

## ISSUES THAT ENHANCE TEACHER EDUCATOR'S SUCCESS AND CONTRIBUTION TO CREATE SUCCESSFUL CITIZENS IN THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE

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### ABSTRACT

*Teachers who educate teachers are the people who instruct, teach and provide support to student-teachers, thus making a significant contribution to the development of prospective teachers. Teacher educators are the pillar for making educational institutions achieve the objectives making every graduate contribute at least a bit for development endeavor of the country in both south poor and northern rich nations in the world. Practically meeting objectives of such type is not easy and this certainly require an extensive and sustainable involvement of all of major stakeholder of the country (students teachers, teacher educators, parents, school administrator, local and higher government, local community etc). In this paper particular emphasis is given on identifying factors important for making teacher educator productive in their careers. Experience of various academic institutions and teachers and teacher educators as found in various researches were referred to identify what, how and who can make teacher educator superb in their profession. It is be found that teacher educators need to learn relevant curriculum and appraising effectiveness of teacher educator preparation program for the student teacher is also very important. In addition, teacher educators need to possess reflection and self study skill, an ongoing understanding of the changing environment, pedagogical skill, and knowledge for teaching.*

Key Words; Teacher Educator, Profession, reflection, self study, pedagogical skills

## 1 .Introduction

The educators' roles are numerous and diverse: they are lecturers in a specific field of expertise; they make the learning process accessible to student-teachers; they encourage reflective processes in the trainees; and they are involved in research and in developing research skills in their students. Beyond all these, they demonstrate the need to cope simultaneously with teaching, and training people to teach; that is, with the need to provide role-models. That duality is typified by their need to be constantly aware that they are role-models, to be familiar with teaching strategies appropriate for adult learners and for young learners—and to be able to distinguish between the two (Korthagen *et al.*, 2005; Koster *et al.*, 2005; Smith, 2005; McGee & Lawrence, 2009). On the other side Teachers in every parts of the world live and work on school landscapes changed being caused by different factors like globalization, immigration, demographics, economic disparities and environmental changes. Within those landscapes teachers find themselves struggling to compose lives that allow them to live with respect and dignity in relation with children, youth and families. (Clandinin, Downey & Huber (2009). Teachers are severely affected time because there are so many forces in the environment (in their class, school, their social lives and policy changes) that conspire to undermine their effort to create more productive citizens. As stated above teacher educator have numerous responsibilities but also there are a number of environmental factors (forces) that can constrained their effort that might hinder their further professional development. Successfulness in the field of teacher education will not come easily and to me it is an ongoing process that starts as student teacher and as teacher educator professional and while working as teacher educator in schools/universities.

**“There is no more important responsibility for a school, college, department, or faculty of Education than to do the best job that it possibly can in preparing teachers to teach in the schools or our nation and to support the learning of these teachers throughout their careers. If we are not prepared to take this responsibility more seriously and do all that we can to have the best possible teacher education programs, then we should let someone else do the job. Taking more seriously the new scholarships in teacher education and using it to help us make our programs better, is one important part of this responsibility.”** (Zeichner, 1998, p. 46)

## 2. Research Question

This article tried to assess address two important issues

1. What important components/elements teacher educators have to learn in universities?
2. What teacher educators have to do (activities) as a professionals in order to be successful in their professional career and to help their student teacher or to create successful citizen?

## 3. Methodology

This article tries to stipulate important components to produce astute teacher educators in the most ever changing education environment globally. To do so a lots of literatures written in the area of teacher education were reviewed carefully. But it doesn't mean that this article inculcates all the necessary attributes to create shiny teacher educators. Hence this paper Provide a synthesis of ideas and issues that are critical aspects of the pedagogy of teacher education. In addition synthesis was made by referring pedagogy of teacher education journals, articles and books about professional identities of teacher educators and the aspects that fit into the development of those identities that made them successful in their career.

## 4. What important components/elements teacher educators have to learn in universities

### 4.1 Making the curriculum relevant and stressing effectiveness of teacher educator preparation program for the student teacher

Teacher education programs have to be relevant and pertinent to the preparation of teachers for this important role.(Peretz, Kleeman, Reichenberg & Shimoni (2010): Korthagen *et al.* claim that:

in the light of the increasing attention paid to the nature of teaching and teachers' work, it is not surprising that there has also been an increasing focus on the quality of teacher education, and hence, that of the teacher educators. This focus has therefore brought attention to bear on the work of teacher educators such that their professional expertise is becoming more and more a matter of scrutiny (2005, p. 107).

When teachers complain that university work has often been “too theoretical,” they usually mean that it is too abstract and general, in ways that leave teachers bereft of specific *tools* to use in the classroom. The theoretically grounded tools teachers need are many, ranging from knowledge of curriculum materials and assessment strategies to techniques for organizing group work and planning student inquiries—and teachers in training need opportunities to *practice* with these tools systematically” (Darling-Hammond, 2010). In addition, recent research indicated that to be most effective, these opportunities for analysis, application, and reflection should connect to both the subject matter and the students whom candidates teach. In this way, student teachers learn the fine-grained stuff of practice related to the practical theories that will allow them to adapt their practice in a well-grounded fashion and to innovate and improvise to meet the specific classroom contexts they later encounter (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

New York City database found that some teacher education programs have much more positive effects than others (Boyd et al., 2008). Some teacher education programs produce graduates who contribute stronger value-added learning gains for students than do other teachers. The New York City team of researchers has been exploring what these programs do, producing findings very similar to those from previous studies of exemplary programs. These features include:

- ❖ programs’ careful oversight of the quality of student teaching experiences;
- ❖ the match between the context of student teaching and candidates’ later teaching assignments, in terms of grade levels, subject matter, and type of students;
- ❖ the amount of coursework in reading and mathematics content and methods of teaching;
- ❖ a focus in courses on helping candidates learn to use specific practices and tools that are then applied in their clinical experiences;
- ❖ candidates’ opportunities to study the local district curriculum;
- ❖ a capstone project (typically a portfolio of work done in classrooms with students);
- ❖ Programs’ percentage of tenure-line faculty, which the researchers viewed as a possible proxy for institutional investment and program stability.

Effective teacher education program is designed in the way that make student to allocate their amply time in the field throughout the entire program, which enables them to critically examine and applying the concepts and strategies they learn and at the same time learn their courses.

Candidates work alongside teachers who can show them how to teach in ways that are responsive to learners while they take interwoven coursework. Such programs typically require at least a full academic year of student teaching under the direct supervision of one or more teachers who model expert practice with students who have a wide range of learning needs (Darling-Hammond, 2010). These is a similar approach to what Ball and Forzani (2009) in their studies about the work of teaching and the challenge of teacher education emphasized about the Shifting Teacher education From Knowledge to Practice oriented outlined that the core of the curriculum of teacher education requires a shift from a focus on what teachers know and believe to a greater focus on what teachers do. This does not mean that knowledge and beliefs do not matter but, rather, that the knowledge that counts for practice is that entailed by the work. A practice-based theory of knowledge for teaching (Ball & Bass, 2003) is derived from the tasks and demands of practice and includes know-how as well as declarative knowledge. But a practice-focused curriculum for learning teaching would include significant attention not just to the knowledge demands of teaching but to the actual tasks and activities involved in the work. It would not settle for developing teachers' beliefs and commitments; instead, it would emphasize repeated opportunities for novices to practice (Ball and Forzani 2009).

#### **4.2 Knowledge for Teaching: The “What” of Teacher Education**

Darling- Hammond (2006) claimed that there are many ways of configuring the knowledge that teachers may need. In articulating the core concepts and skills that should be represented in a common curriculum for teacher education, the National Academy of Education Committee on Teacher Education adopted a framework that is organized on three intersecting areas of knowledge found in many statements of standards for teaching.

- ✓ knowledge of learners and how they learn and develop within social contexts, including knowledge of language development;

- ✓ understanding of curriculum content and goals, including the subject matter and skills to be taught in light of disciplinary demands, student needs, and the social purposes of education
- ✓ understanding of and skills for teaching, including content pedagogical knowledge and knowledge for teaching diverse learners, as these are informed by an understanding of assessment and of how to construct and manage a productive classroom.

### 4.3 Pedagogical skill

Although it is important to have well-chosen courses that include core knowledge for teaching, it is equally important to organize prospective teachers' experiences so that they can integrate and use their knowledge in skillful ways in the classroom. This is probably the most difficult aspect of constructing a teacher education program. Teacher educators must worry about

not only what to teach but also how, so that knowledge for teaching actually shapes teachers' practice and enables them to become adaptive experts who can continue to learn. (Darling - Hammond, 2006)

Accomplishing this requires addressing some special—and perennial—challenges in learning to teach. Three in particular stand out. First, learning to teach requires that new teachers come to understand teaching in ways quite different from their own experience as students. Dan Lortie (1975) called this problem “the apprenticeship of observation,” referring to the learning that takes place by virtue of being a student for 12 or more years in traditional classroom settings. Second, learning to teach also requires that new teachers learn not only to “think like a teacher” but also to “act as a teacher”—what Mary Kennedy (1999) has termed “the problem of enactment.” Teachers need not only to understand but also to do a wide variety of things, many of them simultaneously.

Finally, learning to teach requires that new teachers be able to understand and respond to the dense and multifaceted nature of the classroom, juggling multiple academic and social goals

requiring trade-offs from moment to moment and day to day (Jackson, 1974). They must learn to deal with “the problem of complexity” that is made more intense by the constantly changing nature of teaching and learning in groups.

How can programs of teacher preparation confront these and other problems of learning to teach? Darling- Hammond (2006) indicated that a study examining seven exemplary teacher education programs—public and private, undergraduate and graduate, large and small—that produce graduates who are extraordinarily well prepared from their first days in the classroom finds that despite outward differences, the programs had common features, including:

- ✓ a common, clear vision of good teaching that permeates all course work and clinical experiences, creating a coherent set of learning experiences;
- ✓ well-defined standards of professional practice and performance that are used to guide and evaluate course work and clinical work;
- ✓ a strong core curriculum taught in the context of practice and grounded in knowledge of child and adolescent development and learning, an understanding of social and cultural contexts, curriculum assessment, and subject matter pedagogy;
- ✓ extended clinical experiences—at least 30 weeks of supervised practicum and student teaching opportunities in each program—that are carefully chosen to support the ideas presented in simultaneous, closely interwoven course work;
- ✓ extensive use of case methods, teacher research, performance assessments, and portfolio evaluation that apply learning to real problems of practice;
- ✓ explicit strategies to help students to confront their own deep-seated beliefs and assumptions about learning and students and to learn about the experiences of people different from themselves;
- ✓ strong relationships, common knowledge, and shared beliefs among school- and university-based faculty jointly engaged in transforming teaching, schooling, and teacher education (Darling- Hammond, in press).

In addition to the deeper knowledge base (Darling- Hammond,2006) have described above, such powerful teacher education and rests on certain critically important pedagogical cornerstones that have been difficult to attain in many programs since teacher education moved from normal school into universities in the 1950s

## **5. What Teacher educators have to do (activities) as a professionals in order to be successful in their professional career**

### **5.1 Reflection and self study skill: studying and researching one's own work, in order to improve it.**

The term 'reflection' is a very broad that refer to both the skill and the attitude of making one's own actions, feelings, experiences the object of one's thinking and reflection that is both deep and broad enough to encompass its moral, political and emotional dimensions (Hargreaves, 1995). Most educationalists agree the importance of reflection and reflectivity in teaching and teacher development (Kelchtermans, 2009). Reflection in teaching profession does not only need to be broad and wide in its content only, but also deep enough. The depth of reflection refers to the fact that is should move beyond the level of action to the level of underlying beliefs, ideas, knowledge and goals (Kelchtermans, 2009).

Reflection and self-study are the key for self-and-action improvement and are looked upon as main actors that motivate and direct the professional development of teacher educators. In line with this Self study enables teacher educator to view their own teaching and try to learn about it, study it and improve it overtime and succeed in their career (M. Ben-Peretz et al.,2010).

Teacher educator has to be able to look at social phenomena and social practices from various points of view. One needs to be exposed to qualitative interpretative narrative inquiries. A teacher educator needs to learn how to interpret students' behavior, how to listen to the voice of the 'other' (M. BePeretz et al., 2010).

Pinnegar & Hamilton (2009) suggested that the self-study of teaching practices is best suited methodology for an undertaking to research my experience as a teacher educator attempting to introduce cosmopolitanism and reflection into the professional lives of my students.



Reflective inquiry and self-study can be linked through desires to improve practice and contribute to the lives of others.

Below I will provide short excerpts about self study taken from M.L. Hamilton et al (2009) in their self-study work that demonstrate how self-study contribute to the development of the professional learning and knowledge of teacher educators.

### **Mary Lynn**

“For me, self-study has become very important as a way to help me work towards a positive classroom climate. My self-study work helps me develop a greater awareness of the difficulties I face and enables me to find ways of dealing with them especially as I model reflection on practice for my students. For me, thinking about my teaching has many layers – I always look to improve my own practice, I look to understand the learning-to-teach process in search of better ways to communicate that process to my students, and sometimes I prepare my work to share publicly with teachers, teacher educators and others”(M.L. Hamilton et al ,2009). To offer an example of how I enact these ideas I provide one vignette:

“After teaching many years I had a semester where my students complained (what seemed to be) endlessly about my lack of organization and my lack of specificity. From my perspective

I thought that I provided intricate detail and well organized information. For them, at least some of them, they felt in the dark about what I wanted, how I wanted it, and why I wanted it. As the semester progressed, tensions mounted. I provided what I thought was more detail; they heard a lack of specificity. I asked myself questions about my practices, sought different strategies, and yet still missed the mark. More worrisome was the interference this issue caused in the total performance (learning process) of students in the classroom. It seemed that they were not always learning what they needed to learn in the class. Although issues became more balanced over time, I never felt satisfied with my own practice and the quality of learning experiences I provided for my students. What to do become the central focus on my self-study” (M.L. Hamilton et al., 2009).

Reflecting on self-study process has led to boosted understanding of the challenges encountered by pre service teachers and this reflection further has also motivated me to develop curriculum and establish classroom environments that facilitate collaboration and reflection on personal experiences in order to address the challenges of classroom teaching (Julian Kitchen 2005).

### **5.2 Involving teacher educator, teachers in teacher education policy formulation and education policy reforms**

In different countries teachers were not the main actors in teacher education policy formulation and education policy reforms which ultimately constrained them from conducting their work effectively. In turn some reforms in turn are failed from achieving their goal. This shows the bilateral relationship between teacher educator and new education policy and policy reforms. Teachers' opinions have been overlooked in the planning of reforms and professional development programs; thus, teachers have been confused, frustrated and angry, and have perceived reform as a hindrance. Zhu (2010) as cited in Villegas-Reimers, such cases have been reported in Hong Kong (Morris, Chang and Ling, 2000), in England and Wales (Day, 2000), in Australia (Chadborunes, 1995) and in Europe (Klette, 2000). Some teaching reforms have failed in some countries due to teachers' insufficient knowledge and understanding of the proposed change, and their beliefs and attitudes towards the reformed curriculum (Van Driel et al., 2001). Involving teacher educator in the educational policy reforms and providing adequate training will increase the likelihood of success of the educational reforms in the implementation phase. In return teacher educator can do better work in the changed environment and the teacher educator can contribute better to their student teacher and providing ample training is very crucial in order to enhance their professional development.

### **5.3 Understanding the Landscape of Teacher Education: Framing the Challenge through relational approach**

Kitchen stated (2009) Teacher educator and school boards faced challenges as they sought to prepare aspiring and novice teachers for success in the classroom. Kitchen in his course paper, Kitchen wrote:

“The education system has been under constant attack from students, parents, business leaders, the press and politicians. Teachers and schools have been challenged for both their actions and their failure to act. This criticism is not always well founded, but it often hits the mark since most teachers are not wholly satisfied either. The same is true for teacher education, the process of becoming a teacher. Indeed, top teacher educators have often led the chorus of criticism. Goodlad (1991), after extensive research on teacher education in the United States, concluded that there was a “general failure to connect teacher education and schooling” and that current practices “virtually guaranteed that the status quo would be protected”, despite its unsatisfactory results” (Course paper, December 1992).

Kitchen (2009) stressed that developing teacher education programs that facilitate relationship enhances opportunities for meaningful reflection and collaboration. A relational approach according to Kitchen to teacher education, regardless of the opportunities or challenges posed by the institutional landscape, would make teacher educator to be reliant on teacher educators who show empathy, respect and a commitment to community and in this way framing the challenge is possible. Programmatic changes such as the establishment of cohorts, an increased focus on reflective practice and a greater focus on the relationship between school and society have offer opportunities for individual teacher educators to develop authentic professional relationships with students and communities of learners. One way of respecting and empathizing with pre service teachers is to assume a relational approach to teaching adult learners.

Building on Clandinin and Connelly’s (1992) regard of teachers as curriculum makers and Hollingsworth et al.’s (1993) view of relational knowing, relational teacher education offers methods in which teacher educators can understand their own personal practical knowledge, make their teacher education practices more responsive to the needs of preservice teachers, and situate their work in their professional landscapes (Kitchen, 2009).

## 6. Conclusion

Enhancing teacher educator knowledge is very crucial in order to create a very successful citizen. To do so, teacher educator needs to acquire and learn various skills in their stay in the universities and in addition they need constantly eager to upgrade their professional development. Of the elements that are needed in creating superb teacher educator, teacher educators need to learn relevant curriculum and appraising effectiveness of teacher educator preparation program for the student teacher is also very important. In addition, teacher educators need to possess Reflection and self study skill, an ongoing understanding of the changing environment, pedagogical skill, and knowledge for teaching. Involving teacher educators in major educational reforms, inculcating their voice and proving adequate training is also very crucial issue to support their professional development and enhance their implementation skill.

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