robust debates. Continuous communication and engagement remains a core focus of TICZA, with weekly messages going out to all partners. The showcasing of the work of NGOs and HEIs has also provided value to all involved.

The backbone support offered by the convening group is largely stable, with clear roles and responsibilities assigned to each organisation. The DHET, DBE and SACE remain actively involved in TICZA and continue to provide important policy directives. The range of HEIs involved has coalesced around UNISA, UJ, the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and NWU, with UP, the University of Kwazulu-Natal (UKZN), Instill and Stadio still involved. Around 14 NGO ESTI implementers remain involved in TICZA, but with a stronger focus on the NGOs pursuing more standardised ESTI models which aim to be affordable to government funding schemes, notably NSFAS and the Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme. The three unions remain involved although more tangentially, but also in a good way, to ensure that the rights of student teachers remain paramount.

TICZA's greatest achievement to date has been in 'bringing together organisations that may not necessarily have worked together this closely without such a project' (Southern Hemisphere, 2023). This has contributed significantly to coherence in a context where diversity, non-alignment to policy and varied models and costings were the starting point. There is more to do, but there has been progress, also in how large ecosystem convenings in education can be coordinated to ensure system impact.

References

African Union. (2019). *African teacher qualification framework for teacher quality, comparability and international mobility.* Addis Ababa: AUC. https://teachertaskforce.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/Continental%20Teacher%20Qualification%20Framework_EN.pdf

Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2010). *Report on the national review of academic and professional programmes in education.* Pretoria: CHE. https://www.che.ac.za/publications/reports/higher-education-monitor-11-report-national-review-academic-and-professional

Commonwealth Secretariat. (2016). *Pan-Commonwealth standards framework for teachers and school leaders.* London: ComSec. https://www.saqa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Pan-Commonwealth-Standards-Framework-for-Teachers-and-School-Leaders.pdf

Department of Basic Education (DBE) and Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2011). *Integrated strategic planning framework for teacher education and development in South Africa* 2011-2025. Pretoria: Government Printer. https://www.education.gov.za/Informationfor/Teachers/ISPFTED2011-2025.aspx

Department of Basic Education (DBE). Technical Working Group on Articulation. (2020). Recommendation of the Technical Work Group on Articulation. Unpublished.

Department of Basic Education (DBE). (2020). Refocusing and strengthening basic education in South Africa by providing learners with multiple pathways: Towards a three streams model. Unpublished.

Fullan, M. (2010). Positive pressure. In: Hargreaves, A., Lieberman, A., Fullan, M., Hopkins, D. (Eds.) *Second International Handbook of Educational Change*. Springer International Handbooks of Education, Vol. 23. Springer, Dordrecht. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-2660-6_7

Hofmeyr, J. & Vally, Z. (2022). *Towards the professionalisation of TVET lecturers.* Johannesburg: JET Education Services. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/toward-tvet-lecturer-professionalisationfinal.pdf/view

Kania, J. & Kramer, M. (2011). Collective impact. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 9(1), 36-41. https://doi.org/10.48558/5900-KN19

McDonald, Z. (2024). TICZA Terminology. *TICZA implementation compendium,* 1. Johannesburg: JET Education Services. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/ticza-compendium-series-1_final.pdf/download

South African Council for Educators (SACE). *Professional teaching standards*. (2018). Pretoria: SACE. https://www.sace.org.za/assets/documents/uploads/sace_84066-2019-06-11-SACE%20Professional%20Teaching%20Standards%20Nov%202018%20X2.pdf

Soudien, C. (2012). Whither progressive education and training? An interrogation of the form and substance of the education process. 3rd Ben Parker Memorial lecture, 6 March 20212. https://www.saqa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/bpm_lecture.pdf

Southern Hemisphere. (2023). External evaluation of the Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) programme. Final report. Unpublished.

Taylor, N. & Robinson, N. (2019). *Secondary education in sub-Saharan Africa teacher preparation and support. Case study: South Africa*. Mastercard and Varkey Foundations. https://mastercardfdn.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/SEA-Teacher-Preparation-and-Support-Case-Study-South-Africa.pdf

Taylor, N, Robinson, N. & Hofmeyr, J. (2017). *Teacher professional standards for South Africa. The road to better performance, development and accountability?* Johannesburg: Centre for Development and Enterprise. https://www.cde.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CDE-Insight-Teacher-Professional-Standards-For-South-Africa.pdf

TICZA. (2022). *Training better teachers. An implementation brief for improving practice-based initial teacher education*. Johannesburg: JET Education Services. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/ticza-training-better-teachers.pdf/@@download/file/TICZA%20Training%20Better%20Teachers.pdf

Trialogue. (2022). *A model of collective impact: The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA).* https://trialogue.co.za/a-model-of-collective-impact-the-teacher-internship-collaboration-south-africa-ticza/

Trialogue. (2023). *A collective impact approach. Contribution to strengthening education*. https://trialogueknowledgehub.co.za/a-collective-impact-approach-contribution-to-strengthening-education/

UNESCO. (2024). *Global report on teachers. Addressing teacher shortages and transforming the profession*. Paris: UNESCO. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000388832

Van der Berg, S. & Hofmeyr, H. (2017). *An incomplete transition: Overcoming the legacy of exclusion in South Africa*. Washington DC: World Bank. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/339291529320964248/Education-in-South-Africa- background-note-for-the-South-Africa-systematic-country-diagnostic

Wolhuter, C. (2006). Teacher training in South Africa: Past, present and future. *Education Research and Perspectives*, 33(2), 124-139. https://erpjournal.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ERPV33-2_Wolhuter-C.-C.-2006.-Teacher-training-in-South-Africa-.pdf

The TICZA Theory of Change

OBJECTIVE & IMPACT		
High quality, committed teachers contribute to an improved standard of basic education in South Africa	▲	There is a common understanding of what is a quality teacher
		Improving teacher quality leads to improved performance of learners
Increased efficiency, effectiveness and scale of sustainable extended student teacher internships in South Africa	▲	Teacher interns will learn through assimilation by being together with seasoned teachers

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

Increased efficiency, effectiveness and scale of sustainable extended student teacher internships in South Africa	ESTI graduates in schools continuously contribute to strengthening system capacity, increasing the number of teachers, leaders and mentors to support ESTI	ESTIs successfully transition from donor-funded pilots to sustainable, scalable models, through methods such as transferring responsibility, identifying/driving sustainable revenue streams	HEIs offer distance education access to quality wraparound services in partnership with IPs
▲ Government will be willing and able to adopt the model	▲ There is a shortage of teachers in public schools		▲ HEIs are unable to provide wraparound support, but NGOs/IPs can

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

MERL processes are utilised to drive improvement in the targeting, quality and outcomes of ESTI programming	Siloes are broken: Shared knowledge and evidence are leveraged by TICZA partners across their efforts and mandates, improving alignment to the system and other partner efforts and resulting in targeted programmes	ESTIs are increasingly able to draw on existing sector resources, and therefore improve efficiencies	An increasing number of HEIs offer and invest in distance ITE
TICZA partner capacity/resourcing for monitoring, evaluation, reflection and learning improves		Innovative pilot programmes successfully demonstrate improved quality, efficiency and/or cost-effectiveness, targeting and/or placement of ESTIs	Increased number and diversity of funding sources for pilots
TICZA knowledge products, resources and research inform revisions/new pilots of ESTIs, including HEI/NGO collaborations	An increased number of HEI/NGO partnerships are developed and pilot variations/improvements to ESTI models	System alignment, quality and marketablity of internship programmes improve	
Sector research is shared widely, increasing awareness of impact and support of ESTI programmes	▲ One standard ESTI model is the way to go and IPs want to collaborate on this	An increased number of qualified, quality mentors are available across the system, improving ability to scale internship programmes/ transfer programme responsibilities	
		MRTEQ revisions include ESTIs, increasing government awareness and investment in these programmes	
		A professional pathway for mentors is integrated into SACE processes, encouraging more teachers to meet standards	

IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES

Co-created resources for research and internal monitoring are used by TICZA partners, increasing capacity to share programme results and evidence	TICZA members are aware of and connected to other actors in the sector with the same goals, creating a larger network for TICZA members	A competency framework is leveraged by TICZA partners (NGOs, DHET, HEIs) as a resource to guide teacher internships, improving alignment to SACE professional teaching standards	Knowledge about innovative, alternative, and supplemental possibilities for funding beyond donors is available and shared
New evidence is generated and shared about ESTIs	Information from government (such as priority areas, funding availability) is available timeously to implementing partners	Standards and/or expectations for mentors and mentor training are clarified by government and shared	KEY ▲ Assumptions

RESEARCH, M&E AND CAPACITY BUILDING	COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP	SERVICE DELIVERY	FUNDING

PART 1
Policy impact of extended
student teacher internships

1   Extended student teacher internships: the need for policy alignment

Lala Maje and Ben Lubisi, *Department of Basic Education*
Veronica McKay, *College of Education, University of South Africa*

Introduction

School-based teaching experience is an integral component of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes, and when well-structured and supported, offers significant potential for enhancing teachers' practices and improving the outcomes of their learners. The experience provides student teachers with opportunities to reflect on the teaching process, bridging the gap between theory and practice, while deepening their theoretical understanding (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Kerry & Knight, 2020).

Learning from practice

A great deal of what teachers need to learn must be learned in and from well-supported practice. (DHET, n.d., 2015; Dreer-Goethe, 2023). The *Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* (MRTEQ) published by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in 2015 emphasises two critical aspects of ITE:

1. Learning from practice entails studying and analysing contextual practices and drawing on case studies.

2. Learning in practice through observing and teaching in authentic and simulated classrooms, reflecting on lessons taught by self and others (DHET, 2015, 11).

The *Teaching Practice: Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education* (DHET, n.d.) focus on the schools where students do their practicums and indicate that the school should appoint a mentor teacher to act as a liaison with the university, gather feedback on student performance, facilitate collaboration in work integrated learning (WIL) placements and support intern teachers.

Duration of teaching practice

The revised MRTEQ (DHET, 2015) requires Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) students to complete 20-32 weeks of 'supervised and assessed school-based practice' over four years, with a maximum of 12 weeks per year. Distance learners and un- or underqualified teachers may have extended placements but must receive the same supervision and assessment.

There is advocacy for extending the teaching practice period to 16 weeks in the final year of the B.Ed. programme in order to immerse student teachers in the school setting through a 'sandwich' model that alternates between school placements and university sessions. Student teachers would be able to develop reflective learning through well-structured, supported and supervised practicums that prepare them, as prospective new teachers and newly qualified teachers, to meet the demands of the profession (DHET, n.d.).

Supporting teachers during teaching practicums

ITE practicums depend on supervision by higher education institutions (HEIs) and school mentor teachers. Mentors play a critical role in welcoming, orientating and familiarising student teachers with classroom and school protocols, ensuring a progression from highly scaffolded classroom experiences to independent teaching as the student progresses. Mentors are required to provide intensive support for first- and second-year students, gradually reducing it for third- and fourth-year students. Mentors, who should be well-qualified subject and phase experts, play essential support and coaching roles, helping student teachers adjust, observe, co-teach, plan, teach, assess and reflect, and, at a meta-level, integrate theory and practice.

A recent Department of Basic Education (DBE) (2024) study examined the role of school-based mentors in supporting newly qualified teachers. The study found overwhelming evidence that the newly qualified teachers had benefited from their assigned mentors. It found that mentors who participated in the DBE's New Teacher Induction Programme (NTIP) played a crucial role in helping novice teachers develop both their personal and professional goals. The mentors supported novice teachers in reflecting on and analysing their teaching practices, encouraging them to connect their practical experiences with the theoretical knowledge gained during their academic programmes. As a mentee indicated:

> Mentors can help mentees manage the work and guide them where the guidance is required since they have more experience than mentees. ... They help us learn about the working environment. ... We rely on experienced teachers who know the school. There are many things to learn to adapt to the new environment. ... Mentors are essential. They limit your struggles. It is the difference between coping and not coping. (DBE, 2024, 67)

Various models have been piloted to enhance the abilities of teachers in bridging the theory-practice divide. Over the past decade, the DBE's internship model has provided students with opportunities to refine their practical skills by placing them in schools for extended periods, allowing them to apply theoretical concepts to classroom practice. This model has primarily been piloted among distance education students, who can take advantage of the flexibility offered by their learning format.

Expanding the teaching practice model

The DBE introduced the Teacher Internship Model as part of its endeavour to recruit students into teaching, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. The model, which complements the Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme, supports Funza Lushaka bursars by integrating them into long-term school placements as interns while they continue with their ITE studies. The principle is that combining academic theory with school-based learning, thereby focusing on their holistic development, will develop teachers with strong pedagogical skills and subject knowledge.

The first partnership to implement this model was established between the DBE and the Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa (ISASA) in 2012, followed by the ELMA Foundation in 2015. These early initiatives have shaped the main typologies for future internships (see Table 1).

The need for policy alignment

While TICZA plays an essential role in bringing together various stakeholders, including government departments, HEIS, non-profit organisations (NPOs) and private sector partners, it must ensure that the relevant NPOs comply with and report to the DHET and DBE in order for them to be recognised as bodies that might support the WIL component of ITE. They will also need to comply with any requirements set by the HEIs with which they work.

In addition, consideration should be given to ensure that interns receive fair stipendiary compensation, acknowledging the different nature of their roles as distinct from formal employment. While all interns receive a Funza Lushaka bursary, consideration should be given to whether the intern stipend is fair compensation to cover their travel and other requirements.

A multifaceted approach is required to institutionalise extended student teacher internships (ESTIs) in South Africa. This approach is contingent on policy alignment, stakeholder collaboration and robust implementation frameworks. As indicated in Figure 1, the relationships in ensuring effective student teacher internships are complex, and it is necessary to ensure the student intern is at the centre of this interaction and benefits from the structured support and contributions of all the stakeholders. The universities provide academic guidance, supervision and assessments, while the schools offer practical, hands-on experience and mentor the interns. The various government departments ensure alignment with national standards and policies and support the schools in providing this extra supportive function. TICZA, as a coordinating body, ensures providers bridge any gaps through funding and logistical support. These interactions are aimed at creating a holistic learning environment for the intern, integrating both theoretical knowledge and practical experience while ensuring compliance with broader educational goals and policies (see Figure 1).

Table 1: Internship typologies

FOUR YEAR INTERNSHIP

- B.Ed. in teaching through distance education
- Funza Lushaka bursary funded
- Placement as intern at an independent school or pubic school from the 1st year of study
- Stipend sourced and provided by service provider
- Management, mentoring, academic and psycho-social support by service provider
- Steering Committee consisting of DBE, PED, service provider and HEI meets quarterly

TWO YEAR INTERNSHIP

- B.Ed. in teaching through distance education
- Funza Lushaka bursary funded
- Placement as intern at an independent school or public school from the 3rd year of study
- Stipend sourced and provided by service provider
- Management, mentoring, academic and psycho-social support by service provider
- Steering Committee consisting of DBE, PED, service provider and HEI meets quarterly

PGCE INTERNSHIP

- PGCE in teaching through distance education
- Funza Lushaka bursary funded
- Placement as intern at an independent school or public school for the duration of the PGCE
- Stipend sourced and provided by service provider
- Management, mentoring, academic and psycho-social support by service provider
- Steering Committee consisting of DBE, PED, service provider and HEI meets quarterly

VALUE ADD INTERNSHIP

- BEd or PGCE in teaching through distance education
- Funza Lushaka bursary funded
- Placement as intern (limited hours) at an independent school or public school
- After school outreach programmes on reading, mathematics, life skills, etc.
- Stipend sourced and provided by service provider management, mentoring, academic and psycho-social support by service provider
- Steering Committee consisting of DBE, PED, service provider and HEI meets quarterly
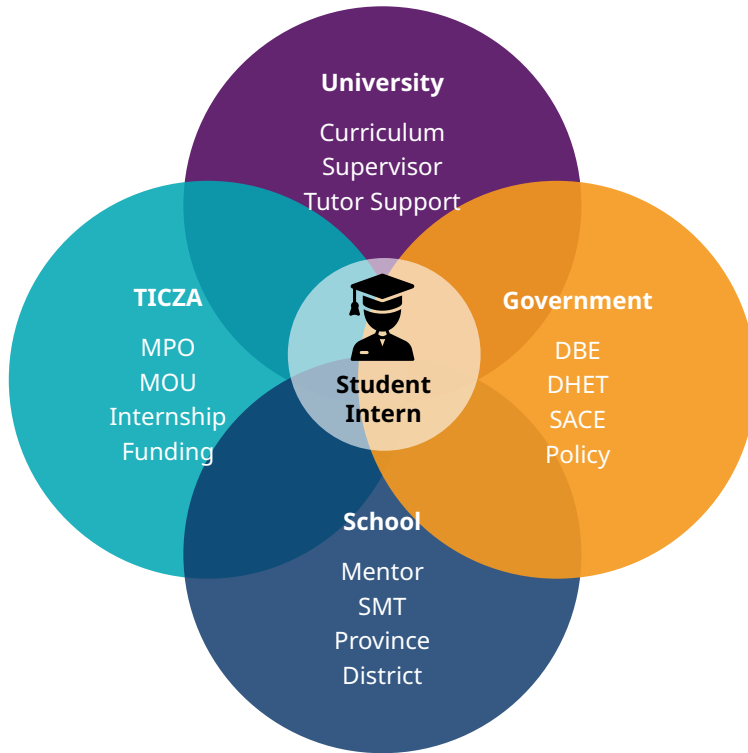
Figure 1: Stakeholders' roles in the internship model

Policy implications for the stakeholders

Extensive policy development and alignment are needed, including clear policies and guidelines to integrate ESTIs into the *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa 2011-2025* (DBE & DHET, 2011) and MRTEQ (DHET, 2015). The typology presented in Table 1 outlines the roles and responsibilities of partners in the ESTI and specifies the duration and timing of placements. The typology considers curriculum frameworks for interns in the different years of their studies, the impact on learning programmes, criteria for selecting NPOs, the types of support offered, methods of evaluation and the role of HEIs. These factors have significant policy implications for all stakeholders, as described below.

Government: The NPOs offer support for internships in public schools. To this end, the DBE would be required to develop a monitoring framework to ensure robust support for interns and oversee the implementation of NPO-supported internships, including financial oversight and monitoring.

NPOs: All external parties entering schools as representatives of NPOs must register with and have their courses endorsed by the South African Council for Educators (SACE). NPOs must ensure that the consultants they use to provide support to student teachers have the necessary qualifications and experience and that those providing support in schools fulfil the SACE requirements. The Council on Higher Education (CHE) requires that those teaching or supervising possess a qualification higher than that of the student they are teaching or supervising. In the case of the B.Ed., the minimum qualification for consultants providing tuition and supervision would be a relevant Honours degree.

HEIs: Interns are registered students at various HEIs. NPOs would therefore be required to enter into memoranda of understanding (MoU) with the HEIs. This would ensure the NPOs are familiar with the various HEIs' qualification requirements and the students' academic calendars to enable the NPOs and schools to coordinate around these dates.

Schools: Schools participating in internship programmes need to foster a culture of collaboration and professionalism regarding student teacher development. The principal must appoint school-based mentors who are familiar with the academic course structure and the subject and phase specialities of the student intern. The demands of the programme require that mentors have scheduled time to play this supportive and coordinating function while, at the same time, ensuring that interns have sufficient time to focus on their academic studies (DHET, n.d.).

The role of TICZA: As an umbrella body for the NPOs, TICZA will need to bring about greater coherence and consistency among the various NPOs providing for trainee teachers, ensuring that contracted staff meet SACE and CHE standards to provide effective support. While each of the NPOs will need to be accredited by the DBE, TICZA will need to remain the central point of contact for the implementation of ESTIs, releasing the DBE from having to liaise with each NPO independently.

Financial implications

Resourcing will be a significant challenge for all stakeholders in every case. NPOs should seek ways of reducing overhead and other non-core costs in order that funding may be dedicated to the provision of support for the student teacher interns.

Conclusion

Effective practicum models that integrate academic theory with hands-on experience can play an important role in developing teachers' pedagogical skills and content knowledge. Successful implementation of these models requires policy alignment, stakeholder collaboration and continuous monitoring to ensure that adequate support is provided for student teacher interns in schools. With coordinated efforts and robust frameworks, these initiatives can profoundly impact the quality of teacher education in South Africa.

References

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). *Powerful teacher education: Lessons from exemplary programs*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Department of Basic Education (DBE). (2024). *New Teacher Induction Programme evaluation report.* Compiled by V. McKay. Unpublished report for the DBE.

Department of Basic Education (DBE) and Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2011). *Integrated strategic planning framework for teacher education and development in South Africa 2011-2025*. Pretoria: Government Printer. https://www.education.gov.za/Informationfor/Teachers/ISPFTED2011-2025.aspx

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (n.d.). Teaching and Learning Development Capacity Improvement Programme. *Teaching practice: Guidelines for initial teacher education programmes.* https://www.jet.org.za/clearinghouse/projects/primted/curriculum-frameworks/work-integrated-learning-1/teachingpracticeguidelines2020.pdf/@@download/file/TeachingPracticeGuidelines2020.pdf

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2011). Policy on the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications. *Government Gazette*, Vol. 583, No. 34467. https://www.dhet.gov.za/Part%20C%20%20Policies/HIGHER%20EDUCATION/14.%20Policy%20on%20minimum%20requirements%20for%20teacher%20education%20qualifications.pdf

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2015). Revised policy on the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications. *Government Gazette*, Vol. 596, No. 38487. https://www.dhet.gov.za/Teacher%20Education/National%20Qualifications%20Framework%20Act%2067_2008%20Revised%20Policy%20for%20Teacher%20Education%20Quilifications.pdf

Dreer-Goethe, B. (2023). Well-being and mentoring in pre-service teacher education: An integrative literature review. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, 12(4). https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-09-2022-0073

Kerry, T. A. & Knight, B. A. (2020). The WIL to learn: Students' perspectives on the impact of work-integrated learning placements on their professional readiness. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 39(5), 869-882. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2019.1695754

2 Extended student teacher internships: a policy/practice perspective

Vanencia Chiloane, *South African Council for Educators*
Michelle Mathey, *Department of Higher Education and Training*

Introduction

This article attempts to provide an understanding of the relationship between policy and its impact on the design of teacher education programmes through a focus on the structure of work integrated learning (WIL) and the references made to the internship or school-based model of WIL. It shows that WIL and the internship model have received very cursory mention in two of the three policies being reviewed, with the third policy offering more structured guidelines, but still with very little attention being paid to the internship model. The article then discusses the findings of a report that examines aspects of initial teacher education programmes that are found wanting and compares this to Darling-Hammond's identification of seven common features of strong programmes that have produced excellent teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2012).

The motivation for WIL generally, and the internship model specifically, to receive more attention in the revised *Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* (MRTEQ) (DHET, 2015) and in the revised *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development* (ISPFTED) (DBE & DHET, 2011) will be developed. It is envisioned that this, together with recommendations on strategies for the improvement of WIL generally, and extended student teacher internships specifically, may provide sufficient gravitas for universities to strengthen the WIL component of initial teacher education programmes.

Policy intentions and impact on teacher education programme development

Education policies developed post-apartheid were understandably driven by socio-political imperatives for a transformed and strengthened quality education system, underpinned by the principles of human rights, social justice and equity. Similarly, teacher education policies such as the *Norms and Standards for Educators* (DoE, 2000), *National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa* (DoE, 2006) and the MRTEQ (DHET, 2011, 2015) were developed to guide and strengthen teacher education programmes developed and offered by universities, with the aim of improving the design of the programmes and the quality of teacher education graduates.

However, public perception of the poor quality of teacher education graduates is still a constant refrain across the sector, and this is reinforced by the poor performance of learners in international assessments of reading and mathematics such as the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). Since universities provide teachers for the system, by implication, they have been criticised for not producing quality graduates. This begs the question of the quality of teaching and the quality of the curricula in teacher education programmes.

Darling-Hammond's (see Guha et al., 2017) identification of seven critical features that define strong teacher education programmes includes tight coherence and integration among courses and between coursework and clinical work in schools, extensive and intensely supervised clinical work using pedagogies that link theory and practice, and closer proactive relationships with schools that serve diverse learners effectively.

Recent findings (Roberts & Moloi, 2022) on the quality of teacher education programmes in 14 South African universities, with a focus on mathematics, showed poor student content knowledge over the four years of a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree, with a mean score of 43% for first-years and 47% for fourth-years, a growth of only 4%. Roberts and Moloi (2022) also presented findings showing students' performance against four performance levels (below procedural fluency; procedural fluency only; procedural fluency and some conceptual understanding; and advanced understanding) and found that 20% of primary teacher graduates who would be teaching mathematics were below fluency. This lack of progression has been attributed to a variety of reasons, with Roberts and Moloi (2022) citing insufficient alignment with course standards, insufficient training and knowledge of lecturers in primary school teaching, and insufficient time and credits for the training of students in mathematical knowledge over the four years of the B.Ed. programme.

Policy guidelines on work integrated learning: enablers or disablers?

As mentioned, the evolution of teacher education policies post-apartheid is characterised by strong measures to create a transformed system that is based on human rights, social justice and quality education for all. Three policies were reviewed to ascertain the extent to which they focus on WIL, using this as an indicator of the importance placed on WIL at the time the policy was developed. Although the practical component of teacher education is included in the three policies, the name of this component as well as the specifics relating to its implementation differ substantially. The *Norms and Standards for Educators* refers to 'school experience' (DoE, 2000, 32). The policy acknowledges the importance of school experience as an essential component of quality teacher education and, further, that it should be a 'structured teaching and learning experience with some form of observational assessment' (DoE, 2002, 32). The vague reference leaves universities to decide on the structure and assessment. The *Norms and Standards* further state that 'no competence[s] are specifically associated with it, and there is no prescribed period of time. This is a programme element to be determined by the provider concerned and the relevant quality assurance body' (DoE, 2000, 11).

The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (DoE, 2006) references international evidence that shows that professional development of teachers works best when there is 'a strong school-based component' (DoE, 2006, 5) , and further on, identifies 'mentored school-based practice to first-time recruits to teaching who are employed by Provincial Departments of Education as student teachers' (DoE, 2006, 23) . The meaning of first-time recruits is unclear, as is the explanation of what must be in place to create a strong school-based component.

The first substantive statement on WIL is located in the MRTEQ (DHET, 2011, revised 2015). The policy refers to practical learning that involves learning from and learning in practice. The learning in practice component is referred to as 'work-integrated learning (WIL)' and the duration and sequencing of the weeks is specified (DHET, 2015, 8, 21). The revised MRTEQ also provides for situations that may require longer periods in schools for students in part-time or distance programmes, with the understanding that the 'same amount of supervised and assessed school-based practice is required' (DHET, 2015, 25). Universities have the autonomy to decide on when the WIL component takes place, the supervision of students, school placements and the assessment of WIL.

However, as discussed earlier in the article, the design and implementation of WIL has not been consistent. In addition, the vague references to internship across the policies do not provide sufficient gravitas for stakeholders to implement the internship model of WIL.

Policy impact of extended student internships

Recent discussions with stakeholders regarding WIL-related issues have been cautious about the implementation of the internship model, despite its inclusion in policies and its presence in education since the 1900s (Darling Hammond, 2012). Since evidence of success must exist if policy is to incorporate internships more substantively, it is imperative that implementers monitor and evaluate the process and provide data that supports the implementation of extended student teaching internships (ESTIs). In South Africa, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) has successfully implemented the District Based Teacher Recruitment Strategy (DBTRS) model that provides extended internships across the four years of a teacher education programme. This was done in partnership with districts, universities and a non-governmental organisation (see TICZA, 2024).

There is also strong international evidence showing the success of ESTIs: the Teacher Residency model in the United States of America demonstrated high retention rates of graduates (80%) after five years in the profession (Guha et al., 2017); in Australia, the implementation of extended teacher internships was a response to the need for high-quality teachers (Ledger & Vidovich, 2018).

The ISPFTED (DBE & DHET, 2012) has identified improvement of the quality of WIL as an urgent priority to strengthen teacher education. In this regard, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) was tasked with establishing teaching schools and strengthening professional practice schools. The impact of ESTIs on schools is the opportunity that arises for them to transition into professional practice schools that simultaneously benefit pre-service teacher education and the professional development of in-service teachers.

In the revised ISPFTED (2017-2030) (DHET 2024), the DHET output is to develop a National Implementation Protocol for Work Integrated Learning. Universities and stakeholders implementing the internship model and the standard policy model of WIL will collaborate on the development of this important framework, which will provide comprehensive support and guidance to universities for a strengthened WIL component in teacher education programmes.

Finally, the reference group for the revision of MRTEQ will have to consider research and evidence to strengthen the policy guidelines of WIL and the positioning of internships within these guidelines.

Conclusion

The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) is a collective of like-minded people who all believe in the significance of ESTIs as part of the national efforts to improve the quality of teacher education graduates. The diverse stakeholder base offers different perceptions, sets of knowledge and interests that come to bear on the collective, and the tensions experienced in the initiation period of TICZA were to be expected. The role that JET Education Services played in the recalibration of TICZA, and the collective's efforts to ensure a strengthened collaboration, testify to the value attached to teacher internships by all the stakeholders.

However, TICZA is not a permanent structure. The realisation of its vision depends on the uptake of ESTIs in the system. When the structure ceases to exist, it will be up to the like-minded people who believe in the vision of TICZA to sustain what Emile Durkheim refers to as 'collective effervescence '[1] – the energy, passion and commitment to drive the journey towards institutionalisation.

1   https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collective_effervescence

References

Darling Hammond, L. (2012). *Creating a comprehensive system for evaluating and supporting effective teaching.* Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education. https://edpolicy.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/publications/creating-comprehensive-system-evaluating-and-supporting-effective-teaching_1.pdf

Department of Basic Education (DBE) & Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2011). *Integrated strategic planning framework for teacher education and development in South Africa* 2011-2025. Pretoria: Government Printer. https://www.education.gov.za/Informationfor/Teachers/ISPFTED2011-2025.aspx

Department of Education (DoE). (2000). Norms and standards for educators. National Education Policy Act, 1996. *Government Gazette*, Vol. 415, No. 20844. https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/20844.pdf

Department of Education (DoE). (2006). *The national policy framework for teacher education and development in South Africa.* https://www.dhet.gov.za/Teacher%20Education%20Frameworks/The%20National%20Policy%20Framework%20for%20Teacher%20Education%20and%20Development%20in%20South%20Africa.pdf

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2011). Policy on the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications. *Government Gazette*, Vol. 583, No. 34467. https://www.dhet.gov.za/Part%20C%20%20Policies/HIGHER%20EDUCATION/14.%20Policy%20on%20minimum%20requirements%20for%20teacher%20education%20qualifications.pdf

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2015). Revised policy on the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications. *Government Gazette*, Vol. 596, No. 38487. https://www.dhet.gov.za/Teacher%20Education/National%20Qualifications%20Framework%20Act%2067_2008%20Revised%20Policy%20for%20Teacher%20Education%20Quilifications.pdf

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2024). Revised ISPFTED (2017-2030). Unpublished draft.

Guha, R., Hyler, M. E. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). The power and potential of teacher residencies. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 98(8), 31–37. https://www.pdkmembers.org/members_online/publications/archive/pdf/PDK_98_8/31pdk_98_8.pdf

Ledger, S. & Vidovich, L. (2018). Australian teacher education policy in action: The case of pre-service internships. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 43 (7). https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1188005.pdf

Roberts, N. & Moloi, Q. (2022). *The quality of primary mathematics teacher preparation in SA. Findings form PrimTEd*. University of Stellenbosch, Research on Socio-Economic Policy (RESEP). https://tdd.sun.ac.za/downloads/D.-Roberts-Moloi-2022-Overview-of-Primted-TDD-10-Nov-2022.-v3.pdf

TICZA. (2024). Overview of the District Based Teacher Recruitment Strategy. *TICZA Implementation Compendium*, 2. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/ticza-compendium-series-2-final.pdf/@@download/file/TICZA%20Compendium%20Series%202%20FINAL.pdf

3　Scaling up teacher internship models and the epistemology of knowledge

Renny Somnath, *South African Democratic Teachers Union*
Hema Hariram, *National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa*
Peter Boase, *Professional Educators' Union*

Introduction

A common criticism of initial teacher education (ITE) in South Africa relates to struggles that new teachers face when performing their roles when they are employed in schools. This problem is compounded by the fact that teachers are often required to perform roles in classrooms that exceed their capabilities or knowledge. Researchers have recognised this phenomenon and called for changes related to how teacher education can address the problem (City et al., 2009). While universities focus on education theories, little attention is given to the epistemology of practice - how student teachers store and deploy their knowledge to effect classroom changes. In simple terms, teachers are asked to develop 21st century skills related to higher order thinking but struggle to develop a language of description to generate knowledge to this end. The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) focuses on supporting teachers and contextual learning but does not go far enough to build on teachers' epistemology of knowledge or their understanding of what theory looks like in the classroom.

Before delving into policy changes and opening up policy spaces to address issues experienced in current teaching practices, teacher unions would like to know exactly what can be achieved through the TICZA initiatives (Mokoena, 2017; Robinson, 2014). What shifts are we trying to achieve through the TICZA model?

Universities and internships

Universities, guided by the Department of Higher Education (DHET), play a critical role in determining what student teachers learn. Therefore, university learning cannot be divorced from deliberations about interns. The problems related to teachers' epistemology of knowledge start with what students learn at university and extend to on-site learning (Gee, 2004). Some knowledge structures are directly relevant for classroom use, while others are peripheral. Perhaps there is an opportunity for universities to carefully evaluate their curricula to better support the internship model. Universities could also experiment with knowledge structures that can support shifts in teacher interns' practice.

TICZA model

Internship is a new model for developing student teachers and extending the support of newly qualified teachers. The model's main strength is that it supports student teachers, and in some cases, newly qualified teachers, to enhance their practice through mentor and mentee relationships (Foster, 2001). In addition, the internship model is a collaboration between universities and the schools to provide extended teaching experience with the help of experienced mentors. Mentors bring more than classroom experience to the table in terms of psycho-social support for interns (Weinberg & Lankau, 2011). It is clear that the existing university teaching practice sessions are inadequate, and it remains unclear if the method adopted by the universities focuses on developing interns' epistemology of knowledge.

Mentorship model

Listening to mentors and mentees on the reported benefits of the mentorship model, there seemed to be implicit benefits from the mentor/mentee relationship. The type of support extended beyond classroom engagement showed that the mentors cared about the mentees, and the mentees valued the relationship and the learning they experienced with the mentors (Ismail et al., 2015). The human element and relationship between the mentor and mentee are well recognised, and there is a growing recognition that the mentor/mentee relationship is a piece of a bigger puzzle for overcoming interns' immunity to change. However, the relationship is by no means the only piece in the puzzle as various efforts are assembled to shift interns' practice.

Opportunities for trial and error and supporting the epistemology of knowledge

The theories that interns study at university must be converted into knowledge for classroom use in order to have a causal impact in the classroom. Theories of reflection are important for interns to grow their knowledge (Zeichner, 1994). Possibilities exist for reflective practice theories to be used to enhance efforts to transform interns' teaching practice (Belvis et al., 2013). This brings us closer to solving the puzzle of shifting instructional practice that should guide the TICZA model.

School arrangements

The unions always emphasise the importance of context for shaping how teachers and interns think about their work. The same principle applies to all education theories, including classroom management and assessment for learning, among others. Situated learning is a well-recognised idea (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Shifting instructional practice and immunity to change

In the South African context, using assessment for learning, for example, could have a high causal impact on teaching and learning (Black et al., 2003). Assessment for learning is a mental technique that could support teacher practice by providing teachers with the necessary mental equipment to generate and calibrate their teaching practice to

bring about improvement. Unless internship models offer to take on the difficult task of shifting interns' practice, their position should be reviewed (Rusznyak, 2009). In general, interns will craft their practice based on their experiences as learners after observing their teachers. If TICZA offers to challenge this phenomenon, it could be a game changer for the internship model.

Scaling up the model – policy amendments

Teacher unions and governments recently re-affirmed the importance of defending and promoting professional teaching and committed to promoting quality teacher training to ensure a professional, skilled and motivated teacher workforce (International Labour Organisation, 2024). The recommendations of the United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession speak to high quality ITE; that the fragmented approaches to ITE of some HEIs and private providers require appropriate regulation to ensure that quality prevails; and that adequate quality induction and mentorship be provided. Both the South African government and teacher unions, as parties to this panel, are obliged to ensure compliance; hence, the TICZA model will need to comply with both professional and labour-related policies and legislation.

Contrary to perceptions, an intern in a place of work, for example, a school, is deemed an employee in terms of the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997. In ensuring the successful and effective implementation of the TICZA internship model, there needs to be closer collaboration among all stakeholders to ensure compliance to all relevant policies and legislation within the sector. Noting the critical role of mentors in the TICZA model, it is imperative that existing policy be reviewed to ensure the quality and consistency of mentors. Added to this is the issue of diversity and the inclusion of mentors across the different quintiles, thus allowing for equal opportunities for interns.

Conclusion

Supporting the shift in instructional practice considering immunity to change is a difficult puzzle to solve (Kegan & Lahey, 2001). TICZA offers a potential route to address the problem, so long as the theoretical and methodological pieces are put in place, from university to school arrangements. To solve the problem of immunity to change, we are starting to see assessment for learning, reflective practice and mentorship as relevant pieces of the puzzle.

For an initiative such as TICZA to start making a difference in the system, policy spaces from funding to legitimising the relationship between universities and the school, including support, must be included. At this point, and empirical evidence aside, the key question about shifting instruction practice remains the number one consideration for unions in opening the policy space.

References

Belvis, E., Pineda, P., Armengol, C. & Moreno, V. (2012). Evaluation of reflective practice in teacher education. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 36(3), 279-292. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619 768.2012.718758

Black, P. J., Harrison, C., Lee, C. S., Marshall, B. & Wiliam, D. (2003). *Assessment for learning: Putting it into practice.* Open University Press.

City, E. A., Elmore, R. F., Fiarman, S. Assessment for learning: Putting E. & Teitel, L. (2009). *Instructional Rounds in Education: A Network Approach to Improving Teaching and Learning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Foster, L. (2001). *Effectiveness of mentor programs: Review of the literature from 1995 to 2000.* Sacramento, CA: California Research Bureau. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED463511.pdf

Gee, J. P. (2004). Situated language and learning: A critique of traditional schooling. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203594216

International Labour Organisation (ILO). (2024). *Transforming the teaching profession: Recommendations and summary of deliberations of the United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession.* Geneva: International Labour Office https://www. ei-ie.org/en/item/28334:united-nations-secretary-generals-high-level-panel-on-the-teaching-profession-recommendations-and-summary-of-deliberations

Ismail, A., Ridzwan, A. A., Ibrahim, W. N. A. W. & Ismail, Y. (2015). Effect of mentorship program on mentees' psychosocial development. *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences*, 49, 53-65. https://www.learntechlib.org/p/176730/

Kegan, R. & Lahey, L. L. (2001). The real reason people won't change, *Harvard Business Review,* Magazine November 2001. https://hbr.org/2001/11/the-real-reason-people-wont-change

Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge University Press.

Mokoena, S. (2017). Student teachers' experiences of teaching practice at open and distance learning institutions in South Africa. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education* 18(2): 122-133. https://doi.org/10.17718/tojde.306564

Robinson, M. (2014). Selecting teaching practice schools across social contexts: Conceptual and policy challenges from south africa. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 40(2), 114-127. https://doi. org/10.1080/02607476.2013.869970

Rusznyak, L. (2009). Confronting the 'pedagogical immunity' of student teachers. *Education as Change*, 13(2), 263–276. https://doi.org/10.1080/16823200903234794

Weinberg, F. J. & Lankau, M. J. (2011). Formal mentoring programs: A mentor-centric and longitudinal analysis. *Journal of Management*, 37(6), 1527-1557. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206309349310

Zeichner, K. M. (1994). Research on teacher thinking and different views of reflective practice in teaching and teacher education. In: Carlgen, I., Handal, G. & Vaage (Eds.). *Teachers' Minds and Actions: Research on Teachers' Thinking and Practice*. London: Falmer Press, 9-27.

PART 2

Partnerships to implement extended student teacher internships

4   Making inroads: funder collaborations in multi-stakeholder partnerships

Gail Campbell, *Zenex Foundation*
Rebecca Muir, *Maitri Trust*

Introduction

This article will explore TICZA's multi-sector collaboration against the background of diverse philanthropic models of partnerships, sound principles for collaboration, the risks and possible failures, and strategies to unlock/leverage future funding for the TICZA collaboration. Historically, philanthropic organisations have preferred to work in silos, for various reasons. Susan Wolf Ditkoff (2018, 1) outlines the difficulty of finding partners with common objectives and the complexity and costs associated with collaborations as possible motivators for philanthropies to go at it alone.

Catalysing the partnership

The seeds for the Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) were planted by Trialogue, JET Education Services (JET) and the Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship, University of Cape Town, in 2017. The focus of the collaboration is extended student teacher internships (ESTIs) and it is based on long-standing relationships. JET brokered the discussions with the Maitri Trust, the Standard Bank Tutuwa Community Foundation and the Zenex Foundation. The established relationships among the organisations, and particularly with JET, helped build trust and facilitated the formation of this funding partnership.

TICZA operates as a multi-sector partnership, employing the collective impact model to guide it. This model, with its emphasis on shared agendas and strategies, has been vital in managing the complex relationships among the various stakeholders, including higher education institutions, teacher unions, non-governmental organisations, government departments and funders. The presence of government officials and policymakers in the collaboration is crucial for achieving systemic and policy change. Recognising the challenges in initial teacher education (ITE), such as a poor practice component in the production of new teachers, the insufficient production of quality teachers and teachers' low confidence levels in subject knowledge, TICZA presents an opportunity to enhance the practice component of ITE.

As funders, we share a clear intent: to institutionalise extended student teacher internships (ESTIs), make them a viable option for universities and advocate for government funding. With around 40% of new teachers emerging from distance education, where practical experience is limited, the internship model provides an important avenue for workplace integrated learning (WIL) for student teachers. TICZA's stakeholders believe that ESTIs could significantly improve the quality of new teachers entering the profession.

Pooling resources: The new era of philanthropy

Philanthropic organisations pooling their resources have the potential to 'increase the power of the collective to influence education practices and policies' (Zenex Foundation, 2024, 21). The world's gravest problems can be solved when organisations with feasible and adaptable projects are connected with the required financial support to get interventions off the ground (Leland, 2017). There are also benefits to coordinating the skills and strengths of a range of partners to enable sustainable and practical impact (Driver, 2024).

Historically, philanthropies have operated in silos due to the absence of natural accountability forces, the difficulty of finding partners with shared objectives and the complexity of collaborations. However, as funding has become scarcer, there has been a shift toward collaboration among philanthropies. This is increasingly evident in South Africa, where the potential to scale projects and address socio-economic challenges makes partnerships more desirable. By pooling resources, philanthropies amplify their impact, enable more productive use of resources, share risks and develop innovative funding strategies.

TICZA is a prime example of how such collaborations can lead to sustainable and impactful outcomes. The three funders share risks, knowing that our collective effort would mitigate the challenges of working at a systems level on such a complex multi-stakeholder project.

The collective impact model employed by TICZA has guided the partnership; however, other models in the philanthropic sector also offer valuable insights. For instance, the Zenex Foundation and the Maitri Trust have experience in multiple forms of collaboration, from information sharing to coordinating processes in jointly funded projects and pooling funding for systemic impact.

Drawing on our complementary expertise as funders and leveraging each other's strengths to keep the project grounded and focused strengthens the TICZA collaboration. TICZA funders quickly organised themselves to share initial due diligence and identify our core strengths and skills to engage in workstreams and agreed to streamline administrative burdens through common reporting. Most importantly, we mutually agreed to align the key priorities for TICZA, underpinning all funders' discussions and focus.

Both the Zenex Foundation and the Maitri Trust had previous experience with ESTIs and could build on that knowledge. Engagements with multiple funders often lead

to different funder requirements, multiple varying reports, overlapping due diligence processes and endless meetings. Instead, Zenex drew on Maitri's extensive expertise in managing the due diligence processes and providing oversight of project deliverables, while Zenex's monitoring and evaluation experience guided the research and evaluation agenda.

Balancing collaboration with deliverables

Managing the tension between collaboration and tangible deliverables is a constant challenge in multi-stakeholder partnerships. We faced the challenge of mitigating the power dynamics inherent in being funders while working in partnership with other stakeholders. We recognise the importance of being perceived as equal partners rather than using our funding status to unduly influence the project's direction. This balance is critical in maintaining trust and ensuring that the focus remains on achieving policy change.

There were moments of doubt, particularly regarding the focus on collaboration over tangible outcomes. The funders had to navigate the tension between supporting the collaboration and being accountable to our respective boards for the deliverables. There were also questions about whether we had been too ambitious in our expectations for policy change at the start of the project. However, these challenges have provided valuable learning experiences, contributing to our understanding not only of what success looks like for TICZA but also the time and cost of driving collaborative endeavours.

Funder coordination

Funding leads meet regularly to discuss progress and check-in with one another and, more recently, have included additional team members to challenge our thinking on the project – questioning our perspectives to ensure a well-rounded view. We support each other, share responsibilities, respect differing opinions and maintain mutual trust. This foundation allows for robust discussions, and when we face moments of despair, we help keep each other grounded and motivated.

Leveraging partnerships and contributing to learning

TICZA's success in bringing together a larger group of donors in the ITE space is a testament to the power of leveraging existing partnerships. TICZA has been a valuable network opportunity across all the different stakeholders. The scope of TICZA draws on detailed expertise and knowledge from the project management office led by JET, working together with Trialogue, Bertha, Bridge, Southern Hemisphere and Reos. The funders benefit significantly, gaining valuable insights and learning from our collective engagement.

The collaboration has deepened the partners' own understanding of ITE in general and specifically internships. A strong case has been made for the value of internships, challenging the perception among some donors that they are too expensive. By advancing discussions and advocating for internships, TICZA has opened doors for further collaboration and funding.

The experience has also helped the funders to develop a deeper understanding of working at a system level and the time it takes to achieve meaningful change. We have to continuously remind ourselves that TICZA is working across the system – changing behaviours, attitudes, relationships, services and policy; and all this takes time, a lot of time. 'We only get out as much as we put in'. Through participating in TICZA activities such as communities of practice or contributing to this Digest, we can start to codify/conclude elements of funder collaboration and/or individual approaches which will be valuable for future projects.

Unlocking future potential

The principles required for sustainable collaborations are now in place for TICZA, and the funders continue to build on their strengths. We have deepened our understanding of collaborative efforts toward systemic change and are committed to advocating for TICZA within the donor community. The collaboration's future potential lies in its ability to adapt and evolve, drawing on the collective expertise and commitment of its partners.

James Keevy from JET often reminds the funders that the collective does not necessarily need to be a space where everyone agrees on everything, 'sometimes it's good to sit in the messiness.' TICZA correlates to Adam Kahane's (2017) concept of 'stretch collaboration', which emphasises the need for flexibility, openness and willingness to engage in disputes to find creative solutions.

TICZA's journey underscores the importance of robust partnerships in addressing complex educational challenges. While the road has not been easy, the collaboration has laid a strong foundation for future impact in the ITE sector. Through continued communication, trust-building and strategic alignment, TICZA is well-positioned to make significant inroads in ITE.

References

Ditkoff, S. W. (2018). *The long spoon problem – Five models of philanthropic collaboration*. The Bridgespan Group. https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/five-models-of-philanthropic-collaboration

Driver, L. (2024, 19 June). *Maximising impact: The power of corporate and private funder collaboration in South Africa*. Independent Philanthropy Association South Africa (IPASA). https://ipa-sa.org.za/public/maximising-impact-the-power-of-corporate-and-private-funder-collaboration-in-south-africa/

Kahane, A. (2017). *Collaborating with tthe enemy: How to work with people you don't agree with, like or trust*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Leland, O. (2017). A new model of collaborative philanthropy. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. https://doi.org/10.48558/04P3-9G10

Zenex Foundation. (2024). Strategy report: Trustees meeting – May 2024. Zenex Foundation. Unpublished.

5 The evolution of collaboration: TICZA as a public-private partnership, collective impact collaboration or even an outcomes-based contract?

James Keevy and Zaahedah Vally, *JET Education Services*
Herman Meyer, *independent consultant*

The origins of TICZA

Collaboration across education and training ecosystems is never easy (De Witt, 2020). However, in South Africa, we cannot be criticised for not attempting several options over the last 30 years. This short article reflects on one such collaboration that has been underway since 2017. The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) focuses on 'mutually reinforcing activities among discrete actors in the education sector with varying interests in extended student teacher internships' (McDonald, 2024, 1). The question is, can TICZA be described as a collective impact collaboration (CIC)? Or should TICZA rather be described as a more traditional public-private partnership (PPP)?[2] And has that changed over time?

What seems obvious is that assisting student teachers to be better prepared for entering the classroom as teachers must surely be good and supported by organisations operating in this realm. It is assumed that everyone supports the notion that better qualified and equipped teachers are motivated to help children become their best selves. What seems less obvious is agreement on ways to achieve this.

It can be assumed that everyone who has participated in the TICZA journey to date wants this initiative to succeed. If so, then why has it been so difficult to build a common understanding of the work, and why have the impacts been so difficult to achieve? Or has this been the case? What this article attempts to answer is the extent to which TICZA can be accurately described as a CIC and whether the collective efforts of discrete organisations have achieved more success than those organisations would have achieved on their own in the absence of TICZA.

---

2 A public-private partnership (PPP) is a partnership between the public and private sectors in which the private sector delivers a service (usually a public good) traditionally provided by the public sector.

To start with, the origins of TICZA must be understood. The discomfort with the existing teacher training paradigm (Rusznyak, 2016) led to different organisations establishing forms of pre-service teacher training programmes. Out of this was born the need to learn from and share with others. The precursor to TICZA was referred to as the Teacher Internship Initiative and was conceptualised in 2017 as a PPP for systemic impact (TICZA, 2018). The early thinking was that the PPP would include a partnership with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and those involved in exploring alternatives to the existing teacher training model. The PPP would be managed by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in collaboration with higher education institutions (HEIs) and private funders who were 'dedicated to addressing the systemic crisis in education and initial teacher education through co-creation, cooperation and high-quality delivery of teacher internships' (TICZA, 2018, 1).

The new PPP, soon renamed TICZA, aimed to: (1) establish and maintain a PPP between teacher internship service providers, universities, government and private funders; (2) drive innovation and continuous improvement among teacher internship programmes through common metrics, standards and knowledge sharing; (3) develop a scalable and replicable teacher internship model and support the proliferation of the model throughout the country; and (4) address systemic barriers to success and promote the work of teacher internships.

The initial convening partners of TICZA were the Global Teachers Institute (GTI), Trialogue and the Bertha Centre, with JET Education Services (JET) joining later. An important consideration in 2019 was whether the sector was ready to engage with TICZA as a performance-based funding programme[3] which would include permutations of results-based financing (RBF) instruments such as outcomes-based contracting (OBC) and social impact bonds (SIBs) in which the government funds part or all of the performance payments (Mawoyo & Vally, 2020, 343). Typically, an OBC consists of: (1) a financing arrangement with government and non-state actors in which payments are contingent upon the achievement of outcomes; (2) verification by an independent evaluator; (3) donors that are willing to provide upfront capital; and (4) implementers that deliver the services. The concept of TICZA as a PPP was not advanced at that stage but further work in this area has made it necessary and possible to revisit innovative financing models for extended student teacher internships (ESTIs).

JET facilitated work on innovative financing for education during and after the COVID-19 pandemic (De Witt, 2020). Working with a range of local and international experts, De Witt, who was based at the Bertha Centre at the time, made a strong case for South Africa to explore and test collaborative models to support alternative pathways to initial teacher education, mentioning TICZA as 'an operational example on which to design future public–private collaborations which can be instigated and/or led by the DBE/DHET to address other key issues' (De Witt, 2020, 3).

---

3   Performance based contracting (PBC) is an outcomes-oriented contracting mechanism that links payments for services delivered directly to the achievement of performance measured against monetary and non-monetary metrics (TICZA, 2018).

In 2021, JET, with Percept Actuaries & Consultants, a transdisciplinary health and finance sector consulting firm, and Social Finance Ltd., a UK-based not-for-profit consultancy, was commissioned by the World Bank to conduct research on transferring lessons learned from the use of RBF in the health sector to inform its use in the education sector, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (Social Finance Ltd. et al., 2021). The research pointed out that education impact bonds in India and sub-Saharan Africa 'tended to utilise improved learning outcomes as payment triggers, intentionally leaving inputs and activities to be flexibly determined by support providers based on locally determined needs' (Social Finance Ltd. et al., 2021, 52).[4]

The COVID-19 pandemic precipitated a rethink of, amongst others, innovative financing. Another area that was significantly impacted was teaching practice. Given that schools were closed down or functioned with severe restrictions, the traditional approach to teaching practice was severely affected. This forced everyone, including schools of education in universities, to rethink their practices.

TICZA as a collective impact collaboration

During 2022 and 2023, and building on De Witt's suggestions, the notion of TICZA as a CIC became more explicit (Southern Hemisphere, 2023). This approach was based on a framework developed by Kania and Kramer (2011) and originally published in a 2011 edition of the *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. The CIC model

> … is defined by five key organisational features, all of which have been embedded in TICZA's work: (1) a common agenda, debated and defined by a wide range of stakeholders involved in ITE; (2) tools for shared measurement, developed from a co-created theory of change (TOC) and accompanying monitoring and evaluation framework; (3) implementing mutually reinforcing activities, including members repositioning their own organisations and programmes to support the common agenda; (4) continuous communication and engagement, which is not a small task given the diversity and numbers of members, and with up to fifty participants at Steering Committee meetings; and (5) a structure providing backbone support, as represented by the convenors as well as a staff appointment specifically to support the TICZA process. (Trialogue, 2022)

---

4   Development impact bonds (DIBs), like social impact bonds (SIBs), are results-based contracts in which private investors provide pre-financing for social programmes, and public sector agencies pay investors back their principal plus a return if, and only if, these programmes succeed in delivering social outcomes. Unlike SIBs, DIBs involve donor agencies, either as full or joint funders of outcomes. Because repayment to investors is contingent upon the achievement of specified social outcomes, DIBs are not 'bonds' in the conventional sense (Social Finance et al., 2021).

The model does not necessarily include a funding component associated with OBC or RBF.

Since its introduction in 2011, the collective impact framework has gone through various cycles of optimism and interest. From being a fringe concept promoted as an academic idea, it has grown in stature and importance, as evidenced by a growing number of projects using the framework as a reference point as well as the growing literature on CICs.

The table below provides a bird's-eye view of the forms of collaboration that have been explored as part of TICZA since 2017. The PPP and CIC have been the most explicit, while the OBC model has been mooted but never pursued.

Table 1: The evolution of collaboration in TICZA

		Forms of collaboration		
		Public-private partnership (PPP)	**Outcomes-based contracting (OBC)**	**Collective impact collaboration (CIC)**
	Period of emphasis	2017-2019	2018-2021	2022-2023
Focus areas	Continuous communication and engagement	High	High	High
	Verification by an independent evaluator	High	High	High
	Payments contingent upon the achievement of outcomes	Moderate	High	Moderate
	Drive innovation and continuous improvement	High	High	Moderate
	A common agenda, debated and defined by a wide range of stakeholders	High	High	High
	Common metrics, standards and knowledge sharing	High	High	High
	Donors who are willing to provide upfront capital	High	High	High
	Implementers that deliver the services	High	High	High
	A structure providing backbone support	Moderate	High	High

The shift from the more transactional and somewhat simplistic PPP model to a more evolved OBC model that requires more engagement around role clarification, outcome measures and responsibilities represents an important shift. Moving to a CIC model represents a further shift towards the collective understanding and design of solutions and acceptance of joint responsibility for outcomes. Though a more complex model, which includes (initially) greater undefined risks, a CIC also carries the possibility of a more systemic and sustainable response to this wicked problem.[5]

Looking to the future of TICZA

As we prepared this contribution in May 2024, the discussions within TICZA had become increasingly about a long-term solution that requires the institutionalisation of collaborative effort. This includes directly linking TICZA's work to the notion of the CIC approach. From the perspective of the convening group, and even the external evaluator, it appears that TICZA partners are starting to find a good rhythm. Agreements have been signed between the TICZA convening group and 14 implementers, seven universities and one HEI are actively involved, and three unions (the South African Democratic Teachers Union, the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa and the Professional Educators' Union) remain key participants, not to mention the South African Council for Educators (SACE), the DBE and DHET. Specific inputs regarding ESTIs have been made into policy review processes, including the *Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* (TICZA, 2023), the *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development* and the Council on Higher Education's qualifications standards for the Bachelor of Education and the Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (JET, 2024; KICP, 2024).

The initial expectation from implementing partners to secure more funding for their individual programmes which are serving under-resourced communities has gradually shifted towards a more joined-up approach. As an example, a group of implementing partners recently submitted a collaborative proposal to the Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa, making the case for ESTIs through their ability to reach a significant number of student teacher interns, estimated as 10% (or 600 ESTIs) of the current University of South Africa student teacher intake (JET, GTI, Teach the Nation, Khanyisa and Thuto Trust, 2024). This move opens the way for institutionalisation and a singular model for ESTIs to be pursued more strongly.

Critical decisions lie ahead, not least on how best implementers can be drawn into a proof-of-concept process from 2025. Importantly, the foundation has also been laid for an OBC approach.

---

5   Wicked problems are problems whose social complexity and complex interdependencies makes them difficult or impossible to solve because of incomplete, contradictory and changing requirements that are often difficult to define. This means that simple or obvious solutions are often absent, and only incomplete or complex solutions are available. Solving some aspects of a wicked problem may reveal or create other problems. Solving wicked problems requires a systemic and collaborative approach. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wicked_problem

References

De Witt, S. (Ed.). (2020). Education researchers respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Theme 12: Innovative finance for education during and after COVID-19. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/theme-12-report-final.pdf/download

JET Education Services. (2024). Comments: Draft qualification standards for the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) and Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). Unpublished submission.

JET, GTI, Teach the Nation, & Khanyisa & Thuto Trust. (2024). Submission for the Call for strategic implementing partners for the National Pathway Management Network Innovation Fund. Unpublished submission.

Kania, J. & Kramer, M. (2011). Collective impact. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 9(1), 36-41. https://doi.org/10.48558/5900-KN19

Khanyisa Inanda Seminary Community Projects (KICP). (2024). Draft qualification standards for the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) and Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). Unpublished submission.

Mawoyo, M. & Vally, Z. (2020). Improving education outcomes in low- and middle-income countries: Outcomes-based contracting and early grade literacy. *Journal of Learning for Development*, 7, 334-348. https://doi.org/10.56059/jl4d.v7i3.468

McDonald, Z. (2024). TICZA terminology. *TICZA Implementation Compendium,* 1. Johannesburg: JET Education Services. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/ticza-compendium-series-1_final.pdf/download

Rusznyak, L. (2016). Making conceptual connections visible to students in professional programmes: The case of initial teacher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 30(2), 205-225. https://www.journals.ac.za/index.php/sajhe/article/view/576/218

Social Finance Ltd., Percept Actuaries & Consultants & JET Education Services. (2021). *Learning lessons for education from the use of results-based financing (RBF) in health.* World Bank Group. https://www.socialfinance.org.uk/assets/documents/Learning-lessons-for-education.pdf

Southern Hemisphere. (2023). External evaluation of the Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) programme. Final report. Unpublished.

TICZA. (2018). The Teacher Internship Initiative: A public-private partnership for systemic impact. Unpublished concept note.

TICZA. (2023). Draft policy on the Minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications, as revised 2018. Input from the Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA). Unpublished submission.

TICZA. (2024). Inputs into the Integrated strategic planning framework for teacher education and development in South Africa, 2011–2025. Unpublished input submitted on 11 April 2024.

Trialogue. (2022). *A model of collective impact: The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA).* Trialogue. https://trialogue.co.za/a-model-of-collective-impact-the-teacher-internship-collaboration-south-africa-ticza/

6 Strengthening teacher education: the power of collaboration in extended student teaching internships

Hassiena Marriott, *Global Teachers Institute*

Introduction

This article explores the development and implementation of extended student teaching internships (ESTIs) within the Global Teachers Institute (GTI) Future Leader Programme (FLP) (GTI, n.d.) in South Africa. Through partnerships with universities, GTI offers a model that equips aspiring teachers with a strong academic foundation alongside invaluable practical experience. The article examines the strengths and challenges associated with these collaborations, highlighting the importance of collective impact in strengthening teacher education, particularly in high-need contexts. Finally, it proposes future directions for strengthening these partnerships and furthering the impact of the ESTI programme.

The quality of teachers is widely acknowledged as a critical factor influencing student learning outcomes (EEF, 2023). In South Africa, addressing teacher shortages and ensuring a well-prepared teaching workforce remains a pressing challenge, particularly in high-need schools located in rural, remote and township areas (Spaull, 2013). This article presents the case of the GTI, a South African non-profit organisation, and its innovative approach to teacher education through ESTIs, a school-based experience for student teachers working towards their Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) qualifications. Through partnerships with universities like the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and the University of South Africa (UNISA), GTI places student teachers in schools for extended periods ranging from two to four days per week. While enrolled at their respective universities, student teachers receive mentorship from qualified teachers at their host schools and wraparound support from GTI. This support includes professional development, personal development, instructional development, socio-emotional support and academic support. The goal is to develop a new generation of highly capable teachers who are reflective, empathetic, socially responsible and equipped with academic and instructional mastery. These 'Future Leaders,' as GTI calls them, are specifically targeted to work in high-need schools in rural, remote and township areas of South Africa, aiming to tackle educational inequality and become agents of change.

The role of university partnerships

GTI's strategic partnerships with UNISA and UJ play a crucial role in the success of the ESTI programme.

University of South Africa

The flexible learning environment provided by UNISA caters to the diverse needs and schedules of student teachers engaged in ESTIs, allowing them to balance academic studies with practical experience. UNISA's supportive academic culture is committed to student success, offering targeted support and remedial assistance for students struggling with specific modules, fostering inclusivity and academic support (UNISA, n.d.). Students may not always be aware or take advantage of these services, which is where GTI comes in, either directing the students to the support or providing such support in professional development sessions. Additionally, UNISA ensures resource accessibility through the delivery of study materials, including alternative digital versions when necessary, ensuring that students have uninterrupted access to educational resources.

The success of this partnership is underscored by the significant number of graduates from UNISA's programme. GTI has had 125 graduates since we began our programme, all of whom were studying through UNISA. Robust communication channels between GTI and UNISA enable student teachers to work together remotely, balancing their academic studies with practical training needs. Furthermore, GTI can directly contact UNISA when interns face challenges, ensuring prompt intervention and minimal disruption to the learning experience. UNISA supervisors observe GTI students engaged in practical work, providing valuable feedback and guidance to enhance their hands-on learning experience. GTI plays a supportive role by ensuring that the students are well-prepared for their supervisors' visits. GTI collaborates with UNISA staff to assist students with Funza Lushaka and National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) bursary challenges; while the process is not perfect, conversations are underway to streamline it.

Despite these strengths, there have been challenges. GTI had 124 students studying through UNISA in 2023. Response times from the university could sometimes be slow, delaying the resolution of students' issues and impacting the learning experience. The student interns faced technical issues such as occasional system downtimes and technical challenges during exams, which the students found stressful. Issues with online exams were reported, with examination scripts sometimes being rejected due to network issues, forcing students to register again and retake the exams. Four of our students faced this problem and had to write the supplementary examinations. These technological challenges are frustrating for students and can negatively impact their exam experiences and results. Taking these issues into account, GTI offers training and support in new digital tools to enhance students' digital literacy and academic proficiency. GTI has learnt how to mitigate some of the technical challenges, for example, those experienced with the Invigilator app. Students are advised to keep their phones away from the examination venue or place them in 'flight mode'. Whereas previously students had written their exams at home or in the staffroom, which may have led the Invigilator app to disqualify them, students now write exams in quieter spaces.

Although the teaching practice or work integrated learning (WIL) component is in line with the *Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* (MRTEQ) of 20 to 32 weeks over the four years of study, (DHET, 2015, 25), the number of lesson observations that UNISA is able to do is extremely limited. In this respect, the partnership with GTI is key. GTI has a limited number of students and has a designated staff member who is responsible for observing and providing feedback to these students. This takes place between five and seven times a year and is imperative for the students' growth.

Many students have challenges, especially when it comes to their emotional well-being. In 2021, UNISA had a student body of 342 995, with the College of Education (CEDU) hosting 94 035 of that total (UNISA, n.d.). The university is not able to provide individual support to students, as mentioned at the CEDU Teaching Practice Lekgotla held on the 12th September 2024. GTI's FLP programme, with a strong focus on the socio-emotional wellbeing of its-students, assists to fill this gap for the students who are on the programme.

University of Johannesburg

UJ students have performed well academically, and the provision of off-site exams allows for greater flexibility in exam locations for students. Excellent communication between GTI and UJ ensures that educational practices meet high standards and that both parties are aligned in their educational goals. UJ prioritises student support with innovative approaches, including dedicated personnel readily available to address student challenges, evening check-in sessions with lecturers for continuous contact and support, and access to UJ's social media platforms for student recruitment purposes. UJ demonstrates flexibility by admitting students who do not meet standard entrance criteria, with GTI providing additional support.

However, there are opportunities for improvement. The efficiency of bursary processing at UJ could be enhanced to ensure students understand and navigate bursary procedures effectively, particularly for those requiring additional assistance. Unanticipated funding issues have arisen, such as interns not being able to obtain NSFAS funding for the School-Based Teacher Education Programme and learners who studied Afrikaans in matric not qualifying for a Funza Lushaka bursary. These issues created financial strain for students who require funding for their studies. Technical issues with the Moodle app, including unavailable exams and submission failures, disrupted the assessment process, necessitating alternative submission methods such as email, which was cumbersome for both students and staff. Scheduling conflicts, such as rescheduling tests from Monday to Friday, created confusion and potential conflicts with other commitments, impacting students' preparation and performance. Instances of students receiving incorrect results, like a first-year student receiving a Sesotho final mark, undermined trust and added administrative burdens.

Cultural considerations

A culturally diverse student population at UJ presents both opportunities and challenges. A diverse student body may have varying levels of digital literacy and ability to navigate online platforms and communication tools effectively. The fact that our students come from schools that are under-resourced and where they are sometimes taught by teachers who themselves have language barriers, impacts students' ability to read and understand English. In addition, language barriers can impact the clarity of communication between students and UJ staff, leading to misunderstandings and misinterpretations of instructions and feedback. The transition from traditional in-person classes to online learning requires cultural adjustment for students who are more accustomed to face-to-face interaction and direct support. This challenge cannot be ignored, which is where the support of GTI and other implementing partners is essential.

The way forward: a collaborative future

GTI recognises the importance of ongoing collaboration and is committed to working with UNISA and UJ to further strengthen the ESTI programme. Here are some of GTI's proposals for the future.

- A government-endorsed community engagement project: GTI proposes a collaborative project with UNISA and UJ's Teaching Practice Departments focusing on initiatives such as:

  > Joint student recruitment: Partnering with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) to target students in high-need areas based on subject selection, priority phases and geographical location;

  > Enhanced WIL: Sharing knowledge and developing best practices to better support students in achieving academic and professional success.

- Research and evaluation: Conduct joint research to evaluate the efficacy of the GTI and other implementing partners' models and identify areas for improvement.

- Monitoring and evaluation tools: Collaboratively develop tools to measure students' classroom competencies, potentially leveraging GTI's existing Future Leaders Information Portal (FLIP).

- Professional development: Universities provide input to enhance the GTI professional development programme, including psycho-social and emotional support for students.

- Career pathways: Support Future Leaders to become lifelong learners and develop into happy, fulfilled, enthusiastic and well-retained teachers.

- Community of practice: GTI plans to convene other implementing partners to develop a standardised support curriculum, ensuring students receive holistic support and addressing gaps left by potential inconsistencies in university support structures.

- Sharing seminar: A seminar is planned for universities offering online, distance, or blended learning for B.Ed. degrees, aiming to accelerate best practices and knowledge sharing within the teacher education sector.

- Collaborative research: GTI and UJ collaborate on data collection to co-write journal articles or conduct postgraduate research on establishing and enhancing ESTIs. This research will be published to contribute to the field of teacher education.

Conclusion

The partnerships between GTI and UNISA and UJ exemplify the power of collective impact in strengthening teacher education. By working together, these institutions are creating a supportive environment for future teachers, equipping them with the knowledge, skills and experience needed to address the challenges faced by high-need schools. Through ongoing collaboration, innovation and a shared commitment to quality teacher education, GTI and its partners are paving the way for a brighter future for South African education.

References

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2015). Revised policy on the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications. Pretoria: Department of Higher Education and Training. *Government Gazette*, Vol. 596, No. 38487. https://www.dhet.gov.za/Teacher%20Education/National%20Qualifications%20Framework%20Act%2067_2008%20Revised%20Policy%20for%20Teacher%20Education%20Quilifications.pdf

Education Endowment Foundation (EEF). (2023). *High-quality teaching*, EEF. Available at: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/school-planning-support/1-high-quality-teaching

Global Teachers Institute (GTI). (n.d.). Want to become a teacher? Apply to the Future Leaders Programme. [Brochure]. https://gti-flip.azurewebsites.net/Content/FutureLeadersFactSheet-S1_2020_Web.pdf

Spaull, N. (2013). Poverty & privilege: primary school inequality in South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 33(5), 436-447. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2012.09.009

University of South Africa (UNISA). (n.d.). *Unisa facts and figures 2017 -2022* [Fact sheet]. UNISA. https://www.unisa.ac.za/static/myunisa/Content/Announcements/Documents/Unisa%20Facts%20and%20Figures%202017-2022.pdf

7   Partnerships that work: reflections from Thuto Trust

Lerato Okeyo, *Thuto Trust*

Introduction

South Africa is plagued by the continuing inadequacy of teacher performance in public primary schools in terms of the three dimensions of professionalism, knowledge and skills (Bold et al., 2017). This situation is compounded by the growth in the child population, together with many teachers in the system approaching retirement, resulting in significant pressure to bring more teachers into the system. Whilst this is an opportunity to bring new levels of competence into teaching, indications from the *Action Plan to 2024* of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) (DBE, 2020) highlight the need to accelerate improvements in pre-service teacher training. The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) initiative is a response to this challenge, specifically focusing on the potential to institutionalise extended student teacher internships (ESTIs) within initial teacher education (ITE) in universities.

Guha et al. (2017) advocate for teacher internships as an effective means of enhancing academic knowledge with practical experience and mentoring, leading to substantial improvement in pre-service teacher preparation to teach effectively in challenging school environments. The teacher internship model mitigates the limitations of academic study by providing a platform for supervised experiential practice of theoretical constructs. In studying different pre-service teacher internship programmes, Guha et al. (2017) have found them to be commonly characterised by partnerships between universities and school districts.

As a participant in TICZA, Thuto Trust is practising potential solutions for cost efficiency in implementing ESTIs for quality and scale. According to Guha et al. (2017, 35), pre-service teacher internships typically provide for:

1. Recruitment to identify candidates of high potential whose abilities match the needs within a district;
2. A full year of practical internship under the supervision of an expert teacher mentor;
3. Relevant coursework aligned with internship practice;
4. Availability of expert mentor teachers co-teaching with teacher interns;
5. Placement of interns into host schools with diverse learners;
6. Ongoing mentoring and support to interns; and
7. Financial support to interns on condition of teaching commitment within the participating district for a minimum time period.

A critical objective of middle childhood education is to raise the performance of the most marginalised children to an appropriate level to enable their further progression throughout school. Primary school education is recognised as foundational to all future learning for children, and therefore, teaching quality is of vital importance to their learning trajectory (Boyden et al., 2019). The importance of teaching practice in ITE programmes offered in higher education institutions is widely emphasised. However, the impact of poor recruitment practices, insufficient practice time and inadequate quality assurance in the supervision, mentoring and assessment of teaching practice is the subject of much criticism (Deacon, 2016). As Thuto Trust, we view the quality and scale of ESTIs as necessarily involving context-relevant, extended, experiential learning in our predominantly under-resourced public schools, underpinned by well-structured supervision and mentoring, with appropriate measures for reporting and accountability.

The placement of student teachers in public schools in South Africa necessitates establishing mutually beneficial partnerships with government education departments at the national level to facilitate financial support to student teachers, and at the provincial and district levels. In our experience, the complexity of implementing ESTIs in under-resourced public schools is invariably compounded by limitations in school-based teacher quality and capacity (Bold et al., 2017). Consequently, Thuto Trust appoints independent programme supervisors and mentors with defined roles and responsibilities, the delivery of which require the support and facilitation of participating provinces, districts and host schools. Similarly, job placement of student teachers on completion of their ESTIs requires alignment with provincial and district level requirements. Given the multiple inter-dependencies, the successful implementation of ESTIs is a function of partnerships with key stakeholders.

Thuto Trust is in the fourth year of implementing a memorandum of agreement with the DBE's Initial Teacher Education Directorate and the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) to collaborate on pre-service teacher internships in Gauteng. Participating student teachers experience fully-funded, full-time internships in host schools in Gauteng, spanning the duration of their B.Ed. studies in Foundation and Intermediate Phase teaching. Student-teacher financial support is provided through DBE-awarded Funza Lushaka bursaries to cover tuition, books and living expenses, augmented with wraparound support funded by Thuto Trust. The collaboration specifically provides for student teacher internships in under-resourced public primary schools in Gauteng. A Partner Steering Committee was established in January 2021, comprising representatives from the DBE, GDE and Thuto Trust, to provide oversight of the programme implementation. The programme has evolved significantly, with innovative solutions continuously applied to improve outcomes.

Highlights of the partnership

The role of the DBE in the partnership is to allocate Funza Lushaka bursaries to participating student teachers, all registered for the distance learning B.Ed. through the University of South Africa (UNISA). The availability of Funza Lushaka bursaries is critical in enabling students to access the living allowance which makes it affordable for distance learning student teachers to participate in ESTIs. For the DBE, the partnership

is beneficial in realising an improved return on bursary spend through targeted university throughput of students participating in the programme as well as significant improvements in preparation for the workplace of teaching.

The DBE has been a crucial role player in providing the necessary support for programme implementation by facilitating access to public sector stakeholders, including the GDE and UNISA. The DBE is also exemplary in supporting continuous problem-solving and the inclusion of innovations to improve the programme. This has included lobbying for GDE support for the internship implementation in Gauteng, engaging UNISA to support annual student teacher induction to the programme, arranging laptops for student teachers, and facilitating a monthly payment cycle for living allowances, making it possible for student teachers to cover their monthly travel and expenses to be able to participate in the internship.

The role of the GDE in the partnership has been equally critical, specifically in facilitating district engagement and support for the programme. GDE nominated the Johannesburg West District to participate, which in turn has offered a community of five host schools in Soweto within reasonable proximity to participate. Through the support of the district, Thuto Trust has developed positive relationships with the respective school management teams, with ongoing engagements characterised by mutual benefit and commitment to the programme.

As the implementing partner, Thuto Trust adapts the programme through innovations for continuous improvement. This has included removing the reliance on school-based supervision and mentoring by appointing dedicated programme mentors who observe each student teacher regularly in the classroom. This has been supplemented by the Thuto app, designed as an interactive, experiential learning platform connecting student teachers to their mentors to manage the development of classroom practice through an array of prescribed tasks, ranging from school attendance, development of lesson plans, lesson presentations observed by mentors, lesson observations of school-based teachers by student teachers, to reflective practice. Thuto Trust emphasises inclusive education and trauma-informed practice in ESTIs. To this end, host schools have agreed to the participation of all student teachers in their respective school-based support teams, enhancing the students' exposure to and understanding of barriers to learning. Thuto also conducts monthly professional training workshops for the student teachers, often attended by school representatives eager to implement new practices in their schools. Thuto Trust has also implemented monthly meetings with the schools to promote communication, accountability and facilitation of all aspects of student teacher teaching practice in their host school communities.

Thuto Trust has subsequently expanded its partnership with the DBE to include the Limpopo Department of Education. This has involved replicating our existing model for 40 new student teachers hosted in under-resourced rural schools in the Capricorn North and South Districts. The Limpopo Province has thus far distinguished itself as a very active partner, involved in and supportive of all aspects of the programme. This has catalysed progress and shown that such a partnership significantly enhances ESTI implementation.

Similarly, we have expanded to include 40 new student teachers hosted in disadvantaged schools in Braamfischerville, Soweto, in collaboration with the Johannesburg West District. This brings our total cohort to 120. In our recruitment and induction of the new cohort, we have worked closely with UNISA. The positive relationships with UNISA, the participating provinces, districts and host schools have unlocked significant improvements in ESTI implementation for all participants, including student teachers.

Conclusion

As we seek to collaborate as implementing partners to achieve the institutionalisation of ESTIs, it is essential that we recognise the critical partnerships that we need to foster as a collective to achieve mutually beneficial objectives. Thuto Trust interprets the collective challenge of partnering for quality and scale to be:

- Defining replicable ecosystems of public sector role players to minimise student teacher recruitment costs, maximise outcomes of teacher training related to government bursary investments, and unlock logistical cost efficiencies of mentoring by identifying communities of supportive host schools within mutual proximity;

- Providing ESTI programmatic accountability through well-structured implementation defined by clear roles and responsibilities for supervision and mentoring, communicating student teacher tasks, defining measurable objectives, and regular engagement and reporting amongst role players;

- Implementing mechanisms for equitable outcomes for participating school communities.

The role of TICZA in facilitating these partnerships remains an essential value proposition.

References

Bold, T., Filmer, D., Martin, G., Molina, E., Stacy, B., Rockmore, C., Svensson, J. & Wane, W. (2017). Enrollment without learning: Teacher effort, knowledge, and skill in primary schools in Africa. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31(4), 185-204. https://pubs.aeaweb.org/doi/pdfplus/10.1257/jep.31.4.185

Boyden, J., Dawes, A., Dornan, P. & Tredoux, C. (2019). The Young Lives design and conceptual framework. In: *Tracing the Consequences of Child Poverty: Evidence from the Young Lives study in Ethiopia, India, Peru and Vietnam* (pp. 13–280. Bristol, UK: Policy Press. https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447348368.ch002

Deacon, R. (2016). *The Initial Teacher Education Research Project: Final report*. Johannesburg: JET Education Services. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/deacon-iterp-final-composite-report.pdf

Department of Basic Education (DBE). (2020). *Action plan to 2024: Towards the realisation of schooling 2030.* https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/sector_plan_2019_15_sep_2020.pdf

Guha, R., Hyler, M. E. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). The power and potential of teacher residencies. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 98(8), 31–37. https://www.pdkmembers.org/members_online/publications/archive/pdf/PDK_98_8/31pdk_98_8.pdf

8   School-university partnerships: learnings from piloting the University of Johannesburg's School-Based Student Teacher Programme

Sarita Ramsaroop and Nadine Petersen, *University of Johannesburg*
Tshegofatso Mashaphu, *JET Education Services*

Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that teachers must be adequately prepared for both the current classroom conditions and the fast-evolving educational landscape (Chisholm, 2019; Sjølie & Østern 2021; UNESCO, 2024). Universities have to ensure that new teachers are equipped with subject matter expertise and the accompanying pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) (Shulman, 1987) which enables effective teaching and learning. Universities, in their initial teacher education (ITE) programmes, therefore, carefully balance the development of both theoretical knowledge (in coursework) and the practical skills necessary for the classroom. The latter, often referred to as work integrated learning (WIL), conducted in collaboration with schools, has received significant attention as a way of enhancing teacher supply and retention (Dlamini, 2018; Kiggundu & Nayimuli, 2009). One of the most challenging aspects in preparing new teachers is finding ways to enhance cooperation between universities and schools so that there is a shared understanding of the goals of teacher education and students are effectively supported to bridge the gap between university coursework and classroom practice. The emphasis on WIL also reflects a broader concern about the quality of teachers emerging from ITE programmes.

Innovative approaches to improving teacher quality highlight the importance of classroom experience, particularly when guided by effective mentorship. Consequently, there has been an increase in student teacher internships, especially for those in distance education programmes. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), higher education institutions and schools have collaborated to offer these internships, providing prospective teachers with extended classroom training under the supervision of experienced mentors. Such initiatives aim to better prepare teachers for the complexities of South African classrooms. The University of Johannesburg (UJ) is at the forefront of implementing these innovative internship programmes. By fostering partnerships with

schools, government departments, and NGOs, UJ ensures the coordinated and effective implementation of student teacher internships within their ITE programmes.

In this article, we examine the UJ student teacher internship programme and the experiences of its participants. By showcasing an effective model of teacher preparation, we hope to contribute to the broader discourse on improving teacher quality in South Africa. In addition, we foresee this research contributing to the national project, the Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa Teacher (TICZA), which focuses on improving student teacher intern learning in schools. We discuss the initial successes of and obstacles to introducing an online teacher education programme in close collaboration with school partners, drawing on research data collected among various stakeholders between 2021 to 2023 (support for the research project is through the Zenex Foundation).

The University of Johannesburg School-Based Student Teacher (SBST) Programme

In 2021, the Faculty of Education at the University of Johannesburg launched a pilot of the SBST Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) in Foundation Phase (FP) Teaching Programme in collaboration with selected public and private schools. The programme for SBSTs extends the model of the contact B.Ed. programme, which operates in close collaboration with the Funda UJabule teaching school, and is aimed at expanding access and contributing to knowledge production on alternative pathways for teacher education in South Africa. In the SBST programme, a group of carefully selected students is placed into immersive practicum settings within highly functioning partner schools. School functionality is an essential component of the programme, and we view a functional school as a well-run and well-managed school with basic compliance in terms of teaching hours, curriculum coverage and good teaching practices, a clean environment and evidence of efforts to create an environment conducive to teaching and learning. These schools serve as practice learning sites where students can bridge theory and practice and engage in learning in cognitive apprenticeship mode (Collins et al., 1991) with experienced mentors and intentional investigation of their practice.

As a start, a memorandum of agreement (MoA) between UJ and the teacher education partner school and/or organisation, trust or foundation is entered into, outlining all parties' roles and responsibilities. SBSTs are placed in schools in Gauteng, Limpopo, the Northern Cape and the Western Cape. An important component of the MoA is that partner schools must allow SBSTs the equivalent of two school days per week for coursework studies over the four years of the degree. From the university, there is a commitment to provide developmental opportunities for mentor teachers through workshops or short learning programmes.

Initial successes and challenges

From 2021 to 2023, the UJ SBST programme faced significant challenges in aligning stakeholder expectations regarding student teachers' time-management for school activities and university coursework. The data reveals SBSTs faced significant challenges

with time-management as they struggled to balance school responsibilities with university coursework (Ramsaroop et al., 2024). Despite lecturers and tutors creating online content and providing live sessions and additional communication channels to accommodate SBSTs, the students often attended sessions without prior engagement with the lesson materials. Part of this was due to partner schools not adhering to creating time for students to work on their studies during the school week and university lecturers who were unaccustomed to planning for students who also had school-related responsibilities. As a result, lecturers had to re-teach content during live online sessions, which undermined the programme's effectiveness. SBSTs' university academic tutors also noted that while students were open to support, they tended to expect a more passive learning experience, possibly due to their exhaustion from full-time school placements.

Teacher educators have attempted to mitigate these issues by adjusting their pedagogies to accommodate SBSTs' online engagements and encouraging SBSTs to bring coursework-related questions to sessions. Although this approach has improved interactions with SBSTs, it has not fully achieved the ideal dialogic learning environment. It also appears that some lecturers struggled to adapt their academic expectations and pedagogical strategies to the specific circumstances of the SBSTs, expecting that the same sets of rules and tools used with campus-based students (CBSTs) would work with SBSTs. Thirdly, while the SBST programme aims to integrate online coursework with classroom practice seamlessly, a lack of a shared vision, expectations and practices between the university and schools, coupled with the demands of full-time in-school placements, resulted in SBSTs engaging minimally with coursework. Addressing these issues requires a more balanced approach and an acknowledgement of the dual roles of SBSTs by both lecturers and schools if the desired learning outcomes are to be achieved (see Gravett et al., forthcoming).

The MoA between UJ and partner schools aimed to allocate time for coursework, but inconsistencies across schools led to SBSTs often being treated as full-time staff. The SBSTs' integration into the school community, while beneficial, left SBSTs with limited time for their academic studies, often resulting in late-night study sessions. The unequal power dynamic of SBSTs and school mentors, exacerbated by students' financial reliance on schools, meant that students frequently prioritised school responsibilities over their coursework, despite the MoA's provisions. In selected cases, discussions between the schools and the university referencing the conditions of the MoA led to adjustments in school schedules to cater for sufficient time for SBSTs to engage in coursework. However, not all school contexts were as accommodating, and we reached an impasse in negotiations, leading to a cessation of some partnerships.

Despite these challenges, there is notable evidence of substantial learning gains in teacher development when SBSTs are placed in well-performing schools with exemplary mentor teachers for guidance and coaching. Insights gleaned from classroom mentors underscore the SBSTs' adoption of an inquiry-driven approach during classroom observations. Students posed insightful queries regarding the rationale behind specific pedagogical choices, such as the application of certain teaching strategies and the structuring of lessons. Notably, these inquiries seamlessly extended into their

engagement with university coursework, facilitating enhanced learning compared to their counterparts in contact-based programmes.

Data sourced directly from SBSTs showcases instances of this integration, where they effectively applied theoretical knowledge acquired from their university courses to actual classroom scenarios. Recognising the significance of translating academic learning into practical teaching contexts, this connection between theory and practice emerged as pivotal for their professional development as teachers. Moreover, tutors collaborating with SBSTs observed remarkable maturity and confidence in SBSTs' interactions with them. These students displayed a level of independence and autonomy that was often unexpected, given that they did not attend as many lectures as their counterparts (CBSTS). This autonomy is attributed to SBSTs' ability to draw from real-life teaching experiences, which empowers them to approach questions and challenges with a mature perspective.

Conclusion

The initial outcomes underscore the advantages of immersing students in well-functioning school environments while they complete their coursework. This approach enabled them to learn from exceptional teachers and develop reflective, thoughtful teaching approaches, known as adaptive expertise (van Tartwijk et al., 2017). However, the journey also raises questions about the role of partnerships and the importance of interrogating power and privilege in these spaces. The university must ensure alignment among multiple stakeholders and advocate for students with limited power. Additionally, it must address the necessary pedagogical shifts for academic lecturing staff and school mentors to effect optimal learning for SBSTs.

References

Chisholm, L. (2019). *Teacher preparation in South Africa: History, policy and future directions.* Emerald Publishing Limited.

Collins, A., Brown, J. S. & Holum, A. (1991). Cognitive apprenticeship: Making thinking visible. *American educator*, 15(3), 6-11. https://www.psy.lmu.de/isls-naples/intro/all-webinars/collins/cognitive-apprenticeship.pdf

Dlamini, R. (2018). The impact of work integrated learning on student teachers' preparedness for the teaching profession. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 9(23), 12-19.

Gravett, S., Ramsaroop, S. & Petersen, N. (forthcoming). Inquiry-oriented and practice-based teacher education in partnerships with schools: A South African perspective. In: Menter, I., Valeeva R. A., and Prata-Linhares, M. (Eds*.) Globalization and Teacher Education in the BRICS Countries: The Positioning of Research and Practice in Comparative Perspective.* Routledge.

Kiggundu, E. & Nayimuli, S. (2009). Teaching practice: A make or break phase for student teachers. *South African Journal of Education*, 29(3), 345-358. https://www.ajol.info/index.php/saje/article/view/45174/28664

Ramsaroop, S., Mahase, M. & Petersen, N (2024). Bridging the theory-practice divide: Reflections of school-based student teachers. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, 14(1), a1558. https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v14i1.1558

Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(1), 1-22. https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.57.1.j463w79r56455411

Sjølie, E. & Østern, A. L. (2021). Student teachers' criticism of teacher education – Through the lens of practice architectures. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 29(2), 263-280. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2020.1729842

UNESCO. (2024). *Transforming teacher education in the 21st century*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing.

van Tartwijk, J., Zwart, R. & Wubbels, T. (2017). Developing teachers' competences with the focus on adaptive expertise in teaching. In: Clandinin, D. J., Husu, J. (Eds.). *The SAGE Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*, 2, 820-835.

9   Improving teacher readiness for the common South African classroom through the TICZA collective impact model: insights from Teach for All and Teach the Nation

David Oliphant, *Teach the Nation*

Introduction

The South African education system faces significant challenges, particularly in ensuring that teachers are adequately prepared to meet the unique needs of learners in township and rural schools (Msila, 2010). According to the World Economic Forum's *Global Competitiveness Report 2021* (WEF, 2021), South Africa ranked 117th out of 137 countries in terms of the quality of primary education. The World Bank's *World Development Indicators 2021* report (World Bank, 2021) found that only 67% of South African children completed their primary education, and only 44% of children went on to complete secondary education. Furthermore, the 2019 Trends in International Maths and Science Study (TIMSS) reported that 63% of South African Grade 5 learners lacked basic mathematical knowledge, and that teachers, especially in the critical Foundation Phase, were poorly prepared to teach mathematics (Reddy et al., 2022).

As Stronge (2010) argues, the effectiveness and quality of teachers play a huge role in students' academic success and achievement, emphasising that the quality of teaching is the most important school-related factor in student achievement. To address these challenges, the Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) has been established to explore how collective impact interventions could strengthen both teaching quality and long-term educational outcomes (Trialogue, 2022). TICZA, initiated by Trialogue, JET Education Services and the Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the University of Cape Town, and formally launched in 2021, aims to create an institutionalised ecosystem where effective partnerships between higher education institutions (HEIs) and non-governmental organisation (NGOs) can thrive with appropriate funding models to support extended student teacher internships (ESTIs) and improve teacher effectiveness and learner outcomes.

The purpose of this research paper is to examine TICZA's collective impact model and its potential to achieve its broader goals, using Teach the Nation, an ESTI provider within the TICZA ecosystem and a network partner of Teach for All, as an example. This paper provides insights and recommendations to achieve the broader TICZA goals, particularly in relation to bridging the gap between theory, as delivered by HEI institutions, and practice, as wraparound support provided by ESTI implementing partners, to prepare student interns for township and rural school contexts.

Lessons from the Teach for All collective impact model

Teach for All, a global network of more than 62 independent network partners which serves under-resourced schools in different country contexts through locally-led and governed civil society organisations, offers valuable lessons for the development of TICZA's collective impact model. Founded in 2007 and grounded in local contexts, Teach for All works to develop educational leadership to improve the quality of education in under-resourced schools through transformational and instructional support to teachers in training with the goal of breaking down barriers to teaching and learning. To achieve system-level impact, TICZA can learn from Teach for All's approach in the following ways (Crawford-Garret & Thomas, 2018):

1. Grounding ESTI providers in a shared purpose based on the prevailing context in the local schools and communities they serve, ensuring that interventions and student intern training address specific challenges within those communities;

2. Motivating ESTI providers to structure effective recruitment and selection processes to choose high-potential candidates, thereby establishing improved success of the TICZA collective model;

3. Developing a deeper understanding of the complex range of challenges faced by teachers in the classroom and using this data to encourage ESTI providers to prepare teachers effectively using context-specific pedagogy and competency frameworks for teacher development;

4. Establishing an alumni movement for TICZA's ESTI participants for long-term impact, enabling alumni to advance in their careers and become school leaders and government officials. This would continue impacting the system and assist in achieving TICZA's broader goals;

5. Prioritising the scaling of ESTI providers in terms of professional development, both programmatically and operationally, with outcomes-linked funding support to achieve broader goals;

6. Ensuring that student interns within the TICZA ecosystem serve demand-led subjects and sectors, supporting long-term system adoption and institutionalisation;

7. Encouraging partnerships with government and alignment with government processes through completing memoranda of understanding with the Departments of Basic Education (DBE) and of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and registration of its programmes with the South African Council for Educators (SACE).

Teach the Nation: An ESTI Provider within TICZA

Teach the Nation, a partner of Teach for All, is an ESTI provider within the TICZA ecosystem that focuses on providing practical support and guidance to bridge the gap between the theory delivered by HEIs and practice for student teachers working in township and rural schools. By recruiting high-potential graduates with non-teaching qualifications from demand-driven sectors and supporting them to register for a two-year Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) while being placed full-time in schools, Teach the Nation ensures that aspiring teachers gain valuable practical experience in the contexts they will serve.

A key feature of Teach the Nation's model is the provision of ongoing support through regular monthly coaching, which helps students embody context-relevant pedagogy and navigate the unique challenges of teaching in township and rural classrooms, such as overcrowded classrooms, limited resources and diverse learner backgrounds. This targeted support, which universities often struggle to provide, is essential in preparing student teachers to lead effectively in these contexts from day one. By partnering with universities that offer PGCE programmes, Teach the Nation serves as an ESTI implementing partner, providing an internship support structure that complements the academic training received by the students while filling the gap in practical preparation for the realities of township and rural schools.

Evidence of Teach the Nation's Effectiveness as an ESTI provider

TICZA has assessed the competency levels of student teachers across various ESTI providers, and the results demonstrate the effectiveness of Teach the Nation's approach. Teach the Nation fellows achieved 69% in mathematics compared to the average of 54% achieved by students in other ESTIs (TICZA, 2023a) and 79% in English compared to the average of 46% achieved in other ESTIs (TICZA, 2023b). It is clear that the training and coaching provided by Teach the Nation is yielding positive results. By aligning with national policies and guidelines such as the DBE's New Teacher Induction Programme (NTIP) and demonstrating the effectiveness of its approach, Teach the Nation is contributing to the institutionalisation of ESTIs in South Africa.

Recommendations for TICZA and stakeholders

To further strengthen the case for institutionalisation and support the development of an effective teacher preparation ecosystem, the following recommendations are proposed based on lessons learnt from Teach the Nation's partnership with Teach for All and as an ESTI provider within the TICZA collective impact model:

1. Expand TICZA's assessment of student teachers to include classroom observations and evaluations of teacher classroom delivery and readiness, providing a more comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of different ESTI models and identifying areas for improvement.

2. Identify, replicate and agree on best practices such as those demonstrated by Teach the Nation and other successful ESTI providers regarding teacher education that prepares student teachers to meet the unique challenges when teaching in township and rural schools.

3. Promote collaboration and knowledge-sharing among ESTIs, universities and other stakeholders to identify and scale up best practices in teacher education, leading to broader adoption of best practices.

4. Monitor the alignment of ESTI providers to national policies (such as SACE's Professional Teaching Standards and the NTIP) which will unlock outcomes-based funding that supports the institutionalisation of effective ESTI models. This can take the form of bursaries (such as the Funza Lushaka bursary) or stipends (such as the Youth Employment Services Initiative) for student teachers.

5. Advocate for the recognition of ESTI-based training in teacher training offered by HEIs.

6. Align ESTI student intern readiness indicators to national teacher education and certification standards.

7. Invest in research and evaluation to build a stronger evidence base for what works in teacher education to inform the continuous improvement and adaptation of ESTI models based on emerging needs and challenges.

8. Investigate the pedagogical approaches and competencies developed by ESTI providers for student interns and agree on a common set of competencies and pedagogical frameworks that address the needs of township and rural schools and are aligned with DBE frameworks. TICZA should motivate all ESTIs to ground their training in these approaches and to work towards common training indicators and outcomes. Progress can be assessed through classroom observations and other instruments administered by ESTIs, assisted by a common monitoring and evaluation framework which would lead to a common understanding of shared purposes across ESTI providers. This approach has been influential in supporting Teach for All's expansion across 62 countries and the organisation's ability to institutionalise and fundraise for sustainability.

Conclusion

The TICZA collective impact model, drawing on lessons from global examples like Teach for All and the success of ESTI providers such as Teach the Nation, has the potential to achieve its broader education goals of teacher readiness for South African classrooms in public schools. By creating an effective collective impact model that develops partnerships between ESTI providers and universities, aligns the preparation of student interns with national education policies, prioritises the development of context relevant pedagogy and support for teaching in township and rural schools and establishes a common pedagogical framework and competencies for all ESTIs, TICZA can contribute to the institutionalisation of a more effective, equitable and prepared teacher workforce in South Africa.

Through a collaborative and innovative approach, the teacher education sector in South Africa can make a significant contribution to the broader goals of social justice, economic development and the realisation of the right to quality education for all. By working together to implement the recommendations outlined in this paper and building on the insights and lessons from successful models like Teach for All, TICZA and its stakeholders can help ensure that all student teachers in South Africa have access to the training, support and opportunities they need to become effective and transformative educators, capable of preparing learners for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

References

Crawford-Garrett, K. & Thomas, M. A. (2018). Teacher education and the global impact of Teach For All. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.417

Msila, V. (2010). Rural school principals' quest for effectiveness: Lessons from the field. *Journal of Education*, 48:169–189.

Reddy, V., Winnaar, L., Harvey, J., Hannan, S., Isdale, K Arends, F. & Juan, A. (2022*). The South African TIMSS 2019 Grade 5 results: Building achievement and bridging: achievement gaps*. HSRC Press, Cape Town. https://www.timss-sa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/TIMSS-2019-Grade-5-National-report-FINAL.pdf

Stronge, J. (2010). *Effective teachers=Student achievement: What the research says*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315854977

TICZA. (2023a). Primary teacher education (PrimTEd): Mathematics test. Unpublished.

TICZA. (2023b). Primary teacher education (PrimTEd): Language (English) test. Unpublished.

Trialogue. (2022). *A model of collective impact: The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA)*. Trialogue. https://trialogue.co.za/a-model-of-collective-impact-the-teacher-internship-collaboration-south-africa-ticza/

United Nations. (2023). *Report on the 2022 Transforming Education Summit convened by the UN Secretary-General: Transforming Education Summit 2022: Collection of best practices.* United Nations. https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/report_on_the_2022_transforming_education_summit.pdf

World Bank Group. (2021). *World Bank development indicators.* Washington, DC: World Bank Group. https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators

World Economic Forum. (2021). *Global competitiveness report*. Washington, DC: WEF. https://globaledge.msu.edu/global-resources/resource/471

10 An extended student teacher internship-university partnership: a programme manager's perspective

Rene` Levinge-Lang, *Intern Programme Director, St Peters Intern Programme*

Introduction

School-university partnerships offer a robust and contextually relevant way to address enduring issues in the teaching profession by fostering collaboration between key stakeholders, as argued by Green (2021). Merrill (2002) supports this assertion and emphasises the importance of applying and integrating knowledge in real-world contexts, a process which is facilitated by school-based student teacher (SBST) programmes. These programmes allow student teachers in initial teacher education (ITE) to engage in practical and theoretical learning simultaneously. In 2020, the St Peter's Extended Teacher Internship (ESTI) programme managers formalised a partnership with a university through a memorandum of agreement (MoA) to provide an online degree qualification for Foundation Phase student teachers, following challenges with other distance education providers. The first cohort of SBSTs began their online qualifications in 2021, marking a significant step towards integrating practical classroom experience with academic coursework.

The impetus of the ESTI aligned to ITE

From the outset, the St Peter's ESTI programme focused on preparing the student teachers (SBSTs) for the Foundation Phase to address the shortage of qualified teachers in this critical educational stage. The National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) highlights the current shortage of Grade R to Grade 3 teachers trained specifically for the Foundation Phase (Singh, 2024). Additionally, there is a significant need for African language teachers, particularly in the early grades, as noted by Van Broekhuizen (2015b). The degree qualification offered through the St Peter's ESTI includes specialisations in isiZulu and Sesotho, facilitated by the university's Centre for African Languages Teaching (CALT), which emphasises effective teaching methodologies for young children in these languages.

Another key aspect of the St Peter's ESTI programme is the emphasis on extensive classroom practice. The work integrated learning (WIL) component of the programme exceeds the minimum requirements set by the *Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* (MRTEQ) in South Africa (DHET, 2015).

Korthagen (2001) argues that practical experiences can help integrate theoretical concepts into teaching practices. The extensive practical experience offered by the St Peter's ESTI programme helps student teachers integrate theoretical knowledge from their coursework with real classroom situations, addressing a common challenge faced by novice teachers. The programme leverages a successful model from the university's teaching school, where campus-based student teachers gain hands-on experience in classrooms and attend university classes in the afternoon. This model, refined over a decade, has been applied to the ESTI-HEI partnership, enhancing the integration of theory and practice (Gravett et al., 2014). Additionally, the ESTI programme includes psycho-social support, academic strengthening and leadership development, further extending the benefits beyond traditional degree qualifications to meet the evolving needs of the teaching profession.

The organisation of the ESTI aligned to the university requirements

The St Peter's ESTI is a fully integrated programme incorporating four focus areas. Interns need to complete the four-year Bachelor of Education degree whilst attending practice-based experiences on weekdays between 7:30 am and 12:30 pm. Afternoons are set aside for academic and other learning programmes. The afternoon time allocated is mostly for academic work purposes, in line with the requirements of the MoA. Through the ESTI programme, interns are learning to use flexible and adaptive methods for teaching and learning. In the teaching school and in other school environments, they adapt to different children, classes, grades, schools and academic support areas, gaining invaluable knowledge on child development and educational psychology.

Most of the daily hands-on practice-based experience is in the private school context the ESTI is established in; however, the interns also attend weekly experiences in a Quintile 1 public school. The focus in this learning experience is on early literacy development with children who do not speak English as a first language. The 'follow a child' approach (Gravett, et al., 2019) is employed as each SBST is allocated a learner or group of learners. The SBSTs learn to monitor and assess learners over a period and reflect on aspects of cognitive and psycho-social development. In addition, SBSTs spend another two to four weeks per annum over the four-year period in other school contexts including Quintile 1-5 schools, schools with learners with special educational needs and low-fee private schools. This allows for practice in applying the core pedagogical skills they are learning in the academic and degree coursework in multiple teaching contexts. The creation of teachers with 'adaptive expertise' (Bransford et al., 2000; Hatano & Inagaki, 1986) is a key focus of the St Peter's ESTI.

In line with the curricular focus of the university, the St Peter's ESTI attempts to build deeper meta-learning (meta-emotion, metacognition, reflection) practices in the student teachers through the mentoring process. This process is two-fold, with classroom mentors and a focus on praxis and reflective practice (Fadel et al., 2015, Rousseau, 2015). The evaluation of student teachers' progress, weekly in the design of lessons and termly relative to five areas informed by professional teaching practices, is a guided, structured evaluation process with several tools to build SBSTs' and mentors' capacity in teaching and learning. The university's infusion of principles derived from the learning sciences

with concomitant classroom implications focuses student teachers on the centrality of how learning occurs when they design and enact lessons (Levinge-Lang, 2022). The SBSTs have a solid understanding of learning and how it translates to teaching (Deans for Impact, 2015; Gravett et al, 2023; Levinge-Lang, 2022) and selected competencies for a fast -changing world based on a combination of competencies derived from the school curriculum and the university's teaching methodology courses. With intensive practice-based learning and constant opportunities to reflect and consider praxis, the St Peter's ESTI attempts to attend to the views that student teachers have of teaching, based on the programme's years of observing its own teachers in practice, referred to as 'the apprenticeship of observation' (Lortie, 1975, 2). There is also a focus on optimising mentoring using a cognitive apprenticeship approach (Collins et al., 1991). In four years, SBSTs learn from more than twelve mentor teachers.

Recruitment and selection in the St Peter's ESTI extend beyond academic results. The university's academic requirements at matric level are higher than the requirements of the distance HEIs the St Peter's ESTI engaged with previously. This higher level of achievement proved to be necessary for student teachers to effectively engage in and apply the university coursework. An intensive selection process is followed including written assessment and a panel interview. Shortlisted applicants are required to spend a week in the classroom and present a basic lesson prior to final selection. Enculturation into the profession begins four months before the SBSTs join the programme, with onboarding and induction focused on the school and academic learning environments. Efforts to increase the attractiveness of the teaching profession to student teachers 'requires active promotion of teaching as a vocation and raising the status of the teaching profession in South Africa' (van Broekhuizen, 2015a, 4). The development of teacher identity to cultivate effective, motivated, inspirational and professional teachers is intentional in the St Peter's ESTI programme.

The degree qualification is presented wholly in an online format on a learning management system with all modules presented in interactive ways including readings, videos, quizzes, MOOCs etc. SBSTs use digital devices provided by the St Peter's ESTI for learning and assessment purposes.

The completion rate of SBSTs is more likely to be shortened with the move to the new HEI, due to the structure of the degree programme. Firstly, the failure rate is minimal, although there has been a substantive decrease in the number of distinctions produced as compared to the interns enrolled with the prior HEI. Secondly, failed modules in the first three years of the qualification are remediated within a year or two.

Conclusion

In 2024 we will have the first cohort of interns in the final year of the St Peter's ESTI programme. The interns have contributed to data for HEI research on SBSTs by sharing their experiences and engaging in interviews. They continue to contribute to the continuous improvement of the delivery of the degree qualification in the online environment by providing feedback to the HEI and the ESTI programme.

There are a few possible learnings for institutionalising ESTI's moving forward: firstly, partnering with an HEI with robust feedback processes to ensure the needs of SBSTs are attended to sufficiently, whilst aiming to produce teachers with 'professional knowledge, professional practice and professional commitment' (CDE, 2017, 16); secondly, extending recruitment and selection of student teachers beyond universities' minimum academic requirements is recommended; thirdly, enabling classroom-based mentoring to strengthen the learning between university coursework and practice-based experience is integral to enhancing the quality of teachers entering the profession.

References

Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L. & Cocking, R. R. (2000). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school.* Washington: National Academy of Sciences. https://nap.nationalacademies.org/download/9853

Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE). (2017, 17 August). Teacher professional standards for South Africa: The road to better performance, development and accountability? *CDE Insight*. Johannesburg: CDE. https://www.cde.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CDE-Insight-Teacher-Professional-Standards-For-South-Africa.pdf

Collins, A., Brown, J. S. & Holum, A. (1991). Cognitive apprenticeship: Making thinking visible. *American Educator*, 15(3), 6-11.

Deans for Impact. (2015). *The science of learning.* deans for impact.org. https://www.deansforimpact.org/files/assets/thescienceoflearning.pdf

Department of Education (DoE). (2000). Norms and standards for educators. *Government Gazette*, Vol. 415, No. 20844. https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/20844.pdf

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2015). Revised policy on the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications. Government Gazette, Vol. 596, No. 38487. https://www. dhet.gov.za/Part%20C%20%20Policies/HIGHER%20EDUCATION/14.%20Policy%20 on%20 minimum%20requirements%20for%20teacher%20education%20qualifications.pdf

Fadel, C., Bialik, M. & Trilling, B. (2015). *Four-dimensional education: The competencies learners need to succeed*. Boston, MA: Education Centre for Curriculum Redesign. https://curriculumredesign.org/our-work/four-dimensional-21st-century-education-learning-competencies-future-2030/

Gravett, S., Petersen, N. & Petker, G. (2014). Integrating Foundation Phase teacher education with a 'teaching school' at the University Of Johannesburg. *Education as Change,* 18(sup1), S107-S119. https://doi.org/10.1080/16823206.2013.877357

Gravett, S., Petersen, N. & Ramsaroop, S. (2019, January). A university and school working in partnership to develop professional practice knowledge for teaching. *Frontiers in Education*, 3, 118). https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/education/articles/10.3389/feduc.2018.00118/full

Gravett, S., van der Merwe, D. & Levinge-Lang, R. (2023). Lesson design in preservice teacher education drawing on a science of learning perspective. In: Gravett, S. & Petersen N. (Eds.). *Future-Proofing Teacher Education*. *Voices from South Africa and Beyond*. (Chapter 5). Routledge. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9781003185499/future-proofing-teacher-education-sarah-gravett-nadine-petersen

Green, C. A. (2021). Partnering in the third space: What motivates teachers' and school leaders' involvement in school-university partnerships? [PhD thesis, University of Wollongong].

Hatano, G. & Inagaki, K. (1986). Two courses of expertise. In: Stevenson, H. W., Azuma, H. & Hakuta, K. (Eds.). *Child Development and Education in Japan.* (pp. 262–272). W H Freeman/Times Books/ Henry Holt & Co. https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1986-97669-017

Korthagen, F. A. J. (2001). *Linking practice and theory: The pedagogy of realistic teacher education* [Paper presentation]. Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, USA, April 2001. https://dl.icdst.org/pdfs/files1/8def2fb45db95cab3719a793f85a605e. pdf

Levinge-Lang, R. A. (2022). The learning experiences of final year initial teacher education student teachers using a new lesson design approach. [Masters Dissertation, University of Johannesburg].

Lortie, D. C. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Merrill, M. D. (2002). First principles of instruction. *Educational Technology, Research and Development,* 50(3), 43-59. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02505024

Rousseau, N. (2015). The role of reflection in integrating theory and practice in the Foundation Phase. (Dissertation Doctor of Philosophy, Stellenbosch University). https://scholar.sun.ac.za/ items/d121f495-3484-4327-8d2d-11cc523951fa

Singh, K. (2024, 9 April). Union raises alarm over shortage of trained foundation-phase teachers*. IOL.* https://www.iol.co.za/mercury/news/union-raises-alarm-over-shortage-of-trained-foundation- phase-teachers-b912d6fe-340a-4d68-b826-b048f4a2ba99

van Broekhuizen, H. (2015a). *Increasing the supply of teacher graduates*. *RESEP Policy Brief,* December 2015. University of Stellenbosch, RESEP. https://resep.sun.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/ RESEP-Policy-Briefs_Hendrik-van-Broekhuizen-EMAIL-1.pdf

van Broekhuizen, H. (2015b). Teacher supply in South Africa: A focus on initial teacher education graduate production. *Stellenbosch Economics Working Papers*, WP07/15. https://econpapers. repec.org/scripts/redir.pf?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ekon.sun.ac.za%2Fwpapers%2F2015%2Fwp 072015%2Fwp-07-2015.pdf;h=repec:sza:wpaper:wpapers239

Sustainability of extended student
teacher internships

11 Common Competency Framework: pragmatic coherence for the standardisation for scaling up extended student teacher internships

Fergus Turner, *Bertha Centre for Social Innovation & Entrepreneurship*

Introduction

This article aims to describe and explore a collaborative process towards the development of a common competency framework (CCF) as part of the sector-wide collaboration and innovation work stream of the Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA). (TICZA, 2024). In the context of the collective impact process, TICZA focuses on jointly developed and reinforcing activities from diverse stakeholders across the education sector with interests in the development and proliferation of extended student teacher internships (ESTIs).

Sector-wide collaboration and innovation

South African student teachers are required to 'navigate the complexities associated with teaching in a rapidly changing, inequitable and largely under-performing education system' (Rusznyak, 2018, 1). Furthermore, Ruszynak (2018, 1), citing Mukeredzi and Mandrona (2013) and Taylor et al. (2013), points out that

> Advancing teachers' professional development is one of four outputs envisaged by UNESCO's (2006) Teacher Training Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa, and is widely regarded as one means of leveraging systemic improvements in the education system.

Assisting student teachers to be better prepared for entering the classroom as teachers as a leverage point is supported by organisations and key institutional partners operating in the education sector and represented by TICZA's membership body. TICZA members support the idea that better trained and equipped teachers - enabled and motivated to teach and support learners to the best of their ability - can lead to systemic improvements. One of the collaborative and innovative tasks identified to support this priority is the development of a CCF.

With regard to the proliferation of ESTI models towards an increase in the quantity and quality of well-trained and equipped student teachers, it has seemed pertinent to provide a work-in-progress knowledge product that details the complex competencies entailed in the development of teaching professionals for the pragmatic standardisation and cross-cutting clarity concerning the guidelines and standards for good teaching.

The development of the common competency framework

Against this background, TICZA sought to conduct a situational analysis of the alignment of higher education institutions (HEIs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) - TICZA implementing partners - to the standardisation and practical assessment of ESTIs in South Africa. This exercise was undertaken during several working group sessions with TICZA implementing partners across the education ecosystem. The situational analysis entailed an 'ecosystem mapping, review of existing competency frameworks in this area, and analysis of how - and to what extent - HEIs and NGOs in South Africa are aligned with regard to implementing extended student teacher internships' (JET, 2022, 3). The analysis informed the need for and feasibility of developing a competency framework for ESTIs that would be of mutual value to all stakeholders.

The development of a competency framework has been undertaken in a consultative manner, with TICZA offering a unique opportunity to engage implementing partners as well as the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the South African Council for Educators (SACE) in the development of such a framework. The terms of reference for the work specified that

> To the extent that the goals of TICZA are sought through collective impact, the design process is expected to generate and highlight insights relevant to the future of multi-stakeholder collaborations in education (JET, 2022, 4).

The proposed competency framework would later 'be presented to stakeholders for comment, and revisions would be made in order to increase the relevance, alignment, and usability of the knowledge product' (JET, 2022, 4).

The South African Council for Educators and professional teaching standards

Keeping in mind the historical background of teacher education's 'highly fragmented past', Kimathi and Rusznyak (2018, 1) point out that

> Teachers from diverse backgrounds, experiences and qualifications find themselves working together in schools where they do not necessarily have access to a common language of practice, nor a shared understanding of professional teaching practices.

To address these systemic challenges, SACE, in consultation with stakeholders from across the system, has developed a set of professional teaching standards (PTSs) for use in the South African context, contextualised by other preceding frameworks and guidelines developed over the years to regulate and evaluate South African

teachers' practices (Kimathi & Ruszynak 2018, 1). According to Kimathi and Ruszynak (2018, 2), these frameworks include (1) *The Roles of the Educator and Their Associated Competences*, part of the *Norms and Standards for Educators* (DoE, 2000), (2) the SACE *Code of Professional Ethics* (SACE, 2002), (3) the criteria for performance evaluation of teachers in the *Integrated Quality Management System* (ELRC, 2003), and (4) the *Basic Competences of a Beginner Teacher* in the *Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* (DHET, 2015). Kimathi and Rusznyak (2018, 1) also note that these frameworks each address some aspects of professional teaching while not engaging with others (for a variety of practical and policy-oriented reasons), and 'none of them adequately acknowledge the relations between knowledge, skills, judgment and the ethical orientations that underpin professional teaching.'

The ways in which previous frameworks have constrained the further development of teacher professionalism has important implications for SACE, especially regarding the set of professional teaching standards that is meant to support the successful enhancement of teacher professionalism in the South African context. Nonetheless, the SACE PTSs (SACE, 2019) provide a comprehensive overview of a set of national standards that seeks to promote professional teaching practice and embed a strong professional teaching culture in South Africa. The process of dialogue and the development and drafting of a CCF knowledge product aims to articulate the complex nature of teaching by further describing the 10 dimensions of teacher competency, mirroring the SACE PTSs and providing an imperfect yet (aspirationally) practical integration of the complexities of visible and less visible aspects (including in- and out-of-classroom skills, collaboration and continuous learning practices, etc.) associated with teacher training in the context of ESTIs.

The CCF's 10 dimensions of teacher competencies were developed with the SACE PTSs as a foundation as the standards are the most recent comprehensive and sector-wide consensus on the direction teachers (and by extension, teacher interns) need to aspire towards. Keeping in mind the above-mentioned national guidelines and policies that regulate the work of teachers, the dimensions are the objectives toward which the CCF aims, and by mapping the professional development journey of teacher interns, they represent a practical articulation of pathways to achieving the PTSs, with dimensions progressing asynchronously alongside measurable descriptors of practice.

The case for pragmatism and the common competency framework
A conception of teaching as a professional practice includes aspects of competent classroom performance, but also transcends a focus on the observable aspects of teaching. Teaching also has components that are less observable or measurable, including an ethical orientation and commitment to the well-being of learners that underpin ethical teaching actions and the nature of relationships teachers form through their work. The SACE PTSs do include these aspects, along with references to the social contexts of learner development and the concept of justice as it concerns the teaching environment.

In addition, professional teaching is founded on knowledge that informs teachers' pedagogical reasoning and the judgements they make on a daily basis. If the set of PTSs is to support the professionalisation of teaching in the South African context, it is important for stakeholders to understand how certain dimensions of teacher professionalism (sensibilities, skills, collaboration and continuous learning) have been represented in previous frameworks.

These less visible dimensions of professional teaching are less represented and are not integrated with measurable descriptions of teacher behaviour, exemplifying a gap for further practical elaboration and clarity when connecting the standards to practice. For example, while most teaching practice guidelines used for assessment by HEIs do provide direction to student teachers regarding the importance of complying with the SACE PTSs along with the *Code of Professional Ethics*, these are framed as expectations for good conduct during school-based placements and do not indicate practical professional and/or ethical imperatives that guide student teachers' classroom actions.

Making sense of competencies

A competency is 'an ability, skill, attitude, attribute, trait or behaviour that is needed for the successful performance of a job' (UCT, 2023), in this instance, teaching. A competency is most often described as a behaviour, or *how* the student teacher does the work. Different competencies are required, in varying combinations and at differing levels, for various aspects of teachers' work. It is not easy to recognise, define and measure competencies, and a competency framework assists by specifying the types of behaviours necessary for the successful performance of the particular type of work – acting as a 'competency dictionary' (UCT, 2023). The CCF thus aims to provide a common language or understanding of the behaviours required by student teachers.

It is useful to disambiguate the nature of distinct competencies. For example, according to the Department of Education (DoE), *foundational competencies* demonstrate the teacher's 'understanding of the knowledge and thinking which underpins the action taken' (DoE, 2000, 4). *Reflexive competencies* refer to the 'ability to integrate and connect action and decision making with understanding and with the ability to adapt to change and unforeseen circumstances and explain the reasons behind these actions' (DoE, 2000, 4). Foundational and reflexive competencies are meant to come together in coherent ways in moments of practice, and the dialogue, development and design of a CCF seeks to contribute towards further coherence and integration of existing frameworks, working with SACE's PTSs as a departure point.

The PTSs promise to support teacher professionalism and provide essential guidance to teacher internship development and proliferation, especially if they are enablers of the practical components of ESTI programmes such as mentorship, benchmarking, peer-to-peer support, reflexive learning and contextual professionalism.

The contention is that a CCF, as a reference point for various implementers for further aligning ESTI programmes to national guidelines and providing robust descriptors for mentors and supervisors, would contribute to fulfilling the practical imperatives implied by the aspirational PTSs and other frameworks.

References

Department of Education (DoE). (2000). Norms and standards for educators. *Government Gazette*, Vol. 415, No. 20844. https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/20844.pdf

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2015). Appendix C: Basic competences of a beginner teacher. In: Revised policy on the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications. Pretoria: Department of Higher Education and Training. *Government Gazette*, Vol. 596, No. 38487. https://www.dhet.gov.za/Teacher%20Education/National%20Qualifications%20Framework%20Act%2067_2008%20Revised%20Policy%20for%20Teacher%20Education%20Quilifications.pdf

Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC). (2003). *Integrated Quality Management System. Collective Agreement No. 8 of 2003*. Pretoria: Education Labour Relations Council. https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/Documents/Publications/IQMS%20Training%20Manual%202003.pdf?ver=2015-03-18-081228-000

JET Education Services (JET). (2022). Terms of reference for a convenor for HEI-NGO implementer alignment and common competency framework. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/tor-for-ticza-wg_-hei-ngo-implementer-alignment_30-08-2022.pdf/view

Kimathi, F. & Rusznyak, L. (2018). Advancing professional teaching in South Africa: Lessons learnt from policy frameworks that have regulated teachers' work. *Education as Change,* 22(3), 1-25. https://doi.org/10.25159/1947-9417/4042

Mohd Yusof, F., Md Ali, R. & Veloo, A. (2011). *Developing teacher oral competency framework (TOCF) for secondary school teachers moving forward to meaningful teaching and learning of English language and mathematics.* https://core.ac.uk/download/12122154.pdf

Mukeredzi, T. G. & Mandrona, A. R. (2013). The journey to becoming professionals: Student teachers' experiences of teaching practice in a rural South African context. *International Journal of Educational Research,* 62, 141 -151. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2013.07.010

Rusznyak, L. (2018). What messages about teacher professionalism are transmitted through South African pre-service teacher education programmes? *South African Journal of Education*, 38(3), 1-11. https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v38n3a1503

South African Council for Educators (SACE). (2019). Professional teaching standards. https://www.sace.org.za/assets/documents/uploads/sace_31561-2020-10-12-Professional%20Teaching%20Standards%20Brochure.pdf

South African Council for Educators (SACE). (2022). *The Code of Professional Ethics*. Updated. Pretoria: SACE. https://www.sace.org.za/assets/documents/uploads/sace_12998-2020-09-09-SACE%20Booklet%20Yellow.pdf

Taylor, N., van der Berg, S. & Mabogoane, T. (Eds.) (2013). *Creating effective schools.* Cape Town, South Africa: Pearson.

TICZA. (2024). *TICZA annual report 2023*.

University of Cape Town (UCT) Human Resources. (2023) Competency framework. https://hr.uct.ac.za/performance-promotion-performance-management-pass-staff-performance/competency-framework

12 The role of monitoring, external evaluation and learning in collective impact initiatives

Tracey Phillips and Nana Davies, *Southern Hemisphere*
Herman Meyer, *independent consultant*

Introduction

The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) is a collective impact (CI) initiative designed to support mutually reinforcing activities across various actors in the education sector. Collective impact is a concept aimed at addressing complex problems through collaborative effort. Emphasis is placed on alignment and partnership between the various actors involved to facilitate progress towards shared goals.

TICZA evaluation

In 2022, Southern Hemisphere was commissioned to conduct a formative evaluation of TICZA. The evaluation aimed to provide an independent assessment as well as an alternative perspective of the TICZA initiative to inform learning and, where necessary, project adaptation or improvement.

The evaluation was a combination of an implementation and outcome evaluation. Thus, it assessed whether TICZA had been implemented as intended and if the initiative's structures and systems were sufficient to support the implementation and achievement of its objectives. The evaluation also enquired about any emerging outcomes or changes achieved to date and TICZA's contribution to these outcomes. Lastly, it sought to establish whether the initiative aligned with the five components of a successful CI model. (Southern Hemisphere, 2023).

The evaluation found that TICZA had developed effective administration and communication systems, and that several processes had been set in place to support the formulation of a common agenda and the crafting of mutually reinforcing activities. There was also evidence that collaboration and mutual support amongst the various stakeholders was emerging. However, further information-sharing and consensus-building were required to ensure a shared understanding of the initiative's goals. There was also a need for greater clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of the various TICZA actors. Lastly, the evaluation found that the initiative's monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) systems required review and further refinement. This was particularly relevant to the TICZA MEL framework, where the crafting of clear indicators to monitor progress towards the establishment of a strong collective was recommended.

Collective collaboration and monitoring and evaluation

A maxim in the legal profession is that sunlight is the best disinfectant, that is, presenting all facts may be the best way to establish the truth. In organisational work, transparency is essential for building credibility and trust within communities and among stakeholders. In an inter-organisational construct such as a CI model, this is of even greater importance. Procuring external and objective MEL support is one tool for strengthening transparency. It is an accepted industry standard that embedding MEL in interventions leads to better decision-making and hence more successful interventions. A well-crafted MEL system can bring tacit data to the forefront, helping stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities as well as their impacts and influences.

However, Parkhurst and Preskill, in the special edition of the *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, *Collective Insights on Collective Impact* (2014), highlight the challenges of evaluating a CI initiative's progress and success. These challenges result from the very nature of CI models, which involve 'multiple activities, programs, and initiatives' that are required to operate in mutually reinforcing ways to effect change in complex and often highly dynamic systems (Parkhurst & Preskill, 2014, 17). Evaluating success in a collaboration may also be hampered by power imbalances, conflicting interests and disparities in opinions regarding precisely how success might be defined and hence assessed. Given this situation and the time and attention required to establish common ground amongst different actors regarding a CI initiative's intent and appropriate actions, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) often receives insufficient or untimely attention.

The Bulungula Incubator, documenting their work in designing and supporting collaborative initiatives, notes this challenge and states, 'When you're initially launching as an organisation, your focus is often on doing the work rather than documenting it' (Bulungula Incubator, n.d., 11). When M&E is eventually considered, agreeing on the best type of approach to provide insightful data may prove a further challenge. The complexity of true collective collaboration makes it difficult to follow a standard approach using the typical M&E questions: *Is it working?* or, *Is the initiative doing what it set out to do?*

Lessons from Southern Hemisphere's evaluation

The TICZA formative evaluation provided an opportunity to identify a set of practices to support the M&E of CI models. The following section provides a brief overview of the key lessons learnt in this regard.

Conducting an evaluation through external, neutral actors allows for the collection of frank and honest opinions from a range of initiative participants. Gathering these opinions proves crucial for constructive and robust reflection, which can then be followed by learning and adaptation (all elements that an initiative operating within a complex and dynamic system requires). By gathering and sharing TICZA actor insights, the evaluation contributed towards clarity and a sharpening of the focus of TICZA's work. Following the formative evaluation, the TICZA theory of change was reviewed and revised. In addition, a workshop was scheduled to facilitate engagement and consensus-building between parties regarding TICZA's objectives as well as feasible strategies for their achievement. TICZA's willingness to open itself up to scrutiny and its transparency in sharing the

evaluation findings built stakeholder confidence in the initiative, and, some argued, even renewed interest in the initiative itself.

Parkhurst and Preskill (2014, 18) note that it is 'normal for initiatives to make slow or minimal progress toward their goals in the early years.' However, meaningful, measurable change should be expected within three to four years. This points to a second key lesson emerging from the evaluation; that is, a draft MEL system needs to be put in place during the design phases of a CI initiative.

Of importance is that this MEL system includes a theory of change for the collective model itself as well as the outcomes envisaged as a result of its work. Both theories of change should include a set of well-crafted indicators that provide agreed-upon or shared measures of success for tracking progress. Adopting this dual theory of change approach will ensure that changes over the initial phases of the collective model, which include the establishment of its structures and operations, consensus- and relationship-building, exploration of strategies and crafting of action plans, can be tracked for learning and – where required – adaptation and improvement of the model. It will also ensure that as the CI initiative matures, the MEL system focus can shift to monitoring its progress towards the collective's objectives.

Thus, a vital learning emerging from this evaluation is that a CI model's MEL system must itself be adaptive; that is, it should evolve together with the CI initiative. This will ensure that as the initiative shifts from an exploratory to a stable and well-established state, so too will the system that tracks this transition. Furthermore, the objectives of the CI initiative may shift or change over the model's maturation process. This will require MEL system adjustments to ensure that the system remains relevant over the full course of the initiative and continues to provide the necessary information at the appropriate time.

Conclusion

TICZA's evaluation demonstrated the importance of adopting a more fluid approach to MEL when monitoring and assessing a CI initiative. It also highlighted the importance of having a robust MEL system in place to not only track *progress towards CI initiative objectives* but also to gather important lessons about the journey of *building a CI collaboration*. Lastly, the evaluation demonstrated the value of creating space for an evaluation process and utilising the emerging recommendations proactively and transparently.

References

Bulungula. (n.d.) Monitoring and evaluation. Path to sustainability. Data series, No. 2. https://bulungulaincubator.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Data-management-system-toolkit_v5.pdf

Parkhurst, M. & Preskill, H. (2014). Learning in action: Evaluating collective impact. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 12(4), A17–A19. https://doi.org/10.48558/BCC5-4275

Southern Hemisphere. (2023). External evaluation of the Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) programme. Final report. Unpublished.

13 Three years of TICZA: reflections from a data collection perspective

Jennifer Shindler, Patrick Molokwane and Morris Phundulu, *JET Education Services*

Introduction

The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) is in its penultimate year, with three years behind it, and the TICZA research team has been researching different areas outlined in a research plan developed at the beginning of the collaboration. This initial plan, which has scope for being revised when the need arises based on the review of the TICZA theory of change, had as one of its foci, the collection of information on newly qualified teachers (NQTs) to be used as *'a self-reflective exercise undertaken by first-year teachers to examine their own practices and understanding of professionalism and intentions for the profession, community, attitudes and values towards teaching/learners/the school/peers/etc.'* (TICZA, 2022, 3).

Two sets of data on 2022 graduates who were beneficiaries of some of the TICZA partner programmes have been collected and analysed. One set was the aggregate results achieved by graduates who had written Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) Primary Teacher Education (PrimTEd) mathematics and English assessments. The other was the results of a survey of NQTs.

The PrimTEd tests of newly qualified teachers

This report provides the aggregated results of the B.Ed. PrimTEd mathematics and English assessments that were written at the end of 2022 and the beginning of 2023 by participants from seven different TICZA partner programmes around the country who had completed their teaching degrees in 2022. Both the mathematics and English tests had four performance levels, ranging from the lowest performance (level 1), to the highest performance (level 4).

The mathematics assessment (PrimTEd, 2023a) was written by 61 TICZA graduates, and the results were compared to the aggregate PrimTEd benchmark results of a national group of 1 062 fourth-year students who took the assessment from 2018 to 2020. The English test was written by 55 TICZA graduates, and their results were compared to the aggregated PrimTEd benchmark results of a national group of 731 fourth-year students who took the assessment from 2020 to 2022.

In mathematics, the mean attainment for the TICZA graduates was 54%, just one percentage point higher than the fourth-year national benchmark. However, with a standard deviation of 20%, the TICZA graduates had a wider distribution of results than the fourth-year national benchmark, which had a standard deviation of 17%. It is pleasing to note that a higher proportion of TICZA graduates (31%) compared to the PrimTEd benchmark fourth-years (23%) achieved at level 4 (the highest achievement level). However, if one combines the two highest achievement levels (levels 3 and 4), 51% of TICZA graduates achieved at these levels, lower than the 55% of the PrimTEd fourth-years who achieved at these levels.

In the English assessment (PrimTEd, 2023b), the TICZA graduates achieved more poorly than the PrimTEd fourth-year students. While the mean attainment for the PrimTEd national fourth-year benchmark was 55%, for the TICZA graduates the mean attainment was just 46%. Both groups had a standard deviation of 21%. Similarly, only 13% of the TICZA graduates achieved at level 4 compared to about 25% of the PrimTEd benchmark fourth-years. Even if one combines the two highest achievement levels, the PrimTEd benchmark fourth-years achieved better than the TICZA graduates, with 65% and 43% respectively falling into the combined level 3 and 4 categories.

The survey of newly qualified teachers

The information on the survey of NQTs is taken from the report presented to the TICZA Steering Committee in November 2023 (TICZA, 2023). The survey population consisted of NQTs who had completed their B.Ed. or Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) qualifications in 2022 and who had been beneficiaries of one of five TICZA implementing partners. The fieldwork began on 12 July 2023 and ended on 28 July 2023. The survey was conducted telephonically, using Google Forms to capture the information. Each interview took, on average, 20 minutes to complete. Up to six attempts were made to contact a respondent before the respondent was considered as a non-response. To encourage participation, an incentive of R20 worth of airtime was given to those who participated. Of the 124 NQTs from the five organisations, 68 (or 54.8%) completed the survey.

Of the 68 respondents, the largest proportions were between the ages of 25 and 29 years (48.5%) (see Figure 1), were female (75%) (see Figure 2), and spoke isiZulu (27.9%) (see Figure 3).
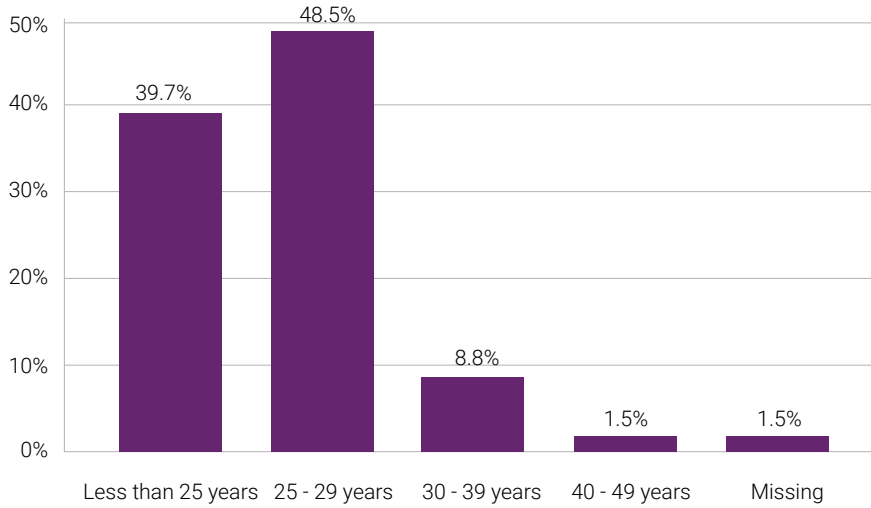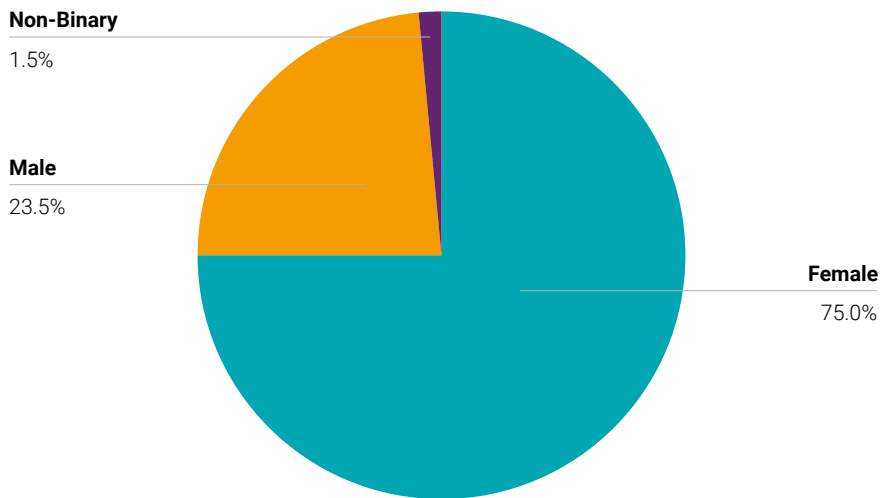
Figure 1: Age group of respondents

Figure 2: Gender of respondents
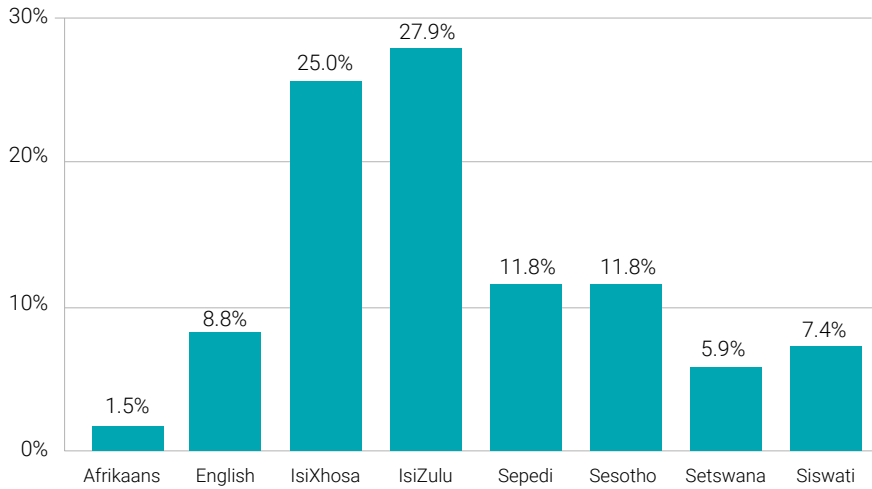
Figure 3: Home language of respondents

The majority had qualified with a B.Ed. (89.7%) (see Figure 4), and the largest proportion (45.6%) had specialised in both the Senior Phase (SP) and the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase, followed by 17.6% who had specialised in the Intermediate and Senior Phase (see Figure 5).
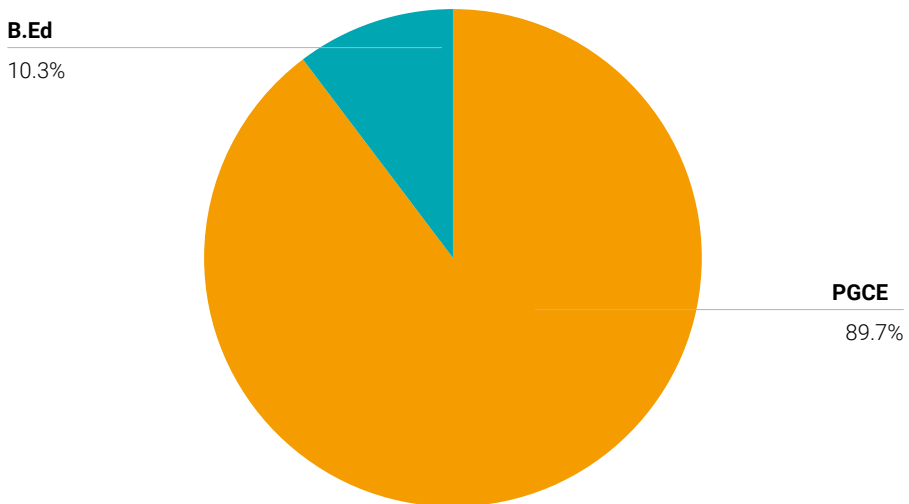

Figure 4. Teaching qualification of respondents
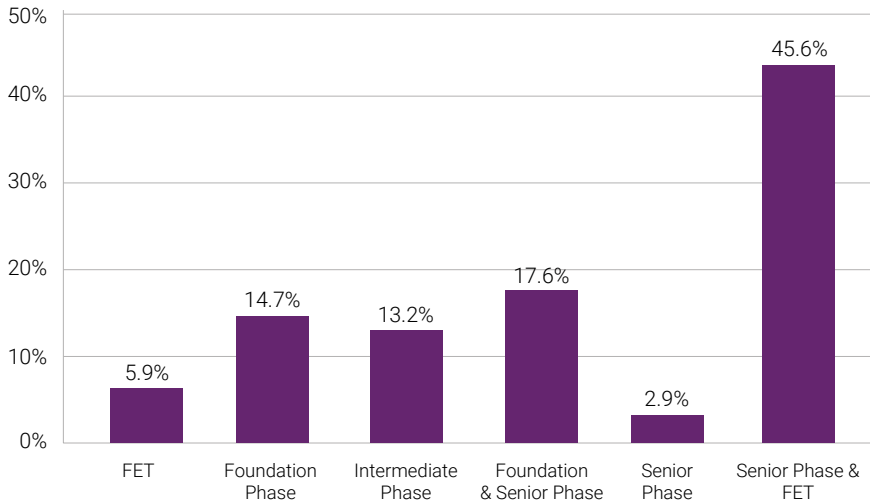
Figure 5: Phase specialisation of respondents

Five of the seven respondents who had completed a PGCE qualification had completed their degree in one year (information was missing for the remaining two), while among the B.Ed.-qualified respondents, 44.3% indicated that they had completed their degrees in three years, followed by four years (29.5%) and five years (19.7%).

In terms of their current employment, (see Figure 6), of the 68 NQTs who participated in the survey, 55.9% (38) were employed as teachers in a school and 26.5% were unemployed. The remaining NQTs were employed, but not as teacher in schools.
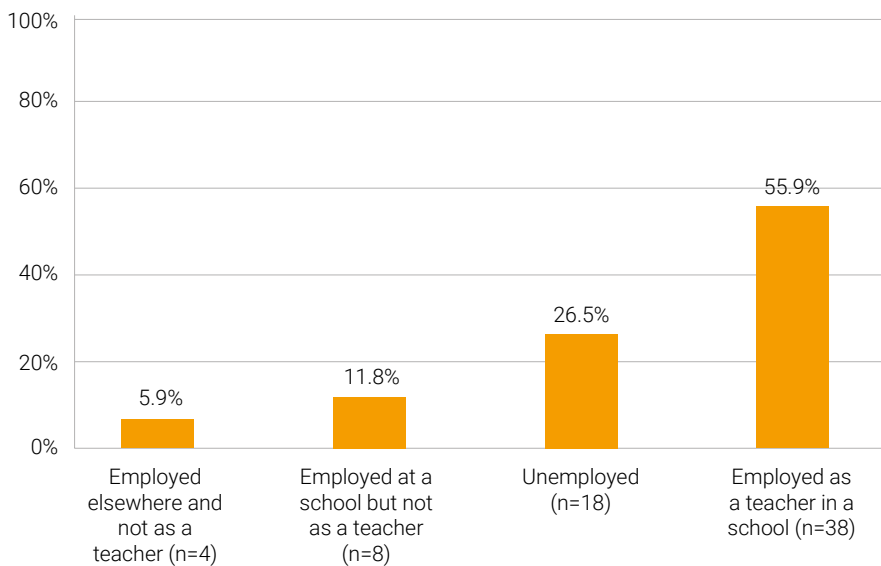
Figure 6: Employment status of respondents

Of the 38 employed as teachers in a school, the largest share was in Gauteng (15) followed by the Western Cape (nine) (see Figure 7. Twelve were employed in private schools and 26 in public schools.
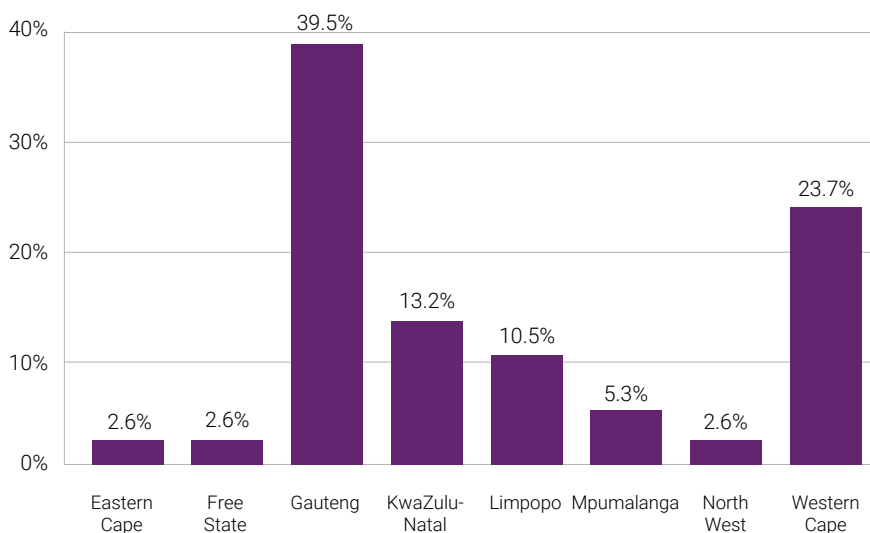
Figure 7: NQTs employed in a school by province of the school (n=38)

In terms of beliefs and values, all the NQTs believed that teaching is an important profession. Most felt that teachers should worry about the problems learners had at home (94.1%) and that it is important to try to understand the reasons for a learner's behaviour (98.6%) as learners' challenges at home could affect teachers' instruction in important ways (82%). However, 71% of the NQTs said that they were able to address the challenges that the learners had at home.

With regard to collaboration, all the survey respondents indicated that they had benefited from collaborating with other teachers, with 82.4% strongly agreeing. Almost all (94.8%) felt that teachers at their schools had helped them to become better teachers. Regarding collaboration with parents, however, most (82.3%) would only talk to parents if there was a problem with their child.

In terms of classroom routines, almost all (94.7%) NQTs had a routine for all their classes. However, 26.5% did not think it was problematic for a teacher to miss a class to fulfil other responsibilities. In terms of discipline, 97% of respondents indicated that they believed that a teacher must know how to discipline learners and the class. Regarding a safe environment, just over half of the NQTs did not think that their school was a safe place for learners, and 2.6% said that their classroom was not a safe place for learners.

More than half the NQTs (57.4%) felt that it is difficult to teach learners with special needs.

Most NQTs (94.1%) agreed that a teacher must know all of their subjects' content, and most felt that when learners gave the wrong answer, they understood what the learner was thinking and why. All NQTs said they could help learners in their classes understand the subject(s) they taught. A large proportion of NQTs (73.7%) said that they read research related to education at least once a month.

In terms of understanding learners' needs, all the NQTs noted that a teacher should understand how learners learn best, and almost all felt that teachers must understand learners' needs and respond to them.

Regarding assessment, all or almost all the NQTS understood that assessment is used for the following purposes: to check how much learners know about the topic or content; to understand what the teacher taught well and what lesson and approaches they should change; to see what learners can do with their knowledge; and to find out what teachers need to go over again in class.

Conclusion

A few of the TICZA implementing partners focus on training mathematics educators, and this can be seen in the TICZA PrimTEd mathematics assessment results. These results show that while the average achievement of TICZA graduates was more-or-less on a par with the national benchmark for fourth-year B.Ed. students, a larger proportion of TICZA graduates (31%) than fourth-year B.Ed. PrimTed students (23%) achieved level 4 (the highest achievement level).

In the English assessment, however, TICZA graduates, with a mean attainment of 46% and just 13% achieving at level 4, performed worse than the B.Ed. PrimTed fourth-years, who obtained a mean achievement of 55% with 25% achieving at level 4. These results are a cause for concern and could mean that further attention should be given to English by both universities and TICZA implementing partners.

Regarding the TICZA NQT survey results, it is difficult to draw any conclusions as a counterfactual group of respondents who were not part of an implementation programme could not be accessed. It is hoped that going forward this will be possible.

References

Primary Teacher Education (PrimTEd). (2023a).: PrimTEd mathematics tests. November.

Primary Teacher Education (PrimTEd). (2023b). PrimTEd language (English) test. November.

TICZA. (2022). Research plan: Draft. Unpublished.

TICZA. (2023). Newly qualified teacher survey, November. Unpublished.

14 Collaboration for sustainability

Judy Tate, *Khanyisa Inanda Seminary Community Project***s**
John Gilmour, *Global Teachers Institute*

Introduction

It is widely accepted that collaborative education transformation partnerships between social change entities and institutions hold immense potential for driving sustainable outcomes and accelerating progress towards a more resilient and equitable education system (UNESCO, 2015). The three main intentions and possibilities for collaboration are: boosting organisational efficiency, increasing organisational effectiveness, and driving broader social and systems change. Collaborative extended student teacher intern (ESTI) partnerships in South Africa have, over time, created possibilities for a new design for initial teacher development. As we seek to institutionalise this new construct of embedded teacher training, the following need to be considered:

- Individual and systemic teacher development needs should be identified and addressed;

- Increased numbers of high-achieving school-leavers must be attracted into teaching and specifically have a desire and intent to teach and lead in challenging socio-economic circumstances;

- Teacher support must be enhanced at the local level;[6] and

- Accessible and expanded formal teacher education entry points should be established

An obvious strategy for the sustainability of ESTIs has been to strengthen and foster existing partnerships with sister organisations and higher education institutions (HEIs) as well as to seek new synergies with both government and with local and international funding organisations interested in improving the quality of teacher education in developing countries. An integral part of this strategy requires agreement on core activities and core cost structures. This involves producing comprehensive reports, sharing models, in particular funding models, and sharing success stories and strategies. As a collective impact collaboration facilitator, the Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) has successfully assisted in this endeavour (Shiohira et al., 2022).

---

6   Adapted from DBE, 2020, 4.

One of the positive aspects of collaborative partnerships between ESTI providers is that where there may be relevant areas of commonality, organisations readily share ideas and innovations. However, different stakeholders have differing emphases, and while each implementing partner can build their own model according to their needs and manner of approach, agreed minimum requirements need to be upheld. For sustainable collaboration it would be helpful to ESTI providers if components like learning management systems or successful learning platforms were agreed upon and opportunities provided to collectively use these agreed upon systems and platforms.

Partnerships between NGO implementers

Partnerships between non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can work well even though the organisations may often differ in approach. This can be seen in the Coalition of Teacher Intern Providers (CTIP) which was formed in 2023 (CTIP, 2023). There are ESTI providers working widely across all provinces in the country and others working only in one province, district or circuit, or only working in community structures but at a deeper level. At times, the organisations may, to some extent, be able to share management staff, although clear guidelines would be helpful to avoid issues with staff retention and employment.

TICZA has further enabled partnerships and sharing between providers. The TICZA community of practice meeting in January 2024 on scale and sustainability came to this conclusion about collaboration:

> There is a complex interplay of factors influencing sustainability and scale in educational initiatives, emphasising the importance of stakeholder collaboration, evidence-based practices and strategic advocacy, particularly with government. (TICZA, 2024, 2)

There have been very positive experiences of sharing between the implementing partners of TICZA in the areas of instructional practice, on-boarding methodology, materials development and teacher exchange programmes and, more recently, of collaboration around funding proposals. Collaboration between ESTI providers can yield considerable benefits, particularly in the area of business acumen and enabling NGOs to implement ESTI programmes more economically. Partners can share strategies, for example, on how they manage strong working relationships with HEIs and how to document and publicise advocacy items for the ESTI programmes. An important component of this is developing a funding model to reduce the costs of an ESTI programme, thereby enabling such models to scale and spread. Agreement among ESTI providers on what is included in the wraparound support provided to student teacher interns is needed for monitoring the costs of institutionalising ESTIs. This is particularly important in the area of digital teaching and learning, where training and development should embrace technology fully, as well as in the area of social and emotional learning where the current most pressing need of wellness among staff and learners in schools should be met.

The ESTI sector has access to a limited pool of funders. Therefore, although partnerships and networks do operate smoothly, partners can become competitors where funding is concerned. Similarly, when working together for one funder, the partners need to agree on minimum benchmarking parameters, for example, in the dosage of professional development, the frequency of project staff visits to schools and the required volume of resources provided for student interns. Organisations can become defensive concerning their own models or try to promote themselves in preference to others. Institutionalising the concept of ESTIs could be a solution to this problem, particularly if minimum standards are established for the ESTI sector nationally without organisations losing quality processes, output or individual strengths.

Institutionalising ESTIs

There are opportunities that could emanate from the process of institutionalising ESTIs that would strengthen their sustainability. These include more emphasis on improving student teachers' content knowledge and knowledge of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) as well as that of in-service teachers. The development of a strong culture of learning within school communities has been found to be the result of professional development courses for wider target audiences, such as school management teams undergoing change leadership training and in-service teachers attending professional development workshops focused on their specific requirements (Hsieh et al., 2018). Simultaneous professional development programmes also resulted in a robust learning culture that enabled student interns to flourish in schools that may have previously been resistant to any mention of innovative teaching (Ward & Bernath, 2019).

Having an institutionalised ESTI programme would undoubtedly strengthen the position of NGOs in working alongside the DBE when requested to work in challenging subjects and domains. This is evident in areas of national crisis like mathematics and science, children with barriers to learning, foundational learning programmes (particularly reading and writing) and learning loss associated with COVID-19. To sustain the culture of learning within the school, ESTI providers need to establish mechanisms within schools before the closure of their programmes. Peer coaching is considered to be one of the most effective approaches for sustaining internal staff development and enabling professional development to continue. While still working on the ESTI programme, providers could collaborate with the school management teams to select the most appropriate teachers to initiate the peer coaching programme. The alumni network of experienced mentors could be mobilised to replicate the mentor training programme within the school. Sustainability committees with representatives from the ESTI provider, partner schools, alumni and local community members could be called upon to draw up sustainability plans and foster ownership among the school community.

Collaborating for sustainability

An important component of collaboration between ESTIs is agreement on core values, objectives, ethics and methodologies. ESTIs offer a mutually beneficial opportunity to both schools and providers, but any additional workload on teachers which requires voluntary work is often not well received. An approach as an 'add-in' and not an 'add-on' has been helpful for countering this mindset. Here the ESTI programmes are seen as adding value to the teaching and learning in their host schools and not adding to the workload of current teachers or school-based mentors.

The complexity and magnitude of the social, political and economic challenges facing education in the 21st century world are unprecedented. 'These challenges cannot be tackled alone. Moving the needle requires concerted, collaborative action' (Samali et al., 2916, 7). To that end, the ESTI implementing partners need to focus on how to work together to create real, significant social impact. As we combine forces, we can significantly contribute towards the sustainability of the ESTI model and achieve considerable improvement in the quality of education in South Africa.

References

Coalition of Teacher Intern Providers (CTIP). (2023). Coalition of Teacher Intern Providers' Charter. Unpublished.

Department of Basic Education (DBE). (2020). *Institutionalising the NICPD*. https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/Documents/Publications/Institutionalising%20NICPD.pdf

Hsieh, C. C., Chen, Y. R. & Li, H. C. (2024). Impact of school leadership on teacher professional collaboration: evidence from multilevel analysis of Taiwan TALIS 2018. *Journal of Professional Capital and Community*, 9(1), 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1108/JPCC-01-2023-0002

Samali, M., Laidler-Kylander, N., Simonin, B. & Zohdy, N. (2016, 19 May). Why and how do nonprofits work together? *Candid. Philanthropy News Digest*. https://philanthropynewsdigest.org/features/the-sustainable-nonprofit/why-and-how-do-nonprofits-work-together

Shiohira, K., Lefko-Everett, K., Molokwane, P., Mabelle, T., Tracey-Temba, L. & McDonald, Z. (2022). *Training better teachers, An implementation brief for improving practice-based initial teacher education*. Johannesburg: JET Education Services. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/ticza-training-better-teachers.pdf

TICZA. (2024). Sustainability and scale in the context of extended-teacher internships (ESTIs): Perspectives of funders and implementers. *TICZA Community of Practice (CoP) Series # 13 Summary Report: 20 February 2024* https://www.jet.org.za/resources/ticza-cop13-meeting-summary-report-docx-1-1.pdf/view

UNESCO. (2015). *Rethinking education: Towards a global common good.* Paris: UNESCO. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232555.locale=en

Ward, R. & Bernath, A. (2019, 30 October). Creating the conditions for change: Training teachers and school leaders in parallel. *Irex*. https://www.irex.org/insight/creating-conditions-change-training-teachers-and-school-leaders-parallel

15 Sustained internships: complexities and challenges

Veronica McKay, *College of Education, University of South Africa*
Matshidiso Joyce Taole, *College of Education, University of South Africa*

Introduction

With the global expansion of access to schooling, the focus has shifted to the development of both initial and in-service teachers to ensure competent, motivated and empowered educators in every classroom (UNESCO, 2024). Higher education institutions are mandated to provide these teachers, ensuring their educational experiences meet the demands of education systems (Aprile & Knight, 2020).

There is broad agreement that experience in authentic school settings is vital for quality teacher preparation (Bahr & Mellor, 2016). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2019a, 2019b) underscores the benefits of assigning school-based mentors to new and student teachers, evidencing that this significantly contributes to teacher efficacy and learner achievement.

The 14th Policy Dialogue Forum's report (ILO, 2024) emphasised the importance of investing in teachers, ensuring a supply of professionally trained, qualified and well-supported teachers by providing high-quality initial teacher education and continuing professional development across the teacher's career. Similarly, the recent dialogue of the Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA) (2024), convened under the theme *The Teachers We Need for the Education We Want*, committed to teacher development aligned with the African Union (2019) and Education International/UNESCO (2019) professional standards and teacher qualification frameworks.

A recent Department of Basic Education (DBE) study (2024) on the department's New Teacher Induction Programme (NTIP) examined the impact of school-based mentoring on newly qualified teachers (NQTs). The findings, consistent with international literature (Ingersoll & Strong, 2012), highlighted the positive effects of mentorship, including improved confidence, resilience and efficacy. Mentoring also enhanced NQTs' well-being and professional development, resulting in their increased self-efficacy and their expressed commitment to 'remain in teaching for many years to come' DBE (2024, 3).

Supply of mentors

The DBE study found that many well-qualified, experienced teachers volunteered to take on the mentorship role alongside their regular teaching duties, demonstrating their professionalism and commitment, which facilitated the NQTs' transition from theory to

practice. As one NQT noted, 'We value the support from someone who has walked in our shoes' (DBE, 2024, 64).

The PERSAL data (April 2023) reveals a large pool of well-qualified and experienced mentors, indicating that 20% of the teacher workforce holds Relative Education Qualification Values (REQV) of 15 to 17 and higher – indicating that one in five teachers has qualifications beyond a four-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.)

This pool of well-qualified teachers, many of whom volunteer to provide additional support, could immensely contribute to teacher professional development, supporting student teachers and interns on extended placements as well as NQTs. The DBE (2024) review also found that a large number of school-based mentors already had extensive mentoring experience in supporting teachers during their teaching practicums, with many trained by local universities to undertake this mentoring role.

The benefits of school-based mentors are well documented. School-based mentoring results in enhanced social skills (Schenk et al., 2020), serves as an empowerment tool for the transmission of knowledge and skills (Bilesanmi, 2011), provides professional learning and psychological mentoring support (Ligadu, 2012) and develops student teachers' self-confidence and self-esteem (Singh & Mahomed, 2013). Moreover, Mabunda & McKay (2024) found that the mentors played significant roles in facilitating professional peer networks such as professional learning communities which fostered a sense of belonging and common purpose, contributing to teacher resilience and ultimately to improving teacher retention.

The DBE (2024) study confirmed that school-based mentoring offers many bi-directional advantages, benefiting both student teachers and mentors. The literature on bi-directionality shows that mentoring enhances mentor's self-image, reflexive abilities and well-being (Dreer-Goethe, 2023). Mentor teachers report that mentoring allows them to reflect on and improve their teaching and class management skills (Singh & Mahomed, 2013). These benefits, as highlighted in the DBE (2024) study, include improved reflexive abilities and job satisfaction.

Challenges arising from internship arrangements

While there is broad agreement that extended teaching practice is a highly influential and formative component of teacher preparation (Kuriloff, 2013), the arrangements are often complex because interns are university students placed in public schools on a semi-fulltime basis, thus impacting the time interns spend on academic studies.

Mentor-mentee matching

Effective school partnerships require well-matched mentors and mentees based on criteria such as the mentor's work experience, grade, phase and subject area. Mentor teachers should understand the situational context of both the school and the surrounding community (Fyall et al., 2020; Ingersoll & Strong, 2012), highlighting the important role of internal mentors who are already familiar with these environments.

Socio-economic factors impacting student interns

In addition to seeking to improve their academic and practical competencies, student teachers often enlist in internships for financial reasons. However, current intern stipends are low and do not fully cover transportation costs. Moreover, balancing student life with work means interns inevitably incur additional expenses. Despite having bursaries, they must navigate the demands of both worlds – complying with school dress codes and paying for resources such as extra internet bundles for their school work. These costs should be considered when determining stipends for interns.

Duration of internships vs programme requirements

Internship programmes must be aligned with the student's academic requirements. The ITE academic load is structured around notional hours, assignment due dates and predetermined volumes of scholarly work. The *Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* (MRTEQ) (DHET, 2015) specifies that students are required to complete a minimum of 20 weeks (and a maximum of 32 weeks) of work-integrated learning (WIL) for a B.Ed. degree and 8 weeks of WIL for those enrolled for a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).

Undergraduate qualifications assume a 30-week full-time academic year. Full-time students, including most distance education students on national bursaries, are expected to commit to a 40-hour academic week to accomplish a credit load of 120 credits[7] per year. Student placements in schools must align with their qualification requirements. It is important to consider whether students spending four or five days at school, plus travel time, can dedicate enough time to their studies without burning out. The time interns spend in schools should be balanced, ensuring they have dedicated study time.

Variances in teacher education across institutions

Internship programmes work with students from across different phases, provinces and learning areas and in various years of study; the numerous permutations make it difficult for small organisations to cater for these variances and to have the necessary expertise and resources to provide high-quality support consistently.

Dependency and sustainability

A further challenge to sustainability is that support for interns is contingent on donor funding. This reliance can be problematic when funding ceases or is tied to specific projects or cycles, resulting in inconsistent support and jeopardising sustainability.

University partnerships

In many cases, universities have not been formally engaged in designing internships and lack insight into the operations of the non-profit (NPO) implementer. For success and

---

7   The credit system equates 10 notional study hours as equivalent to one credit. The number of credits denotes a measure of the volume of learning necessary to achieve the intended outcomes of a qualification.

sustainability, partners must work in synergy. The NPO should enter into agreements that form the basis of a successful internship programme.

As shown in Figure 1, the success of the teacher internship programme depends on structured collaboration between the various stakeholders, each fulfilling an essential but interconnected role. As Figure 1 shows, the school offers real-world teaching experience and mentorship; the university provides academic guidance; the NPO facilitates logistical and financial support; and the student intern is required to commit to both their academic and practical learning. This coordinated effort ensures that interns receive a balanced and comprehensive education, preparing them for their future roles as professional teachers.

School	**Student intern**	**University**	**NPO**
• Accomodate the intern	• Register at university	• Identify interns for internships	• Memorandum of understanding with the university
• Provide a mentor teacher	• Commit to internship	• Collabrate with NPO to ensure alignment of the intership programme	• Contract the student
• Provide supportive environment for student teacher	• Commit to studies towards qualification	• Enter into agreement with the NPO	• Respnsonsible for intern stipend
			• Report on intern prgress to HEI

Figure 1: Interconnected roles of internship stakeholders

Aligning practice

Partnership agreements between the HEI and the NPO should specify the areas of focus and the objectives of the NPO partner. In some cases, it has been found that the NPO's goals are not aligned with the curricula and requirements set by universities. Since there is often little or no communication between the NPO and the HEI, inconsistencies in the training and evaluation of the student teachers may arise. Essentially, external organisations need to reinforce what students learn from universities and align with their programme requirements.

Complying with the WIL requirements

The MRTEQ (DHET, 2015) specifies a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 32 weeks of WIL for students studying for a B.Ed. degree and 10 weeks of WIL for those enrolled in a PGCE. The policy concedes that students do go beyond the maximum time if they are employed as an unqualified teacher whilst completing their studies. The student teacher intern will fall into this category.

The WIL component, like the internship programme, integrates theory and practice, offering a comprehensive school experience. The *Guidelines for the Application for Programme Accreditation and Registration* (CHE, 2004) require HEIs to provide detailed information on teaching practice requirements, including:

- The type/s of WIL included in the qualification and how the different WIL modalities will be implemented;

- The processes for supervision, student support and monitoring;

- The way in which the institution will ensure the parity of learning experiences and assessments across WIL sites;

- The coordination of the WIL, including the adequacy of infrastructure, communication, maintenance of records, monitoring, mentoring, supervision, liaison, assessment and moderation;

- The extent of compliance of the WIL component with the MRTEQ, South Afrian Council for Educators (SACE) and the Council for Higher Education (CHE) quality assurance processes and standards.

While these requirements are explicitly stated for HEIs, they could also be beneficial for intern programmes.

Expanding the target groups for intern programmes

While NPOs usually screen for the best students, the programmes could be expanded to include:

- Students who do not have a Funza Lushaka bursary and who are either self-paying or on a National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) bursary;

- PGCE students who would benefit from extended school-based practice;

- Unemployed graduate teachers who may not have the requisite subject combinations that are sought for employment. These already qualified teachers could be redirected into scarce skill subjects and engaged as interns while they reskill.

Concluding thoughts

While extended school-based programmes provide valuable experience for student teachers, many factors need to be considered for sustaining and expanding implementation. This paper points to a number of complexities impacting sustainability, emphasising the importance of aligning with the student's academic commitments and the university's programme requirements. Many of the challenges could be mitigated through formalised partnerships with the universities concerned.

References

African Federation of Teacher Regulators in Africa (AFTRA). (2024). Communique 11th Africa Teaching and Learning Conference and 13th Roundtable, Lusaka, Zambia, May 6-11, 2024.

African Union. (2019). *African teacher qualification framework*. African Union Commission: Addis Ababa. https://teachertaskforce.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/Continental%20Teacher%20Qualification%20Framework_EN.pdf

Aprile, K. T. & Knight, B. A. (2019). The WIL to learn: students' perspectives on the impact of work-integrated learning placements on their professional readiness. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 39(5), 869-882. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2019.1695754

Bahr, N. & Mellor, S. (2016). Building quality in teaching and teacher education. *Australian Education Review*, 61, 1-72. Camberwell, VIC: Australian Council for Education Research. https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1025&context=aer

Bilesanmi, B. (2011). Mentoring: an emerging trend in the forefront of HRM: Chapter 7. *IFE PsychologIA: An International Journal*, 2011(si-1), 92-103. https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC38508

Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2004). Guidelines for the application for programme accreditation and registration. CHE: Pretoria.

Department of Basic Education (DBE). (2024). New teacher induction programme evaluation report. Compiled by V. McKay. Unpublished technical report.

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2015). Revised policy on the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications. *Government Gazette*, Vol. 596, No. 38487. https://www.dhet.gov.za/Teacher%20Education/National%20Qualifications%20Framework%20Act%2067_2008%20Revised%20Policy%20for%20Teacher%20Education%20Quilifications.pdf

Dreer-Goethe, B. (2023). Well-being and mentoring in pre-service teacher education: An integrative literature review. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, 12(4). https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-09-2022-0073

Education International & UNESCO. (2019). *Global framework of professional teaching standards*. https://teachertaskforce.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/2019_EI-UNESCO_Global-framework-of-professional-teaching-standards_EN.pdf

Fyall, G., Cowan, J. & Buchanan, G. (2020). A profession within a profession: Mentoring ecology of three new zealand primary schools. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 55, 5-27. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40841-020-00160-6

Ingersoll, R. M. & Strong, M. (2012). What the research tells us about the impact of induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers. *Teachers College Record*, 114(14), 466-490. https://doi.org/10.1177/016146811211401411

International Labour Organisation (ILO). (2024). Recommendations and summary of deliberations of the United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession. Geneva: ILO. https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40ed_dialogue/%40sector/documents/publication/wcms_912921.pdf

Kuriloff, P.C. (2013). Must we take student teaching for better or worse? What student teachers learn from their internships in urban schools. *Teacher Education and Practice*, 26(3), 393-415. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1044922

Ligadu, C. P. (2012). The impact of the professional learning and psychological mentoring support for teacher trainees. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(3), 350-363. https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/afc1/0dbc27cdb6ab23979b50f016aa883e8a0588.pdf

Mabunda, P. L & McKay, V. (2024). Navigating the first years: Newly qualified teachers' experiences with professional learning communities. *Systemic Practice and Action Research,* https://doi.org/10.1007/s11213-024-09707-w

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2019a). *Education at a glance 2019: OECD indicators*. Paris: OECD Publishing: Paris. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2019/09/education-at-a-glance-2019_892e172e.html

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2019b*). TALIS 2018 results (Volume I): Teachers and school leaders as lifelong learners*. https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/talis-2018-results-volume-i_1d0bc92a-en

Schenk, L., Sentse, M., Lenkens, M., Nagelhout, G. E., Engbersen, G. & Severiens, S. (2020). An examination of the role of mentees' social skills and relationship quality in a school-based mentoring program. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 65(1-2), 149-159. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12397

Singh, P. & Mahomed, C. C. (2013). The value of mentoring to develop student teachers' work-integrated learning skills. *The International Business & Economics Research Journal* (Online), 12(11), 1373. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/268107773.pdf

UNESCO. International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030. (2024). *Global report on teachers: Addressing teacher shortages and transforming the profession.* Paris: UNESCO. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000388832

16 Transforming the training of teachers with the extended student teacher internship programmes

Zanele Twala, *Tutuwa Community Foundation*
Tarryn de Kock, *JET Education Services*

The launching of TICZA

The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA), launched in 2021, is a collaborative impact (CI) initiative designed to support mutually reinforcing activities across discrete stakeholders with varying interests in extended student teacher internships (ESTIs) (Basco-Carrera et al, 2021; Parkhurst & Preskill, 2014). ESTIs deliver wraparound support and mentorship during the work-integrated learning component of initial teacher education (ITE) programmes, through partnerships between non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and higher education institutions (HEIs). TICZA aims to support the institutionalisation of ESTIs with a specific focus on effective wraparound support that consolidates the work experience and professional identity of novice teachers, thus strengthening retention down the line (TICZA, 2022).

An initial convening committee, composed of JET, the Bertha Centre and Trialogue, provided the original stimulus for the formation of a collaborative group focused on the potential of ESTIs as a lever for improving student teachers' professional learning and initial induction to working in schools. Donor funding was sought through approaching organisations aligned to the overarching aim of strengthening the quality of teachers, teaching and learning in South Africa's schools. The donors approached included The Standard Bank Tutuwa Community Foundation, the Zenex Foundation and the Maitri Trust. This reflection develops from the perspective of the Standard Bank Tutuwa Community Foundation as one of the funding partners in the TICZA ecosystem, based on insights from Tutuwa CEO, Zanele Twala.

A donor perspective

A CI approach draws together stakeholders across the breadth of vested interests related to a particular problem or innovation (Basco-Carrera et al., 2021; Muñoz -Erickson et al., 2009). Commonly used in environmental and land management, CI represents a shift in thinking and practice towards iterative, interactive approaches to problem-solving that draw on expert, experiential and stakeholder knowledge (Basco-Carrera et al., 2021; Edlmann & Grobbelaar, 2021). CI incorporates a wider network of actors

working collaboratively rather than in silos, such that mutual learning occurs and dynamic solutions can be harnessed that address multi-layered, multi-scalar issues (Wolff et al., 2017). TICZA aims to respond to the intersecting challenges of improving student teachers' experiential knowledge base, strengthening teacher retention and supporting viable alternative pathways into the teaching profession based on current efforts to diversify the locus of teacher preparation from universities to more practice-based learning opportunities (Trialogue, 2022).

The Standard Bank Tutuwa Community Foundation aims to support effective models of initial teacher education programmes to improve system performance, as indicated by improved learning outcomes at school level. In reflecting on TICZA from a donor perspective, Twala emphasised that the programme is structured as an internship, open not only to student teachers studying for the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree but also to qualified graduates entering the teaching profession through studying for the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). The programme operates in all nine provinces in collaboration with HEIs and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), spanning five years and offering student teachers the opportunity to earn while gaining invaluable experience, professional support and networks. Twala argued that particularly for student teachers seeking further development, 'The selection criteria are rigorous and complement existing routes to teaching rather than replacing them.' This indicates a focus on enhancing capabilities beyond traditional degree programmes through workplace training, mentoring, coaching and support, while also allaying student teachers' concerns about the effectiveness and quality of taking an alternative learning pathway.

TICZA aims to gather evidence on the cost-effectiveness and effectiveness of ESTI programmes (Shiohira et al., 2022). Twala noted that for her organisation, success strongly aligns to the overall aims of the TICZA theory of change (TICZA, 2022), which means delivering proof of a scalable and replicable teacher internship model and supporting the institutionalisation of the model within (ITE) programmes in HEIs throughout the country while addressing systemic barriers to success and promoting the work of teacher internships. Moreover, Twala indicated the hope that the evidence generated will reflect that ESTI programmes show higher retention rates among teachers. Evidence of this would provide impetus for stakeholder partners to advocate for government recognition and funding for these programmes to support students who choose this path to teaching. The programme aims to enhance the capabilities of trainee teachers within the ambit of established standards as HEIs have specific eligibility criteria aligned with the programme's objectives.

Challenges are still to be expected in the alignment of stakeholder expectations and agendas, highlighting the importance of regular meetings and workshops to foster understanding and critical agreement. Twala stressed the need for adaptive processes in multi-stakeholder projects and the value of regular evaluations and workshops to address issues and maintain alignment, two factors which have been critical to the development of robust partner relationships over the TICZA lifespan. The Tutuwa Foundation's strategic principles also emphasise collaboration and networking in

supporting evidence-based approaches, leveraging public finance and supporting the crowding-in and sustainability of programmes. These principles align with Edlmann and Grobbelaar's (2021) framework of stakeholder engagement practices, which provides a description of stakeholder engagement activities that support strengthened collaborative work. One of these activities, *strategic representation*, speaks specifically to the involvement and representation of diverse partners, including donors, for cultivating transparency and trust across stakeholders to support deeper collaboration and willingness to engage over time (Edlmann & Grobbelaar, 2021). Strategic representation can also include NGO partners and engagement with the perspectives of student teachers, teacher educators and mentor teachers working at the coalface of the programme.

Wolff et al. (2017) formed some of the key principles of the original collaborative impact approach, yet have critiqued its application for a lack of a strong equity focus and the involvement of philanthropic partners in steering specific outcomes. The TICZA experience suggests this is not always the case. Indeed, as Twala argued, the success of implementing a CI strategy or approach for transforming education is that it offers the philanthropy sector the knowledge that collaboration is a powerful force for good. Given the complexity of a CI approach to solving educational problems, it is critically important to partner with other organisations to leverage specialist skills, share learnings, co-invest and build on the impact for the education ecosystem. TICZA considers this partnership and shared advocacy to be an integral aspect of the network's activities, which Wolff et al. (2017) argue is one of the key ways to ensure sustainability, buy-in and long-term penetration.

Furthermore, the shift in the nature of stakeholder collaboration also suggests that there is a need to rethink the role of philanthropy. In considering the massive financing shortfall for development, there is an urgent need for philanthropy to evolve from pure grant-making to strategically using impact investing funding models to de-risk investments, support pilot programmes and mobilise risk capital to deliver long-term sustainable impact. This is a critical area of support that the development and philanthropy sector can offer to public institutions and for strengthening the application of public policy. Moreover, collaborative impact can allow for deeper engagement with the experiences of student teachers within a specific intervention ecosystem, enabling more effective understanding of potential drivers of improved teacher quality, induction and retention among novice teachers. This offers potentially greater benefit than developing advocacy and investment strategies based on isolated sources of research and information (Edlmann & Grobbelaar, 2021).

Because the Foundation's strategic principles underscore the importance of supporting programmes founded on evidence-based approaches, TICZA's research and evaluation activities are critical to providing evidence that can guide future work in this area. However, this research strategy more broadly aims for a holistic understanding of the programme functioning, drivers of success and constraining factors, and the equity considerations embedded in costing exercises. Twala expressed support for the value of generating evidence on programme effectiveness, particularly for achieving government recognition and funding. Additionally, this evidence would enable dialogue

on and broader participation in identifying competency standards and provide a case for sustainable funding for implementing organisations and HEIs. The potential implications of a successful, institutionalised ESTI programme are significant and include strengthened student teacher practice and professional induction and better retention of novice teachers during the early stage of their teaching career, which could contribute to mitigating overall teacher attrition in South Africa (Sayed & De Kock, 2019; van der Berg & Gustafsson, 2022).

The Tutuwa Foundation recognises the importance of strong business continuity planning to mitigate disruptions in programme implementation. This is particularly due to the Foundation's active involvement in impactful projects, as Twala emphasised the need for intense participation in programmes with high stakes and potential significant impact. TICZA thus offers a unique opportunity for philanthropic partners to participate in a shared learning process that incorporates the question of impact into the wider aim of enhancing teacher capabilities through supportive, embedded learning experiences in South Africa's schools.

References

Basco-Carrera, L., Yangyue, Y. & Rini, D. S. (2021). Stakeholder partnerships: Collaborative modeling as a mechanism for sustainable development. In: Leal Filho, W., Marisa Azul, A., Brandli, L., Lange Salvia, A., & Wall, T. (Eds.). (2021). *Partnerships for the Goals*. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-3-319-95963-4_34

Edlmann, F. R. P. & Grobbelaar, S. (2021). A framework of engagement practices for stakeholders collaborating around complex social challenges. *Sustainability*, 13(19), 10828. https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/13/19/10828

Muñoz-Erickson, T. A., Aguilar-González, B., Loeser, M. R. R. et al. (2010). A framework to evaluate ecological and social outcomes of collaborative management: Lessons from implementation with a northern Arizona collaborative group. *Environmental Management,* 45, 132-144 (2010). https://doi.org/10.1007/s00267-009-9400-y

Parkhurst, M. & Preskill, H. (2014). Learning in action: Evaluating collective impact. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 12(4), A17-A19. https://doi.org/10.48558/BCC5-4275

Sayed, Y. & de Kock, T. (2019). *Teacher career pathways in South Africa: Insights from the Western Cape.* Paris: UNESCO-IIEP. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000370514

Shiohira, K., Lefko-Everett, K., Molokwane, P., Mabelle, T., Tracey-Temba, L. & McDonald, Z. (2022). *Training better teachers, An implementation brief for improving practice-based initial teacher education*. Johannesburg: JET Education Services. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/ticza-training-better-teachers.pdf

TICZA.(2022). TICZA theory of change. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/ticza-toc.pdf/download

Trialogue. (2022). *A model of collective impact: The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA)*. https://trialogue.co.za/a-model-of-collective-impact-the-teacher-internship-collaboration-south-africa-ticza/

van der Berg, S. & Gustafsson, M. (2022). *How many teachers will retire by 2030?* Research on Socio-Economic Policy (RESEP) Teacher Demographics Policy Dialogue, 1 December 2022. https://resep.sun.ac.za/new-research-on-teacher-demographics-1-dec-2022/sample-post/

Wolff, T., Minkler, M., Wolfe, S.M., Berkowitz, B., Bowen, L., Butterfoss, F. D., Christens, B. D., Francisco, V. T., Himmelman, A. T. & Lee, K. S. (2017). Collaborating for equity and justice: moving beyond collective impact. *The Non-Profit Quarterly,* Winter 2016, 42-53. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314089395

17 What does sustainability of extended student teacher internships mean?

Nick Rockey, *Trialogue*

Introduction

To be considered sustainable, extended student teacher internship (ESTIs) must meet three broad criteria:

- Stakeholder value: Key stakeholders - including schools, learner teachers, educational institutions and other invested groups - must all benefit through their participation in ESTIs. Any party involved in the implementation that does not extract value through their participation will in time inevitably withdraw support.

- Sustainable funding: A sustainable funding model is necessary, where the costs of learning and placement are funded from within the learner teacher ecosystem. This excludes funding sources that are exceptional, external, not directly invested in the system or subject to ongoing review.

- Formalisation: ESTIs need to be formalised and embedded within the learner teacher ecosystem. Practices should become part of day-to-day routines, creating interdependence between learner teachers, schools and educational institutions. This includes routine processes for mentoring, classroom instruction, study schedules and competency recognition (see TICZA, 2024).

Meeting these sustainability requirements is simpler at a micro level, covering an individual school or a small cluster of schools. High-profile private schools, for example, have programmes designed to cultivate their own future teaching needs which are relatively easy to fund through the schools' finances. Programmes covering small clusters of schools have successfully accessed Funza Lushaka bursaries to cover academic costs while securing relatively reliable funding flows to support other programme elements (Shiohira et al., 2022*)*.

Implementing partners running programmes at this micro level have met the sustainability criteria to varying degrees. However, despite successful outcomes reported, these programmes reach relatively few individuals and can be costly to implement (Shiohira et al., 2022). For ESTIs to impact the broader education system, the model needs significant scaling to include under-resourced schools, where the need is greatest, in an affordable manner. At a macro or systemic level, where ESTIs operate as a viable mainstream pathway for initial teacher education, the sustainability model changes completely.

This article views the sustainability of ESTIs at a systemic level, using the three outlined criteria and considering the transitional process being run by TICZA as a phase leading to more formal institutionalisation.

Stakeholder value

At a systemic level, stakeholders in ESTIs include relevant national and provincial government departments, tertiary education institutions and various other role-players. The value proposition for each stakeholder differs according to the stakeholder's mandate and how well the ESTI model supports the mandate in an accessible and implementable manner. Significant effort and time are required to engage in the process of systemising ESTIs, and barriers of any change management process will apply. To ensure support during the transition, the end value must be compelling. Affordability and quality of outcomes are likely the most fundamental and common value drivers for all stakeholders.

The formation of and role fulfilled by TICZA is critical to ensuring the active participation of stakeholders during the transitional phase (see Trialogue, 2023). The transition process has limited time and needs to reach a point where institutionalisation has gathered enough momentum to continue independently once TICZA is disbanded. During this period, the value proposition must be tested and confirmed, and ongoing support for the change process must be maintained, overcoming the inertia that inevitably arises when time and effort beyond day-to-day commitments are required.

The ultimate value that ESTIs bring to each stakeholder was examined during an outcomes mapping process in 2021 which outlined the abilities and ambitions of different stakeholders (Shiohira et al., 2022*)*, not to be repeated here. However, revisiting the value proposition for implementing partners at this point is worthwhile, given the critical role these organisations play during the transitional phase. ESTI implementers, like most non-profit oraganisations, were formed to make a positive impact on teacher development. The extent of their impact has been confined by resource availability and programme size, but it is safe to assume that most implementers aim to achieve the greatest impact possible. Therefore, implementers would, in principle, aspire to be part of a process that leads to the systemisation of ESTIs as a means of improving educational outcomes in South Africa (see Mlachila & Moeletsi 2019; Spaull 2023).

However, achieving systemisation of ESTIs poses a sustainability risk for implementer organisations if the scaled ESTI model no longer accommodates their individual solutions. Every organisation has self-preservation interests. Examining sustainability through a value proposition lens for implementers ensures they have a future role in the provision of ESTIs while accommodating their interests during this transition period.

Sustainable funding

A sustainable funding model requires securing funds from within the teacher development system, whether through government or institutional sources. During the transition phase, the economic and value case for ESTIs needs to be determined. The scaling and systemisation of ESTIs depend on the model's economic viability. There is a *prima facie* case for ESTIs based on the logic that students from distance

learning facilities, when placed within a supportive schooling environment, will be more committed to their studies (resulting in higher throughput rates), will learn the art and joy of teaching (resulting in better and more committed teachers), and are likely to stay in the profession longer after graduation (Shiohira et al., 2022*)*. However, to date, there is no evidence to show whether pass or retention rates of ESTI programmes are significantly different, so there is no real sense of the immediate economic return.

As with many micro-programmes, costs are relatively high compared to those incurred when an intervention is systemised or implemented at scale. Many current programmes are deliberately positioned at the high-quality end of the spectrum, including formalised and extensive mentorship, stipends, accommodation and up to four years of support (Shiohira et al., 2022*)*. At scale, this level of support is unlikely to be affordable if costs are compared to existing programmes. Assuming that the benefits of ESTIs stemming from high-end solutions can be demonstrated, it is necessary to test the extent to which these benefits can be sustained with reduced duration or levels of support. This sensitivity analysis is critical to positioning an ESTI programme for scale.

A cost-effectiveness analysis is being initiated to start uncovering evidence on the immediate economic costs and how these compare with established teacher development processes. Additional, deeper analysis will then be required to understand the comparative costs, taking into account the quality, retention and progression of teachers within the system who come through the ESTI pathway, other distance education programmes, and in-person higher education institutions.

Formalisation

Formalising systems and processes is essential for ensuring sustained and collective outcomes. While existing implementing partners do share practice examples and system collateral to some extent, most have developed their internal processes to suit their individual circumstances, focusing on self-sustainability rather than collective sustainability.

Systemising ESTIs to ensure delivery at scale requires developing systems and processes at a sector level rather than an organisational level, which are then accepted and adopted by all relevant parties. This approach allows for multi-party participation on a consistent basis, leading to efficiencies and improved measurability. TICZA has begun standardising certain ESTI processes, setting up working groups and running communities of practice (see TICZA, n.d.). However, considerable time and effort are required for such standardisation. It is important to consider what is realistically achievable and necessary for the transitional phase when testing the viability of the ESTI model versus what is ultimately needed once ESTIs are formally institutionalised.

For example, developing a competency framework is an essential long-term measure. While it certainly holds value in measuring teacher development during the transition phase, completing and applying this framework will likely require a longer timeline. On the other hand, formalising monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes to track throughput rates of learner teachers is a more immediate need and can be relatively easily achieved.

Conclusion

The collective impact process coordinated by TICZA is built on an ESTI model that has demonstrated some degree of sustainability at a micro level (see Kania & Kramer, 2011; Trialogue, 2023). While this model, applied by various implementing organisations, shares the same fundamental design, it is not uniform. There are varying levels of system formalisation, reliance on third-party funders and monitoring practices. While there will always be room for innovation and tailored approaches, systemic sustainability requires greater collaboration.

The transitional process, spearheaded by TICZA as the collective impact 'backbone organisation' (Kania & Kramer, 2011), has secured funding for a limited period. This process has successfully engaged key stakeholders, based on the expectation that the ESTI model offers a compelling value proposition. Some progress has been made in formalising systems and processes, but much of the work in finalising collective processes and ensuring broad application will need to be completed once the decision to scale is formally made. The funding model, which is critical to any scaled or system-wide solution, remains uncertain. To solidify formalisation, it is essential to fully examine the viability of scaling the ESTI model as well as the conditions and characteristics necessary for its success. This work is necessary to reaffirm the value proposition assumed thus far. It is also crucial to provide a compelling case that will enable the necessary policy shifts and mobilise institutional funds required to move this process forward.

References

Kania, J. & Kramer, M. (2011). Collective impact. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 9(1), 36-41. https://doi.org/10.48558/5900-KN19

Mlachila, M. & Moeletsi, T. (2019). *Struggling to make the grade: A review of the causes and consequences of the weak outcomes of South Africa's education system.* IMF Working Paper 19/47. https://www.imf.org/-/media/Files/Publications/WP/2019/WPIEA2019047.ashx

Shiohira, K., Lefko-Everett, K., Molokwane, P., Mabelle, T., Tracey-Temba, L. & McDonald, Z. (2022). *Training better teachers, An implementation brief for improving practice-based initial teacher education*. Johannesburg: JET Education Services. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/ticza-training-better-teachers.pdf

Spaull, N. (2023). *Background report for the 2030 Reading Panel.* Cape Town: Rreading Panel. https://www.readingpanel.co.za/_files/ugd/b385b7_7476724ee8a74ba8be8320a3be46b5cc.pdf

TICZA. (n.d.). The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA). https://www.jet.org.za/clearinghouse/projects/teacher-internship-collaboration-south-africa-ticza/about

TICZA. (2024). Sustainability and scale in the context of extended-teacher internships (ESTIs): Perspectives of funders and implementers. *TICZA Community of Practice (CoP) Series, 13*. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/ticza-cop13-meeting-summary-report-docx-1-1.pdf/download

Trialogue. (2023). *Case study: TICZA: A collective impact strategy for transforming education.* https://trialogueknowledgehub.co.za/case-study-ticza-a-collective-impact-strategy-for-transforming-education/

PART 4

Innovation in extended student teacher internships

18 Mixed reality simulation and pre-service teacher preparation: a game changer?

Carisma Nel, *North-West University*
Hassiena Marriott, *Global Teachers Institute*

> Mam, I don't get it! I was top of my class in my English literacy modules. I know exactly what to teach – phonemic awareness, etc. But exactly how to do this has caught me off-guard. I realised I couldn't explain how to blend and segment sounds; that I needed to model or do something. We didn't get any opportunities to practice this in our modules. I give worksheets and hope for the best. I don't know what to do when the children don't get it. I feel unprepared and totally stressed out.

Introduction

This beginner teacher's story is not unique. According to Moats (2020), many teachers are unprepared to teach reading. Similar sentiments are being expressed in the South African context. For instance, Spaull (2022, 4) states that, 'It is now clear that, on the whole, faculties of education are not preparing incoming teachers to teach reading in the home language'. Similarly, Taylor and Mawoyo (2022, 164) state that,

> ...with few exceptions, South African education faculties only pay lip service to policy set by government regarding the initial education of primary school teachers, ... they neglect the poor language and mathematics skills of their students, and give scant attention to research on reading pedagogy.

Mather and Land (2014) and Nel (2022) also mention that there are shortcomings in teachers' preparation to teach reading. Research indicates that lack of teacher preparedness has been linked to teacher attrition as well as low levels of learner achievement (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). One of the most important factors affecting teacher quality and the quality of teaching is the effectiveness of teacher preparation (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2006). Benedict et al. (2016, 2) assert that pre-service teachers increase their chances of success when their teaching includes 'high-quality opportunities to practice, coupled with support and feedback'. Carrington et al. (2011, 353) suggest that solely depending on school-based placements may not sufficiently prepare pre-service teachers.

Integrating effective practice opportunities in pre-service teacher preparation is not easy within overcrowded curricula (Gravett, 2020), micro-teaching is often non-existent or unrealistic, and it is rarely possible for pre-service teachers to repeatedly practise until competency has been achieved (Nel & Marais, forthcoming). Providing frequent and deliberate practice opportunities can augment the readiness of pre-service teachers for their teaching roles (Grossman et al., 2009). We are of the opinion that bridging or narrowing the gap between the actual and desired levels of pre-service teacher instruction, specifically reading instruction, will not be achieved by practice as usual; game changers involving the integration of deliberate and equitable practice-based teaching and learning opportunities via the use of mixed reality simulations (MRS) may be needed.

Mixed reality simulation in the spotlight

Ade-Ojo et al. (2022, 862) define simulation 'as an approach to teaching that utilizes the process of creating a replica of real-life situations in order to develop students' response to such a situation if and when confronted with it in their actual practice'. MRS can provide pre-service teachers with opportunities to practise core reading practices (e.g., questioning, explicit teaching of vocabulary, eliciting background knowledge, oral reading fluency assessment, explicit teaching of segmenting and blending sounds, etc.) in an environment where the complexity of teaching situations can be adapted to meet pre-service teachers' specific teaching needs (Brownell et al., 2019).

The mixed reality simulated classroom environment depends on three interconnected components (see Figure 1). Firstly, there is a human interactor, or simulation specialist, situated in a 'SimStation' who can observe the pre-service teachers located in the simulation classroom or a remote location. This direct observation allows for synchronous interactions between the simulation specialist and the pre-service teacher (Dieker et al., 2016). The simulation specialist is responsible for ensuring that the avatars speak, interact, behave or misbehave like real children (Dieker et al., 2014; Nel et al., 2020). A learner avatar might easily understand newly taught material or struggle to segment and blend phonemes in words. Secondly, the pre-service teacher can view the avatars either through a large screen in the simulation classroom or on their personal device (i.e., computer or cell phone) via Zoom. Lastly, the teacher educator can be present in the classroom (for programmes offered face-to-face) or online (for both contact and distance programmes), and is able to monitor the pre-service teacher and his/her/their interaction with the avatars. The online teaching option enables the teacher educator(s), mentor teacher(s) and/or peers (fishbowl modality) to join and observe the pre-service teachers at the same time. This is something which is very rarely possible within the South African context.
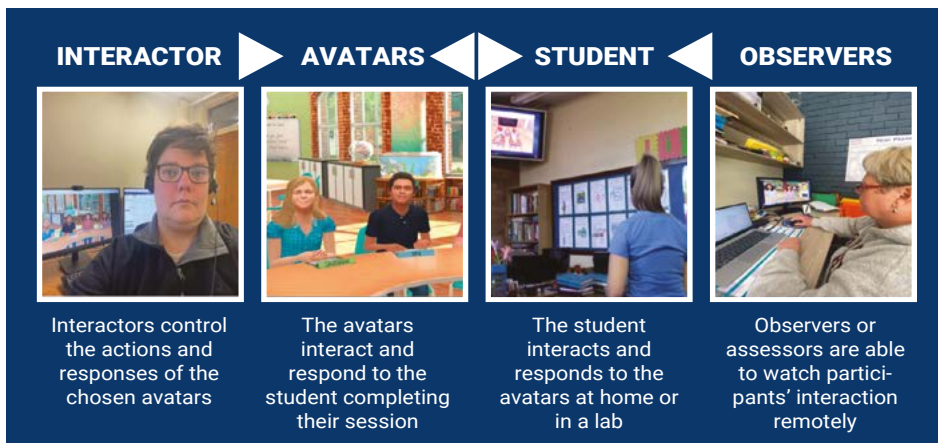
INTERACTOR	AVATARS	STUDENT	OBSERVERS
Interactors control the actions and responses of the chosen avatars	The avatars interact and respond to the student completing their session	The student interacts and responds to the avatars at home or in a lab	Observers or assessors are able to watch participants' interaction remotely

Figure 1: Mixed reality simulation components at the North-West University

The pandemic highlighted the inequality and variability in the practice-based teaching and learning opportunities afforded to pre-service teachers, especially for students studying via distance learning mode (Nel & Marais, forthcoming). This is exactly what the use of MRS could enable, providing pre-service teachers with opportunities to rehearse core teaching practices in a controlled environment; allowing them to falter with no harm to real learners and themselves as they receive coaching and feedback without being embarrassed in front of the learners; and allowing them to experiment, regroup and reflect, in interaction with other pre-service teachers who could be observing and/or guided by a teacher educator or mentor teacher. Cohen et al. (2020, 209) state that:

> MRS afford both a unique practice space and standardized assessment platform that allow teacher educators to observe candidates interacting with 'students' in ways that are otherwise difficult to replicate in a university classroom [*and we would add during the teaching practicum*], while facilitating the provision of feedback, with opportunities for 'do-overs'.

The MRS environment can also optimise teacher educator or mentor teacher guidance. The teacher educator observing the pre-service teachers in interaction with the avatars can stop the lesson at any time to coach and provide actionable feedback that the pre-service teachers can implement immediately. Peers could be included as observers, thereby creating a social learning environment that enables discussion and problem-solving with peers.

Mixed reality simulation environments: benefits and challenges

Participating in mixed reality simulations like Teachlive[8] or Mursion[9] offers numerous benefits for pre-service teachers. These benefits span across pedagogical, professional, personal and collaborative development, helping to prepare pre-service teachers for the complexities of real-world teaching (Cohen et al., 2020; Dalinger, 2020; Dieker et al., 2014; 2016). Here are some of the key benefits:

Pedagogical benefits

1. Realistic practice environment: These simulations provide a safe, controlled environment where pre-service teachers can practice classroom management, instructional strategies and learner interactions without the fear of real-world consequences.

2. Immediate feedback: Participants can receive instant feedback from their teacher educators, mentor teachers or their peers, allowing them to quickly identify and correct mistakes.

3. Scenario variety: Simulations can present a wide range of classroom scenarios, including classroom management, pedagogies of enactment, teaching learners from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, one-on-one sessions with a parent avatar, offering an equitable preparation experience for contact as well as distance students.

4. Skill development: Pre-service teachers can focus on developing specific skills such as handling disruptive behaviour, differentiating instruction or implementing specific reading literacy practices such as the explicit instruction of vocabulary.

Professional benefits

1. Confidence building: Repeated practice in a simulated environment helps pre-service teachers build confidence in their teaching abilities and decision-making skills.

2. Enhanced reflective practice: The opportunity to review their performance, via the recorded simulation sessions, and receive constructive feedback encourages reflective practice, which is crucial for professional growth.

3. Stress reduction: By practising in a safe environment, pre-service teachers can reduce the anxiety associated with real classroom experiences, making the transition to actual teaching smoother.

4. Competency development: Simulations allow teachers to demonstrate and develop competencies in a controlled setting, which can be documented and used to showcase their readiness for school-based teaching practicum as well as employment.

---

8   https://sites.google.com/view/teachlive/home
9   https://www.mursion.com/

Personal benefits

1. Increased engagement: The interactive nature of mixed reality simulations can be more engaging and motivating compared to traditional teacher training methods (e.g., micro-teaching).

2. Adaptability and problem-solving: Regular exposure to varied scenarios facilitates adaptive expertise and enhances pre-service teachers' problem-solving skills, making them more resilient in real classrooms.

3. Empathy and understanding: Engaging with virtual learners from diverse backgrounds helps pre-service teachers develop greater empathy and cultural and linguistic competence, which are essential for effective teaching in diverse classrooms.

Collaborative benefits

1. Peer learning: Simulations can be used in group settings where pre-service teachers can observe their peers, engage in discussions and learn collaboratively.

Possible challenges

Challenges may include connectivity issues and ensuring that MRS is fully integrated into a module and not experienced as an add-on. Scenario development can be time-consuming and may increase teacher educator workload. The cost of Mursion licensing and usage fees can be an obstacle and may require funder involvement. Nonetheless, mixed reality simulations like Teachlive and Mursion offer a comprehensive platform for pre-service teachers to develop their teaching skills in an immersive, supportive and effective manner, better preparing them for the demands of real-world teaching.

Mixed reality simulation and extended student teacher internships

According to Deacon (2016), there are significant differences within the South African context in the amount and quality of practice provided to pre-service teachers during their initial teacher education. Effective practice-based learning opportunities are scarce and often limited to inauthentic role playing and scenarios that do not reflect the complexities and challenges of teaching reading in a classroom environment (Nel & Marais, forthcoming). MRS is an 'innovative technology that merges human knowledge with artificial technology' (Driver & Zimmer, 2022, 49), and which may be a game changer that can support the equitable preparation of pre-service teachers within the diverse South African educational context. Utilising mixed reality platforms like Mursion within an extended teacher practicum partnership between higher education institutions (HEIs) and non-governmental organisations (NGO) may significantly enhance the preparedness and professional development of pre-service teachers. Well-structured collaborative partnerships may address the following:

Customisable teaching practice modules

- NGOs can provide insights into specific challenges faced in the communities they serve. HEIs can use this information to develop customised teaching practice modules with a MRS component that reflect these real-classroom issues.

- NGOs and HEIs can co-create scenarios that align with both the educational goals of the HEIs and the school community needs identified by the NGOs.

- Emergency-proof scenarios can be created where pre-service teachers can respond to various crises such as natural disasters or safety threats and still complete their practice-based teaching opportunities.

Joint assessment and feedback

- Teacher educators and experts from NGOs or trained mentor teachers can jointly formatively assess the performance of pre-service teachers in simulations.

- An added benefit is that teachers who have been teaching for years can improve their own teaching as they too have to role model these techniques in their classes.

- This collaborative approach ensures that feedback is comprehensive, combining academic rigour with practical, in-the-classroom insights. Regularly updating the simulation scenarios based on the feedback from both the HEIs and NGOs ensures that the practice-based opportunities remain relevant and effective.

Data collection and analysis

- The data collected from simulations can be used for research on teaching methods and assessing how simulation training impacts teaching practice in real-world settings.

Training and support

- A whole-school approach to training and support can be established (i.e., mentor teachers can be trained to communicate and model 'evidence-based' teaching practices in the mixed reality simulator, etc.).

Conclusion

Mixed reality simulation can be viewed as an 'approximation of practice' (Grossman et al., 2009) and can be seen as a supplement to the school-based teaching practicum, addressing the lack of equitable practice-based teaching opportunities for all pre-service teachers. Deliberate practice-based opportunities within an MRS environment that are coherent, sequenced and scaffolded can help pre-service teachers autonomise their knowledge and reading instructional skills prior to entering complex classroom settings. Pre-service teachers can learn to surf without waves. They can learn to paddle and find their balance on the surfboard while receiving support and feedback from teacher educators, mentor teachers and peers before they take on the swelling surf in the classroom with its strong rip currents.

References

Ade-Ojo, G. O., Markowski, M., Essex, M. R., Stiell, M. & Jameson, J. (2022). A systematic scoping review and textual narrative synthesis of physical and mixed-reality simulation in pre-service teacher training. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning,* 38(3), 861-874. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcal.12653

Benedict, A., Holdheide, L., Brownell, M. & Marshall Foley, A. (2016*). Learning to teach: Practice-based preparation in teacher education.* Special Issues Brief*.* Centre on Great Teachers and Leaders. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED570144.pdf

Brownell, M. T., Benedict, A. E., Leko, M. M., Peyton, D., Pua, D. & Richards-Tutor, C. (2019). A continuum of pedagogies for preparing teachers to use high-leverage practices. *Remedial and Special Education*, 40(6), 338-355. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741932518824990

Carrington, L., Kervin, L. & Ferry, B. (2011). Enhancing the development of pre-service teacher professional identity via an online classroom simulation. *Journal of Technology Education*, 19(3), 351-368. https://www.learntechlib.org/primary/p/36181/

Carver-Thomas, D. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). *Teacher turnover: Why it matters and what we can do about it*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Teacher_Turnover_REPORT.pdf

Cohen, J., Wong, V., Krishnamachari, A. & Berlin, R. (2020). Teacher coaching in a simulated environment. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 42(2), 208-231. https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373720906217

Dalinger, T., Thomas, K. B., Stansberry, S. & Xiu, Y. (2020). A mixed reality simulation offers strategic practice for pre-service teachers. *Computers and Education*, 144, 103696. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2019.103696

Deacon, R. (2016). *The Initial Teacher Education Research Project: Final report*. Johannesburg: JET Education Services. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/deacon-iterp-final-composite-report.pdf

Dieker, L. A., Kennedy, M. J., Smith, S., Vasquez, E., Rock, M. & Thomas, C. N. (2014). *Use of technology in the preparation of pre-service teachers*. Document No. IC-11. Collaboration for Effective Educator, Development, Accountability, and Reform Center. http://ceedar.education.ufl.edu/tools/innovation-configurations/

Dieker, L. A., Lignugaris-Kraft, B., Hynes, M. & Hughes, C. (2016). Mixed-reality environments in teacher education: Development and future applications. In: Ludlow, B. L. & Collins, B. C. (Eds.), *Online in Real Time: Using Web 2.0 for Distance Education in Rural Special Education* (pp. 116-125). American Council on Rural Special Education.

Driver, M. K. & Zimmer, K. (2022). A guide to integrating mixed-reality simulation in initial and advanced special education programs. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(1), 48-57. https://doi.org/10.33043/JOSEP.2.1.48-57

Gravett, S. (2020, 4 May). *Initial teacher education must be prioritised.* https://news.uj.ac.za/news/initial-teacher-education-must-be-prioritised-says-prof-sarah-gravett-2/

Grossman, P., Hammerness, K. & McDonald, M. (2009). Redefining teaching, re-imagining teacher education. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice***,** 15(2), 273-289. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540600902875340

Mather, N. & Land, S. (2014). Exploring educators' understanding of developing learners' reading skills and their readiness to implement CAPS. *Journal for Language Teaching*, 48(2), 199-215. https://journals.co.za/doi/epdf/10.4314/jlt.v48i2.9

Moats, L.C. (2020). *Teaching reading is rocket science, 2020: What expert teachers of reading should know and be able to do*. American Federation of Teachers. https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/moats.pdf

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. (2006). *What makes a teacher effective?* https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED495408.pdf

Nel, C. (2022). *Bridging the reading instruction theory-practice divide through a mixed reality teaching environment.* SALALS conference, Potchefstroom, South Africa, June 2022.

Nel. C. & Marais, L. M. (forthcoming). Using mixed reality simulation and Perusall during the teaching practicum. In: Pattison-Meek, J. & Phillips, C. (Eds.), *Pedagogies of Practicum: Post-Pandemic Reflections on Innovation in Practice Teaching*. Peter Lang.

Nel, C., Marais, E. & Dieker, L. (2020). TeachLivE™: Learning from practice in a mixed-reality teaching environment. In: De Beer, J., Petersen, N. & van Vuuren, H. J. (Eds.), *Becoming a teacher: Research on the work-integrated learning of pre-service teachers.* NWU Self-Directed Learning Series Volume 4, pp. 43–64. AOSIS. https://doi.org/10.4102/aosis.2020.BK215.02

Spaull. N. (2022). *2022 Background report for the 2030 Reading Panel*. Cape Town: Reading Panel. https://www.readingpanel.co.za/_files/ugd/65ee04_e0737da3d6c04c999fc1e6961f291098.pdf

Taylor, N. & Mawoyo, M. (2022). Professionalising teaching: The case of language and literacy. In: Spaull N. & Pretorius, E. (Eds.), *Early Grade Reading in South Africa*, pp. 164-178, Oxford University Press. https://www.calameo.com/oxford-university-press-south-africa/read/00671075301e9fca7596a

19 Preparing student teachers to learn from classroom observations: Teacher Choices in Action

Lee Rusznyak, School of Education, *University of the Witwatersrand and the UNESCO Chair in Teacher Education for Development and Diversity*

The challenges of learning from classroom observations

Student-teachers are not new to the classroom environment. They have spent many years watching teachers during their own schooling. It is often assumed that because of their time in the classroom and schooling experiences, student teachers should be able to observe and interpret teachers at work from the start of their teacher preparation. However, recent research on how South African student teachers analyse the lessons they observe challenges this assumption (see Langsford & Rusznyak, 2024).

At first, student teachers tend to:

- Focus on what learners are doing and describe the lessons as a series of discrete classroom activities;

- Notice the classroom routines teachers use such as handing out resources and routines for participating in discussions/questions;

- Notice the ways teachers interact with learners, particularly teachers' use of praise and encouragement;

- Notice the extent to which learners enjoy and participate in the lesson.

What is significant here is that the research suggests that student teachers pay little attention to how teachers work with knowledge to create a pathway of learning. They pay little attention to how teachers introduce concepts, unpack them, link them to real-world examples, and design worthwhile tasks that require learners to grapple with new ideas or practise new skills. Until they focus on these aspects of classroom practice, student teachers struggle to see coherence in the lessons they observe.

An important and often neglected part of learning to teach involves noticing aspects of classroom practice to which student teachers were previously oblivious (Jacobs et al., 2010). The legislation governing teacher education in South Africa, the *Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* (DHET, 2015, 10), therefore requires that practical learning should include both *learning from practice* (that is, analysing

lessons across a variety of contexts in order to theorise practice) and *learning in practice* (teaching in authentic and simulated classroom environments).

To make the most of their time in school-based placements, student teachers need a deeper understanding of why teachers do what they do. This requires opportunities that help student teachers see how their coursework can help them make sense of the lessons they observe.

A study by Borello (2019) on the mentorship of student teachers in a South African leadership programme showed how conversations between student teachers and three experienced teachers seldom moved beyond providing encouragement and general classroom tips. This is not a uniquely South African concern. Berry et al. (2008, 1271) point out that internationally, teachers tend to 'focus more on "doing teaching" rather than explicating associated pedagogical reasoning' to the student teachers they mentor. Without meaningful conversations with mentor teachers about the lessons they have observed or taught, student teachers do not necessarily learn why some decisions may be appropriate in some contexts but not in others.

Teacher Choices in Action: opportunities for a TICZA partnership

An opportunity to develop a nationally available module that prepares student teachers for classroom practice presented itself during the COVID-19 pandemic (Bertram & Rusznyak, 2024). When schools were closed for an extended period, student teachers could not undertake teaching practicals. A 'Researchers' Bootcamp' was organised by JET Education Services (JET), a non-profit organisation that facilitates partnerships between government, professional, academic and corporate stakeholders. A challenge posed to researchers was to use the crisis to address perennial concerns within the education system and 'build back better' (JET, 2020).

School-based learning was one of 12 themes tackled during the bootcamp. A team of teacher educators drew on their research and experiences to address enduring concerns about the quality of school-based learning for student teachers (Bertram & Rusznyak, 2024). A capacity-building grant from the South African Department of Higher Education (DHET) in partnership with the European Union enabled a group of teacher educators drawn from 12 universities across South Africa to develop an online module called *Teacher Choices in Action*. This module enables pre-service teachers to achieve the South African Council for Educators (SACE) Professional Teaching Standard 7: 'Teachers make thoughtful choices about their teaching that lead to learning gains for all learners' (SACE, 2019). It does this by giving student teachers guided opportunities to observe things about teaching that were not obvious to them during their own schooling. In so doing, the module empowers student teachers to bring together different parts of their teacher education curriculum, thereby reducing a so-called 'theory-practice gap'. In its first four years, more than 70 000 student teachers from 24 South African higher education institutions have completed the module to prepare for school-based learning. Universities have continued to use the module to prepare student teachers to make the most of their time in the classroom.

The module offers a foundational introduction that can support Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA)-affiliated extended student teacher internships (ESTIs). Teachers at schools and many teacher mentors completed their own teacher education many years ago and are not always familiar with the coursework that student teachers are doing. On the other hand, universities do not always show student teachers how the theories they learn about inform the day-to-day work that teachers do. The *Teacher Choices in Action* module offers the possibility for those in ESTIs who spend a significant amount of time in one particular kind of school to share a common language of practice across TICZA affiliates and have the opportunity to undertake guided lesson observations across a wide range of South African school contexts.

Preparing student teachers to analyse teaching

The *Teacher Choices in Action* module presents teaching as complex and intricate work in which teachers need to make carefully considered choices about how best to enable learning. It introduces student teachers to some of the key choices every teacher needs to make during their lessons (Hugo, 2013). These include modes of curriculum delivery, knowledge selection and sequencing decisions, classroom interactions that enhance learning, considering diverse learner identities, the choice of learning support materials, and choices in creating and managing safe learning environments (Rusznyak & Bertram, 2021). The module also offers a lesson library in which student teachers can observe and analyse 250 recorded lessons relevant to their subject and phase specialisations. Student-teachers come to see how teaching is enacted in a wide range of contexts including rural, township and suburban schools. Through a guided study of practice, student teachers come to understand that appropriate decisions are not arbitrary but are made in response to variables including subject knowledge, contextual priorities, learner diversities and ethical imperatives.

In a comparative analysis of lesson observations written before and after the module, Langsford & Rusznyak (2024) show how the capacity to observe and interpret teaching changed among a cohort of 286 Post-Graduate Certificate in Education student teachers. The left side of Figure 1 below shows the range of the complexity of their lesson observations at the start of the lesson. The findings suggest that student teachers do not intuitively interpret the lessons they watch, and their initial observations are primarily directed to what learners are doing and how the teacher interacts with them. While 10% of participants paid little attention to what the teacher was doing, 34% provided simple descriptions of her actions. Initially, 48% suggested a reason for the teacher's actions but these were mostly in the form of statements like, 'She asked questions so that she could see if learners understand.' Only 7% of responses offered a more complex account of teaching, in which different teacher's actions were understood to be working towards a coherent learning process. The findings support Star and Strickland's (2011, 118) argument that learning to observe practice is 'a learned skill'.
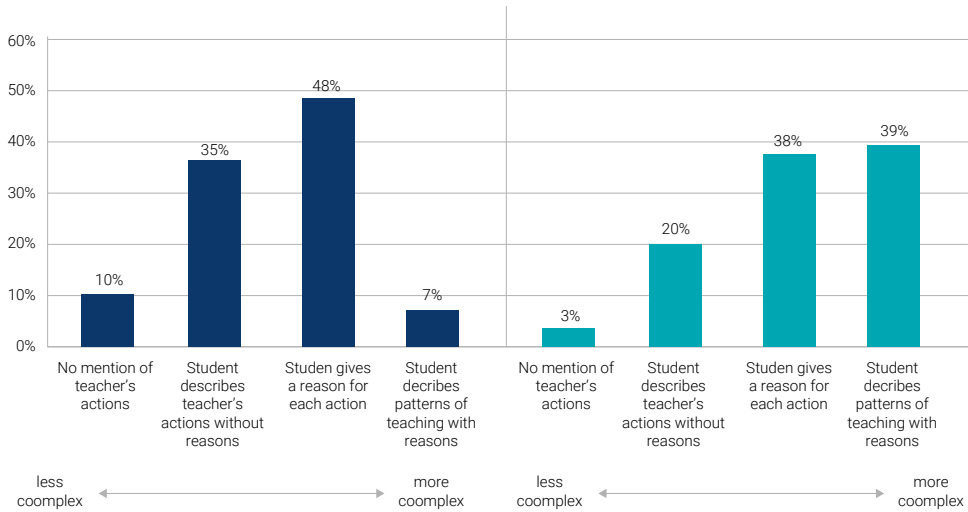
Figure 1: A comparison of the complexity with which PGCE students observe and interpret what teachers do and why before (left) and after (right) doing the Teacher Choices in Action module (see Langsford & Rusznyak, 2024).

The right side of Figure 1 shows that by the end of the module, a total of 77% of descriptions of the teacher's actions included suggestions of why the teacher was doing what she was doing, with 39% of responses suggesting more complex, theoretically informed reasons about how different teaching actions contributed to the teacher's learning goals for her lesson. For example, by the end of the module, a student teacher interpreted the teacher's action in more nuanced ways, saying,

> Throughout the lesson the teacher asks questions as a method to prompt thinking. The teacher does not answer her own questions. Furthermore, she allows them sufficient time to answer. What this does is give the learners opportunities to think about their responses and formulate their own ideas.

Mason (2002, 1) proposes two benefits of this kind of complex 'noticing': first, noticing enables teachers to identify strategies they may wish to try out in their teaching; second, it enables teachers to become 'more articulate and more precise about reasons for acting'. The findings suggest that the *Teacher Choices in Action* module enables student teachers to become far more aware of the alternative courses of action they may choose and how these choices directly affect the structure of their lessons (Langsford & Rusznyak, 2024; Martin & Bertram, 2024).

Possibilities for collaboration

The *Teacher Choices in Action* module is currently used by some TICZA partners as a part of their wraparound support offered to student teachers before they embark on their school-based learning. The *Teacher Choices in Action* team and TICZA could potentially

provide a common SACE-endorsed preparation programme for student teachers embarking on extended school-based placements. It would offer student teachers and their mentors a common language and set of concepts for discussing teaching practices. The huge database of baseline studies on student teacher learning offers some possibilities for a comparative research study into the effectiveness of ESTIs in the teacher preparation landscape.

References

Berry, A., Loughran, J. & van Driel, J.H. (2008). Revisiting the roots of pedagogic content knowledge. *International Journal of Science Education*, 30(10), 1271-1279. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500690801998885

Bertram, C. & Rusznyak, L. (2024). Navigating tensions in designing a curriculum that prepares preservice teachers for school-based learning. *Education as Change*, 28, 1-23. https://doi.org/10.25159/1947-9417/14677

Borello, L. (2019). Learning to teach in a situated studentship model of teacher education: a case study of the support provided by mentor teachers in the process of learning to teach. MEd Research Report, University of the Witwatersrand. https://hdl.handle.net/10539/29360

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2015). Revised policy on the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications. *Government Gazette*, Vol. 596, No. 38487. https://www.dhet.gov.za/Teacher%20Education/National%20Qualifications%20Framework%20Act%2067_2008%20Revised%20Policy%20for%20Teacher%20Education%20Quilifications.pdf

Hugo, W. (2013). *Cracking the code to educational analysis*. Cape Town: Pearson.

Jacobs, V. R., Lamb, L. L. & Philipp, R. A. (2010). Professional noticing of children's mathematical thinking. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 41(2), 169-202. https://doi.org/10.5951/jresematheduc.41.2.0169

JET Education Services (JET). (2020). *Building back better - Teacher choices in action: An enriching supplementary module for 'teaching practice' in 2020 and beyond*.Researcher's Bootcamp Theme 11. Johannesburg: JET Education Services. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/theme-11-module-outline-teacher-choices-in-action.ppsx/view

Langsford, D. & Rusznyak, L. (2024). Observing complexity in teachers' choices: preparing preservice teachers for work-integrated learning. *Education as Change*, 28(1), 1-23. http://dx.doi.org/10.25159/1947-9417/14676

Martin, M. & Bertram, C. (2024). Pre-service teachers' learning about inclusive education from an online module. *African Journal of Teacher Education and Development*, 3(1), 10. https://doi.org/10.4102/ajoted.v3i1.44

Mason, J. (2002). *Researching your own practice: The discipline of noticing*. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203471876

Rusznyak, L. & Bertram, C. (2021). Conceptualising work-integrated learning to support pre-service teachers' pedagogic reasoning. *Journal of Education*, 83, 34-53. http://dx.doi.org/10.17159/2520-9868/i83a02

South African Council for Educators (SACE). (2019). *Professional teaching standards*. https://www.sace.org.za/assets/documents/uploads/sace_31561-2020-10-12-Professional%20Teaching%20Standards%20Brochure.pdf

Star, J. R. & Strickland, S. K. (2008). Learning to observe: Using video to improve preservice mathematics teachers' ability to notice. *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education*, 11, 107-125. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10857-007-9063-7

20 A collaborative social justice framework approach to student support in an education faculty in South Africa: implications for TICZA

Rakgadi Phatlane, *University of Pretoria, Faculty of Education*

Introduction

According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), in 2020, more than seven out of ten young people experienced deprivation in education (Stats SA, 2020). Moreover, half of the children (51%) in South Africa may justly be considered as poor and living in a household whose consumption is below the poverty line of R647 per person, per month (Stats SA, 2020). Research on students in higher education institutions (HEIs) in South Africa has confirmed that the education of rural students in particular is a crucial aspect for achieving social justice and economic development. In the last few years, there has been a significant increase in the number of rural, destitute students in universities across the country, most notably after the 'Fees must fall' student unrest, which ultimately forced the government's hand to declare 'free education' in South Africa (Naidoo & McKay, 2018).

Transformative student recruitment strategy

It was against this background that in 2017, an education faculty in a South African university adopted a transformative student recruitment strategy. The faculty intentionally and systematically recruited poor, rural, destitute students from previously disadvantaged communities into a former white, Afrikaans-only, urban university. This meant that the prospective students would be faced with double transition challenges, *viz.,* from high school to tertiary education and from a rural to an urban environment. The faculty collaborated with a government department tasked with initial teacher education to succeed in its recruitment. In terms of this recruitment strategy, the faculty would admit 300 students who met the faculty admission requirements. Consequent to this collaboration, students who satisfied the criteria of the merit bursary were funded by the Department of Basic Education to ensure that their academic careers were supported.

The study

This article discusses a study that was undertaken to explore the impact of this initiative, called the Innovative Teacher Development Project. In this project, indigent rural student teachers were provided with extra support by the faculty to enable them to succeed. In the study, 30 rural, indigent first-year students from 2018 and 2019 who received funding and who had an average pass of more than 75% overall were purposely sampled. Thirteen of the 30 were from the 2018 cohort and 17 from the 2019 cohort. All of them were intentionally recruited and assisted to become teachers. The study sought to understand the extent to which such an intervention possibly contributed to the academic success of these student teachers. The study adopted a social justice framework and utilised a narrative analysis within a qualitative research design in order to examine the experiences of the students who were supported. The subjects of the study were requested to write narratives of their experiences of the faculty support, directed by three questions:

1. What are your experiences of the support provided to you by the university?

2. How will you manage your journey at the university without these support mechanisms?

3. What would you recommend, with this support, in order to enhance your individual study progress?

According to Martin et al. (2015, 1), teachers' ideas of social justice are based on 'a transformative philosophy of education, which calls on societal organisations to transverse political borders,' albeit the reality that all educational decisions are affected by politics. In this context, however, social justice presupposes that education has the potential to break the cycle of persistent social ills such as poverty. In society, education is expected to be able to change the lives of poor rural and disadvantaged students in order to transform them into active participants in the economy of the country. As Martin Luther King put it 'True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring'.

Mngomezulu et al. (2017), who examined the narratives of students receiving government funding, found that there is a negative relationship between student funding and academic performance. Similarly, a study conducted by Wildschut et al. (2020) also found that poor and indigent students fail academically not only because of financial hardships but also due to social and psychological challenges they face. Concurring with these authors, Naidoo & McKay (2018) also argued that there is no significant correlation between student funding and academic performance.

Contrary to the foregoing research findings, however, the present study, based on the narratives of the students themselves, found that the funding they received contributed significantly to the students' performance. One of the study participants clearly stated that should he have not been a beneficiary of this support, his chances of success would have been nil. It therefore stands to reason that some of the psycho-social challenges identified by Wildschut et al. (2020) may be ascribed to financial constraints. Once

such constraints are taken care of by the funding which they receive, the students are free to partake in their academic work for success. Liu and Shange (2018), moreover, found that higher education funding is crucial because with it, students can provide for their needs and not worry but study. A lack of funding might lead to worrying and thus underperformance or even failure. In addition, Oduaran (2019) argued that when students have inadequate funding or no funding at all, they are compelled to partake in part-time employment in order to sustain themselves. For students in this situation, the challenge often becomes the ability to juggle the employment obligations and the demands of their academic responsibilities. The lack of this balance between work and study often leads to the academic responsibilities suffering and therefore, failure. All the students in the sample argued that they would 'definitely not have achieved the kind of result in their first-year, should they not have been assisted with the tailormade support mechanisms' they received. They also mentioned receiving transport money, airtime, data bundles, accommodation, stationery, toiletries, electronic devices, clothing, bedding as well as basic groceries. Some further stated unequivocally that 'without the extra support, they would have not made it'. These findings are in sync with the finding of Mafoka (2016) that rural students often do not have money to pay for accommodation, study material and other necessities needed at the university. Liu and Shange (2018) argued that student financial problems often lead to emotional weariness and stress, which may ultimately affect academic performance. Concurring with Mofoka (2016), Heckman et al. (2014), confirmed that one of the sources of stress for university students is financial hardships, which may result in depression and, at the worst, lead to suicide.

The conclusions of Mofoka (2016) and Heckmann (2014) are both contextually valid and regarded as correct because the epistemological stance of qualitative research is that the participants' experiences of phenomena in their environment, their narratives and their answers to research questions are regarded as data, and therefore, as truth (Maree, 2010). Ontologically, the students' narratives of how the individualised, extra support provided to each one of them are regarded as reality and therefore, as newly created knowledge (Priya, 2020).

The participants' narratives are supported by a similar study conducted by Fosnacht and Dong (2013) on the impact of financial stress on the academic performance of first-year students. In this study, students received extra tutoring and benefitted from government funding and other interventions provided by the faculty with the assistance of external funders. According to the participants, the collaboration assistance was crucial for their navigation of university life with confidence. This research also found that students who received accommodation near the university appreciated the enhanced access to the library after hours, which contributed to their academic success. The study by McGhie (2012) into factors impacting the academic progress of first-year students corroborates this finding. He also found that poor students resented having to live with relatives, stating that 'some of their relatives did not know what it meant to be a university student'. Some students resented the long distances to travel to and from the university campus, which ultimately affected their academic performance negatively.

Against this background, it cannot be denied that lack of funding is stressful for students and has detrimental effects on their studies, notwithstanding the dissenting views identified by other authors on this issue.

Participating students, based on their experiences and the thoughts they shared on the impact of the interventions they received, positively agreed that without the wraparound support, they would have struggled to even arrive at the university, more so to succeed in their studies. One of the key findings of this study is thus that there is a dire need for the government to take on the responsibility of addressing the plight of poor students, especially those from the rural areas. This should be done through tailormade and deliberate interventions and individualised support mechanisms.

Implications for TICZA and future education policy directions

While our study was based on the narratives of 30 funded, rural, indigent students who received extended support interventions and therefore performed well in their first year at an urban university, it is tempting to suggest that the Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) model with its provision of stipends for students who continue to live at home could go a long way in addressing the challenges of such students. TICZA has shown that extended periods in schools assist student teachers to become more familiar with the workplace than when they just come in for a few weeks and leave (Trialogue, 2023). The student teachers from different institutions who are in the extended student teacher internships (ESTIs) have shared positive stories.

An important lesson to be learnt from TICZA is that all interested parties and stakeholders involved in teacher professional development can do a great job if they work together. The teacher trainees receive on-the-job training in the industry they are being trained to serve; schools provide mentor teachers; and the HEIs provide the theory and monitor practice. The availability of mentor teachers at the schools and mentor lecturers at the HEIs, coupled with the opportunity to study theory while putting it into practice immediately is invaluable.

Findings from TICZA (Trialogue, 2023) and this study have shown that government funding alone is not enough. As Eggers and Macmillan (2013) assert, governments alone will not be able to come up with solutions to the education challenges in any country. Collaboration among different stakeholders in education is indispensable to enhance the quality of student performance and possibly improve results.

The study showed that external funding provided to the university enabled the participants to perform well in their first year as they were able to receive extra support. This finding supports a social justice framework which takes the rights of every student into consideration, while fairly and justly enabling them to change their situations. There is a strong assertion that relevant, tailor-made support mechanisms at the beginning of each academic year are indispensable for student success.

The findings of this study have implications also for the future direction of education policy, especially concerning the crucial economic development of the unemployed youth. A recommendation is that the government should make the provision of extended

student support a policy and possibly institutionalise it. If the government is serious about contributing to the economic sustainability and prosperity of the poor, young, rural students, they should also consider institutionalising the extended teaching practice model advocated by TICZA.

Although this study aimed to find out how poor, indigent, rural students from one particular university faculty experienced student support, the researcher believes that the findings can easily mirror similar students' experiences in similar contexts both locally and globally. The researcher also believes that policy makers should consider the different models of teacher professional development and make evidence-based decisions to review existing policies.

References

Eggers, W. D. & Macmillan, P. (2013, 19 September). Government alone can't solve society's biggest problems. *Harvard Business Review*. https://hbr.org/2013/09/government-alone-cant-solve-societys-biggest-problems

Fosnacht, K. & Dong, Y. (2013). Financial stress and its impact on first-year students' college experiences. Association for the Study of Higher Education Annual Conference. Indiana University, Bloomington, November 2013.

Heckman, S., Lim, H. & Montalto, C. (2014). Factors related to financial stress among college students. *Journal of Financial Therapy,* 5(1), Art. 3. https://doi.org/10.4148/1944-9771.1063

Liu, R. & Shange, S. (2018). Toward thick solidarity: Theorizing empathy in social justice movements. *Radical History Review*, 2018(131), 189-198. https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-4355341

Maree, K. (Ed.). (2010). *First steps in research*. Sixth impression. Pretoria; Van Schaik.

Martin, M. & Ngcobo, J. (2015). Social justice as a conduit for broadening curriculum access: Stories from classroom teachers. *Perspectives in Education*, 33(1), 87-99. https://journals.ufs.ac.za/index.php/pie/article/view/1898

McGhie, V. F. (2012). Factors impacting on first-year students' academic progress at a South African university. PhD thesis. Stellenbosch University of Stellenbosch. https://scholar.sun.ac.za/items/f392afdc-51c8-46b9-a411-1e54110c74db

Mngomezulu, S., Dhunpath, R. & Munro, N. (2017). Does financial assistance undermine academic success? Experiences of at risk students in a South African university. *Journal of Education (University of KwaZulu-Natal)*, 68, 131-148. https://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/jed/n68/08.pdf

Mofoka, K. G. (2016). The effects of tertiary students' financial problems on academic performance: the case of Motheo Technical Vocational Education and Training in Bloemfontein. Masters dissertation. University of Kwazulu-Natal. https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/items/10054df4-2237-4065-b501-f0770e22e9f2

Naidoo, A. & McKay, T. J. M. (2018). Student funding and student success: A case study of a South African university. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 32(5), 158-172. https://journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.20853/32-5-2565

Oduaran, A. B. (2019). Reclaiming commitment to social justice through relevant adult and continuing education in sub-Saharan Africa. *Africa Education Review*, 16(6), 151-164. https://doi.org/10.1080/18146627.2018.1464701

Priya, A. (2021). *Case study methodology of qualitative research: Key attributes and navigating the conundrums in its application. Sociological* Bulletin, 70(1), 94-110. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038022920970318

Statistics South Africa (Stas SA). (2020, 7 July).   More than 60% of South African children are poor. [Media release]. https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=13438

Trialogue. (2023). *Case study: TICZA: A collective impact strategy for transforming education.* https://trialogueknowledgehub.co.za/case-study-ticza-a-collective-impact-strategy-for-transforming-education/

Wildschut, A., Megbowon, E. & Miselo, A. (2020). Impact of funding on academic performance: An exploration of two South African universities. *Journal of Education (University of KwaZulu-Natal),*

81, 29-49. https://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/jed/n81/03.pdf

21 Jakes Gerwel Fellowship selection design: opportunities for TICZA implementing partners

Mia Bunn, *Vitatalent*
Jeremy Gibbon, *Jakes Gerwel Fellowship*

Design of the JGF Competency Framework

The selection process for the Jake Gerwel Fellowship's (JGF) Graduate Training Fellowship (GTF) was launched in 2020 to identify high-potential future expert teachers, educational leaders and educational entrepreneurs from a diverse pool of South African graduates. In 2023, the selection process was further refined and streamlined based on learnings and insights gained from 2020 to 2022, and these improvements ensured that the GTF selection process remains aligned with the latest best practices and methodologies for selecting aspiring teachers.

Central to the GTF selection process is the JGF Competency Framework, a strategic model designed to identify and develop key competencies in aspiring teachers while ensuring alignment with global best practices (Campion et al., 2011; Sanchez & Levine, 2009; Spencer & Spencer, 1993) and the strategic vision of the JGF. Unlike generic competency models, the JGF Framework is strategically informed and was meticulously designed with a strong emphasis on alignment with the JGF's vision and strategic objectives.

The primary objective of the design stages was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the diverse career paths JGF Fellows might pursue, including roles such as newly qualified teachers, expert teachers, educational leaders and educational entrepreneurs. The design process included consideration of both immediate and long-term role requirements by identifying the challenges and demands associated with each future role and defining performance criteria and expectations specific to the Fellowship. The process included extensive research into existing global competency frameworks and a comprehensive review of the performance indicators for teachers and principals to clearly define the competency proficiency levels and performance indicators expected from JGF Fellows within the Fellowship's framework.

Competency framework components

The JGF Competency Framework includes eight core competencies, each defined at various progression levels to establish selection standards for graduates about

to complete their Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and to support the development and career advancement of JGF Fellows. These competencies are:

1. **Strategic outlook:** The ability to research, analyse and evaluate diverse and complex information to master complexity in educational contexts;

2. **Change leadership**: The ability to understand, adapt to, identify levers for, facilitate and lead change within educational settings;

3. **Innovation:** The ability to integrate and adapt ideas, develop unique insights, generate breakthrough ideas and foster a culture of innovation within educational settings;

4. **Engaging for talent**: The ability to take charge of personal development, nurture self and high school learners and effectively unlock the talent and potential of high school learners through effective teaching and learning methods.

5. **Engaging for impact:** The ability to exhibit strong interpersonal and intercultural communication skills and demonstrate strong motivation and influencing abilities.

6. **Engaging for collaboration:** The ability to develop networking skills, establish professional networks and build influential partnerships within educational settings.

7. **Shaping excellence:** The ability to set and maintain high personal standards, promote continuous improvement and establish benchmarks for excellence across various educational settings.

8. **Shaping success:** The ability to accept accountability for performance outcomes, drive personal performance and effectively manage learner performance.

During the GTF selection process, these eight competencies are comprehensively assessed and measured to ensure that the selection process identifies high-potential candidates capable of delivering on the Fellowship's strategic vision for education in South Africa.

The selection process

The JGF employs a sophisticated talent selection algorithm during the selection process. Based on a holistic assessment model, this algorithm integrates multiple data points collected throughout the selection process to provide a comprehensive view of each applicant's overall profile. This 'whole person' approach ensures that the JGF selection committee can make well-informed decisions based on a thorough assessment of each candidate's current capabilities, expected development trajectory and future potential.

Key data points and their integration into the selection algorithm

Phase 1 - Online Application Form: The process begins with the online application form that is hosted on the JGF's bespoke online selection portal that is capable of handling large volumes of applications. The GTF application form collects several data points, aligning with best practices in assessment frameworks (Sanchez & Levine, 2009; Schmitt, 2012), which are then auto-scored to evaluate applicants in categories such as:

- Achievement orientation: Assesses past achievements in various fields such as sports, culture, academics, community projects and other diverse areas.

- Leadership: Evaluates the candidate's history and experience in various formal and informal leadership positions across multiple and diverse contexts.

- Working experience: Considers the applicant's work experience including roles and industries they have worked in.

Phase 2 - Motivational Fit Assessment: Candidates complete a motivational fit assessment that draws on theories of motivation (Mayer et al., 2007) and Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour and includes a series of multiple-choice questions designed to measure a candidate's motivation to pursue a teaching career. Dimensions evaluated include:

- Instrumental and affective attitudes: Candidate's attitudes towards a teaching career.

- Subjective norms: Candidate's perceptions of the teaching profession.

- Self-efficacy for social justice: Confidence in advocating for social justice.

- Self-efficacy for teaching: Confidence in acquiring teaching skills and abilities.

- Self-esteem and locus of control: Psychological factors that influence the candidate's ability to successfully navigate challenges and environmental factors within the educational landscape.

- Perceived feasibility and commitment: Commitment to the teaching profession.

- Prosocial and activism behaviours: Past prosocial and activism behaviours demonstrated.

- Experience in teaching and tutoring: Previous experience in teaching and tutoring roles.

By comprehensively assessing these dimensions, JGF gains insights into the candidate's overall motivational fit for a teaching career. Candidates are then ranked and shortlisted for the next selection phase based on their scores in leadership, achievement orientation, work experience and motivational fit.

Phase 3 - Situational Judgment Test (SJT): Shortlisted candidates complete an SJT specifically designed and validated for aspiring teachers. Supported by research (Lievens & Sackett, 2011; Klassen et al., 2020), this test presents candidates with realistic scenarios that teachers might encounter such as dealing with parents, collaborating with fellow teachers, managing learners, balancing workload and schedule and interacting with school management. This is a multiple-choice assessment that requires candidates to select the most effective actions for each scenario to demonstrate their situational judgement abilities.

Phase 4 - Online Selection Camp (Assessment Centre): During this phase, candidates participate in a two-day online selection camp where they undergo a series of competency assessments designed to measure their proficiency in the eight core

competencies outlined in the JGF Competency Framework. Candidates are presented with various exercise formats, including group discussions, written analysis assessments and individual lesson presentations that offer multiple opportunities to demonstrate their competencies. The use of trained assessors and structured competency scoring guides ensures a comprehensive evaluation that reflects best practices in competency assessment (Schmitt, 2012, Thornton & Rupp, 2005) and established standards for competency-based evaluations (Thornton & Gibbons, 2009).

Phase 5 - Psychometric Assessments: In this phase, candidates undergo a series of psychometric assessments including emotional quotient (EQ), personality and cognitive assessments. This approach aligns with Schmidt and Hunter's (1998) theoretical frameworks on the validity and utility of selection methods and is further supported by best practice guidelines as detailed by Schmitt (2012). These assessments provide detailed insights into a candidate's attributes, which are then mapped to the eight core competencies in the JGF Competency Framework. The psychometric data helps identify both enabling and derailing factors that could impact a candidate's future performance and development. By fully integrating these insights, the GTF selection process ensures a comprehensive evaluation of how each candidate's attributes align with the required competencies.

Data integration and final selection

The final step involves integrating all collected data points through the selection algorithm defined for GTF applicants. This algorithm provides some of the following key data points:

Total Talent Potential Index (TPI)

A composite score is derived from the initial application data dimensions, motivational fit assessment, SJT scores, selection camp competency scores and psychometric assessments. This index ranks candidates holistically based on all data points from the beginning to the end of the process and facilitates the identification of the strongest and most consistent performers throughout the entire selection process.

Competency Training Quotient (CTQ)

This score integrates demonstrated competency proficiency scores from the selection camp with enabling and derailing attributes informed by psychometric data. A matrix model is used to classify competencies into four categories: Performance Derailer, Threat to Sustainable Future Performance, Opportunity for Accelerated Development and Proficient. By evaluating candidates based on their current proficiency and the number of enabling and derailing attributes, the CTQ score provides a nuanced view of each candidate's competency development potential at increasing levels of complexity.

Profile Fit Scores for Career Paths

In alignment with strategic drivers, career paths and the competency framework, the algorithm provides insights for the selection committee on the profile fit scores for three career paths:

1. Educational Entrepreneurial Profile Fit: Evaluates the candidate's potential to innovate and lead educational initiatives.

2. Educational Leaders Profile Fit: Assesses the candidate's potential to assume leadership roles within educational institutions.

3. Expert Teacher Profile Fit: Measures the candidate's potential to excel as an expert teacher.

Sequencing of assessments and conclusion

The GTF selection process was designed to minimise bias and ensure a fair and objective evaluation of applicants by leveraging multiple data points through a sophisticated talent selection algorithm and comprehensive assessments. The assessment methods employed at each phase of the selection process were strategically positioned to ensure high-potential future teachers are not lost as the applicant pool is reduced from the application phase to the final psychometric assessments. JGF has invested considerable time and consideration in developing the systems and methods used to screen GTF candidates at each phase to ensure potential talent is not overlooked.

Opportunities for TICZA implementing partners

The innovative use of a competency framework, assessment centre methodologies and psychometrics to identify high-potential applicants may be worth considering in more depth for other members of the Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa involved in similar selection activities. Each component of the process provides additional information to guide organisations as they select programme participants.

References

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179-211. https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T

Campion, M. A., Fink, A. A., Ruggeberg, B. J., Carr, L., Phillips, G. M. & Odman, R. B. (2011). Doing competencies well: Best practices in competency modelling. *Personnel Psychology*, 64(1), 225-262. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2010.01207.x

Klassen, R. M., Kim, L. E., Rushby, J. V., Bardach, L. (2020)**.** Can we improve how we screen applicants for initial teacher education? *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 87, 102949. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2019.102949

Lievens, F. & Sackett, P. (2011). The validity of interpersonal skills assessment via situational judgment tests for predicting academic success and job performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 97, 460-8. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025741

Mayer, J.D., Faber, M.A. & Xu, X. (2007). Seventy-five years of motivation measures (1930–2005): A descriptive analysis. *Motivation and Emotion*, 31(2), 83-103 https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-007-9060-2

Sanchez, J. I. & Levine, E. L. (2009). What is (or should be) the difference between competency modelling and traditional job analysis? *Human Resource Management Review*, 19(2), 53-63. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2008.10.002

Schmidt, F. L. & Hunter, J. E. (1998). The validity and utility of selection methods in personnel psychology: Practical and theoretical implications of 85 years of research findings. *Psychological Bulletin*, 124(2), 262-274. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.124.2.262

Schmitt, N. (Ed.). (2012). *The Oxford handbook of personnel assessment and selection*, Oxford Library of Psychology. Oxford Academic. 2012. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199732579.001.0001

Spencer, L. M. & Spencer, S. M. (1993). *Competence at work: Models for superior performance*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Thornton, G. C. & Gibbons, A. M. (2009). Validity of assessment centers for personnel selection, *Human Resource Management Review*, 19(3), 169-187. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2009.02.002

Thornton, G. & Rupp, D. (2005). *Assessment centers in human resource management: Strategies for prediction, diagnosis, and development*. Psychology Press. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410617170

22 Innovating teacher internships: If you can't do it, how do you teach it?

Alexandra Smith, *NPO Consultant*
Brenda Elshove, *Teachers Plus*

Introduction

It is unthinkable to expect someone who cannot play soccer to be a soccer coach, just as it is absurd to have someone who cannot solve an algebra equation teach algebra to 40 Grade 11 students. We ask the question, '*Why do we expect student teachers with poor mathematics results to be confident and professional mathematics teachers?'* It is difficult for our education system to cultivate strong mathematics teachers when overall student performance in mathematics remains consistently low.. We need to dedicate time to reteach learners the language of mathematics, ensuring they understand it thoroughly before building their teaching skills, otherwise, how can we expect them to be great teachers and, more importantly, how can we expect the next generation of learners to do well in mathematics?

> It is fundamental and very simple: if you cannot do it, how can you teach it?

The mathematics landscape in South Africa

You might wonder, is the state of mathematics in South Africa that dire? Consider the worrying mathematics landscape in the country:

Grade 12 results in mathematics

- In the last three years, only 6% of Grade 12 students have achieved more than 60% in (pure) mathematics (DBE, 2024, 212). Approximately 60% of all learners take mathematical literacy[10], which disqualifies them from university programmes in science or engineering.

- 3% of South African high schools create more mathematics and physical science distinctions than the remaining 97% put together. Of those 200 high schools, 185 are former White-only schools charging significant fees (Spaull, 2019, 4). High-fee schools boast mathematics departments with excellent mathematics teachers, and

---

10   Calculated using data in the 2023 NSC Diagnostic Report (see DBE, 2024, 196, 212).

this statistic demonstrates that top-notch mathematics teachers lead to outstanding mathematics results.

- Of the 2023 Grade 12 cohort, only 3.4% of learners achieved over 80% for mathematics (DBE, 2024, 211). Those learners who perform well in mathematics in matric have many study opportunities available to them. This further reduces the number of strong mathematics students choosing to become mathematics teachers.

This poses a critical question: if there aren't enough students excelling in mathematics, who in the country will be equipped to teach it? We can see from the statistics below that the poor results ripple through into teacher training and beyond:

Students studying for a Bachelor of Education Degree:

- 80% of students who started a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree achieved less than 50% for mathematics (Van der Berg et al., 2022).

Teachers

- 79% of South African primary school teachers of Grade 6 do not have the content knowledge required to pass Grade 6 mathematics (Venkat & Spaull, 2015, 121).

Reversing educational deficiencies is essential for future teachers who have experienced a sub-standard mathematical education. Although it might demand more resources than conventional teacher training programmes, taking the time to address the mathematical backlogs of our future teachers will lead to thousands of learners completing school without a mathematical backlog.

A solution offered by Teachers Plus

Innovation is about implementing solutions that create significant positive impact and value. When the system is so fundamentally broken, innovation means rebuilding it from the ground up, ensuring a stronger and more effective foundation. Teachers Plus has an innovative solution that generates significant positive impact and value. Our focus is singular and driven: ensuring that our students achieve mastery in the language of mathematics and can become excellent mathematics teachers. We exist because we believe every child deserves an outstanding mathematics teacher.

Addressing mathematics backlogs is not straightforward. Further, subject mastery alone does not make a formidable teacher; effective teaching abilities and student engagement are crucial. That is why Teachers Plus invests over 600 hours per year in the following core areas: Mathematics Content knowledge, Mathematical Techniques and Mathematical Methodology. Institutionalising these aspects of teacher training ensures that mathematics backlogs are addressed and student teachers know how to teach their content effectively. Our experience shows that with comprehensive support, student teachers can overcome their academic backlogs. Therefore, it is unnecessary to change university entry requirements. Instead, we should focus on dedicating time and resources to help committed student teachers become high performers. If universities lack the time to address academic backlogs, teacher training programmes can fill this gap.

At Teachers Plus, we are committed to the principle that high-quality teachers are created with a combination of subject mastery and an understanding of how to teach the subject. Our intensive five-year programme ensures that students are taken through the entire mathematics curriculum, spending 600 hours per year on mathematics in three key areas:

- Mathematics Content Knowledge: We reinforce foundational mathematical skills through proper notation, symbols and terminology while also addressing misconceptions in student answers. Our sessions emphasise coherent mathematical writing and effective problem-solving strategies, supported by benchmark tests to assess comprehension and provide targeted assistance for any identified gaps.

- Mathematical Techniques: In these lectures, students revisit the spiral mathematics curriculum from the very beginning. Students get the opportunity to practise using educational tools, such as manipulatives, that they might have missed out on using when they were at school. Recognising that teachers often teach as they were taught, these transformative sessions aim to reshape how our students will teach in the future. By experiencing the best mathematical teaching techniques first-hand, they can adopt and implement these effective strategies in their own classrooms.

- Mathematics Methodology: Lee Shulman coined the term pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) in the mid-1980s (Shulman, 1986), emphasising the importance of teachers' ability to teach subjects in ways that resonate with learners. Our Methodology sessions, integral to our five-year programme, progressively hone these vital skills, focusing on hands-on teaching exercises to instil effective mathematics instruction principles and techniques.

We believe that teachers should be proficient in the mathematics they are required to teach and be skilled in teaching the mathematics they understand. Our view is that the following content competencies are essential for excellent mathematics teachers:

- Foundation Phase Teachers: 80% competency in mathematics up to Grade 7

- Intermediate Phase Teachers: 80% competency in mathematics up to Grade 9

- Senior and Further Education and Training Phases Teachers: 80% competency in mathematics up to Grade 12, along with the completion of first-year pure mathematics at a university level.

In addition to mathematics support, students also spend a significant amount of time in schools. In years 1 and 2, they attend our partner schools for two full days, and when they are in years 3-5, they spend four full days in school. Students in years 3-5 can only spend four days per week at schools if they have passed our mathematics benchmark tests with 65% or more.

Retaining committed expert teachers

Our experience demonstrates that subject mastery creates committed and focused teachers who approach their work with confidence and enthusiasm. These teachers have

no fears about teaching the subject because they possess the skills to effectively teach complex areas like algebra and geometry. They do not dread teaching a Grade 12 class; in fact, they look forward to it, relishing the opportunities to challenge and inspire their students. Our programme boasts a 95% retention rate in the teaching profession. While we are relatively small, we have proven that expertise fosters long-term commitment in educators. Our expert teachers not only stay in the profession but thrive, making a lasting impact on their students and the education system.

Measuring the intervention's cost

If we do not measure retention in the teaching profession as a key outcome metric of teacher training programmes, we will underestimate the true cost of an intervention. For example, consider two teaching training organisations: Org. A and Org. B both offer programmes with a duration of five years but different costs per student. For Org. A, the cost per student for five years is R500k; for Org. B it is R350k per student for five years. Org. A has a 100% retention rate in the teaching profession after graduation. On the other hand, only 50% of students from Org. B graduate and are employed as educators. Therefore, the cost per student doubles for Org. B to R700k per employed teacher. This example emphasises the value of investing in programmes with excellent throughput and retention rates, underscoring them as the most prudent and financially sound investments if we are going to shift the status quo.

Conclusion

At Teachers Plus, we believe that true innovation is about getting the basics right. As the only teacher training programme in South Africa focusing exclusively on producing competent and professional mathematics teachers, we are dedicated to addressing the mathematics crisis in the country.

> The quality of an education system can never exceed the quality of its teachers. - Andreas Schleicher, OECD Director for Education and Skills

References

Department of Basic Education (DBE). (2024). *NSC examinations 2023: Diagnostic report. Book 1.* https://www.education.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=X4BWNU0gxUU%3d&tabid=92&portalid=0&mid=4359

Shulman, L. S. (2013). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Journal of Education*, 193(3), 1-11.. https://doi.org/10.1177/002205741319300302

Spaull, N. (2019). *Priorities for education reform in South Africa: Input Document for Treasury's Economic Colloquium 19 January 2019*. https://nicspaull.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/v2-spaull-priorities-for-educ-reform-treasury-19-jan-2019.pdf

van der Berg, S., Gustafsson, M. & Burger, C. (2022). *School teacher supply and demand in South Africa in 2019 and beyond.* https://resep.sun.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/DHET-Supply-and-Demand-Report-Phase-1-1.pdf

Venkat, H. & Spaull, N. (2015). What do we know about primary teachers' mathematical content knowledge in South Africa? An analysis of SACMEQ 2007. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 41, 121-130. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2015.02.002

23 A partnership framework for impact: the Emergency Aid Roadmap example

Colleen Magner and Mpinane Senkhane, *Reos Partners*

Introduction

In an era fraught with polarity of views and approaches, partnerships are essential to addressing systemic challenges, for example, addressing the quality, quantity and retention of excellent teachers in South African schools. The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) aims to

> …understand, inform and support systemic change in initial teacher education (ITE) by demonstrating the extent to and conditions under which extended student teacher internships (ESTIs) can be an effective, efficient and widely used model that can contribute to teacher education pathways that produce high-quality teachers for public schools in South Africa. (Shiohira et al, 2022)

There is a lot to learn when we look more widely at examples of the partnership between higher education institutions (HEIs) and non-governmental or civil society organisations, who are often the implementing partners in addressing such a systemic challenge.

In this article, we will explore a partnership framework called the *Emergency Aid Roadmap* (EAR) (Reos Partners, n.d.), developed and facilitated by Reos Partners since 2016 to address the challenge of providing emergency aid (EA) to students at colleges and universities in the United States. Although this partnership is situated in an entirely different context to South Africa and is focused on a different higher education issue, HEIs across the world face similar systemic challenges, including unique administration models, siloed approaches and an increasing demand for financial support, particularly for disadvantaged students, due to socio-economic realities.

The partnership model for the *Roadmap to Effective Emergency Aid* offers a comprehensive, collaborative approach to transforming emergency aid efforts in higher education. By addressing systemic issues and providing structured support, the programme aims to significantly impact student retention and success across HEIs in the United States.

The Roadmap to Effective Emergency Aid: an overview

The *Roadmap to Effective Emergency Aid* is designed to guide HEIs in transforming informal emergency aid (EA) efforts into comprehensive programmes aimed at

increasing student retention and completion rates. The initiative provides colleges and universities with a suite of tools, resources, guidance and a structured process for developing and implementing effective EA programmes. Delivered through virtual workshops, in-person convenings, coaching and an online platform, the programme is spearheaded by Reos Partners and is supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The EAR is an outcome of the Emergency Aid Lab (Reos Partners, 2017), an intensive pilot programme conducted with various HEIs and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The lab aimed to identify the best strategies for developing and implementing effective EA programmes. The initiative involved over 100 higher education administrators, senior leaders, faculty and students, building on strategic partnerships with non-profit organisations such as NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA), Single Stop and Scholarship America. The importance of including multiple stakeholders was evident from the start, the assumption being that to achieve real improved practice (impact) the commitment of several stakeholders is needed from the start, in particular, those stakeholders who are able and willing to contribute to improved practice (Numans, et al., 2019).

The need for effective emergency aid

> Every year, approximately three million students in the US leave higher education due to unexpected expenses under $1,000. Affording college has become increasingly difficult in the U.S., and many students drop out due to minor financial setbacks. While many institutions offer some form of EA, few have comprehensive programs with the potential for significant impact. (Reos Partners, n.d.)

Although a 2016 NASPA study (Kruger et al., 2016) indicated that 70% of HEIs offered some form of EA, most of these efforts were handled on a case-by-case basis rather than through established programmes designed to increase retention. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these issues, significantly increasing the need for EA as students faced challenges related to income loss, housing and healthcare.

The Emergency Aid Lab established a practice field for effective EA, helping institutions to research, design and implement innovative financial aid solutions. Over 18 months, a diverse group of higher education stakeholders collaborated to refine best practices, leading to the development of the EAR.

The Roadmap Process: a systemic, collaborative, and experimental approach

The EAR provides institutions with a structured methodology for transforming their EA delivery through a systemic, collaborative and experimental process. The initial phase of this process involves a Current State Assessment, where institutions critically evaluate their existing EA efforts. This foundational analysis is crucial for establishing a comprehensive understanding of the current operational landscape, thereby laying the groundwork for identifying areas requiring enhancement.

Subsequently, institutions engage in a Gap Analysis to identify and articulate the discrepancies between their current EA framework and the envisioned ideal state. This analytical step is pivotal in pinpointing specific areas of deficiency, thereby enabling institutions to strategically focus their efforts on targeted improvements that align with their overarching programmatic goals.

The final phase, Solution Prototyping, entails the development and iterative testing of strategies designed to bridge the identified gaps. This phase is centred around six critical pillars: optimising the process for inviting and processing requests to alleviate the burden on students, ensuring that responses to requests are comprehensive and address the full spectrum of students' needs; formulating a communications plan to enhance awareness across the campus community; devising a sustainable funding strategy; implementing a robust data tracking system to monitor program effectiveness; and conducting a policy review to identify and amend policies that may inadvertently contribute to emergencies. Through this iterative process, institutions are positioned to systematically refine their EA programmes, ultimately enhancing their efficacy and impact.

Delivery methods

The EAR is delivered through several methods to support institutions:

1. Convenings: Cohort institution team members participate in convenings to work systemically and collaboratively. These workshops provide opportunities for skill development, solution improvement and shared learning.

2. Monthly calls: These calls deepen skill development, offer guidance on key modules and facilitate brainstorming and learning.

3. Coaching: Institutions receive coaching to support leaders in their EA programme efforts.

4. Online platform: This platform provides access to tools, project management resources and opportunities for collaboration between convenings and calls.

Outcomes and impact

By the end of the EAR process, each pilot institution had successfully developed solutions for each of the six critical pillars, resulting in a robust and effective EA programme, achieving better outcomes of EA across the board. The ongoing goal is to ensure that students facing unexpected financial challenges have the support they need to continue their education.

> Before we started, our programs were scattered and siloed, not well advertised, and lots of folks didn't know about the options. We now have a much more comprehensive approach. The process we're going through...is really building something sustainable.(Reos Partners, n.d)

The EAR aims to address the critical issue of affordability in higher education in the United States by ensuring that small, unexpected expenses do not derail students'

educational journeys. By providing a structured, comprehensive approach to EA, the programme seeks to transform how institutions support their students, ultimately increasing retention and completion rates.

Relevance to TICZA

In the last three years, TICZA has already developed and implemented strategies and structures for:

- Strategic Oversight and Advocacy

- Knowledge Production

- Platforms for Collaboration

- Standards, Tools and Resources

- Sector Capacity Development

- Monitoring and Evaluation

The EAR partnership model offers valuable guidance to TICZA in several key areas. Firstly, it can assist in identifying successful, complementary and effective partnerships between HEIs and NGOs. This analysis enables the creation of generalisable collaboration 'pillars' that can serve as foundational elements in partnership agreements.

Secondly, the model aids in designing a generalisable framework for ESTIs that can be tested, ensuring that these collaborations can be applied effectively across various contexts. Additionally, the EAR model guides HEI administrators, NGO programme managers, and funders through a structured process of developing a shared vision and goals. This process is critical for the application of a common model for ESTIs and the integration of collaboration pillars, ultimately leading to scalable solutions.

Finally, the EAR partnership model emphasises the development of a sophisticated communication platform. For TICZA, this platform would serve as a comprehensive resource and network hub, providing essential support to ESTIs and facilitating the broader goals of TICZA.

TICZA has a set of specific outcomes: knowledgeable teachers who positively influence the education system, improved teacher retention and job satisfaction and reduced teacher shortages in identified areas of need. It is important to be creative and test multiple solutions; the realm of radical imagination involves finding more creative ways to resolve stuck situations that are not working optimally. Hard evidence shows that creativity yields more effective outputs, and the birthplace of creativity is our collective imagination (Magner, 2020).

Both EAR and TICZA aim to provide a creative, systemic and collaborative response to improving education outcomes. By understanding the EAR example of partnership-building and a structured collaboration process, TICZA could harness some generalised learnings to apply for the remaining duration of this collaboration.

References

Kruger, K., Parnell, A. & Wesaw, A. (2016). *Landscape analysis of emergency aid programs*. NASPA. https://www.naspa.org/files/dmfile/Emergency_Aid_Report.pdf

Magner, C. (2020). Facing down crisis with radical imagination and experimentation. *GIBS Acumen Magazine*. Issue 33. Third Quarter. https://mags.contactmedia.co.za/acumen/33/

Numans, W., Van Regenmortel, T. & Schalk, R. (2019). Partnership research: A pathway to realize multistakeholder participation. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919884149

Reos Partners. (n.d.). Emergency Aid Roadmap https://earoadmap.com/

Reos Partners. (2017, November). Emergency Aid Lab: co-creating the future of emergency financial aid. [Blog]. https://reospartners.com/blog/emergency-aid-lab

Shiohira, K., Lefko-Everett, K., Molokwane, P., Mabelle, T., Tracey-Temba, L. & McDonald, Z. (2022). *Training better teachers, An implementation brief for improving practice-based initial teacher education*. Johannesburg: JET Education Services. https://www.jet.org.za/resources/ticza-training-better-teachers.pdf

24 Advancing extended teacher internships: innovations and alignments in South Africa

Patience Voller, *National Association of Social Change Entities in Education (NASCEE)*

Introduction

Teacher shortages are a global issue, and South Africa faces a critical need for qualified educators. Minister Angie Motshega reported a 28% increase in vacant teaching positions over three years (Kahn, 2024). With over half the current educators expected to retire by 2030, this challenge will intensify. While the government is responsible for addressing this crisis, extended student teacher internship (ESTI) programmes offer essential support. Aligned with national teacher development priorities, these programmes can help mitigate shortages, enhance educational equity and cultivate high-calibre educators poised for long-term retention.

Alignment with national priorities for teacher recruitment, training, and development

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has set priorities for recruiting and training teachers in selected phases, subjects and geographic areas (DBE & DHET, 2011, 11), although national priorities often shift due to annual teacher exits and changes in learner demographics in both rural and urban schools.

The current priorities are to: increase the pool of competent educators with good subject content knowledge; improve the supply of teachers to rural and disadvantaged public schools, particularly in Quintiles 1 to 3; address shortages in critical science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects in the Further Education and Training Phase, in home languages in the Intermediate and Senior Phases, in provincial posts, and in vocational subjects in the new three stream curriculum.

Non-profit organisations (NPOs) and institutions implementing ESTIs in South Africa use varied approaches, but alignment with national priorities remains paramount. This is illustrated by recruitment, selection and training strategies which are tailored to meet provincial needs, focusing on areas such as STEM subjects and Foundation Phase teaching. Recruiting interns who meet regional home language requirements and targeting rural schools are key to these efforts. Many ESTI models across the country align well with national priorities.

Examples of ESTIs in South Africa

Three broad groups of internship models exist:

1. NPO Initiatives, which include distance learning though a recognised institution and an extended practicum in a public school, for examples the Khanyisa Inanda Seminary Community Project (KICP) and Global Teachers Institute (GTI);

2. Public private partnerships, where universities, independent schools and their associated public benefit organisations (PBOs) and education departments collaborate in schools which often have a strong focus on mathematics and science subjects, for example, Thuto Trust and St Peters Intern Programme; and

3. The university-based internship model which involves a combination of coursework, practical teaching experience in schools and mentoring from experienced educators, for example, the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and North West University (NWU).

These organisations work closely with provincial and national education departments to deliver programmes aligned with the national priorities listed above. The snapshots below give three examples of how ESTIs align with government policy and priorities:

St Peter's Teacher Intern programme

Running for over 25 years, this programme aims to develop teachers from disadvantaged communities.[11] Interns study a 4-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree through distance learning with UJ. Recruitment addresses the shortage in STEM subjects and Foundation Phase teaching. As classroom-based interns, the student teachers learn on the job and gain valuable experience and skills from their mentors. The programme is funded by the St Peter's Foundation PBO at a cost of R120 000 per student per annum and takes care of all the student's costs including psycho-social and mentoring support. The programme's vision is to produce 21st Century teachers with 21st century Skills.

Thuto Trust

The Thuto Trust internship programme began in 2004 and was co-funded by the Trust, the DBE and the Gauteng Education Department (GDE), giving disadvantaged students opportunities to train to become teachers. Interns study for a B.Ed. degree through distance learning and focus on the critical subjects of mathematics, science, and literacy.[12] School-based Interns get exposure to both public and private schools in their practicum. Their programme incorporates embedded technology such as the Tillo app for data management.

Global Teachers' Institute (GTI)

GTI's Future Leaders Programme (FLP) is a school-based internship programme placing student teacher interns studying through distance education in primary and

---

11   https://www.stpeters.co.za/
12   https://thutotrust.org/teacher-internship-programme

secondary schools for the duration of their training.[13] Interns come from disadvantaged environments and are placed in lower quintile schools within their geographical location. The FLP programme provides mentorship, professional development and classroom teaching experiences, with a strong emphasis on technology integration. Annual support for a Future Leader is roughly R80 000.

Innovation for sustainability

Sustainable ESTI programmes prioritise cost-effectiveness and innovation for long-term viability. They depart from traditional initial teacher training of four years of tertiary study, interspersed with six to eight weeks annual practicum. Innovative practices include: targeted recruitment processes and identifying high-achieving graduates interested in becoming teachers. Applications are made online through accessible, user-friendly portals, ensuring students are not excluded because of location. Secondly, having a classroom-based internship ensures the practicum is continuous through the internship journey, between three to four days per week, with days allocated for course work. The daily exposure to innovative classroom practice, teaching methodology and curriculum development allows the student teachers to hone their skills.

Central to most ESTI models is 'wraparound support' offered alongside the academic component of the degree. This is a comprehensive system of guidance, resources and services that surround and support the interns, ensuring their success and well-being. This support network may include: a designated mentor (school-based or external) who provides mentorship, guidance and feedback; one-on-one coaching for personal and professional growth; scheduled check-in meetings with supervisors to discuss progress and challenges; professional development opportunities to enhance skills and knowledge; regular assessments and constructive feedback to improve performance; access to relevant materials, resources and technology equipment; and wellness support services to promote physical, mental and emotional well-being. This approach fosters competent, confident, and empathetic professionals, reducing dropout rates and enhancing teacher retention.

To ensure they keep up with the fast pace of technological change, students must develop the necessary 21st century digital skills to succeed (Marais, 2023, 136). ESTI programmes are rising to meet the demand by embedding technology into their programmes, for example, Thuto Trust's Tillo app, which exposes students to online data management; GTI's FLIP online portal for intern engagement and monitoring and evaluation and its partnership with a mathematics technology programme which supports interns and learners; St Peter's inclusion of coding, robotics and computational thinking; Instill's virtual mentoring app; and NWU and UJs use of simulation tools and virtual reality for teacher training to provide immersive learning experiences at a lower cost compared to traditional methods.

13   https://globalteachers.org/

Cost considerations

ESTI programmes require significant investment. Fee structures encompass tuition fees, living expenses and administrative costs. Costs can range between R60 000 and R120 000 and are influenced by factors such as the institution offering the programme, duration of the internship and location of intern and institution. A breakdown of the main costs shows that tuition fees can range from R30 000 to R70 000 per annum; living expenses (accommodation, food, transportation) between R5 000 and R12 000 per month; there are costs entailed in training resources (text books, training materials, technology devices) and administrative costs associated with managing the internship programme and other overheads. Funding mechanisms, including bursaries and donor support, alleviate the financial burden placed on interns. While ESTIs are generally considered costly, especially at the upper end of the spectrum, data from Old Mutual (Business Tech, 2024), pitches the average cost of university fees in South Africa at between R55 900 and R84 060 in 2023 - not vastly different from the average costs presented by ESTIs, but minus wraparound support. A critical point is that ESTI programmes claim wraparound support improves throughput rates dramatically, thereby increasing return on investment from public funding.

By leveraging innovative approaches such as blended learning, which allows remote access to lessons and mentors, online learning, access to open educational resources, remote mentoring, community partnerships, educational technologies and learning management systems, the costs associated with ESTIs can be reduced somewhat. These innovations will contribute to making internships more affordable and enhance the quality and accessibility of teacher training, aligning with the broader goals of improving education nationally.

Global trends in ESTIs

Internationally, innovative ESTI approaches echo South African efforts. Internships are either extensive and take place along with university study and coursework or a student may be placed in an internship after graduating with any degree to get practical teaching experience and address the regional or community need. These programmes also focus on enhancing teacher training through technology, collaborative networks and creative programme structures. Two examples that bear similarities to some South African models are iTeachAZ[14] which has an extended residency and ACU's Teaching for Australia[15] which addresses the needs of disadvantaged and rural communities

iTeachAZ - Arizona State University, United States

iTeachAZ is described as an innovative teacher preparation programme with an emphasis on an extended practicum period. Student teachers participate in a full-year residency period in which they have the opportunity to co-teach with a mentor teacher while engaged in coursework.[16] An additional element of the programme incorporates

---

14   https://news.asu.edu/
15   https://www.acu.edu.au/
16   https://asu.my.salesforce-sites.com/kb/articles/FAQ/What-is-the-iTeachAZ-program

professional learning communities (PLCs) where interns collaborate and share best practices. Interns are also taught to use data to inform instructional practices to improve student outcomes.

The ACU's Teaching for Australia

This is a programme run by the Australian Catholic University (ACU) which focuses on preparing teachers for challenging environments.[17] Interns work in schools as paid teachers while completing their Master of Teaching degrees. Placements are targeted, with trainee teachers sent to high needs schools, particularly in rural and remote areas. The programme strongly emphasises community engagement and understanding the school's socio-cultural context.

Do ESTIs impact teacher mobility?

There are two sides to teacher mobility - movement between jobs or exiting the system because of low job satisfaction, and movement between schools or districts in search of growth and increased opportunities (SACE, 2011, 19). ESTIs can impact teacher mobility in the following ways:

- Participation in an ESTI programme often ensures better preparation for the classroom, making teachers more confident and effective, leading to higher job satisfaction and greater retention as a satisfied teacher is less likely to move in search of new opportunities.

- The quality of the internship programme can also impact the school's reputation, influencing teachers to stay and attracting new quality teachers to the school. Alternatively, the professional development, confidence and skill acquired through the internship can empower teachers to take ownership of their professional growth, potentially leading to increased mobility and career advancement. Additionally, ESTI programmes can provide opportunities for teachers to build professional networks, presenting new opportunities and increasing mobility.

Conclusion

ESTI programmes are vital in addressing teacher shortages and advancing educational equity in South Africa. Embracing innovation is crucial for the sustainability and effectiveness of these programmes. By leveraging technology, wraparound support systems and cost-effective approaches such as blended learning, ESTIs can enhance the quality of and access to teacher training while mitigating financial barriers, producing skilled educators who have greater job satisfaction and who remain in the system longer and contribute to sustainable educational development. As South Africa navigates its educational landscape, continued investment and innovation in ESTIs remain essential for fostering a thriving teaching workforce and improving educational outcomes nationwide.

---

17   https://www.acu.edu.au/

References

Businesstech. (2024, 28 January). University fees 2024: How much it costs to study in South Africa. https://businesstech.co.za/news/lifestyle/744973/university-fees-2024-how-much-it-costs-to-study-in-south-africa/

Department of Basic Education (DBE) & Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2011). *Integrated strategic planning framework for teacher education and development in South Africa 2011-2025*. Pretoria: Government Printer. https://www.education.gov.za/Informationfor/Teachers/ISPFTED2011-2025.aspx

Kahn, T. (2024, 17 April). Vacant teacher posts in state schools rocket to more than 31,000. *Business Day.* https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/education/2024-04-17-vacant-teacher-posts-in-state-schools-rocket-to-more-than-31000/

Marais, E. (2023). The development of digital competencies in pre-service teachers. *Research in Social Sciences and Technology*, 8(3), 134-154. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1409742.pdf

South African Council for Educators (SACE). (2011). Teacher migration in South Africa.

25 Closing contribution: From onboarding to belonging: the promise of teacher internships and mentoring

Carlos Vargas, *UNESCO*

In the past couple of years, the idea that the teaching profession needs to be transformed has gained momentum globally. The reasons for this transformation are threefold, comprising the relevance of education, the quality of teaching and learning, and the shortage of teachers affecting many countries in the world. UNESCO and the Teacher Task Force (TTF) have recently published the first-ever Global Report on Teachers (2024), which reveals that the world lacks some 44 million teachers to ensure universal primary and secondary education, and that most of this shortage is due to teacher attrition. Teachers are leaving the classroom owing to the eroding status of the profession and their working conditions - on the one hand, the material conditions, including remuneration, workloads, learning environments, infrastructure and resources, and, on the other, the social and symbolic conditions of teaching, which comprise the respect, trust and autonomy that teachers are conferred. The role of teacher student internships and the mentoring processes that occur within hold promise to help this transformation to address teacher shortages and to improve the quality of teaching and thus education.

UNESCO and the International Commission on the Futures of Education (2021) have called to recast teaching as a collaborative profession to transform education. This reframing has implications for policy and practice. For policy, this includes engaging teachers and their organisations in educational decision-making by means of social dialogue, consultation and co-creation. In terms of teacher education, this entails underscoring the relational nature of education and promoting collaborative approaches and pedagogies. From service learning to communities of practice, the interactive exchange of teachers, as reflective practitioners, is seen as a form of collaboration and support.

Teachers' practicum and internships are the foundation for these interactions. It is in the classroom as a workshop where new and prospective teachers are first exposed to the grammar of schooling, the governance and organisation of education and the complexity of teaching dynamics, hand in hand with expert practitioners. This is also the occasion to welcome newcomers to the profession, to a community of practitioners united by

a common body of knowledge, know-how and a shared ethos of service. It is the first encounter with the community that will continue to support them throughout their careers, and to which they will, in turn, contribute with their knowledge and insights.

Beyond onboarding prospective teachers into the profession, internships play a crucial role in shaping the future of education by helping new educators transition into the profession with confidence and enthusiasm, improving motivation and engendering a feeling of companionship. As evidenced in the recent Global Report on Teachers (UNESCO & TTF, 2024), teacher attrition usually happens within the first five years of practice, and programmes for novice teachers, internships and mentoring play an important role in curbing attrition and addressing teacher shortages.

The report also shows that initial teacher training that incorporates an adequate in-school experience, followed by induction and mentoring in the novice years are key elements to retaining these early career teachers. However, only a handful of countries include induction processes and a complete assessment of the experience before conferring full qualification status on teachers. Furthermore, in those countries which offer extended induction programmes, many novice teachers do not benefit from a dedicated mentor.

The introduction of mentorship into these programmes is important as prospective teachers have an opportunity to learn from more experienced educators within a supportive community of practice, promoting intergenerational learning and fostering collaboration across different levels of expertise. Mentorship also helps to make career ladders more horizontal and promote collaboration, levelling authority and autonomy between expert and novice teachers. A shift from a more authoritative to a more supportive role in mentorships and internships can enhance supervisors' relationship with teachers, improve the feedback process and democratise teaching and learning.

The extended student teacher internship (ESTI) model, offering extended internships in schools, wraparound support and blended learning to produce well-prepared, high-quality teachers who stay in the profession long-term while reinforcing teaching as both a skilled craft and a professional vocation is a good step in this direction.

References

UNESCO & International Commission on the Futures of Education. (2021). *Reimagining our futures together: a new social contract for education.* https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379707.locale=en

UNESCO & International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030. (2024). *Global report on teachers: Addressing teacher shortages and transforming the profession*. Paris: UNESCO. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000388832

Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Collective impact project	Collective impact as a concept is designed to address complex problems through the collaborative efforts of multiple stakeholders. In a collective impact project, emphasis is on shared learning, alignment and integration of actions between community members, government, private and third sector organisations which work towards shared goals and measure the same things. Collective impact initiatives aim to achieve population and systems-level change.
Common competency framework (CCF)	A competency framework is a sense and decision-making tool that clearly communicates performance expectations and links individual performance to organisational success and sometimes societal success. Competency frameworks define the knowledge, skills and attributes that teachers need to have if they are to perform successfully in the profession in a broader societal context. Having a defined set of competencies for each norm or standard in the teaching professional's repertoire shows people the kind of behaviours the system values and which it requires to help achieve its objectives. Not only can members of this system work more effectively and achieve their potential with greater efficiency, but there are many cross sectoral benefits to be had from linking personal and professional performance with system or sector-wide goals and values, including: • Ensuring that teacher interns demonstrate sufficient expertise; • Recruiting and selecting teacher interns more effectively;; • Evaluating performance more effectively; • Identifying skill and competency gaps more efficiently; • Providing more customised training and professional development; • Making change management processes work more efficiently; The TICZA Common Competency Framework (CCF) is a competency guideline outlining performance expectations aligned with the SACE Professional Teaching Standards for student teachers to develop during their initial teacher education, especially those enrolled in the extended student teacher internships. The CCF common competencies are the competencies that student teachers need to possess by the time they complete their B.Ed. or PGCE qualifications.
Community of practice (COP)	A group of people (in education or other fields) who share a common interest in a particular area. They come together regularly in facilitated meetings to learn from each other by sharing knowledge, working practices and resources related to that area, identifying and discussing problems and solutions and collaborating in innovative ways. TICZA hosts three COPs per year with a focus on key topics to advance the work on extended student teacher internships.

Term	Definition
Extended student teacher internships (ESTIs)	Extended student teacher internships (ESTIs) describe the experience of individuals who are registered for a teacher education qualification and work in a school for a period exceeding the average student internship or work integrated learning (WIL) required by the teacher education qualification.
	These teaching internship programmes are designed for student teachers who are mostly registered for the distance mode B.Ed. and PGCE qualifications in accredited South African HEIs. The ESTIs are aimed at providing student teachers with wraparound support at extended teaching experience (WIL) periods in host schools, thus improving the quality of graduate teachers and teacher retention in the South African teaching force.
Financial modelling	Financial modelling is a structured approach to analysing the financial situation of a company or project. It involves using quantitative techniques, tools and data to project and analyse the financial implications, costs, funding sources and revenue streams associated with the company or project. The primary purpose of financial modelling is to accurately forecast the future financial performance of the company or project and provide insights into budgeting, resource allocation, funding requirements and potential financial outcomes. Financial modelling can be used to estimate costs, identify funding sources, project financial sustainability and assess the overall financial impact of a programme or project on stakeholders.
Higher education institutions (HEIs)	In the context of TICZA, an HEI is a tertiary education institution that delivers initial teacher education offering a B. Ed. or a PGCE qualification.
Initial teacher education (ITE)	Teacher preparation and training before they fully qualify for employment as professional teachers.
Implementing partner (IP)	Implementing partner (or IP as an acronym) refers to organisations or institutions which are currently managing and carrying out ESTIs. There are two types of IPs: NGO IPs and HEI IPs.
Indicators	Indicators are a measurement or assessment of performance in a certain area. They allow us to determine whether we are achieving the targets of a project or not. For TICZA, graduate throughput might be an indicator for IPs as well as successful teacher placement.
Institutionalisation	Institutionalisation for TICZA means influencing both practice and policies on teacher education. The TICZA project aims to see the *Minimum Requirements for Education Qualifications* (MRTEQ) policy and the *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development* (ISPFTED) recognise the ESTI model as the universal approach to WIL for teacher education programmes across South African HEIs.

Term	Definition
Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED)	The *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa 2011-*2025 puts forward improved and expanded teacher education and development opportunities in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. It addresses the call to 'reopen the colleges' in a variety of ways, so as to improve teachers' - and prospective teachers' - access to quality education and development opportunities.
Knowledge products	Research outputs put together by the TICZA convening group reflecting on various partners' learning experiences in implementing extended student teacher internships in South Africa. These include but are not limited to: COP reports, CCF report, CEA reports and any other relevant reports that the Convening Group members produce to reflect on TICZA activities and engagements.
Minimum Requirement for Teacher Education (MRTEQ)	A policy document outlining the minimum requirements for teacher education with a focus on qualifications regarding ITE and continued professional development.
Monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning (MERL	An approach to collecting and analysing data to report learnings of an intervention with an intent to measure progress towards achieving intervention goals and objectives.
Newly qualified teachers (NQT)	While there are many definitions of a newly qualified teacher, both within South Africa and internationally, for the purposes of TICZA an NQT is a teacher in their first-year of teaching. This may or may not be the year after they graduate.
Novice teachers	These are teachers who are within their first to third year of teaching. They are qualified teachers with little to no teaching experience.
South African Council for Educators (SACE)	A teacher professional body aimed at enhancing the status of the teaching profession through the regulation of professional development for teachers.
Professional teaching standards (SACE PTSs)	The SACE PTSs[18] were created collaboratively with various stakeholders, including government, unions, NGOs and teachers. It is a key document outlining the professional, personal and social expectations of South African teachers. This is a foundation of the TICZA Newly Qualified Teacher Survey and the shared Competency Framework.
Theory of change (ToC)	A theory of change (TOC) illustrates how and why a particular intervention leads to change within a given context. The TICZA theory of change has two parts, one relating to the implementation of internship programmes generally (not specific to any one programme) and the other for the activities specific to TICZA as a collaboration.

18   https://www.sace.org.za/assets/documents/uploads/sace_31561-2020-10-12-Professional Teaching Standards Brochure.pdf