Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in South Africa
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VVOB Study week on Inclusive Education, Brussels, Belgium

Prof Mirna Nel

OPTENTIA
RESEARCH FOCUS AREA

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
VAAL TRIANGLE CAMPUS
®

Norms and Standards for Educators of 2000 (Department of Education 2000)

- Seven educator roles
  - learning mediator;
  - interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials;
  - leader, administrator and manager;
  - scholar, researcher and lifelong learner; community, citizenship and pastoral role;
  - assessor; and
  - learning area/subject/discipline/phase specialist.

Norms and Standards for Educators of 2000 (Department of Education 2000)

- The integration of democratic values and practices in these roles are emphasised,

- As learning mediators it is expected that teachers "will mediate learning in a manner which is sensitive to the diverse needs of learners, including those with barriers to learning; construct learning environments that are appropriately contextualised and inspirational; communicate effectively showing recognition of and respect for the differences of others" (DoE 2000:6).

Policy on the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications (MRTEQ) (2011)

- To develop adequate content and contextual knowledge to deal with diversity and transformation
- To work flexibly and effectively in a variety of contexts
- *Integrated and applied knowledge*
  - Knowledge
  - Reflection
  - Connection
  - Synthesis
  - Research

What is to be learned

How it is to be learned

MRTEQ cont. – Types of learning

- **Competent learning. Mixture of**:
  - Theory and practice
  - Pure and applied
  - Extrinsic and extrinsic
  - Potential and actual
- **Types of learning:**
  - Disciplinary learning (Subject matter, foundations of education)
  - Pedagogical learning (general and specific)
  - Practical learning (learning in-and-from practice)
  - Fundamental learning (language competence, ICTs, academic literacies)
  - Situational learning (self, situations, contexts and environments)

MRTEQ cont. Types of learning

- **Disciplinary learning**
  - Foundations of learning. For example:
    - Philosophy
    - Psychology
    - Politics
    - Economics
    - Sociology
    - History
  - Subject matter

MRTEQ cont. Types of learning

- **Pedagogical learning**
  - General pedagogical learning
    - Knowledge of learners, learning, curriculum and general instruction and assessment strategies
  - Specialised pedagogical content knowledge
    - Knowing how to represent concepts, methods, and rules of a discipline to create appropriate learning opportunities for diverse learners
    - Evaluate progress
  - Inclusive education integral

MRTEQ cont.

- **Practical learning**
  - Learning from practice
    - Analyse practices across a variety of contexts
      - Case studies, video recordings, lesson observations
  - Learning in practice
    - Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

MRTEQ cont. Types of learning

- **Fundamental learning**
  - Converse competently in a second language
  - Information Technology (ICT)
  - Academic literacy

MRTEQ cont. Types of learning

- **Situational learning**
  - Learning about context
  - Varied learning situations, contexts and environments
  - Policy, political and organisational contexts
  - Diverse challenges
    - E.g. Poverty, HIV/Aids, dealing with diversity, promoting inclusivity, environmental sustainability

MRTEQ Competences

- Must know:
  - how to teach their subject(s) and how to select, determine the sequence and pace content in accordance with both subject and learner needs.
  - who their learners are and how they learn; they must understand their individual needs and tailor their teaching accordingly.
  - how to communicate effectively in general, as well as in relation to their subject(s), in order to mediate learning.
- Must understand diversity in the South African context in order to teach in a manner that includes all learners.
- Must be able to identify learning or social problems and work in partnership with professional service providers
- Must be able to manage classrooms effectively across diverse contexts in order to ensure a conducive learning environment.

Different models of teacher education on inclusion

- "We appear not to have a coherent and commonly acknowledged set of theoretical and pedagogical models to inform initial teacher education for inclusive education in a South African context"
  (Dr. Whitty Green - Chief Director: Teacher Education and Development at DHET, 2016)

- Infused/Embedded model
  - Inclusive Education embedded in educational studies
  - Inclusive education embedded in subject studies

- Additional model
  - Separate modules

The Teaching and Learning Development Capacity Improvement Programme (TLDCIP) (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET] and Department of Basic Education[DBE])

- Strengthening University Teaching and Research in Education (SUTARiE) Project

- Teacher Education for Early Childhood Care and Education (TEECE) Project

- Primary Teacher Education (PrimTEd) Project

- Teacher Education for Inclusive Teaching (TEfIT) Project & Teacher Education for Special Needs Education (TESNE) Project

- Support the establishment of at least three university-based centres of specialisation

  – visually impaired,

  – education for the hearing impaired, and

  – education for the intellectually impaired,

Symposium: Teacher Education for Inclusion

- North-West University Vaal Triangle Campus – Optentia Research Focus area
  - October 2015
- Aim:
  - To provide an update on international as well as national research advances
- Secondary objective
  - to establish collaboration networks on how to ensure that research on teacher education can change practice
- Result
  - Collaborative partnerships
    - Individuals
    - HEI's and NGO's

Workshop with all universities (DHET)

- February 2016
  - All 23 universities
  - Analysing ITE programmes with regard to inclusive education
  - Very different
    - Terminology
    - Programme compilation

EU funded project

- Teacher Education project
  - VVOB
  - North-West University
  - University of Witwatersrand
  - University of the Free State
- Improving teacher education training programmes
  - Inclusive Education infused

Current NWU B Ed programme
Intermediate (Grade 4-6) and Senior/FET phases (Grade 7-12)

- Four specific subjects of a total of fifty-four modules

- One module – second year

- Two modules – third year

- One module - fourth year – only Vaal campus

- Topics:
    - Educational psychology,
    - human development,
    - health-promoting schools
    - psycho-social dynamics of a classroom.
    - barriers to learning

- Foundation Phase – Learner support modules over three years

ADDITIONAL MODEL

Current NWU B Ed programme Intermediate and Senior/FET phases

- Didactics and Practicum
  - Methodology modules address a variety of teaching strategies.
  - Schools are selected by the students themselves.
  - Encouraged to choose different schools for each of their practicum periods in order to get exposure to different social as well as learning and teaching contexts.
  - Not compulsory to do practical teaching periods at special or full-service schools or in special classes
  - A few students do so voluntarily.

New B Ed curriculum

- Still separate modules on educational psychology and inclusive education – important for theoretical depth

- Dealing with diversity is integrated into all module outcomes

- Learner support – elective for Senior/FET phase

- Didactics integrated with major subjects

- Foundation Phase – Learner support now infused with Life Skills, Mathematics and Languages

RESEARCH

Reflections of 4th year ITE students on Vaal Triangle Campus of NWU (Nel & Engelbrecht, in process)

- **Attitudes and awareness**
  - Positive awareness - realise that learners come into the classroom with a range of diverse cultural, family and socio-economic circumstances as well as different learning styles, and therefore have a diversity of learning needs
  - an attitude of exclusion about the feasibility of inclusive education. "*… I thought teaching was all about teaching the learners rather than being concerned about their needs*".
    - large classroom numbers,
    - limited teaching time to complete the curriculum
    - handling discipline
    - behaviour problems
    - Second language learning

Reflections of students continue

- **Attitudes and awareness**
  - They emphasized that the curriculum of initial teacher education programmes must have specialist modules for those student teachers who want to teach "*learners belonging in special education*
- Walton and Rusznyak (2013) found the following about practicum in 'special' schools.
  - Promotes understanding of diversity
  - Notice aspects of pedagogy that had been less visible to students during previous practicum in 'mainstream' schools.
  - Attention is drawn to the value of multiple representations of core concepts, lesson pacing and behaviour management in responding to learning differences.

Reflections of students continue

- **Depth of modules**
  - Students regard the theoretical depth of the modules on inclusive education and educational psychology as generally adequate.
  - It helped them to understand that the principles of inclusive education are based on human rights and equality and
  - that is why inclusive education is accepted globally, as well as in South Africa, as the most appropriate education approach
  - Methodology subjects – taught them about a variety of teaching strategies

Reflections of students continue

- **Suggestions for improving teacher education**
  - analysing a broader selection of case studies (i.e. on different intrinsic and extrinsic barriers to learning),
  - being capacitated to plan and implement curriculum and assessment modifications (through lesson plans, presentations, case studies and role plays),
  - spending more time and thus gaining more teaching experience in diverse school communities examining and applying the concepts and strategies learned in their university-based programme.

Reflections of students continue

- **Suggestions for improving teacher education**
  - more practical weeks at full service schools and special schools
  - modules on inclusive education and barriers to learning should be introduced from the first year and
  - must also be integrated into the major subjects' curriculums.
  - They asserted that if they had known earlier in their training what inclusive education was all about and how it links to the teaching of their own school subjects, they would have been better prepared for the practicum periods.
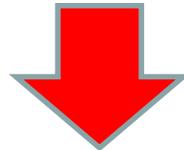
Discussion

- Training did create a deeper awareness that all learners should be accommodated and respected equally in the classroom irrespective of their different learning needs
- Behaviour does not necessarily emanate from an awareness (Arbuthnott 2016; Ballard 2013)
  - Personal and contextual factors – obstacles

Inclusive education not practicable

Medical model entrenched = special education

Additional model prevails

Discussion continues

- Old recurring finding
  - Practical application (e.g. the use of case studies)
    - Helps to better understand the theory
  - Better preparation for the practicum still needs urgent attention

Reflections from in-service teachers (e.g. Eloff, & Kgwete, 2012; Nel, et al. 2014; Sayed, & Ahmed, 2015; Makhalemele & Nel, 2016; Payne-van Staden, 2016)

What are the challenges that ITE students need to be prepared for:

- Large classroom numbers
- Not enough and appropriate resources and learning material
- Inadequate training
- Restricted financial resources
- Limited and inadequate support from education departments
- Curriculum changes
- Inflexible curriculum
- Discipline problems
- Learning needs to diverse
- Home backgrounds
- Poor parent support
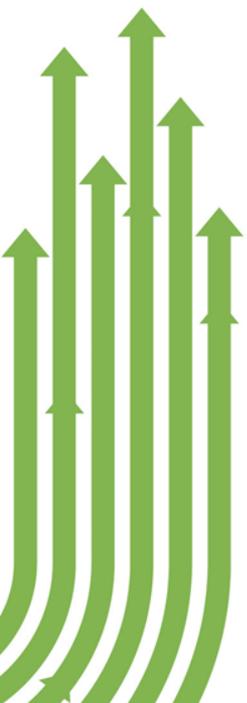- Second language learning

Recommendations

- Needed:
- HEI's –
  - Infused/Embedded teacher education programme for inclusion
  - Instill the belief that all learners can learn (provide knowledge and skills also)
  - Inclusive pedagogy (a variety of teaching, learning and assessment strategies to address a diversity of needs)
  - Knowledge and broad range of skills
    - The content
    - Flexible lesson planning
    - How the classroom should be organised and managed
    - The methods and processes used in teaching.
    - How to use and analyse appropriate learning materials and equipment
    - How learning is assessed to ensure that assessment *for*, *as* and *of* learning takes place
  - Identification, assessment and support of learners who experience barriers to learning
  - Technology

Recommendations continue

- Crucial for HEI's
  - Deep understanding
  - Well-developed skills
  - Belief in self

- Schools
  - Development of craft knowledge
    - knowledge learned from experience

Recommendations continue

- A mentorship programme - to develop craft knowledge
    - In-service teachers - induction and mentoring
        - pre-service as well as novice teachers
    - Professional learning schools
    - Full-service schools
- In-depth workshops by knowledgeable and expert trainers
    - Trainers need to be trained well
- Online courses

Thank you
Dankie
Kea le boha