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Reflections on the scholarship of teaching and learning

Mpsanyana Makgahlela,[1] Tholene Sodi,[2] Mahlapahlapana Themane,[3]

[1]Department of Psychology, Faculty of Humanities, University of Limpopo, Polokwane, Limpopo Province, South Africa
[2]SAMRC-DSI/NRF-UL SARChI Chair in Mental Health and Society, Faculty of Humanities, University of Limpopo, Polokwane, Limpopo Province, South Africa
[3]Department of Education Studies, Faculty of Humanities, University of Limpopo, Polokwane, Limpopo Province, Republic of South Africa
Corresponding editor, email: mahlapahlapana.themane@ul.ac.za

Globally, researchers in the scholarship of teaching are increasingly expected to keep up with new developments in the conceptualisation of teaching. Teaching has always faced a myriad of challenges, now recently, with Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a typical example of such. While AI presents an opportunity, it has also ushered in new challenges to teaching. To accommodate these demands, once again there is a need for a paradigm shift (Khun, 1970). Long held conceptions of what constitutes teaching are undoubtedly under the spotlight. South Africa and other countries in the Global South are hard pressed to respond to these challenges.

Much of the education discourse on teaching in South Africa today, is informed by these challenges and chaos that turn places of learning and development to be unwelcoming. These challenges include student protests for curriculum transformation and free access to education, and difficulties in coping with blended teaching. What is often lacking in tackling these challenges, however, is a deep analysis and understanding of the complexities of teaching environments, and an interpretation of how researchers engage with these challenges within higher education and schooling environments.

Papers in this Special Issue seek to highlight the need for such a deep analysis. Three themes emerged from the papers, inclusivity and diversity, social cultural context, and the use of ICT for teaching. Papers by Ndlovu, on factors inhibiting and enabling the implementation of inclusive education in selected South African primary schools; Ratau, on challenges faced by secondary school teachers in the implementing of inclusive education in Rakgwadi Circuit, Sekhukhune South; Moagi, on the exploration of teacher's experiences in the implementation of inclusive education in mainstream schools of Thabina Circuit, South Africa; and Serero, on teaching visually impaired learners through ICT: learning from teachers' perceptions in a Full-Service School, highlight the need for teaching that accommodates diversity and inclusivity.

On the other hand, papers by Masvopo, on student activism and the decolonial discourse in South African Higher Education: Analysis of the #FeesMustFall Documentary (2018); Tshiovhe on the challenges experienced by student teachers during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in their teaching practice; Nyapisi et al, on the schooling experiences of learners from low socioeconomic status backgrounds in Lesotho; Brown, on navigating between curriculum and sociocultural contestation when teaching sexual diversity in Namibian classrooms. demonstrate how teaching intractably connected to social context of both teachers and students, and that the science of teaching should be connected to its social milieu.

The other theme is on the advent of technologies in the science teaching. A paper by Meyers touches on the usefulness of a blended learning model for teaching and the experiences of first-year tertiary students at selected universities in South Africa. It is concluded by recommending careful and in-depth design, proper training, and adequate implementation and evaluation of blended learning to ensure the sustainability and adoption of blended learning in all educational

formats. A paper by Molapo focuses on support strategies to effectively implement CAPS guidelines to teaching practices in South African schools. The author recommends improving the implementation of CAPS guidelines by enhancing continuous professional development for all subjects and promoting collaborative teaching. It highlights the role of school leadership in monitoring practices and suggests using a structured tool for subject leaders to assess CAPS integration. Mathiba explores the integration of Project-Based Learning in secondary school commercial curriculum and concludes that it is crucial to integrate theoretical subject content with practical application in the teaching of commercial subjects. Accordingly, project-based learning should be adopted as an instructional strategy to effectively implement a learner-centred approach in the delivery of secondary school commercial curricula.

These papers underscore the need for a paradigm shift in the scholarship of teaching. We hope that this volume will spark conversations, elicit new interdisciplinary discourses and collaborations, change the consequential questions we ask and expand the repertoires of theory on the scholarship of teaching. We also hope that the volume will help inspire the growth of the scholarship of teaching.

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