

### **Editorial**

This issue of the TEAN journal brings together a wide range of practitioner research studies by teacher educators and teachers. A majority of studies reported here are by teacher educators from across the UK, but these are enriched by international studies from Nepal, Israel, and The Faroes. The editorial board of the journal welcome international submissions and the open access nature of the journal provides unlimited international access and impact.

The first paper reports on a useful and forward-looking collaborative inquiry in which Helen Coker and colleagues investigate the experiences and professional learning of teacher educators during the 'digital pivot' in teacher education and in school-teaching due to the Covid 19 pandemic. They emphasise the need to focus on overlaps for teacher educators between content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and technological knowledge. The analysis foregrounded the significance of teacher educators' contextual knowledge and the challenges of building strong relationships, trust, and knowledge of their student teachers through online interactions.

The second paper also uses a form of collaborative inquiry but in this case working with 5- to 6-year-old children as collaborative researchers to investigate children's recall of key ideas in Primary school science. Based on her analysis, Megan Fox argues that to support young children's retention of scientific knowledge, it is important to use challenging retrieval tasks whilst minimising literacy constraints. The theoretical framework underpinning this study is partly based on somewhat dated and lab-based studies, but this kind of investigation, in this case directly involving children, arguably helps to build a more realistic appraisal of the practical value of strategies informed by cognitive science perspectives.

In the third paper Sunil Pokhrel brings together teachers' use of technology and the teaching of science by investigating secondary school science teachers' engagement with technology in Nepal. The analysis of qualitative data generated through interview with four teachers on their self-reported use of technology provides insight into the way teachers use technology and the frustrations the teachers feel around use of video to illustrate key concepts and experiments in Physics. Given the overwhelming weight of published educational research that is based in economically developed western nations, this study provides useful insight into the challenges faced by colleagues in economically developing national contexts.

In paper four Colin Christie investigates the use of remote observations of teaching (classroom video based, either synchronous or asynchronous) within teacher education with college lecturers in Scotland. Data were generated using a questionnaire and focus groups with university-based teacher educators and college-based co-tutors. Christie reports a number of drawbacks, including the difficulty of getting a 'feel' for the impact on learning and of building informal connection with the partnership college. Benefits, in addition to less travel and easier

scheduling, perhaps surprisingly included a perceived increase in the openness and depth of post-lesson discussions. This paper contributes to understanding of the power of video for classroom analysis in the context of coaching but also for classroom-based research.

A practitioner research study by teacher educators is reported in paper five. Colette Ankers de Salis, Gina Gretton, and Christine Smith investigate how their student teachers make links between their teaching of 'phonics' and learning to read for purpose or pleasure. The analysis worryingly suggests that many students do not make these links. Significant issues identified included student teachers experiencing constrained practice in some school placements but also their weak subject knowledge around learning to read. As these student teachers were in the third year of an undergraduate degree programme it seems disappointing that they did not have a firmer grounding in learning to read sufficient to strongly question practice in their placement schools.

In paper six, Michal Shani, Pninat Tal and Ilana Margolin investigate college-school partnerships in Israel. They argue for the need to develop the role of clinical supervisors, school-based teacher educators, so that they become 'academia-school partnership leaders'. The most common current role adopted by clinical supervisors is to be focused almost entirely on the student teachers, which might seem sensible but it ignores the potential for impact on the professional learning of teachers more widely across the school from its involvement in teacher education.

The small-scale research study, reported in paper seven evaluates a literacy book club for primary teachers set up by Geraldine Maggenis-Clarke in Northern Ireland. Her analysis of the book club as a form of professional learning identified four themes whose titles and brief definitions deserve mention here due to their significance as well as their alliteration: *Affiliation*: the need for professional comradeship; *Affirmation*: the comfort of being recognised as knowledgeable in the field; *Authenticity*: recognition of effective practices that align with one's professional judgements; and *Agency*: the degree of progress possible as dictated by the relative congruence between what is offered in [professional development] and the demands of real classrooms. The study provides some insight into the possibilities of professional learning that is empowering for teachers perhaps due to its seemingly informal format that allows a critical perspective.

The eighth paper reports on a study by teacher educators Clare Lawrence, Sheine Peart and Hadiza Kere Abdulrahman that focused on the preparation of student teachers for teaching the diversity of children found in many contemporary secondary classrooms in England. The student teachers researched and prepared learning materials that reflected the contributions of the African diaspora. The study evaluates the impact of this activity on their professional learning and values. This study helps to illustrate the broad concepts of decolonising the curriculum and strategies for anti-racist teacher education by evaluating a concrete and practical example.

As teacher educators we can learn much from proactive and ambitious change initiatives in challenging contexts, which points to paper nine within this issue. In their practitioner research in Israel Sharon Hardof-Jaffe and Michal Shani provide insight into the characteristics of teacher education programmes that aim to develop teachers as change agents with the

capacity to lead socio-educational change in schools and communities. One of the teacher educator participants, referring to working with their student teachers, explains 'The main challenge is to involve them in what is important rather than urgent.' The study highlights the way that the programme has to struggle to gain the attention of student teachers, who understandably tend to focus on the immediate demands of planning lessons and managing the class. A strong message comes through the analysis of the way these programmes foreground collaboration and community, positioning teaching as a collaborative endeavour working towards social justice.

When working on a teacher education programme with largely white student teachers in England, it is perhaps too easy to ignore, or at best pay lip service to, the urgent and important issues of decolonising the curriculum and anti-racist education. Within such a context, two teacher educator practitioner researchers, Sophie Vazour and Laura London, report in paper ten on their practical intervention to address these significant issues with secondary school student teachers. The teacher education programme included sessions on decolonising the curriculum and on anti-racist education. Student teacher participants preparing as teachers of history and modern languages were involved in taking this forward during their placements in partnership schools, for example developing teaching resources and teaching in ways that promote anti-racism. Data were generated by student teachers completing reflective diaries and the teacher educator researchers keeping research journals. This study provides useful insight into the practical reform of teacher education programmes and complements recent research (Smith & Lander, 2023) and national frameworks such as that developed in Scotland ([https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media\\_934784\\_smxx.pdf](https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_934784_smxx.pdf)).

In paper eleven, Rosemarie Hill uses the concept of 'epistemic quality' (Hudson, 2019) in her study of how primary teachers find a balance between the emphasis on 'delivering' content to cover a knowledge-based national curriculum, monitored by school inspectors, and the central role of inquiry in ways of knowing as an historian. Her interview-based qualitative study identified three themes: immersion in history; engaging with evidence, and considering different perspectives through inquiry-based approaches. This study highlights the resistance of teachers when working within the high accountability and centralised policy context in England. It raises questions about how we prepare teachers to develop such teacher agency. If we value epistemic quality in lessons with school students, then it also seems a valuable concept for application in teacher education, so that our taught sessions promote the development of research literacy by our student teachers.

In paper twelve, Eyvind Elstad, Hans Harryson, Knut-Andreas Abben Christophersen and Are Turmo investigate the time spent on-task by student teachers completing their teacher education programme in the Faroe Isles. They argue that current expectations are low and that this is a valid concern for quality of teacher education in their national context. Using a student teacher survey and a quantitative analysis, the researchers argue that student teachers' perceptions of study requirements helps to explain their time-on-task. The position of teacher education in The Faroes, with a distinctive language and relatively small population, make it an interesting national context with lessons for us all around teacher recruitment and high-quality initial teacher education.

With a mix of educational research papers plus critical evaluation of innovative practice this issue of the journal accurately reflects the aims and focus of the Teacher Education Advancement Network (TEAN). We consider scholarly practitioner research and professional inquiry as being core elements of an effective pedagogy for initial teacher education and ongoing professional learning for experienced teachers.

### **References**

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