



Reflection on the integration of tutorship development programme in one South African University

Sabelo Peter¹, Clever Ndebele²

¹Faculty of Education, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa

²Faculty of Education, Department of Continuing Professional Teacher Development, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa

Corresponding email: speter@wsu.ac.za

ABSTRACT

The integration of the Tutorship Development Programme into the Faculty of Education at one of the universities in South Africa in 2024 aimed to enhance student academic support, promote faculty ownership, and ensure programme sustainability across two campuses. Despite its potential benefits, the process encountered several challenges, including limited faculty engagement, inadequate resources, and technological constraints. This study responds to the need for a structured, faculty-driven tutorship model that bridges both theoretical and practical gaps in academic support interventions. The primary objective was to develop a scalable and effective tutorship framework aligned with faculty goals and curriculum requirements. Specifically, the study aimed to improve the quality of tutorship, encourage deeper faculty involvement, secure adequate resource allocation, and incorporate technology-based learning tools to support students effectively. A mixed-methods research design was adopted, employing surveys, focus groups, and stakeholder consultations to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. Data analysis involved thematic coding for qualitative responses and descriptive statistics to examine quantitative trends. Key findings underscore the importance of collaborative faculty engagement, strategic institutional partnerships, and the provision of targeted training resources in ensuring successful programme implementation. Theoretical frameworks such as Systems Thinking and Transformational Leadership informed the design and integration process, emphasizing the value of adaptability, feedback loops, and sustainable leadership practices. This study contributes to the broader discourse on academic development and student success by proposing a robust, context-sensitive tutorship model. It offers practical guidance for faculties aiming to institutionalize sustainable, impactful academic support programmes responsive to both student needs and institutional priorities.

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INTRODUCTION

This reflective paper explores the role the Tutor Development Coordinator in the Faculty of Education at a University in South Africa, where the coordinator collaborated with various faculty stakeholders to integrate the tutorship programme into the faculty. The tutorship programme aims to enhance tutoring quality and promote a community of practice that encourages collaboration between tutors and faculty. Dyosini (2024) highlights that professional development is essential for equipping tutors with the necessary skills to navigate teaching challenges, emphasizing the role of mentorship and reflective practice. Similarly, Christensen, Hilde, and Eik (2024) argue that tutorial sessions for tutors in particular enhance academic, personal, and professional development, fostering leadership and collaboration. Additionally, Enwereji et al. (2024) stress the importance of digital literacy and online pedagogical training, as tutors face challenges in adapting to online teaching environments. Integrating professional development, peer leadership, and digital skills within the programme ensures effective tutor training, promotes collaborative learning, and strengthens faculty engagement for sustained student success.

In 2024, as part of its strategic vision and mission, the university consolidated and rationalized its faculties, formally integrating some academic student support development portfolios into the faculties. The Faculty of Education, one of the university's seven faculties, operates across two campuses and comprises six academic departments. This structure required a context-specific approach to programme implementation, taking into account the geographic and institutional diversity of the faculty.

Furthermore, Enwereji et al. (2024) points out that technological access and training are essential for modernising tutorship models, particularly in digital learning environments. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach, incorporating comprehensive tutor training, faculty collaboration, and technology integration to enhance student engagement and academic success. By embedding sustainable tutor development strategies, institutions can create a dynamic and responsive tutorship programme that is both effective and scalable. As such, the integration process was guided by a commitment to enhancing the quality of tutorship, promoting student-centred learning, and ensuring sustainability within the faculty. The process underscored the importance of faculty collaboration, institutional commitment, and adaptability in achieving sustainable academic development initiatives. To achieve a successful integration of the programme into the faculty, we adopted a multi-stakeholder approach involving collaboration between faculty leadership, academic staff, tutors, and student support units, which was guided by the following, but not limited to:

- **Enhancing Tutorship Quality:** Standardizing tutor training, implementing best practices, and aligning tutorship activities with academic programs to improve student learning outcomes.
- **Faculty Ownership and Engagement:** Encouraging faculty to take direct responsibility for the programme, embedding it within their structures, and fostering a sense of ownership among faculty members.
- **Resource Allocation and Support:** Addressing budget issues by advocating for dedicated funding and leveraging institutional resources for tutor training and development.
- **Technology Integration:** Expand digital learning platforms to facilitate online tutoring, tracking tutor performance, and ensuring equitable access to technological tools for both tutors and students.
- **Partnerships for programme development and sustainability:** Creating internal, national and international platforms for tutors and faculty members to share experiences, exchange strategies, and engage in peer mentoring to strengthen the tutorship community.

In the process, we encountered both challenges and opportunities in facilitating this integration. A structured, research-informed approach to tutorship development is essential to ensure effective implementation and sustainability. Owen, Watkins, and Hughes (2022) emphasize the shift from evidence-informed to evidence-based practices, advocating for a framework that integrates empirical research into educational decision-making. Additionally, securing faculty and tutor buy-in is critical, as their engagement and commitment directly influence the success of tutoring initiatives. Kraft and Falken (2021) highlight the importance of scaling tutoring programmes effectively, stressing that institutional support and structured mentoring frameworks enhance tutor efficacy and

student outcomes. Thus, a well-coordinated, research-driven tutorship model fosters collaboration, professional growth, and long-term success within academic institutions. Balancing administrative responsibilities with academic student support functions proved demanding, yet it provided valuable insights into how faculty-driven academic development can be optimized for sustainable impact.

Problem Statement

The integration of the Tutorship Development Programme at the University encountered multiple challenges, highlighting the importance of a well-defined, structured approach. The absence of clear guidelines resulted in uncertainty and resistance from faculty and staff, impeding the smooth adoption of the model (Abu Bakar, Ab Ghani, & Abdullah, 2024). Additionally, the lack of dedicated administrative support for the tutorship unit caused delays in key processes, including tutor recruitment, selection, and programme implementation. This was further compounded by complications from the previous coordination of the programme outside the faculty, which added complexity to the integration process (Puech et al., 2024). These issues emphasize the need for a more strategic and systematic approach to integrating the Tutorship Development Programme, ensuring it aligns with the academic needs of faculty and institutional goals. Addressing these challenges is crucial for enhancing academic student support services and promoting student success. The program's sustainability and effectiveness rely on overcoming these structural and logistical obstacles, ensuring that it meets the academic support needs of both students and faculty. Thus, this study aimed to explore these challenges and propose solutions to facilitate a more seamless and successful integration of the program into the faculty structures at the University.

Rational for the Study

Student success and academic support remain central priorities in South African higher education, particularly within faculties such as Education, where students often come from diverse educational and socio-economic backgrounds (Mzangwa, 2019). In response to persistent challenges related to academic underperformance, disengagement, and unequal access to support structures, the integration of the Tutorship Development Programme into the Faculty of Education in 2024 marked a strategic move toward strengthening academic development. However, this integration process revealed critical gaps, including limited faculty engagement, inadequate resource allocation, and underutilisation of technology-enhanced learning. These challenges highlight the need for a structured, sustainable, and faculty-driven tutorship model that is responsive to both institutional priorities and student learning needs. Despite the recognised value of peer-assisted learning and faculty collaboration, there remains a lack of practical, evidence-based framework to guide the effective institutionalisation of tutorship in multi-campus settings. This study is therefore essential in addressing that gap by developing a contextually grounded, scalable tutorship model that promotes quality, consistency, and sustainability across faculties. Guided by Systems Thinking and Transformational Leadership theories, the study aims to support a dynamic and adaptive approach to academic support that fosters collaboration, continuous feedback, and innovation. The research not only responds to a local need but also contributes to national conversations on improving academic outcomes through faculty ownership and integrated support structures. Its findings will offer strategic insights for policy makers, academic developers, and higher education institutions seeking to embed tutorship as a core component of teaching and learning in meaningful and enduring ways.

Significance of the Study

The integration of academic support programmes, such as the Tutorship Development Programme, is essential for enhancing student learning, engagement, and success, particularly in the faculty of education that encounters diverse student needs and high teaching loads. Despite this necessity, various challenges ranging from the absence of clear implementation guidelines to inadequate administrative support highlight systemic barriers that may undermine these initiatives. This study undertakes a critical examination of the factors that facilitate or hinder the effective incorporation of tutorship within faculty structures, proposing context-specific solutions aimed at developing a more coherent and sustainable academic support model aligned with faculty goals and institutional

mandates. This study underscores the significance of strategic leadership, stakeholder collaboration, and adaptive implementation in fostering academic development by employing Systems Thinking and Transformational Leadership as guiding frameworks. The findings are intended to provide valuable insights for university administrators, faculty leaders, and academic developers engaged in the institutionalisation of student support in a scalable and inclusive manner. Ultimately, this study contributes to the broader discourse on academic transformation within South African higher education by informing policy, enhancing practice, and promoting equitable student success through structured and integrated tutorship programmes.

Literature Review

Tutorship as a Model

Tutorship models in higher education have evolved significantly to address the diverse needs of students, aiming to enhance academic support, foster engagement, and improve overall student success. One such model is peer tutoring, which has been shown to not only support the academic growth of tutees but also promote the development of leadership skills in tutors (Lloyd et al., 2020). The integration of tutoring programmes into the academic fabric of universities, particularly through formalized structures such as the Supplemental Instructor (SI) / Tutor Development Coordinator / Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) roles, can contribute to the effectiveness of academic support systems (Lloyd et al., 2020). The conceptualization of these tutoring models often hinges on the balance between providing immediate academic assistance and facilitating long-term cognitive development. Boud and Brew (2013) emphasize the importance of treating tutoring as a professional practice, where tutors are seen not just as helpers, but as active participants in the educational process who contribute to the knowledge-building of both themselves and their peers. Additionally, the sustainability of such models depends on factors such as institutional support, recruitment of qualified tutors, and the provision of adequate training (Crawford, 2021).

Stakeholder Engagement

Effective integration of tutoring programmes within faculties requires active engagement with various stakeholders, including faculty members, students, and administrative staff. A critical element in ensuring the success of tutoring programmes is stakeholder theory, which emphasizes the importance of understanding and addressing the interests of all parties involved in the educational process (Freeman & Hancock, 2013; Tinto, 2017; Siyaphumelela Conference, 2023). Engaging faculty members in the design and implementation of tutoring programmes can ensure alignment with academic goals and help integrate tutoring into the broader curriculum. This approach encourages collaboration between academic staff and tutors, allowing for seamless communication and a more cohesive learning environment (Bellodi & Dolnikoff, 2021). Additionally, the involvement of tutees in the feedback and evaluation process enables tutoring programmes to adapt to evolving student needs, ensuring the programme's relevance and effectiveness. Such engagement also extends to the creation of a sense of ownership among stakeholders, which is crucial for sustaining the programme over time (Kuh et al., 2011; Tinto, 2017; Pather et al., 2020). For instance, a study by Nwakanma (2024) highlights the significant role mentoring plays in the career development of tutors, underscoring the value of ongoing support from both peers and faculty members.

Technology in Tutorship

The integration of technology into tutoring programmes has proven to be a game-changer, particularly with the shift towards digital learning environments. The use of technology not only facilitates the scaling of tutoring efforts but also provides innovative solutions to address the challenges posed by large student populations (Maier & Reynolds, 2020). AI-based tutoring systems, such as those explored by Wang et al. (2024) in their study on Tutor CoPilot, provide personalized learning experiences that can adapt in real-time to the needs of individual students. These systems harness the power of machine learning to analyse students' progress, providing tutors with valuable insights into where students might need additional support (Wang et al., 2024). Furthermore, the use of mobile and online platforms for tutoring, as discussed by Hrastinski (2009), supports the creation of flexible learning

environments that transcend physical and temporal boundaries, thereby increasing accessibility for students in remote areas. For example, technology has been instrumental in fostering team-based problem-solving during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, where online platforms allowed tutors and students to continue their interactions and collaborate effectively (Maier & Reynolds, 2020). As universities continue to embrace digital tools, the role of technology in tutoring will only expand, offering greater scalability and accessibility for students across various contexts.

Sustainability and Scalability in Tutorship Programmes

The sustainability and scalability of tutoring programmes are essential considerations in their long-term success. As highlighted by Crawford (2021), one of the main challenges in establishing sustainable tutoring models is securing consistent funding and resources. A key strategy in ensuring sustainability is embedding tutoring programmes into the core functions of the university, so they are not viewed as secondary but as integral to the academic mission of the institution. Additionally, it is important to foster institutional buy-in and continuous professional development for tutors to ensure that they remain effective in their roles over time (Pather et al., 2020). Scalability, on the other hand, involves the ability to expand tutoring programmes to meet the needs of growing student populations without compromising quality. The use of technology, as discussed earlier, plays a critical role in addressing this challenge by enabling institutions to extend tutoring services to a larger number of students without the need for proportional increases in human resources (Pather et al., 2020; Bellodi & Dolhnikoff, 2021). Moreover, the integration of peer tutoring and the development of leadership roles for advanced students, as in the Peer Tutor Coordinator role (Lloyd et al., 2020), helps maintain the growth of tutoring programmes by training a new generation of tutors who can scale the programme in future years.

The Role of Collaborative Networks in Enhancing Tutorship

Collaborative networks spanning internal, national, and international collaborations are critical in enhancing the knowledge exchange and long-term sustainability of tutoring programmes. At the local level, these networks can facilitate the sharing of best practices and resources among different faculties, creating synergies that benefit both tutors and students (Titik & Dewi, 2020). Nationally, partnerships with other institutions allow for cross-institutional learning, where universities can adopt successful tutoring models from other campuses (Bellodi & Dolhnikoff, 2021). International collaborations, particularly those that leverage technological advancements, can expose students and tutors to global trends in education, thereby broadening their understanding of tutoring in diverse contexts (Kier & Ives, 2022). These collaborative efforts can also provide access to additional resources, including expert mentors, who can offer guidance and support to tutors, enhancing the quality and reach of the tutoring programmes (Kurniawan et al., 2024). As evidenced by the work of Zhubanova et al. (2024), international collaborations also open up opportunities for the integration of innovative tools, such as AI-based tutoring, which can greatly enhance the efficacy and scalability of tutoring systems across different regions. Through these networks, tutoring programmes can continue to evolve, adapting to new challenges and ensuring that they remain relevant and impactful in supporting student success.

Transformational Leadership and the Integration of the Tutorship Development Programme

The integration of the Tutorship Development Programme (TDP) into faculty structures at the university required strong leadership, vision, and capacity-building efforts, aligning with Transformational Leadership Theory (Burns, 1978). Transformational leadership, in the context of educational leadership as described by Kilag et al. (2024), is essential in driving educational innovation, particularly in shifting faculty perceptions of tutoring from an external intervention to an integral part of teaching and learning. The challenges of faculty resistance and the need for collaboration highlight the importance of change management strategies within higher education institutions (Da et al., 2025). Effective leadership in this context involves fostering a culture of shared responsibility and ensuring that faculty members see the long-term benefits of the TDP. Anwar (2024) emphasizes that transformational leadership enhances educator quality by promoting continuous professional development and engagement. Similarly,

sustained faculty buy-in for the TDP requires ongoing advocacy, mentorship, and institutional support. By embracing a transformational leadership approach, the programme can foster a culture of innovation, collaboration, and sustainable student success within the faculty.

Theoretical Framework

The application of Systems Thinking Theory was one of the lenses adopted to help provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the interconnectedness of stakeholders within the Tutorship Development Programme (TDP) at the Faculty of Education. Systems Thinking Theory views organizations as interconnected systems where changes in one component affect the whole (Senge, 1990). It emphasizes feedback loops, adaptive learning, and holistic problem-solving (Meadows, 2008). In the context of this paper systems thinking emphasizes the dynamic interactions between students, tutors, and faculty leadership, requiring continuous feedback and adaptation to enhance programme effectiveness (Morgan et al., 2024). As Christou et al. (2024) highlight, a whole-institution approach to sustainability relies on systems thinking to integrate academic initiatives effectively within higher education institutions. Similarly, the TDP's success depends on institutional structures that support sustainable tutor development and student success. Furthermore, Lowell and Yan (2024) argue that systems thinking enhances learning experiences by designing immersive environments, reinforcing the need for adaptable and responsive structures within the TDP. Ultimately, an integrated systems approach strengthens tutor development, faculty engagement, and student success within the academic framework.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of this study is to outline the conceptualisation process of the Tutor Development Programme and ensure its successful integration into the faculty. The study aim was to highlight the strategic intent of the programme in promoting accessibility, sustainability, and scalability. Additionally, it sought to demonstrate how the faculty leveraged internal, national, and international collaborations to enhance knowledge exchange, mentorship, and long-term sustainability. Ultimately, the study aimed to identify key components of an integration model based on the incorporation of student support programmes within faculties.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study adopted a pragmatic research paradigm, integrating qualitative and quantitative methods to comprehensively assess the tutorship programme's impact (Creswell, 2018). A mixed-methods approach was employed, allowing for triangulation to enhance validity in evaluating tutor engagement, student support, and faculty involvement. The exploratory sequential design began with qualitative data collection via focus groups and surveys. This approach facilitated the conceptualisation of the approach to integrate the programme, as well as the development and refinement of training materials, programme content, and future improvements (Creswell, 2014). The population included tutors, former tutors, faculty members, and students with disabilities within the Faculty of Education across two campuses. A purposive sampling strategy was used to select participants based on their involvement in the tutorship programme. Data collection methods included observation, surveys from faculty members, tutors, and students to inform programme development, focus groups with students with disabilities to address accessibility, and communication systems involving departmental representatives, team leaders, and student assistants to support programme coordination.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The contents of Stakeholder Engagement in the Tutorship Programme

Stakeholder engagement has been instrumental in shaping the Tutorship Development Programme (TDP) in the Faculty of Education. The participation of former and current tutors through surveys provided critical insights into the integration, improvement, and expansion of the programme. These surveys, containing open-ended questions,

allowed respondents to share their experiences and recommendations, which informed programme enhancements (Freeman & Hancock, 2013; Lloyd et al., 2020; Mills et al., 2022).

The involvement of faculty members, students, and former tutors ensured that the programme remained aligned with the university's academic goals. Faculty members, in particular, played a crucial role in aligning tutorship training with course content and assessment methods. According to Tinto (2012), faculty engagement in academic support programmes enhances student retention and success. Additionally, student and tutor feedback emphasized the importance of addressing discipline-specific challenges in training sessions, ensuring the tutoring programme remains relevant and responsive (Riese & Kann, 2020; Kier & Ives, 2022).

Beyond the University, engagement with Faculty of Education alumni now industry professionals and educational experts provided valuable perspectives on integrating real-world applications into tutor training. This aligns with Kuh et al. (2011), who argue that experiential learning opportunities strengthen academic support initiatives. The insights gathered from alumni have guided curriculum modifications and reinforced the programme's impact on student learning outcomes (Riese & Kann, 2020; Titik & Dewi, 2020).

Overall, stakeholder engagement has significantly contributed to refining the TDP. By ensuring that tutors, students, faculty, and alumni have a voice in programme development, the University has promoted a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement. The data-driven insights have shaped training content and strategies, ultimately enhancing the programme's effectiveness and impact.

Faculty-Specific Materials: Concept Document, Training Manuals, and Standard Operating Guidelines

The development of faculty-specific materials, including the Tutorship Concept Document, Training Manuals, and Standard Operating Guidelines, has been instrumental in formalizing and standardizing the Tutorship Development Programme (TDP) at the University. These resources provide a structured framework for tutor recruitment, training, and evaluation, ensuring consistency and quality in academic support interventions. The pedagogical underpinnings of the programme, emphasizing collaborative learning and active student engagement, which are critical for student success (Tinto, 2017; Maier & Reynolds, 2020; Maier & Reynolds, 2020). The documents also facilitated institutional buy-in by aligning the programme with the university's strategic priorities on student retention and academic excellence (Pather et al., 2020).

Training Manuals were developed to equip tutors with subject-specific tutoring techniques and communication strategies. Research indicates that structured tutor training significantly improves student learning outcomes by promoting metacognitive awareness and self-regulated learning (Chi, 2016; Wang et al., 2024; Zhubanova et al., 2024). The manuals also incorporate experiential learning approaches (Kolb, 1984), allowing tutors to engage in reflective practice and continuous improvement. Furthermore, these manuals ensure equitable training across, addressing concerns about discipline-specific tutoring needs (Bailey et al., 2020; Adelana, 2024).

Standard Operating Guidelines (SOPs) were established to provide clear operational procedures for tutor recruitment, monitoring, and evaluation. SOPs are essential for ensuring accountability and sustainability in academic support programs (Brookfield, 2017; Adelana, 2024). The SOPs delineate tutor roles, responsibilities, and expected outcomes, thereby enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the TDP. According to Kuh et al. (2011), well-defined institutional guidelines in tutoring programs contribute to better program scalability and impact assessment. By developing these faculty-specific materials, the TDP has institutionalized best practices in tutoring, fostering a culture of structured peer learning that is scalable and adaptable to different faculties at the University (Bellodi & Dolnikoff, 2021; Wang et al., 2024).

Scholarship of Tutorship: Advancing Research and Academic Discourse

Recognizing the importance of evidence-based tutoring interventions, a research team consisting of twelve

(12) faculty members was established to advance the scholarship of tutorship at the University. This initiative aligns with contemporary calls for research-informed teaching and learning practices in higher education (Boud & Brew, 2013). The team systematically analysed survey data from tutors, students, and faculty members, generating scholarly publications that contribute to the academic discourse on tutoring.

The scholarly outputs of the research team provide empirical insights into the effectiveness of the TDP, informing future improvements and policy decisions (Freeman & Hancock, 2013). Furthermore, these studies enhance the University's research profile, positioning the university as a leader in tutorship development scholarship.

One of the key areas of investigation has been the impact of structured tutor training on student learning outcomes. Existing literature suggests that trained peer tutors not only improve their own academic performance but also contribute to the intellectual growth of their peers (Roscoe & Chi, 2007; Brookfield, 2017; Zhubanova et al., 2024). By systematically analysing student performance data and tutor reflections, the research team is contributing to an evidence-based understanding of how tutoring interventions support student success.

Furthermore, by disseminating findings through conferences and peer-reviewed journals, the research team will strengthen academic networks and collaborative partnerships in tutorship. This aligns with recommendations from Pather et al. (2020) on the importance of cross-institutional collaborations in enhancing tutoring models and academic development programs.

Technology Integration in Tutorship Development

Collaboration with the University's ICT and Learning and Teaching with Technology teams led to the development of an online recruitment system designed to simplify tutor applications and selections. Although it was not fully adopted in 2024, the groundwork has been laid for full implementation in 2025, starting with applications for newly appointed academics who require tutorship support.

A dedicated training programme for tutors utilizing MS Teams and University's Learning Management Systems (LMS) has improved accessibility and efficiency, ensuring that students can easily engage with tutoring services (Lloyd et al., 2020; Mills et al. 2022; Zhubanova et al., 2024). The use of MS Teams for tutor training, recruitment, and programme evaluation has created a flexible and inclusive learning environment. Additionally, an official email account was developed in collaboration with ICT to facilitate seamless interactions between tutors, coordinators, and faculty members.

The integration of technology demonstrated the importance of embracing digital transformation in academic support services. As the programme continues to evolve, further investments in digital learning tools and AI-driven tutoring systems will be explored to enhance student learning outcomes and tutor effectiveness. AI-driven systems can personalize student support based on individual learning needs (Mills et al. 2022; Zhubanova et al., 2024). Data analytics will be incorporated to track student progress and tailor tutoring sessions, accordingly, aligning with best practices in digital learning environments. According to Lloyd et al., (2020), online engagement fosters deeper learning experiences by enabling tutors to share best practices and seek guidance from experienced mentors. The integration of digital tools has therefore enhanced the scalability and sustainability of the TDP.

Internal, National, and International Collaboration

Collaboration at multiple levels internally, nationally, and internationally has been a strategic focus for enhancing the TDP at the University.

- **Internal Collaboration:** Engagement with various faculties and departments has led to a more cohesive and interdisciplinary approach to tutoring. The recruitment of academic department representatives has ensured that tutoring services are well-coordinated across different campuses, improving accessibility and student

support (Pather et al., 2020).

- **National Collaboration:** Partnerships with surrounding universities have been initiated to facilitate knowledge exchange and benchmarking. These collaborations enabled the sharing of best practices in tutoring, strengthening the faculty's ability to refine its own programme (Pather et al., 2020).
- **International Collaboration:** Interactions with an International University in the USA have opened avenues for global engagement. Training received by the Tutor Development Coordinator at the University of Kansas -Missouri in the USA on Supplemental Instruction (SI) has influenced the TDP's structure, aligning it with globally recognized tutoring models. These partnerships lay the foundation for the establishment of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and Memorandums of Agreement (MoAs), ensuring long-term collaboration and continuous knowledge transfer.

The emphasis on collaboration has positioned the TDP as a dynamic and evolving programme that integrates local and international expertise.

Programme Sustainability and the Development of a Short Learning Programme

Ensuring the long-term sustainability of the TDP has been a key consideration in its development. One of the primary strategies for sustainability is the conversion of the tutor training manual into a Short Learning Programme (SLP). This initiative, undertaken in collaboration with other tutor coordinators, aims to institutionalize tutor training and generate third-stream income, reducing reliance on external funding sources (Crawford, 2021; Bailey et al., 2020; Adelana, 2024).

The development of an SLP aligns with global trends in higher education, where formalized training programmes enhance the professionalization of academic support roles (Bellodi & Dolhnikoff, 2021). By offering accredited training, the TDP will ensure that tutors receive recognized credentials, increasing their employability and professional development opportunities. This also reinforces university's commitment to quality assurance in tutoring services. In addition to the SLP, structured quality assurance mechanisms have been implemented. Tutors are now required to submit portfolios of evidence before receiving certification, ensuring accountability and maintaining high standards. Portfolios serve as a record of tutors' engagement, reflections, and contributions to student success, promoting a culture of continuous improvement and self-assessment (Brookfield, 2017; Riese & Kann, 2020; Bellodi & Dolhnikoff, 2021).

Overall, the emphasis on programme sustainability through an SLP and structured quality assurance mechanisms positions the TDP in the faculty as a long-term academic support initiative. These efforts ensure that the programme remains relevant, effective, and financially viable, while continuing to support student success at the University. This comprehensive and collaborative approach has laid a strong foundation for the long-term growth and sustainability of the TDP, ensuring that it continues to evolve in response to the needs of students and faculty at University.

COMPONENTS FOR A CONCEPTUAL MODEL TO INTEGRATE THE TUTORSHIP SUPPORT IN FACULTIES

A. Stakeholder Engagement

- **Faculty Leadership:** Ensure Faculty Deans, Heads of Departments, and faculty members support the programme.
- **Student Involvement:** Engage student representatives and past tutors for continuous feedback.
- **Industry and Alumni Partnerships:** Connect tutors with external mentors and industry professionals.

B. Faculty-specific recruitment criteria and training content

- Establish faculty-specific recruitment criteria to ensure quality selection of tutors.
- Develop standardized training modules, including:
- Develop tutor pedagogical skills

- Harness digital learning tools
- C. Faculty Integration and Support
 - Assign faculty-based coordinators to oversee programme implementation.
 - Provide funding mechanisms through faculty budgets and external grants.
- D. Technology Integration
 - Utilize digital platforms (e.g., MS Teams, Moodle, Learning Management Systems(LMS) etc.) for tutor-student interaction, reporting, and evaluation.
 - Develop an online system for tutor applications, training, and resource access.
- E. Quality Assurance and Assessment
 - Implement a portfolio-based assessment where tutors submit reflections, challenges, lessons learning , statics on module performance and student feedback,
 - Conduct regular programme evaluations through student and faculty surveys.
- F. Scholarship of Student Academic Development: Tutorship
 - Encourage and collaborate with academics to conduct research on tutoring practices and publish findings.
 - Organize annual colloquiums to present research and best practices.
- G. Sustainability and Growth
 - Develop a Short Learning Programme (SLP) for tutor training, generating third-stream income. This gives credibility to the programme.
 - Foster national and international partnerships for under study and collaboration.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The integration of the TDP into the Faculty of Education has been largely successful. The study underscores the importance of strategic planning, stakeholder involvement, and technological adoption in ensuring programme effectiveness. Future enhancements should focus on expanding training opportunities, increasing faculty participation, and fostering stronger international collaborations. Reflecting on this journey, we recognize that the success of the programme is not solely measured by student performance metrics but also by the capacity it builds in tutors, faculty, and the broader academic community. As the University continues to evolve as a technology-infused African institution, initiatives such as the tutorship will remain instrumental in fostering student success and academic excellence.

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