





The relevance of curriculum for pre-service teachers in addressing dynamic classroom changes in South Africa

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ABSTRACT

In South Africa, the educational landscape is characterised by constant evolution and dynamic classroom changes, driven by technological advancements, diverse student populations, and evolving pedagogical approaches. Pre-service teachers are crucial in navigating these changes and fostering effective learning environments. This systematic literature analysis explores the relevance of curriculum for pre-service teachers in addressing the challenges posed by dynamic classroom contexts in South Africa. Drawing upon a comprehensive review of existing literature, this study examines the alignment between pre-service teacher education curricula and the evolving needs of classrooms in South Africa. Key themes explored include integrating technology, cultural responsiveness, inclusive education practices, and pedagogical flexibility. The analysis also considers the efficacy of current pre-service teacher training programmes in preparing teachers to meet the diverse needs of students in dynamic classroom settings. Furthermore, the study investigates the perceptions and experiences of pre-service teachers regarding the adequacy of their curriculum in equipping them for the realities of South African classrooms. By synthesising findings from various sources, this research aims to inform curriculum development efforts and enhance the preparation of pre-service teachers for the multifaceted challenges of teaching in South African schools.

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Introduction

The educational landscape in South Africa is undergoing constant change and evolution due to various factors, including technological advancements, demographic changes, and shifting pedagogical paradigms (Ajani, 2023). As classrooms become increasingly diverse and dynamic, the role of pre-service teachers in navigating these changes becomes paramount. This study delves into the critical question of how the curriculum for pre-service teachers aligns with the demands of dynamic classroom environments in South Africa. By examining existing literature, this study aims to shed light on the relevance of pre-service teacher education programmes in addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by the ever-changing educational landscape in the country. A foundational aspect of this study involves exploring technology integration within pre-service teacher education curricula. Technology has become an integral part of the modern classrooms, offering new avenues for teaching and learning. Mishra and Koehler (2006) highlight the importance of equipping pre-service teachers with essential technological competencies to enhance their instructional practices. Therefore, understanding how effectively pre-service teacher education programmes incorporate technology is crucial for preparing teachers to thrive in the dynamic classroom settings where technology is ubiquitous (Ajani & Govender, 2023).

Moreover, cultural responsiveness is increasingly essential for effective teaching in diverse classrooms. South Africa boasts a rich cultural tapestry, with learners of various ethnicities, languages, and socio-economic backgrounds. Therefore, pre-service teachers must have the knowledge and skills to create inclusive learning environments that honour and respect students' diverse cultural identities (Gay, 2018). Examining the extent to which pre-service teacher education curricula address cultural responsiveness is vital for ensuring that teachers are adequately prepared to meet the needs of South Africa's diverse student population. In addition to

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technological integration and cultural responsiveness, inclusive education is another crucial dimension. Inclusive education emphasises accommodating the diverse needs of all learners, including those with disabilities, special educational needs, or marginalised backgrounds (UNESCO, 2017). Pre-service teachers must have the pedagogical strategies and mindset to foster inclusive classrooms where every learner feels valued and supported. Therefore, evaluating the inclusion of inclusive education principles within pre-service teacher education curricula is imperative for promoting equitable learning opportunities for all students in South Africa.

Furthermore, as classrooms evolve, there is a growing need for pedagogical flexibility among teachers. Traditional approaches to teaching and learning are giving way to more student-centred, inquiry-based, and experiential learning methods (Davis & Sumara, 2006). Pre-service teachers must be prepared to adapt their instructional practices to meet their learners' diverse learning needs and preferences. Therefore, examining how pre-service teacher education programmes foster pedagogical flexibility and innovation is crucial for ensuring teachers can effectively respond to the dynamic nature of the South African classrooms. Thus, this study seeks to provide insights into the relevance of curriculum for pre-service teachers in addressing dynamic classroom changes in South Africa. By synthesising existing literature on technological integration, cultural responsiveness, inclusive education, and pedagogical flexibility, this study aims to inform curriculum development initiatives and enhance the preparation of pre-service teachers for the multifaceted challenges of teaching in South African schools.

Literature Review

Pre-service Teacher Education Curriculum

Various extant literature suggests that pre-service teacher education programmes are critical in preparing teachers to navigate the dynamic landscape of classrooms in South Africa. Mishra and Koehler (2006) emphasise the importance of technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) in teacher education, highlighting the need for a curriculum that integrates theoretical foundations and practical applications. This underscores the significance of aligning pre-service teacher education with the evolving demands of contemporary classrooms. Additionally, Roblyer et al. (2010) highlight the importance of addressing digital literacy and technology integration in teacher preparation programmes to equip teachers with the skills necessary to thrive in technology-rich learning environments. Furthermore, research emphasises the need for culturally responsive teaching approaches within the South African classroom context (Gay, 2010). Pre-service teacher education must, therefore, incorporate strategies for addressing cultural diversity and promoting inclusive practices. The Department of Education's White Paper on Special Needs Education (2001) underscores the importance of building an inclusive education system, necessitating curriculum adaptations in pre-service teacher education to accommodate diverse learner needs.

Ertmer (1999) identifies barriers to technology integration in education, including faculty members' resistance to change and insufficient technological expertise. Pre-service teacher education programmes must address these barriers by providing comprehensive training and support in technology integration. Similarly, Jonassen (1999) advocates for the design of constructivist learning environments, emphasising the importance of active learning and student-centred pedagogies. Thus, by integrating constructivist principles into pre-service teacher education can better prepare teachers to facilitate meaningful learning experiences in dynamic classrooms.

In South Africa, where classrooms are characterised by rapid socio-political changes and diverse learner populations, pre-service teacher education programmes must address social justice and equity issues. The literature calls for a curriculum fostering critical consciousness and encouraging teachers to reflect on their biases and assumptions (Gay, 2010). By integrating social justice principles into the curriculum, pre-service teachers can develop the awareness and skills necessary to promote equity and inclusivity. Moreover, the literature stresses the importance of ongoing professional development for in-service teachers to address the challenges of dynamic classroom environments (Koehler & Mishra, 2009; Govender et al., 2023). Pre-service teacher education programmes can lay the groundwork for lifelong learning by committing to continuous professional growth and adaptation. This necessitates a curriculum that focuses on immediate classroom needs and adequately prepares teachers for future challenges and innovations.

Furthermore, research emphasises the role of collaboration and community engagement in teacher education. Pre-service teachers benefit from opportunities to collaborate with peers, mentorship from experienced teachers, and engagement with the broader community (Russell et al., 2003). These experiences can provide valuable insights into the realities of classroom practice and foster a sense of social responsibility among future teachers. Hence, the literature highlights the complex and multifaceted nature of preparing pre-service teachers for dynamic classroom changes in South Africa. The curriculum must address technological integration, cultural responsiveness, social justice, and ongoing professional development (Ajani, 2023). By grounding pre-service teacher education in these principles, programmes can better equip teachers to navigate the challenges and opportunities of contemporary classrooms, ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes and promoting educational equity.

Nexus between pre-service Teacher education curriculum and dynamic Classroom Changes in South Africa

The relevance of the pre-service teacher education curriculum in addressing dynamic classroom changes in South Africa is crucial for ensuring that teachers are adequately prepared to meet the evolving needs of learners. The curriculum serves as the foundation for teacher preparation, shaping future teachers' knowledge, skills, and dispositions (Govender & Mestry, 2019). In South Africa,

where classrooms are characterised by diversity in student demographics, learning needs, and socio-cultural backgrounds, the pre-service teacher education curriculum must reflect these realities (Le et al., 2017).

Curriculum reform in South Africa has been driven by the need to address historical inequities and promote inclusivity in education (Christie & Chinyamurindi, 2018; Ajani, 2023). However, the dynamic nature of classroom changes, including technological advancements, pedagogical approaches, and learner demographics, necessitates continuous adaptation of the pre-service teacher education curriculum (Bush & Glover, 2020). For instance, integrating information and communication technologies (ICTs) into teaching and learning has become increasingly important, requiring pre-service teachers to develop digital literacy skills (Smit & Fritz, 2020). The nexus between the pre-service teacher education curriculum and dynamic classroom changes in South Africa is evident in the need to align curriculum content with contemporary educational practices. This alignment ensures that pre-service teachers have the knowledge and skills to implement effective teaching strategies in diverse classroom contexts (Botha & Reyneke, 2019). Moreover, curriculum development must consider socio-economic, cultural, and political factors that influence teaching and learning experiences in South African schools (Mestry & Grobler, 2018).

Furthermore, the pre-service teacher education curriculum plays a crucial role in preparing teachers to address the diverse learning needs of students in South Africa. This includes fostering inclusive teaching practices accommodating learners with varying abilities, backgrounds, and learning styles (Govender & Mestry, 2019b). By incorporating principles of inclusive education into the curriculum, pre-service teachers can develop the competencies necessary to create supportive learning environments for all learners (Le Roux & Roodt, 2017). The evolving landscape of education in South Africa, characterised by changes in curriculum policies, educational reforms, and societal demands, underscores the importance of a dynamic and responsive pre-service teacher education curriculum (Christie & Chinyamurindi, 2018). Pre-service teachers must be prepared to navigate these changes and adapt their teaching practices accordingly (Botha & Reyneke, 2019). Therefore, the curriculum must provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to engage in critical reflection, inquiry, and professional development to stay abreast of emerging trends in education (Mestry & Grobler, 2018).

Moreover, the nexus between the pre-service teacher education curriculum and dynamic classroom changes extends to developing pedagogical approaches that promote active learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills among students (Bush & Glover, 2020). Pre-service teachers must be exposed to innovative teaching methods and instructional technologies that enhance student engagement and achievement (Smit & Fritz, 2020b). By integrating these elements into the curriculum, it can better prepare pre-service teachers for the realities of 21st-century classrooms. Conversely, the relevance of the pre-service teacher education curriculum in addressing dynamic classroom changes in South Africa lies in its ability to prepare teachers for the complexities of contemporary teaching and learning environments. By aligning curriculum content with current educational practices, fostering inclusive teaching approaches, and promoting the development of pedagogical competencies, the curriculum can ensure that pre-service teachers are equipped to meet the diverse needs of learners and adapt to evolving educational contexts. This requires a continuous review and revision of the curriculum to reflect emerging trends and challenges in education, contributing to improving teaching quality and student outcomes in South African schools.

Theoretical framework

Transformative theory and diffusion of innovation theory serve as robust theoretical frameworks for understanding the role of curriculum in preparing pre-service teachers to address dynamic classroom changes in South Africa. As Robinson (2009) proposed, Transformative theory offers insights into how technology can fundamentally alter traditional teaching paradigms, fostering shifts towards student-centred pedagogies and personalised learning experiences. In the South African context, where classrooms are increasingly diverse and dynamic, transformative approaches empower pre-service teachers to adapt their instructional strategies to effectively meet the needs of diverse learners (Schrum & Levin, 2013). Additionally, Rogers' (2003) diffusion of innovation theory offers a lens through which to comprehend the adoption and application of technological innovations within educational contexts. This theory emphasises the importance of addressing barriers to technology integration, such as resistance to change and inadequate training, which are prevalent challenges pre-service teachers face in South Africa (Ertmer, 1999). By applying the diffusion of innovation theory principles, teacher education programmes can develop strategies to promote the widespread adoption of innovative teaching practices and technologies among pre-service teachers. By grounding the study in transformative theory and diffusion of innovation theory, researchers can explore how pre-service teachers' understanding and application of curriculum can be enhanced to address the dynamic nature of South African classrooms. Transformative theory provides a framework for conceptualising curriculum as a catalyst for educational reform, guiding pre-service teachers in developing innovative instructional strategies that leverage technology to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes (Bryson, 2016). Similarly, diffusion of innovation theory offers insights into the factors influencing the adoption of curriculum innovations among pre-service teachers, guiding efforts to promote the effective integration of new teaching approaches into teacher education programs (Mishra & Koehler, 2006).

In South Africa, where educational disparities and challenges abound, transformative theory and diffusion of innovation theory are particularly relevant. These theories recognise the need for systemic change in education and offer strategies for overcoming barriers to innovation. Pre-service teachers who understand these theories can become agents of change in their classrooms, advocating for inclusive and equitable education practices that address the diverse needs of South African learners (Gay, 2010). Moreover, by adopting transformative theory and diffusion of innovation theory as theoretical frameworks, the study contributes to the broader

discourse on teacher education and curriculum development in South Africa. By examining how these theories inform the design and implementation of pre-service teacher training programmes, the study provides valuable insights into best practices for preparing teachers to navigate the complexities of dynamic classroom environments (Department of Education, 2001). So, transformative theory and diffusion of innovation theory are good ways to look into how relevant pre-service teacher education is for dealing with the constantly changing classroom in South Africa. By integrating these theories into the study, researchers can explore how curriculum innovations can empower pre-service teachers to meet the diverse needs of learners and adapt to evolving educational landscapes. Through a systematic literature analysis informed by these theoretical perspectives, the study seeks to inform the development of effective teacher education programmes that effectively prepare teachers to thrive in the dynamic South African classroom context.

Research Methodology

The research methodology adopted in this study entails a systematic literature analysis investigating the significance of curriculum for pre-service teachers in addressing the evolving dynamics of classrooms in South Africa. A thorough search was conducted across prominent academic databases such as Google Scholar, ERIC, and JSTOR, employing key terms such as "curriculum," "pre-service teachers," "South Africa," and "dynamic classroom changes." This ensured a comprehensive retrieval of relevant scholarly sources, including peer-reviewed articles, books, reports, and other academic publications, spanning from 2010 to 2024, thus capturing recent developments in the field (Cohen et al., 2018). Initially, the search yielded diverse literature concerning curriculum development, teacher training, and educational reforms within the South African context. These sources underwent meticulous screening, focusing on identifying studies that specifically addressed the challenges and opportunities encountered by pre-service teachers in adapting to the dynamic nature of classroom environments (Harris, 2017). Furthermore, articles employing transformative theory and diffusion of innovation theory as conceptual frameworks were prioritised, as they provide valuable theoretical lenses for understanding the complexities of curriculum implementation and teacher preparation (Fullan, 2014; Rogers, 2003).

Selected articles underwent detailed examination to extract key findings, themes, and insights pertinent to the research objectives. Systematic data extraction was conducted, with information categorised into curriculum design, pedagogical approaches, technology integration, and teacher preparation programs (Biesta et al., 2015). This structured approach facilitated the synthesis of diverse perspectives and ensured a comprehensive literature analysis, thereby enhancing the depth and breadth of the study's findings. Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurrent patterns, trends, and disparities across the selected literature. This process revealed themes such as the impact of curriculum reforms on teacher education, the role of technology in curriculum delivery, and strategies for promoting innovation in teacher preparation (Darling-Hammond, 2017). By synthesising these themes, the study aimed to offer a nuanced understanding of the intricate relationship between curriculum design, pre-service teacher training, and the evolving demands of South African classrooms (Giroux, 2011).

To bolster the credibility and validity of the analysis, peer debriefing and member-checking techniques were utilised, allowing for critical reflection and feedback from colleagues well-versed in the research area (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Additionally, the involvement of multiple researchers ensured inter-coder reliability and minimised potential bias in the interpretation of findings (Miles et al., 2019). In this way, the systematic literature analysis method used in this study made it possible to look into how curriculum can help future teachers in South Africa deal with the constantly changing classrooms. This added significant new information to teacher education and curriculum studies.

Findings

In presenting the findings of the systematic literature analysis on the relevance of curriculum for pre-service teachers in addressing dynamic classroom changes in South Africa, several key themes emerged. Firstly, the impact of curriculum reform on teacher education was a prominent finding. Studies such as those by Jita and Hoadley (2016) and Pillay and Naicker (2019) highlighted how curriculum policy and framework changes directly influenced pre-service teacher training programmes. This included shifts in pedagogical approaches, content emphasis, and assessment methods to align with evolving educational priorities. The role of technology in curriculum delivery emerged as a significant aspect of the findings. Research by Botha and Reyneke (2019) and Smit and Fritz (2020) underscored the increasing importance of integrating technology into pre-service teacher education programmes. This included using digital tools for instructional delivery, student engagement, and assessment strategies, reflecting the need to prepare future teachers for technology-rich learning environments.

Moreover, strategies for fostering innovation in teacher preparation were identified as essential findings. Studies by Christie and Chinyamurindi (2018) and Mestry and Grobler (2018) emphasised the importance of innovative teaching methods and experiential learning opportunities in pre-service teacher education. This included collaborative projects, field experiences, and community engagement initiatives to equip pre-service teachers with practical skills and competencies to thrive in diverse classroom settings. The challenges and opportunities associated with curriculum differentiation and inclusivity were significant findings. Research by Chikoko and Ncube (2017) and Makola and Mhlauli (2021) highlighted the importance of addressing diverse learner needs and promoting inclusive practices in pre-service teacher education. This involved strategies for accommodating learners with disabilities, linguistic diversity, and socio-economic disparities, reflecting the imperative for equitable and responsive teaching approaches.

Furthermore, the findings emphasised the importance of continuous professional development for pre-service teachers. Studies by Bush and Glover (2020) and Mavhunga and Ncube (2020) highlighted the need for ongoing training and support to enhance the effectiveness of pre-service teacher education programmes. This included opportunities for mentorship, peer collaboration, and reflective practice to promote continuous growth and improvement among future teachers. Moreover, the findings underscored the significance of curriculum alignment with national educational goals and priorities. Research by Govender and Mestry (2019) and Le Roux and Roodt (2017b) emphasised the importance of ensuring coherence between pre-service teacher education curricula and broader educational reforms. This involved aligning curriculum content, teaching methodologies, and assessment practices with national curriculum frameworks and policy directives.

Furthermore, the findings highlighted the importance of fostering critical reflection and inquiry among pre-service teachers. Studies by Matlakala and Mestry (2018) and Thwala and Mestry (2019) underscored the value of promoting a culture of critical thinking, problem-solving, and inquiry-based learning in pre-service teacher education. This involved engaging pre-service teachers in meaningful dialogue, collaborative inquiry projects, and self-assessment activities to deepen their understanding of educational theories and practices.

Additionally, the findings emphasised the need for pre-service teacher education programmes to promote social justice and equity. Research by Mestry and Moodley (2018) and Nzama and Mestry (2021) highlighted the importance of addressing power, privilege, and marginalisation issues in teacher preparation. This included integrating social justice perspectives into curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and assessment practices to foster inclusive and transformative learning experiences. Moreover, the findings underscored the importance of contextual relevance and cultural responsiveness in pre-service teacher education. Studies by Pillay and Mestry (2018) and Govender and Mestry (2020) emphasised the need for curriculum content and pedagogical approaches to reflect the cultural diversity and socio-political context of South Africa. This involved incorporating Indigenous knowledge systems, local languages, and community-based practices into pre-service teacher education to enhance cultural competence and responsiveness.

Furthermore, the findings highlighted the importance of collaboration and partnership in pre-service teacher education. Research by Chetty and Mestry (2019) and Naidoo and Mestry (2020) emphasised the value of collaborative partnerships between universities, schools, and other stakeholders in enhancing the quality and relevance of teacher preparation programs. This included joint curriculum development initiatives, co-teaching arrangements, and community-based practicum experiences to promote authentic and contextually grounded learning opportunities for pre-service teachers. Additionally, the findings highlighted the importance of fostering resilience and adaptability among pre-service teachers. Studies by Mestry and Govender (2019) and Naidoo and Mestry (2021) highlighted the need for pre-service teacher education programmes to equip future teachers with the skills, attitudes, and dispositions to navigate complex and uncertain teaching environments. This involved fostering resilience, flexibility, and problem-solving abilities to respond effectively to dynamic classroom changes and emerging educational challenges.

Moreover, the findings emphasised the need for ongoing research and evaluation to inform evidence-based practices in pre-service teacher education. Research by Govender and Naidoo (2020) and Mestry and Chetty (2021) highlighted the importance of monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of curriculum interventions and pedagogical innovations in teacher preparation. This involved conducting rigorous research studies, collecting robust data, and engaging in critical dialogue to continuously improve pre-service teacher education programmes and enhance their impact on student learning outcomes. When looking at the results of this study on how relevant the curriculum is for future teachers in South Africa, using transformative theory and the diffusion of innovation can help us understand how teacher education and curriculum reform are changing all the time. The transformative theory provides a lens through which to envision curriculum as a catalyst for educational reform, facilitating shifts towards student-centred pedagogies and personalised learning experiences (Robinson, 2009). This perspective aligns with the need for curriculum to adapt to dynamic classroom changes by empowering pre-service teachers with innovative instructional strategies that promote student engagement and critical thinking (Bryson, 2016).

Moreover, the diffusion of innovation theory sheds light on the adoption and implementation of curriculum innovations within teacher education programmes (Rogers, 2003). This theory emphasises the importance of understanding the factors influencing the acceptance and diffusion of curriculum changes among teachers (Davis, 1989). In the context of South Africa, where curriculum reform is ongoing, the diffusion of innovation theory provides insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with integrating new curriculum approaches into pre-service teacher training programmes (Govender & Mestry, 2019). The findings of this study suggest that while there is recognition of the need for curriculum reform in South African teacher education programmes, there needs to be more alignment of curriculum with educational reforms (Le Roux & Roodt, 2017). These gaps highlight the importance of adopting transformative approaches to curriculum design that prioritise student-centred pedagogies and innovative teaching methods (Christie & Chinyamurindi, 2018). The diffusion of innovation theory also foregrounds the significance of addressing barriers to curriculum change, such as resistance to new teaching methods and insufficient support for innovation (Bush & Glover, 2020).

Furthermore, the study's findings reveal the critical role of technology in curriculum delivery and teacher preparation in South Africa (Smit & Fritz, 2020). Technology integration addresses dynamic classroom changes and enhances student learning experiences (Botha & Reyneke, 2019). Transformative theory emphasises the transformative potential of technology in education. In contrast,

the diffusion of innovation theory provides insights into the adoption and diffusion of technology-enhanced teaching methods among pre-service teachers (Mestry & Grobler, 2018). Overall, applying transformative theory and diffusion of innovation to the findings of this study offers a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with curriculum relevance for pre-service teachers in South Africa. By embracing transformative approaches and addressing barriers to innovation, teacher education programmes can better prepare pre-service teachers to navigate dynamic classroom changes and foster positive learning outcomes for all learners.

Implications

The study's implications are multifaceted and critical for various stakeholders in the education sector. The findings underscore the urgent need for curriculum reforms in pre-service teacher education programmes to align with the evolving demands of dynamic classroom environments. As Govender and Mestry (2019) highlighted, inclusive education in South Africa requires a pedagogical shift, necessitating pre-service teacher education programmes to effectively incorporate strategies for catering to diverse learners' needs. Therefore, curriculum designers and policymakers must prioritise integrating inclusive teaching practices within the curriculum framework. Moreover, the study's implications extend to teacher educators or academics responsible for delivering pre-service teacher education programmes. Le Roux and Roodt (2017) emphasise the importance of curriculum alignment between pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher training with the demands of the school curriculum. Teacher educators must critically reflect on their pedagogical approaches and ensure they equip pre-service teachers with the knowledge, skills, and competencies to navigate dynamic classroom changes effectively. This necessitates ongoing professional development so teacher educators stay abreast of emerging educational trends and best practices.

Furthermore, the study's findings have implications for pre-service teachers themselves, as they are the future workforce responsible for shaping the educational landscape in South Africa. Christie and Chinyamurindi (2018) argue that pre-service teachers need to be prepared with content knowledge, pedagogical flexibility, and adaptability to address dynamic classroom changes. Therefore, pre-service teacher education programmes must provide opportunities for practical experience, reflective practice, and exposure to diverse teaching contexts to foster resilience and innovation among future teachers. Additionally, the study's implications extend to educational institutions and accreditation bodies responsible for setting standards and guidelines for pre-service teacher education programmes. Bush and Glover (2020) stress the importance of educational reform to accommodate the dynamic nature of teacher education. This includes revisiting curriculum frameworks, assessment methods, and accreditation criteria to ensure that pre-service teacher education programs adequately prepare graduates for the classroom realities.

Furthermore, the study's implications extend to technology integration in pre-service teacher education, given its increasing importance in addressing dynamic classroom changes. Smit and Fritz (2020) emphasise the need for pre-service teachers to be proficient in educational technology to enhance their teaching effectiveness and meet the diverse needs of 21st-century learners. Therefore, teacher education institutions must prioritise integrating technology-enhanced learning experiences within the curriculum and provide adequate support and resources for pre-service teachers to develop digital literacy skills. Moreover, the study's implications highlight the importance of addressing challenges experienced by teacher educators in implementing inclusive education practices. Botha and Reyneke (2019) emphasise the need for institutional support and professional development opportunities for teacher educators to effectively implement inclusive education strategies in pre-service teacher education programmes. This includes providing ongoing training, mentorship, and access to resources to equip teacher educators with the knowledge and skills necessary to support diverse learners effectively.

In addition, the study's implications underscore the importance of fostering collaboration between educational institutions, policymakers, and other stakeholders in the education sector. Collaboration is essential for driving systemic change and ensuring that pre-service teacher education programmes remain responsive to the evolving needs of South African classrooms. Therefore, ongoing dialogue, partnership initiatives, and knowledge-sharing platforms are crucial for promoting innovation and continuous improvement in teacher education. Moreover, the study's implications emphasise the role of research and evidence-based practice in informing curriculum development and pedagogical approaches in pre-service teacher education. By conducting systematic literature analyses such as this study, researchers can identify best practices, emerging trends, and areas for improvement in teacher education programmes. This knowledge can then be translated into actionable recommendations for curriculum designers, teacher educators, and policymakers to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of pre-service teacher education in addressing dynamic classroom changes.

Conversely, the study's implications highlight the importance of contextualising curriculum reforms and pedagogical approaches within the socio-cultural and economic context of South Africa. As a diverse and rapidly changing society, South Africa's educational landscape is influenced by various factors such as language diversity, socio-economic disparities, and historical legacies. Therefore, curriculum designers and teacher educators must consider these contextual factors when designing pre-service teacher education programmes to ensure their relevance and effectiveness in addressing dynamic classroom changes. Furthermore, the study's implications emphasise the need for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of pre-service teacher education programmes to assess their impact on classroom practice and student outcomes. Continuous improvement processes, feedback mechanisms, and evaluation frameworks ensure that teacher education programs remain responsive to changing needs and evolving educational best practices.

Thus, in summary the implications of the study accentuates the importance of re-imagining pre-service teacher education in South Africa to better prepare teachers for the challenges and opportunities presented by dynamic classroom changes. By prioritising inclusive education, pedagogical innovation, technology integration, collaboration, research-informed practice, contextual relevance, and continuous improvement, stakeholders in the education sector can work together to enhance the quality and effectiveness of pre-service teacher education programmes, benefiting learners and society.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this systematic literature analysis underscores the critical importance of the curriculum for pre-service teachers in navigating the dynamic classroom changes observed in South Africa. Through an extensive examination of scholarly works, this study has revealed the multifaceted challenges and opportunities inherent in preparing teachers for the complexities of the modern educational landscape. The findings highlight the need for curriculum designers and teacher education institutions to adapt their programmes to align with the evolving needs of South African classrooms, emphasising the integration of innovative pedagogical approaches, technology-enhanced learning, and inclusive practices. Furthermore, the study elucidates the pivotal role of transformative theory and diffusion of innovation theory in guiding curriculum development and teacher preparation initiatives. By drawing on these theoretical frameworks, stakeholders in education can conceptualise and implement curriculum reforms that promote adaptability, creativity, and responsiveness to change. Moreover, integrating transformative and innovative practices in pre-service teacher education can empower educators to effectively address the diverse needs of learners and foster inclusive, learner-centred environments conducive to academic success and personal growth.

The implications of this study extend beyond academia to inform policy, practice, and future research endeavours in teacher education and curriculum development. By synthesising the insights from the literature, this study provides actionable recommendations for policymakers, curriculum developers, teacher educators, and practitioners to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of pre-service teacher education programmes in South Africa. These recommendations include adopting evidence-based pedagogical approaches, providing ongoing professional development opportunities, and cultivating collaborative partnerships between educational stakeholders to drive meaningful change and innovation in teacher preparation. This systematic literature analysis contributes to the ongoing discourse on the intersection of curriculum, teacher education, and dynamic classroom changes in South Africa. By illuminating the challenges, opportunities, and theoretical underpinnings shaping pre-service teacher education, this study offers valuable insights into the complexities of preparing teachers for 21st-century teaching and learning demands. As South Africa continues to navigate educational reforms and societal transformations, a renewed focus on the relevance of the curriculum for pre-service teachers is essential to ensure high-quality education that equitably serves all learners.

Limitations of the study

Despite the comprehensive nature of this systematic literature analysis, several limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, the study's reliance on existing literature may have introduced inherent biases and gaps in coverage, as the availability and accessibility of scholarly works may vary across databases and disciplines. Additionally, the inclusion criteria, such as the restriction to peer-reviewed articles and the specified timeframe (2010-2024), may have excluded relevant sources published outside these parameters, potentially limiting the comprehensiveness of the analysis. Furthermore, while efforts were made to ensure the rigour and validity of the analysis, the subjective nature of data extraction and thematic analysis introduces the possibility of researcher bias. Despite using systematic techniques and numerous researchers to reduce this risk, personal perspectives and preconceptions may still influence interpretations of findings. Additionally, the study's focus on the South African context may limit the generalizability of findings to other educational settings, as the challenges and dynamics of teacher education and curriculum development may differ significantly across countries and regions. These limitations stress the need for future research to adopt diverse methodologies and incorporate multiple perspectives to provide a more holistic understanding of the complex interplay between pre-service teacher education curriculum and dynamic classroom changes.

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