Challenges Experienced by Pre-Service Teachers in the Post-Graduate Certificate in Education Programme at a South African University

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ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to better understand the complex nature of tertiary learning by exploring challenges experienced by a group of students who have enrolled for the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) programme as a pathway to a teaching career. This study's aim is to identify challenges experienced by pre-service teachers in the PGCE programme at a South African university with an attempt to test a research instrument that captures such challenges and to determine how the identified challenges vary among different fields of study. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from 150 pre-service teachers enrolled in the PGCE programme at a South African university in 2012. Data was analysed using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and descriptive statistics. Findings of this study showed that challenges experienced by pre-service teachers can be classified into 3 categories: namely, challenges related to terminologies and learning style used in education, challenges related to the structure of the PGCE programme and challenges associated with the academic background from the undergraduate qualification. This study further revealed that most of the challenges were reported among commerce and science pre-service teachers. Findings of this study are important in understanding flexible educational planning for the PGCE students at the university.

Keywords: Challenges, Pre-Service Teachers, PGCE Programme, University, South Africa.

Introduction

During the apartheid era, education in South Africa, experienced an unequal and discriminatory period. Following the end of apartheid in 1994 there was a transformation of the teachers' education through the development and implementation of a new national curriculum aimed at readdressing the societal imbalances caused by apartheid (Department of Education, DoE, 2012). In essence, the notion of a national curriculum as a new concept coincided with the birth of a new democracy and also brought about a change in the fragmented teachers education and training system that was characterised as disparate and uncoordinated (South African DoE, 1997). The problem with teachers' education was the poor quality of teachers' training, the high cost of study and maintenance by institutional bodies, as well as the lack of coordination (South African Department of Basic education, Higher education and Training, 2011). Several changes had to be made in order to improve the education system in South Africa. These changes include among others, knowledge and skill development of existing teachers, and as well as training new teachers.

Based on this aspect, the South African teachers' education introduced the postgraduate teachers' education (PGCE) as one of the requirements and standards of becoming a teacher in a South African school. The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development (NPFTED) in South Africa stipulates that the minimum standards that pre-service teachers must have before they can be accredited as teachers in the country is to have a Bachelor's degree in education or a PGCE (Nyaumwe et al., 2010). The PGCE programme is developed for people who have a degree in other fields outside of education, but want to follow the profession of teaching. It is a one year full time course, or can be done as a part-time course over a period of two years (MacBeath, 2011; Nash & Norwich, 2011). The full-time and part-time programmes are

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designed for people with sufficient subject knowledge at a degree level so that the focus of the course is on pedagogy rather than the subject content (MacBeath, 2011; Norwich & Nash, 2011; House, 2010).

Thus, PGCE students have to acquire teaching methodology and conduct teaching practices in a period of one year. This requires a huge adjustment which comes with different challenges on the students who come into the programme with different backgrounds. These challenges are fully investigated in the South African context and this study aims to fill this gap by exploring the challenges experienced by pre-service teachers in the PGCE programme at a specific South African university. The specific objectives of this study are to test a research instrument (scale) that captures challenges experienced by pre-service teachers in the South African context and determine how the identified challenges vary among different fields of study and among full and part time students.

Literature Review

The PGCE programmes is mostly designed to ensure that pre-service teachers, with an undergraduate non-education degree, receive training in academic and practical aspects of teaching (Heeralal, 2014; Young & Knestricit, 2012; Ostnelli, 2009). The module in the PGCE programme includes developing the ability of student teachers to evaluate research that underpins current practice in teaching and learning; developing necessary practical pedagogical skills and developing the ability to reflect on their teaching and learning strategies (Lim et al., 2009). Literature studies showed that pre-service teachers experience different challenges. For example, Sims & Walsh (2008) argue that pre-service teachers bring preconceived notions of the "apprenticeship of observation to their professional learning". Sims & Walsh (2008) suggest that pre-service teachers must recognize how familiarity and frame of reference affect pre-service teacher learning.

Pre-service teachers face challenges during the teaching placements due to the fact that providers of the programme relied on the school placement to provide learning for them about people with learning difficulties and disabilities (Kennedy, 1999; Norwich & Nash, 2011; Young & Knestricit, 2012). This clearly indicates that the pre-service teachers are not being taught or trained on inclusive education and when they go for their teaching placement they encounter challenges on how to handle students with learning disabilities. Meanwhile, a study by Keengwe (2010) showed that the issue of teaching in a diverse class is one of the challenges pre-service teacher experience. Furthermore, Moore (2008) identified that pre-service teachers were facing challenges in science education within diverse classrooms because courses and other opportunities that reflect on their identities and privileges before teaching children from diverse backgrounds were not offered to them in their initial teachers training programme. Moore (2008) also suggests that pre-service teachers must reveal, confront, challenge, and change cultural models that impede the development of equitable classrooms as they learn about diversity in teaching.

In her study, Ostnelli (2008) identified that the choice of most pre-service teachers to become professional teachers is based on a second or third choice and not on the basis of authentic motivations. This is in line with, and similar to the findings of Roness (2011) and Roness & Smith (2009), which showed that some of the pre-service teachers lose focus during the cause of study and drop out from the teaching programme due to lack of motivation. Roness (2011) further explained that pre-service teachers still found it difficult to understand and bridge the gap between theory and practice while teaching. More so, the study by Roness (2011) has showed that pre-service teachers are not sufficiently prepared to teach during teaching practice.

Shwarz et al. (2008) revealed that pre-service teachers have various challenges of using curriculum materials for effective teaching. For instance, on the mathematical knowledge for teaching in planning and evaluating instruction on what pre-service teachers can learn, Morris et al. (2009) found that although the pre-service teachers had a major challenge with spontaneously applying a strategy of unpacking learning goals to plan for or evaluate teaching and learning. Sims & Walsh (2008) also identified challenges related to limited classroom experience. They linked this to the limited classroom experience, pre-service teachers were unable to generate meaningful questions in the actual classroom practice; the issue of goal setting, lesson planning and as well as understanding a variety of teaching and learning styles were some of the challenges these teachers face.

Similarly, Anderson & Pickeral (2000) identified lack of time for teacher educators to plan and implement service learning, an already overcrowded curriculum and the lack of alignment of service learning with faculty roles, rewards and institutional priorities as the challenges pre-service teachers experience. Kandlbinder & Peseta (2009) also concluded that PGCE students faced challenges which include new discipline language, discourses and rules of operation. Kandlbinder & Peseta (2009) highlighted that PGCE courses operate within a particular conceptual framework and that its unfamiliarity is a pedagogical challenge to some students.

In the South African context, the study conducted by Dos Reis (2012) showed that pre-service teachers experience challenges with their mentors during their teaching practice. For example, conflicting role expectation, being compelled to emulate the mentor, being exploited by their mentors, language barriers, working in a dysfunctional school, not trained for classroom management and adapting to change in the curriculum and educational system were some of the challenges faced by pre-service teachers according to Dos Reis (2012). Heeralal (2014) concurred with Dos Reis and identified several factors such as a lack of classroom management skills, time management, dealing with diversity, lesson preparation and lesson presentation as some of the challenges experienced by pre-service teachers in South Africa. On the other hand, Holtman (2010) poses that a major challenge faced by pre-service teachers in the post-apartheid South African educational system is that they had to familiarise themselves with the new content in the curriculum which they were probably not exposed to during and after their training. Therefore, this study shows that there is paucity in available literature pertaining to the challenges experienced by pre-service teachers in the PGCE Programme in South Africa and Africa in general.

Methodology
Research Approach and Instrument

This study employed quantitative research design with the use of self-administered survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed based on the knowledge gained from the existing literature and comprised three sections. The first section captured demographic information of the participants. The second section comprised items on pre-identified challenges, which were scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). This scale was tested in terms of validity and internal consistency. The third section included open comments to additional challenges (not in the scale) experienced by the PGCE students.

Sample selection and data analysis

A sample of 150 full time and part-time students was selected from a population of 370 students doing PGCE during 2012 at a selected South African university in the KwaZulu-Natal province. Random sampling, to ensure that each element in the population had a fair and equal chance of being part of the sample, was used to recruit the participants. Data were analysed through the use of Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and descriptive statistics, mainly cross-tabulation. The first phase of the data analysis was to assess the construct validity of scale developed to capture PGCE challenges. Cronbach Alpha was utilised to assess the reliability measured by internal consistency of each item in the developed scale (Cronbach, 1951). PCA, with Oblimin rotation, was performed to estimate number of factors. Scree plot and eigenvalues were analysed to determine the number of factors.

Participants' demographic information

The demographic information of the participants shows that of 150 participants, 43.6 percent were between 21 and 25 years old, 33.8 percent were between 26 and 30 years old; while only 2.3 percent were below 21 years old. More female students (67.7%) than male students (32.3%) participated in the study. Race distribution showed that the majority (63.9%) of participants were Africans. A great percentage of the participants were from urban areas (58.6%), while only 41.4 percent were from rural areas. The majority of participants (77.4%) had a bachelor's degree, while a small number (3%) of participants had a Master's Degree. Finally, the majority (61.7%) of PGCE students were from humanities studies, 27.8

percent were in commerce studies; while 10.5 percent were in Science studies.

Results and Discussion

The analysis of the results was done in two parts. The first analysis involved the validation of the scale of challenges experienced by pre-service teachers, as proposed by this study. This involved the validation of the scale, the estimation of the number of factors in this scale and the analysis of how the challenges vary in different subjects of specialisation. The second part of the analysis discussed the additional challenges specifically mentioned by the participants of this study.

Validity and Factorability of the Used Scale

Based on the literature, a scale of eight statements focusing on the challenges experienced by pre-service teachers was developed. Before any analysis, this scale was tested in terms of validity and internal consistency. Cronbach Alphas for each of the eight items were above 0.70 and for overall internal consistency of all items combined, Cronbach's Alpha was 0.768. This implies that the scale, developed to capture challenges experienced by pre-service teachers, has acceptable internal consistency (DeVellis, 2012). The reliability of this scale is also confirmed by the mean inter-item correlations for items, which were in the recommended range from 0.2 to 0.4 (Pallant, 2013).

Having confirmed the validity of the measuring instrument, PCA, with Direct Oblimin rotation, was performed to estimate the number of components in the scale. PCA results, from a rotated component matrix (in Table 1), show that three components explaining 51.86% of the total variance in challenges were extracted. All eight items were loaded correctly on three components with eigenvalues larger than one. The scree plot (Figure not reported in this study) and parallel analysis also confirmed the extraction of three components. This implies that challenges experienced by PGCE students can be grouped into three categories namely, challenges related to terminologies and learning style used in education (3 items), the structure of the PGCE programme (3 items), and to a student's background (2 items). The measure of sampling adequacy reported a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) of 0.61 and a Bartlett's Test of sphericity which is significant at the 0.05 level of significance ($p = 0.001$), implying that the research instrument used for PCA was reliable.

Table 1: Factor loading for the rotated component matrix

Items	Component		
	1	2	3
I struggled with lesson planning	.716		
I found Teaching Practice (TP) very challenging	.623		
I struggled with terminologies used in education	.560		
I come in with in-depth knowledge of subject/area of specialisation		.796	
I lacked adequate training time to do my Teaching Practice		.771	
The time given to complete the PGCE programme is not enough			.779
PGCE should teach the subject content			.596
I struggled with shifting from previous programme to PGCE			.523

Discussion of Participants' Responses to Challenges in the Scale

Table 2 summarizes participants' responses to the eight questions grouped in three categories. In the categories of challenges related to terminologies and learning style of teaching used in education, at least 43 (13+30) percent of the participants disagreed that they did not face such challenges, 27.1 percent were neutral; while at least 29.8 (25.8+4) percent agreed that they faced these types of challenges. This is in line with findings by Kandlbinder & Peseta (2009) that unfamiliarity to new pedagogical language and terminology was a major challenge among PGCE students in 147 higher institutions in different countries. Surprisingly, 42.8 percent of participants disagreed with the statement that 'I did not find Teaching Practice (TP) very challenging', compared to 31.6 (27.1+4.5) percent who agreed with this statement. This is

contrary to the findings of other studies (Dos Reis, 2012; Nash & Norwich, 2010; Roness, 2011) which concluded that pre-service teachers were not sufficiently prepared to teach during TP. However, this does not imply that participants of this study were fully equipped by the TP, as evidenced by responses to the question of practical training which showed that students do not get enough practical exposure during TP. This is due to that fact that PGCE is condensed in one year and as a result, students do not spend enough time at school doing their TPs. This issue of limited time in TP and the PGCE as whole was also highlighted by Anderson & Pickeral (2000); Dos Reis (2012) and Heeralal (2014). This implies that one year might not be enough for a PGCE full time student to acquire the theories of teaching methodology and implement them during the TP.

Table 2: Participants responses to challenges (%)

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA
Challenges related to pedagogical discourse and operations	**13.0**	**30.0**	**27.1**	**25.8**	**4.0**
I struggled with lesson planning	12.8	32.3	30.0	22.6	2.3
I found TP very challenging	12	30.8	25.6	27.1	4.5
I struggled with terminologies used in education	14.3	27	25.6	27.8	5.3
Challenges related to students' background	**4.9**	**15.9**	**24.5**	**33.2**	**21.5**
I don't have in-depth knowledge of subject(s) of my teaching specialisation	2.3	14.3	26.3	33.0	24.1
Lack of adequate training time to do my TP	7.6	17.4	22.8	33.3	18.9
Challenges related to the structure of the PGCE	**21.3**	**22.0**	**25.3**	**19.0**	**12.4**
The time given to complete the PGCE is not enough	30.0	27.8	21.1	11.1	10.0
PGCE should teach the content of the subject to teach in high schools	9.0	6.0	27.8	31.6	25.6
Shifting from previous programme to PGCE was challenging	24.8	32.3	27.1	14.3	1.5

In the categories of challenges related to students' background, a high percentage of students (54.7%) agreed that they faced these challenges; while only 20.8 (4.9+15.9) per cent disagreed that they faced these challenges. This suggests that the students did not come with adequate knowledge of the subject they were being prepared to teach. This finding is similar to that of Shwarz et al. (2008) and Morris et al. (2009) and Spitzer (2009) which showed that pre-service teachers were not sufficiently equipped with the content of the subjects they were being trained to teach. This is a serious challenge because the PCGE programme assumes that students have adequate knowledge of the subject they specialise in. Although students are admitted into the PGCE programme based on the performance in the subject to specialise in; this finding suggests that these students still want to learn the subject content in the PGCE programme. Overall, students did not face challenges related to the structure of PGCE. However, the majority of students (57.2%) at least agreed with the statement that 'PGCE should teach the content of subjects for teaching specialisation; while only 15 (9+6) per cent disagreed with this statement. This indeed confirms the aforementioned finding that students did not come to PGCE with adequate knowledge of the subjects for teaching specialisation.

The Distribution of the Challenges' Categories in Full and Part Time Students

Descriptive information showed that 72.8 (91x 80) percent of part time PGCE students were working as teachers; suggesting that these part time students had more practical exposure than full time ones. Thus, it is vital to analyse whether part and full time students experienced the challenges differently. This section reports the distribution of the identified challenges among these two groups. Table 3 summarises the cross-tabulation of the three sub-scales of challenges among part time and full time students. Two categories, represented by "Yes" and "No" were used to indicate how participants

encountered the identified challenges. If a participant's average score for the sub-scale was above neutral, it means that such participant encountered the challenges in such sub-scale and this shown by "Yes" in Table 3. If a participant did not face the challenges in a specific sub-scale then a "No" is given. Thus, the distribution of the challenges among part and full time PGCE students was generated and the Pearson Chi-Square was used to test the following hypotheses:

- **Null hypothesis H₀**: Challenges in the specific sub-scale are similar among the full and part time students, and
- **Null hypothesis HA**: Challenges in the specific sub-scale are different among the full and part time students.

For the first sub-scale of challenges related to pedagogical discourse and operations, 31.8 percent of full time students encountered these challenges; while 62.2 percent did not encounter the challenges in this category. Within part time students, only 16.7 percent of them encountered these challenges. The number of full time students who encountered the challenges related to pedagogical discourse and operations is 15.1 (31.8-16.7) percent higher than that of part time students. This difference is statically significant at 0.1 significance level as shown by a p-vale of 0.058 which is less than 0.1. This means that the null hypothesis that challenges in this category are similar among the full and part time students is rejected; implying that the pedagogical discourse seems to be less challenging among part time students. The explanation behind this findings is that part time students were exposed to pedagogical terminologies, even before they enrol for the PGCE programme, as descriptive statistics shows that 72.8 percent of them were employed as teachers. Thus, challenges of unfamiliarity to new pedagogical language and terminology, explained by Kandlbinder & Peseta (2009) was less encountered by part time PGCE students.

Table 3: Distribution of the challenges within part and full time PGCE students

Challenges categories	**Full time**		**Part time**		**Pearson Chi-Square (P-values)**
	No	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	
Challenges related to pedagogical discourse and operations (%)	68.2	31.8	83.3	16.7	3.606 (0.058)
Challenges related to students' background (%)	43.5	56.5	39.6	60.4	0.196 (0.658)
Challenges related to the structure of the PGCE programme (%)	60.4	39.6	71.8	28.2	1.806 (.179)

For the sub-category of challenges related to students' background from previous qualifications, both part-time (60.4%) and full time (56.5%) students encountered these challenges. However, the encounter of these challenges appears to be slightly high (by 3.9%) among part time students. A low chi-square of 0.196 and a p-value of 0.658 (> 0.1) imply that the null hypothesis that challenges in this category are similar among the full and part time students cannot be rejected even at 0.1 significant level. This means that there was no difference on how part and full time students encountered challenges related to their academic background.

The number of participants who encountered the challenges related to the structure of the PGCE programme seems to be low in both full time (39.6%) and part time (28.2%), but this number is higher by 11.4 percent in full time students. The low chi-square of 1.806 and a p-value of 0.179 (> 0.1) imply that the null hypothesis that challenges in the category are similar among the full and part time students cannot be rejected even at 0.1 significant level. This means that there is no difference in distribution of challenges related to the structure of the PGCE programme among full and part time PGCE students. Thus, structural challenges such as not having adequate knowledge of the content of the subject to teach in high schools and not being given enough time to complete the PGCE programme seem to be encountered by both groups. This means that the challenges of not having adequate knowledge of the content of the subject to teach in high schools is common even among those PGCE students who are already teaching. Thus, further regular training to equip the teachers with more knowledge of the content of the subject they teach is needed to address this challenge.

The Distribution of the Challenges' Categories within Fields of Study

Challenges encountered by PGCE students may be affected by a student's field of study from their previous qualification. For example, a student shifting from pure science to education may not encounter these challenges similarly to a student from commerce or humanities studies. Thus, this section explores the distribution of the three challenges' categories within the three major fields of study namely, commerce, science and humanities studies. To achieve this, the following hypotheses were tested:

- **Null hypothesis H$_0$**: Challenges in the specific sub-scale are similar within the three major fields of study
- **Null hypothesis H$_A$**: Challenges in the specific sub-scale are different within the three major fields of study

Results from cross tabulation of the challenges' categories and field of study, in Table 4, show that the number of participants who encountered challenges related to students' background was high in commerce and science; while other two categories of challenges were low within all fields of studies. The number of participants who encountered challenges related to students' background was high within commerce studies (81.1%), followed by science studies (78.6%) and humanities studies (43.9%). A chi-square value of 17.201 and a p-value of 0.00 (< 0.00) imply that the null hypothesis that challenges in this category are similar in the three fields of studies is rejected at 0.01 significant level. This means that the encounter of the challenges related to students background from previous qualification differed within these three fields of studies. Thus, the challenges of not having in-depth knowledge of subject(s) of teaching specialisation and lack of adequate training time to do TP seemed to be very high among the science and commerce students. The plausible explanation behind this finding may be that commerce and science PGCE students were mostly trained to teach high/secondary school subjects, which require adequate understanding of the subject-content; while students from humanities were mostly trained to teach primary school subjects, which requires the basic understanding of the subject-content.

Table 4: **The cross-tabulation of the challenges' categories within fields of studies**

Challenges categories	Commerce		Science		Humanities		Pearson Chi-Square
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	(P-values)
Challenges related to pedagogical discourse and operations (%)	75.7	24.3	78.6	21.4	72.0	28.0	0.375 (0.829)
Challenges related to students' background (%)	18.9	81.1	21.4	78.6	56.1	43.9	17.201 (0.000)
Challenges related to the structure of the PGCE programme (%)	70.3	29.7	64.3	35.7	67.1	32.9	0.201 (0.904)

The number of students who encountered challenges related to pedagogical discourse was low within the three fields of studies (28% within humanities, 24.3% within commerce and 2.14% within science studies). A low chi-square of 0.375 and a high p-value of 0.89 (> 0.1) imply that the null hypothesis that challenges in this category are similar in the three fields of studies cannot be rejected at 0.1 significant level. Thus, the difference in the distribution of these challenges within the fields of studies is not statistically significant. Similarly, the difference in the distribution of challenges related to the structure of the PGCE programme is not statistically significant (chi-square 0.201 and p-value = 0.904). Thus, challenges related to pedagogical discourse and the structure of the PGCE programme were encountered similarly within the three fields of study.

Additional Challenges suggested by pre-service teachers

In addition to the pre-identified challenges (reported in the scale), participants faced other challenges that were not captured by pre-identified statements in the scale. These challenges were mentioned in the open responses to the questions related to additional challenges. Major themes were identified from these responses and the challenges mentioned by at least 15 per cent of participants are summarised in Table 5. The challenge related to planning and time table was

mentioned by 32 per cent of the participants, while 31 per cent of the participants were challenged by the workload of the PGCE. This is in line with the study by Anderson & Pickeral (2000) and Heeralal (2014) which found time management to be a major challenge among the PGCE students. The challenges of time tabling and submission were mostly faced by part-time students who had their contact sessions during the school holidays. These students found it difficult to travel for a long distance to submit an assignment as they indicated that some lecturers did not accept electronic submissions. This challenge can therefore be linked to limited use of technology by some lectures.

Table 5: Additional challenges mentioned by participants

Challenge	Distribution
Planning and time tabling (attending long hours, traveling only for submission of assignments)	32%
Heavy work load	31%
Found the organisation of the programme or some modules challenging	29%
Cost of going to high school for TP	21%
Struggled with academic writing in education, such as writing coherent assignments and referencing	21%
Not equipped to deal with admin issues and other extra-curriculum activities	20%
Class presentations	18%

The challenge of heavy work-load was mostly expressed by full time students who find it challenging to complete the PGCE programme in one year. The challenge of academic writing was mostly expressed by science students who further illustrated that they struggle with academic writing because they did not submit any assignments during their undergraduate qualifications. This implies that the assumption that students come into the PGCE programme with basic writing skills may not hold. Finally, some participants mentioned that they struggled during their TP because the PGCE programme did not prepare them for the extra-curricular activities which are part of their duties as teachers. This is similar to findings by Keengwe (2010) and Moore (2008) which showed that pre-service teachers did not have extra-curriculum skills to deal with diversity of the teaching profession.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study conducted exploratory analysis of the challenges encountered by pre-service teachers at a selected South African university. Findings of this study revealed that challenges faced by the pre-service teachers were related to pedagogical terminologies and the learning style used in education, the structure of the PGCE programme and students' background from their previous qualification. The teaching practice was not a major challenge among the pre-service teachers; implying that the PGCE programme seems to prepare students before they go into the field. However, it was observed that the time allocated to teaching practice is not enough and that the PGCE programme seems not to equip pre-service teachers with extra-curricular skills to deal with diversity of the teaching profession. This study further revealed that some students complete the undergraduate degree without basic writing skills and as result, PGCE has to find means to accommodate such students. Challenges related to pedagogical discourse and operations were found to be high among full time students; implying that strategies should be developed to help full time students. Overall, findings revealed that pre-service teachers experience PGCE as stressful, and they do not come into the PGCE with adequate knowledge of their teaching specialisation. Central to these findings is the intensive programme that they have to undergo in a short time period, the ability to manage and coordinate their enormous activities and other commitments as adults.

Findings of this study are important in understanding flexible educational planning for the PGCE programme at the university. Thus, the PGCE programme should find a way of incorporating the subject content in the curriculum in order to fully equip pre-service teachers. Otherwise, continuous trainings in the subject content should be offered to the teachers,

after the completion of the PGCE, in order to address the challenge of inadequate knowledge in the subject content, especially in commerce and science fields. Considering that some of the additional challenges mentioned by participants are linked to their expectations, future research may explore the link between the identified challenges and the students' expectations when they enrol for the PGCE programme. Future studies can also explore whether these challenges are unique in the PGCE programme or they can also be found in a four year bachelor of education programme.

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التحديات التي يعاني منها معلمي مرحلة ما قبل الخدمة ضمن برنامج شهادة الدراسات العليا في برنامج التعليم في جامعة جنوب أفريقيا

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ملخص

تشكل هذه الدراسة محاولة للخروج بفهم أعمق للعملية المعقدة المتعلقة بمرحلة التعليم الجامعي من خلال دراسة الصعوبات والتحديات التم يعاني منها الطلبة في برنامج الدراسات العليا، برنامج (PGCE) وهو برنامج معني بالحصول على شهادة في الدراسات العليا ليتمكن الخريجون من الحصول على فرصة في العمل التعليمي في المستقبل.

هدفت هذه الدراسة لمعرفة هذه التحديات والصعوبات التي تمت مواجهتها من هؤلاء الطلبة في برنامج تأهيل المعلم، أحد برامج الدراسات العليا المطروح في جامعة جنوب افريقيا. كما هدفت هذه الدراسة لطرح وفحص اداة قياس تتلائم مع التحديات والصعوبات التي تم مواجهتها من قبل طلبة برنامج تأهيل المعلم في المراحل مختلفة ضمن هذه البرنامج.

لتحقيق هدف الدراسة، تم توزيع استبانة على عينة الدراسة والتي بلغت 150 من طلاب برنامج تأهيل المعلم في جامعة جنوب أفريقيا في عام 2012. تم تحليل نتائج هذه البيانات التي تم جمعها. واظهرت نتائج هذه الدراسة ان التحديات والصعوبات التي يواجهها طلاب برنامج تأهيل المعلم تنحصر في ثلاث فئات وهي:

تحديات تتعلق بالمصطلحات والاستراتيجيات التدريسية المستخدمة، تحديات متعلقة بهيكلة برنامج تأهيل المعلم (PGCE)، واخيرا تحديات متعلقة بالخلفية الأكاديمية والعلمية للمنتسبين لهذه البرنامج. كما كشفت هذه الدراسة أيضا أن معظم التحديات والصعوبات مرتبطة بطلاب العلوم والتجارة في برنامج تأهيل المعلم (PGCE). تبرز اهمية نتائج هذه الدراسة في الوصول الى فهم تخطيط تربوي مرن للطلاب ضمن برنامج تأهيل المعلم (PGCE) ليتلاءم مع هذه التحديات والصعوبات في جامعة جنوب افريقيا.

الكلمات الدالة: التحديات والصعوبات، معلمو قبل الخدمة، برنامج PGCE، جامعة جنوب أفريقيا.