

## **Perceptions Of Teacher Trainers From The Arab-Bedouin Education System Regarding The Implementation Of The Classroom Practicum Program**

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### **Abstract**

*The present study examined the attitudes of teacher trainers from the Arab-Bedouin education system regarding the contribution of the Classroom Academy Community" model (CAC) to improving the school community and the skills of preservice teachers.*

*In the present study, ten teacher trainers from the Arab-Bedouin education system participated in the classroom practicum project in southern Israel. The findings of the study indicate that the process of accompanying and guiding the preservice teachers, together with the academic counselor, contributed greatly to the integration of teaching elements such as planning teaching units, creating lesson plans, illustrations, and improving student interactions, into the reality of the school environment.*

*The findings of this study suggest that training institutions for teaching staff must focus on strengthening the development of educational initiatives involving preservice teachers during their training at the academic institution and on fostering openness in accepting teaching positions.*

**Keywords:** *teacher trainers, school culture, initiatives, diversity in teaching methods, Arab-Bedouin preservice teachers*

### **Introduction**

In recent years, Israel has implemented a Classroom Academy Community" model (CAC), in the framework of which school teachers, students from teaching colleges (preservice teachers), and academic counselors from an academic institution collaborated to form an interactive "learning triangle" within the school. The objective of this model was to cultivate a partnership between academia and practice through a wide range of learning activities and to enhance the clinical training of preservice teachers. Sacks and other authors introduced the concept of "synergistic cooperation in teaching" as a core value, encompassing inclusive participation of all actors involved in training. This concept presupposes the establishment of cooperation based on a strong sense of individual responsibility and professionalism, creativity, demonstration of mutual respect, approval, contribution to growth and development, as well as consideration of power dynamics characterizing this process (Zach & Strommer, 2018).

The primary goal of the CAC is to better streamline the process of integrating new teachers than existing programs do (Shani, Tal, & Margolin, 2015; Zelbrstrom, 2015). In addition, the CAC aims to boost preservice teachers' motivation and foster effective collaborations within the learning triangle at the school. This, in turn, equips preservice teachers with a toolbox for their future roles as educators, including acquiring new teaching tools, gaining fresh learning

experiences, and forming a professional support network of teachers and preservice teachers. The academic counselors' general guidance and, more important, the emotional support provided by the teachers at the school are vital both from an academic and emotional perspective of preservice teachers.

in fact, The introduction of the CAC into the education system marks a significant shift in the teacher training institutions in Israel. The program emphasizes the strengthening of the connection between theory and practice, the academy and the field, by expanding the hours of clinical experience for preservice teachers in high schools and integrating them as assistant teachers in classrooms (Sağ, 2014; Zelbrstrom, 2015). It also involves creating new positions through partnerships, allocating budgets to reward teachers and preservice teachers, and introducing professional development for teacher trainers to enhance their relationship with preservice teachers and academic institutions. CAC promotes the formation of an active learning community within schools, consisting of academic counselors, teachers trainers, and preservice teachers (Assadi, 2017).

Research demonstrates that the classroom practicum model leads to profound learning experiences for preservice teachers and stimulates innovative thinking about teaching methodologies (Assadi, 2017; Abu-Jaber & Abu-Gweder, 2023). Thanks to the practical partnership within the school, preservice teachers in the CAC are exposed to the typical school teaching processes, enabling them to develop their professional skills. Active participation in the educational efforts within the school allows them to acquire practical knowledge and become accustomed to the demands of the teaching profession. These processes are instrumental in preparing them for meeting the challenges of teaching. Research indicates that preservice teachers in the CAC acquire a strong sense of self-efficacy through practical, hands-on experience in the educational field, which facilitates their integration into the teaching profession and the absorption of the organizational culture of the school (Shani, Tal, & Margolin, 2015; Zelbrstrom, 2015).

Consistent with the professional literature on the integration of practical and academic experiences in education, this study examined the effect of the CAC on the personal and professional development of preservice teachers exposed to a broad spectrum of school activities within the framework of their training and practicum experience in the Arab-Bedouin education system.

Considering the advantages of the CAC in enhancing the clinical experience of preservice teachers, this study seeks to examine the changes in the lives of Arab-Bedouin preservice teachers, in particular, their leadership in education and personal initiatives in schools. Additionally, it aims to explore whether the openness of the CAC provides opportunities for diversifying teaching methods in schools, which is one of the main contributions of this study. The present study endeavors to evaluate the attitudes of teacher trainers from the Arab-Bedouin education system regarding the implementation of the CAC in its various dimensions, such as the nature of the dedicated guidance provided by experienced teachers; the conceptualization, distribution, and accessibility of knowledge; learning methodologies; practical processes; learning outcomes; teaching quality; access to theoretical knowledge in the field of academic research; leadership in learning processes driving progress and improvement in practice— everything that affects the lives of Arab-Bedouin preservice teachers in the course of their clinical training. Furthermore, the study assesses the activity of preservice teachers from the perspective of their willingness to engage with schools, diversify teaching methods, embrace change, and particularly introduce new tools for active classroom teaching. The study explores their enthusiasm to take initiative within the institution and the relationship between the elements of clinical training within the learning community at the school.

### **3. The Research**

### **The research question**

The main research question of the present study focuses on the challenges of Classroom Academy Community" model on the personal and professional lives of Arabic-speaking Bedouin Arab teachers specializing in Hebrew and Arabic.

### **Methodological aspects**

#### **Study participants**

The current study involved 40 Arab-Bedouin students who major in specializing in Hebrew and Arabic. All participants are from Bedouin villages and towns in southern Israel.

#### **Research tool**

The research tool is a semi-structured interview, used to substantiate and validate the findings. At the root of the in-depth interview is the desire to understand other people's experience and the meaning they attach to it (Flick, 2017). It allows for an open conversation that reveals the world knowledge of the interviewees and contains a realistic interpretation of the interviewees while exposing their thoughts, feelings, expectations, and attitudes, and representing their critical thinking in all areas of perception.

#### **Research field**

The study was conducted at academic institutions in southern Israel where Arab-Bedouin students are enrolled. Studies show that the number of women in these institutions has increased significantly in recent years. According to Abu-Gweder, (2022), among the Arab-Bedouin population, the number of female students is twice the number of male students. Most come from the seven recognized Bedouin towns, and there are increasing numbers of Arab-Bedouin students from unrecognized villages. Arab-Bedouin female students are usually admitted directly to the college, but some are accepted on the basis of preparatory courses, most of which operate under the academic institutions.

#### **Research question.**

The primary research questions were: Is the CAC model an inviting space for initiative and for diversity in teaching methods in the Bedouin-Arab preservice teachers' practical experience in the classroom, as perceived by teacher trainers?

**Research method:** This was a qualitative study. Ten teacher trainers from the Arab-Bedouin educational system participated in schools that are part of the CAC model located in the south of Israel. All interviews were conducted with the informed consent of the teacher trainers, transcribed from the recordings, and analyzed to identify and refine the central research themes.

**The central research question focused on the implementation of the CAC and the challenges encountered from the perspective of teacher trainers in the Arab-Bedouin education system. We explored the diversity of teaching methods, entrepreneurship in school culture, and more. Below are the main findings of the study**

**1. Diversity in teaching methods.** A review of the research literature reveals the importance of teaching methods in the classroom. According to the present research, one of the effective teaching methods was "experiential learning." In the current study, teacher trainers reported the effectiveness of using peer learning and extracurricular activities. The study indicates that preservice teachers adopted a wide range of teaching methods, taking responsibility for the

diversity of teaching approaches, using high-quality digital tools, and organizing special workshops throughout the year, demonstrating significant pedagogical leadership.

"Teaching through experiential learning was highly effective" (Sonia). "Peer learning and extracurricular activities" (Shurok). "We witnessed initiatives within the school and responsibility for specific workshops over the years" (Manal).

The diversity in teaching methods enabled the inclusion of struggling students and special education students by adopting a personalized approach toward students, creating an optimal learning environment, engaging in language education activities, and more.

"I had the opportunity to address the challenge of teaching struggling students. This experience revealed my ability to effectively address potential difficulties and create a conducive learning environment for challenging students" (Sonia). "One student took educational initiatives outside the classroom to improve results and foster a positive learning environment" (Miriam). "Our main project this year was establishing a Hebrew learning center for struggling students, providing an opportunity for me to introduce my preservice teachers to effective strategies for working with struggling students" (Jihan).

Moreover, the ability to diversify gives preservice teachers an opportunity to understand and implement content in practice. As part of the improvement process, it can be seen that the preservice teachers were ready for change and put significant effort into their work. Consistency was a key to success, and they proved their resilience in the face of difficulties, achieving continuous development. In addition, the consistency, seriousness, and adherence to the schedule enabled change from the beginning of the year to the end. There was considerable improvement in their ability to listen and absorb information, which was reflected in their clinical work at school. "I see that they learn and develop good listening skills, and want to make progress and are working on it" (Sonia). "The more lessons they give, the more they learn" (Sonia). "I feel that it improved a lot of things for them, they got tools both from me and from their training" (Manal). "I think there have been changes compared to the beginning of the current school year" (Jihan).

In conclusion, in the present study, we found that teaching opportunities constituted an important contribution in the lives of Arab-Bedouin preservice teachers, significantly enhancing the training they acquired in academic institutions. Teacher trainers exercised considerable influence on the learning process, expressed in the fact that the more lessons preservice teachers taught, the richer and more profound their learning became.

## 2. Entrepreneurship and pedagogical innovation

The preservice teachers' ability to be proactive during their clinical experience is crucial for the development of future teachers. Teacher trainers support the initiatives of preservice teachers. The present study attests to the satisfaction of teacher trainers who fostered initiative and innovation in educating their trainees. For example, preservice teachers initiated an Internet activity as part of Hebrew lessons, within the framework of the Hebrew Language Day at school.

One of the teacher trainers endorsed the educational and innovative initiatives of preservice teachers. According to her, "A positive initiative that offers preservice teachers multiple options to address learning difficulties and helps them chart personal paths to success" (Samira).

"Preservice teachers took the initiative to lead a workshop on the Hebrew Day at school" (Miriam).

"A blessed initiative was a Hebrew language corner with various items for students" (Sonia).

Launching a learning initiative in the classroom involves a deep understanding of each student's individual needs and the ability to address these needs personally by tailored instruction. According to the teachers, the successful combination of pedagogical innovation, technology, experiential learning, and language culture led to an engaging and fulfilling

classroom experience. Initiative and innovation indicate a desire to develop new and experiential learning tools. This entrepreneurial spirit was also evident in class preparation when preservice teachers brought new and diverse ideas to class, resulting in multiple successes during the clinical experience.

“There is a preservice teacher who helps struggling students and provides them with appropriate support” (Samira). “Sometimes struggling students feel it’s better to learn from a preservice teacher” (Rola). “Outstanding initiatives and approaches, such as using technology extensively and creating experiential learning in the classroom” (Sarah). “I see innovation; some preservice teachers have given well-structured lessons with presentations, worksheets, and activities” (Sonia).

It is clear that preservice teachers’ initiative and innovation in teaching methods offer significant opportunities for deepening language learning and understanding, especially for students facing difficulties. This approach is effective for promoting new and creative models of learning in both regular and specialized classrooms, where not all students receive personal and individualized attention.

The research results paint a clear and encouraging picture regarding the benefits of investing additional resources in the education system. Specific examples include the active involvement of preservice teachers during the clinical experience, the establishment of a study center for struggling students, the motivation and interest preservice teachers bring to the classroom, and the diverse learning methods, including small group learning, ICT integration, paired learning, and individual lessons.

“Even during practice, they take the initiative to help and contribute to the class” (Noha). “Yes, of course, we have a teaching center for struggling students, small groups according to levels, individual lessons, and lots of ICT” (Samira). “Certain handouts and assessment tools for students who have difficulty. For example, when I divide the preservice into groups, they collaborate and assist each other” (Rola).

The use of diverse teaching tools reflects a multi-perspective worldview. This diversity cultivates active students in the classroom who share knowledge and support their peers. This finding offers an in-depth and comprehensive perspective for enhancing the teaching of preservice teachers in practice, emphasizing the need for additional resources to nurture the full potential of each preservice teacher in the education system.

The ability to receive feedback and the willingness of students to learn and develop are key aspects of the maturity and growth of those training to become teachers. The study found that all feedback was received with openness, leading to valuable discussions on specific aspects of lessons. This contributed to the advancement of preservice teachers and improved their academic and professional abilities.

“We accept feedback and use it to improve” (Noha). “They accept feedback with understanding, particularly in the second part of the year. Their willingness to receive feedback shows their desire to learn and succeed” (Sarah). “Yes, we receive feedback, and it’s gradually getting better” (Abir). “They welcome feedback as a means of support and as a model of the teacher they aspire to be” (Miriam). “I believe every comment was appreciated; they even sought feedback on certain parts of the lessons they taught, asking for opinions on their conduct. This was the main factor contributing to their progress” (Shurok).

The study findings demonstrate the importance of guiding, supporting, and monitoring students throughout their studies. The experience of imparting knowledge and receiving in-depth feedback, including participation in various school activities, is significant. This approach fosters a deep and meaningful connection between preservice teachers and the external educational environment, helping them effectively address learning challenges and their experiences in school.

## **Discussion**

The process of pedagogical innovation and leading initiatives involving preservice teachers' class teaching has had a profound effect on teacher trainers. For example, they reported that preservice teachers sought to help their peers acquire the skills, abilities, and tools crucial for academic success through entrepreneurship education and creative thinking, while they themselves provided learning materials and personal support. The attitude of the academic counselor toward the clinical experience at the school, in collaboration with the teacher trainers, served as a promising example of how to promote the education of preservice teachers. Building mutual trust between the key stakeholders in the program (academic counselor, teacher trainer, and preservice teachers) within the school is likely to enable the development of significant programs to empower Arab-Bedouin preservice teachers.

The results of this study show that teacher trainers have praised the practicum process presented by the academic counselor. For example, expanding the scope of clinical experience and providing targeted guidance by the academic counselor and the teacher trainers at the school are initial indicators of the success of preservice teachers in their future careers.

The research literature points to the importance of the CAC for serving as an anchor of their pedagogical innovation and leading the preservice teachers' practical experience to improve the quality of their training. This study shows that the close relationship helped create a new learning community including the preservice teachers, the teacher trainer, and the academic counselor. According to the college instructors who teach the academy portion of the teacher training program, the "learning triangle" has created a learning community where its members work together to develop theoretical models within the school, for example, e-learning initiatives, diversity in teaching methods, implementation of new models in the classrooms such as learning in pairs—where the student is a second teacher in the classroom—and more. This study shows that the learning triangle promotes active learning in classrooms.

The present study confirms the findings of recent studies that view the academic counselor as a role model for the preservice teachers in the teacher training program, encouraging them to teach in an optimal way, providing instructional skills, and increasing the preservice teachers' motivation in their practical experience in the classrooms (Abu-Gweder, 2024).

In sum, the present study underscores the significance of clinical experience in school settings. The initial exposure at school plays a decisive role in shaping the professional future of preservice teachers as change-makers, allowing them to transition smoothly into the educational field and advance their careers.

## **Research contribution**

This study is expected to make a significant contribution to the world of science, both theoretically and practically. From a theoretical perspective, it is the first study of its kind, shedding light on the central learning processes within the CAC model, as perceived by teacher trainers in the Arab-Bedouin education system. This research also contributes to institutions that train teaching staff, enabling them to develop similar programs within Arab-Bedouin society in the years to come.

From a practical standpoint, this study described the implementation processes of the CAC model. It covered the planning and preparation processes, the feedback and evaluation mechanisms, and the interconnected dynamics between teachers, preservice teachers, and academic counselors. The study showed the significance of collaborative work models in the classroom, the professionalism of teacher trainers, and the preservice teachers' attitudes toward them. It also highlighted the program's contributions at both the general and individual levels, particularly in the professional development of these student teachers.

Another noteworthy contribution of this research lies in its response to the challenges of the program, particularly in improving oral Hebrew skills. The study revealed that the teacher trainers made considerable efforts to enhance the practical aspects of teaching. They went beyond providing practical experience and knowledge-building by concentrating on preparing preservice teachers for teaching effective expression and reading, ultimately enhancing the capacity of the educational system to impart comprehensive and structured knowledge in the area of Hebrew as a second language.

### **Research recommendations**

The research literature points to a dichotomy between the theoretical material studied at the academic institution and the practical experience of preservice teachers in the applied professional aspect at school. A significant challenge raised in the research literature and throughout interviews is the tension between studying at the academic institution and the practical experience at school. The present study presents a complex picture. On one hand, there is an improvement in the quality of preservice teachers' teaching throughout their practical experience at school. On the other hand, the theoretical material studied at the college differs from the reality of the school culture.

Professional development for preservice teachers is a valuable opportunity to promote learning processes and self-guidance. Professional programs aimed at developing skilled teachers who can acquire tools and new technologies are essential. Providing new tools to teachers will significantly contribute to the smooth adoption of technological solutions to address the various problems their students may encounter and make learning a more interesting and meaningful experience. Moreover, professional development can provide teachers with a professional vision, enabling them to adapt learning to the unique needs of different students. Therefore, it is important to offer a wide variety of tools and technologies to enable personalized learning. Limitations and follow-up studies

The present study indicates the personal-professional potential of Arab-Bedouin preservice teachers and their ability to integrate electronic learning into their professional work, based on ICT tools they were introduced to at the academic institution. Future research can provide new insights into the adoption of effective teaching methods and their application through new communication technologies in the clinical experience of preservice teachers.

### **Limitations and follow-up studies**

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