Partnerships in Teacher Education - Empty Rhetoric?

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Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.

quotespedia.info  Henry Ford
“Teacher education programmes should draw on teachers' own experience and seek to foster cross-disciplinary and collaborative approaches, so that education institutions and teachers regard it as part of their task to work in cooperation with relevant stakeholders such as colleagues, parents and employers” (The Council of the European Union, 2014/C 183/05).
Partnership - definition

A relationship between individuals or groups that is characterized by mutual cooperation and responsibility, as for the achievement of a specified goal.


**Conditions:**
- Create a bond of trust and demonstrate openness
- Work as a team, for consensus and consultation
- Respect the organizational mission of each partner
- Respect the expectations and limits of each partner
- Share power, risks and responsibilities
- Encourage commitment and permanency from the stakeholders

[http://spvm.qc.ca/en/service/1_5_3_1_definition-partenariat.asp](http://spvm.qc.ca/en/service/1_5_3_1_definition-partenariat.asp)
Partnerships in Teacher Education

Partnerships in teacher education

- Other faculties/disciplines
- Students
- Teaching profession/practice field
- International/national HEI institutions
- Policy makers
- Society
Teacher education - four main components

- Subject/discipline
- The teaching of that discipline (subject didactics)
- Pedagogy
- Teaching practice
Teacher knowledge - a combination of all four components (PCK- Shulman, 1987).

The combination is enacted in teachership (Hansén, 2008).

When acting in/on a teaching situation, decision making is made out of a mixture of all.


Do the agents of the various components form a true partnership, respect each other’s expertise and pursue the same goal? Or, is it only in the rhetoric?
We should start looking for partnerships with other professional education programs (medicine, social workers, clinical psychology, police forces, etc.):

• Practice components
• Theory and practice challenge
• What does it mean to be a professional?
What would happen if.....

we treated the students as someone whose opinion mattered (Fullan, 1991, p.170)

or

looked for an alternative approach to school (teacher education) improvement - through listening to and acting on what students have to say about learning in school (to become a teacher) (Rudduck, 1999, p. 41)?
Practice – Theory Approach

Practice

Theory

Reflective practice

Personal practice theory

Students

Kari Smith
The keyword is ownership

Move away from what students shall be learning to what they shall become (Priestly & Biesta, 2014)

Students

Student’s choice

Teacher Educator’s choice

Uniform core curriculum (standards)

Teacher Educator Assessment

Student action-research
What does this approach require of teacher educators?

A very high level of practical and theoretical knowledge

- Less pre-prepared theoretical lectures
- Informed spontaneous teaching—using students’ practical cases to introduce the theory (teachable moments, adaptive teaching)
- Flexible reading lists

It is all about teacher educators’ professionalism!

Do we really view students as equal partners— or do we involve them on our premises? Is the talk about partnership only in the rhetoric?

The program walks its talks (Ellen Moir)!
Teacher education

A career-long education!

Pre-initial

Providing professional teacher knowledge (key)

Initial

Qualifying as professionals-

Induction

Professional growth

In-service
Kunnskap for en bedre verden

(Students)

Subject experts

Methodologists

Other teachers

Teaching profession/practice field

Teacher educator

Pedagogues

Peer-students

School principal

School mentor

School coordinator

Subject experts

Other teachers

Pedagogues

Subject experts

Peer-students

School principal

School mentor

School coordinator

Teaching profession/practice field
Why is practice important?

The overwhelming evidence of a decade of research on teacher knowledge is that knowledge of teaching is acquired and developed by the personal experience of teaching.

(Munby, Russell & Martin, 2001, p. 897).
Schools are our main partners

- Shared overall aim
- Shared responsibilities for educating teachers
- Practice and theory intertwined in teaching
- Complementary expertise,......
- .....however, not sufficient respect for each other’s expertise
Expertise

First-order expertise

Second-order expertise (Murray & Male, 2005)

Same goal - educating new teachers
Forms of school-university partnerships

- Practice schools
- Partner schools
- University schools

Separated | Co-operative
Practice schools UoB

- Theory and methodology at university
- Practice in schools:
  - Mentored by school teachers
  - Visits by university lecturers
  - Final assessment- university lecturers
  - Meeting prior to practice period - information
Partner schools at UoB

- Renewed application and contract every three years
- Practice schools for students
- Schools committed to accept certain number of students
- Schools committed to provide time for mentor education
- Free mentor education (30 ECTS) – Profession within a profession.
- Joint R&D projects
- Professional learning seminars
University Schools at NTNU- (university hospitals)

Partners
University
Schools (few selected)
Municipality

aim
Strengthen practice component in teacher education
Develop practice oriented R&D projects
Empower school and university based teacher educators
Enhance school development and teacher education
Create networks for sharing knowledge beyond partnership
How

• Proximity of
  • Theory and practice
  • Education and practice
  • Education and research intertwined
• Shared positions
• Striving for excellence
• University schools as educational light houses
**Intentionality:** When broken expectations and tensions concerning identity and autonomy norms are overcome, the development of common values can catalyse niches of democracy in partnership.

**Unpredictability:** When unexpected occurrences are experienced as challenges, then a dual thrust can catalyse niches of mutual learning.

**Flexibility:** When the limits of tolerance founded on habits and rituals are liberated in imaginary contexts, then freedom and new ideas can catalyse niches of innovation.

**Vitality:** When conflicts between belonging and autonomy are overcome, then curiosity might catalyse sustained engagement, courage and creativity in partnerships. (Halvorsen, 2014, Ph.D. dissertation)
Professional knowledge of all teacher educators

- Structural/practical knowledge
- Theoretical knowledge
- Inter-personal knowledge and skills

Bridging Practice and Theory
Lots of opportunities, not always fully exploited

Often competitors, not partners, however,....

- Complementary expertise
- Joint research projects
- Joint professional learning activities
- Sharing teaching staff
- Sharing students- joint degrees
- One voice in dialogue with policy makers
Other national/international HEI institutions

• Network of 23 teacher education institutions (7 universities and 16 university colleges)

• Each institution is committed to a self-decided number of doctoral students

• Research profile:
  - Subject teaching methodology (Didactics)
  - Teachers’ mandate in society
  - The teaching profession and professional development

Beyond the rhetoric—we depend on each other

National Research School in Teacher Education
It is a small world........

- Staff exchange
- Student exchange
- Joint degrees
- International associations, events
- International research projects
- International networks pursuing the same goal
InFo-TED - an international forum with representatives from Belgium, Ireland, Israel, the Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom and the USA working to promote professional development of teacher educators.

General aims:

• To develop and implement a knowledge base of teacher educators.
• To translate the knowledge base into an international professional development programme for teacher educators.
• To develop and implement supportive guidelines for induction and professional learning programmes of teacher educators.
• To explore how an enduring international supportive structure can be implemented for professional development activities for teacher educators.

Beyond the rhetoric - we share a common aim, we invest, we learn from each other.
Implicit partnership with society

Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another.

G. K. Chesterson
Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today.
Malcolm X

- Our students will still function in a world 60-80 years from now.
- That world is unknown to us.
- Did my grandmother know, and will my grandchildren know, what these gadgets are used for........
Kunnskap for en bedre verden
Teacher education needs to prepare teachers who teach for the future by

- Encouraging creativity
- Stressing informed improvisation in teaching
- Teaching about learning how to learn
- Ask the tough questions beyond rhetoric, and support students in doing the same
Concluding remarks

• Education involves multiple agents
• Same goal, fragmented structure
• Partnerships with agents strengthen education
• Education for the future- a huge challenge
• We need to plan and work together
• But, too often we do not genuinely act on our politically correct declarations

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgoayVcTm54
References

• Darling-Hammond, L. (2012). *Powerful Teacher Education: Lessons from Exemplary Programs*. John Wiley and Sons,


