Reorganization of Practicum in Initial Teacher Education: A Search for Challenges in Implementation by Ex-Ante Evaluation

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ABSTRACT

The background of the study is a perceived need of increasing quality in practice during Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Sweden. In order to achieve higher quality, the government encourages reorganization towards a limited number of practice schools, competence development for supervisors and research focusing on the selected practice schools. The aim of this study is to present and critically discuss prerequisites for implementation of the reform. The paper focuses on how a preliminary logic model and a SWOT analysis can show challenges encountered during the implementation of the reorganization. By using the logic model and the SWOT analysis an ex-ante evaluation was carried out in two steps. The results disclosed that the motivation behind reorganization, improving the quality of practicum, might meet some challenges. Indicators of higher quality being attained are not provided; the local organization is expected to construct such indicators during the process. In contrast to the challenges the results showed that the implementation was supported by earlier good relations and a common idea of developing practicum in ITE. The implication for implementation is a need to have a dialogue about indicators for quality among different stakeholders in ITE. Without such a dialogue it can be disputed whether the change in practicum was successful.

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1.0   Introduction

Recently, waves of reform have swept over Sweden, resulting in a new Education Act (SFS 2010:800), a revised curriculum for preschool (SKOLSFS 1998:16/2011:69), and new curricula for compulsory school (SKOLSFS 2010:37) and upper secondary school (SKOLSFS 2011:144). Furthermore, a new Initial Teacher Education (onwards ITE) was proposed (SOU 2008:109). The investigators suggested a new system for practicum during ITE, where schools should apply to become a field school, and then by certain criteria be selected for a three-year period. The selection should be carried out nationally by the Swedish National Agency for Education, or by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate. Another proposal from the investigators was a revival of research and development schools, where the schools would be closely connected to ITE, and teachers and scientists conducting research in collaboration. Such schools existed up to 1977. When the new ITE was launched in 2011 (Prop. 2009/10:89), practicum at schools was specified, and should comprise 30 ECTS grades (European Credit Transfer System). No new directives were given concerning how the partnership between universities and organizers of preschool, compulsory school, and upper secondary school (the sum of these three, forming what from now on is labelled K-12) should be organized.

A governmental initiative during 2014 will change the manner in which partnership between the university and the organizers of K-12 is organized. If the reorganization is carried out, the partnership between the university and the organizers of K-12 will be more in line with the previous investigator's proposal, i.e. a selection of schools for practicum. All organizers of ITE can either apply to get national funding, or carry out the change with own financing. Mälardalen University applied and was accepted for funding and the implementation or the new practicum organization is the object of this study.

The article contributes to a continuing discussion about practicum in ITE. Most studies concern how the practicum is carried out and the students are in focus (Lawson, Cakmak, Gündüz and Busher, 2015). Organizational perspectives concerning partnership between organizers of ITE and organizers of K-12 are less often discussed. Further on the article contributes with example of methods (logic model and SWOT-analysis) which can be used to get data, useful for critical discussion about how to implement changes.

What is possible to study currently is the background and the planning for the change. Thereby, the aim of the study is to present and critically discuss prerequisites for implementation of the reform. The results are a part of an on-going evaluation of the implementation of the reform in a local context and

The article continues with a presentation of ex-ante evaluation and is followed by selected earlier literature about partnership between universities and organizers of K-12. It is followed by a description of the evaluation perspective. An ex-ante evaluation is carried out in two steps. The first step, current and forthcoming practicum partnership are presented and a logic model for local implementation of change is suggested. In a second step a SWOT analysis is carried out and used for discussion of the challenges. Lastly, the limitations of the study are clarified and the article ends with a conclusion.

2.0   Why an ex-ante evaluation?

The initiative with concentration of practicum schools was accepted as an idea by MDH and a plan for application for national funding was written during spring 2014. In the plan for application research concerning the implementation was included. The study started already during 2014, in the planning stage, and is a limited assignment during 2014 and 2015. The reason why the study could start already early spring 2014, before national funding was granted, was that research was included in the application, but locally granted by Mälardalen Competence Centre for Learning (onwards MKL). MKL is a regional cooperation platform for school development. The initiators of the venture are MDH, Västerås Municipality and Eskilstuna Municipality. Within the framework of MKL continuing professional development for educators, seminars and research-based school development projects are provided. The assignment for research is thereby an internal but the author is not involved in the practicum

organization in any other way. The role is to critically discuss the change (research) as a basis for decision-making (management) (Volkov, 2011).

In the directives from MKL it was stated that the research should be on-going during 2014 and 2015, and that the progress should be commented on continuously. Based on the expectation that research should start early and the demand for early comments to MKL from the evaluator, a decision was taken to study the prerequisites for the change. This decision was informed by earlier literature about change which point to reasons for change, goals for change and communication with stakeholders (Burke, 2011). An ex-ante evaluation is most often used in a European context such as when regional investments are planned. One definition of an ex ante evaluation included that it shall assess consistency and expected impact (Gaffey, 2013). Also when changes in European and national policies are planned, ex ante evaluations are commonplace (Fitzpatrick, 2012). If the European Union context is new, ex ante evaluations can have longer traditions nationally. Carrying out ex ante evaluation can also resemble the tradition of public hearing of proposed legislation – ensured by the constitution in the Nordic countries – provides for a culture of involvement of stakeholders to be likened to ex-ante evaluation (Forss and Rebien, 2014). Even though, there are limitations to ex ante evaluation, similar to logic models, that any thought of control of more complicated changes will fail (Sanderson, 2012, as cited in Lehtonen, 2014). Carrying out ex-ante evaluation is becoming more and more interesting as it can show the limitations and possibilities for a change, but also highlight consequences for different stakeholders. As van der Knaap (2011) phrase it, an ex-ante evaluation can inform about what is needed and then the delivery is showing what can be done.

3.0   Interpreting partnership

In order to interpret what a partnership in this context would entail, the relationship between the university and the practice schools, their respective roles, as well as the location for practicum in ITE, were explored. One central issue concerned who would be responsible for the ITE and thus would be the agent.

A partnership between university and organizers of K-12 may comprise different levels of collaboration:
- ITE is based at UNI, school teachers are advisory
- ITE is based at UNI, practicum is complementary
- ITE is based at UNI, and driven in collaboration between UNI and the practicum schools
- ITE is based at schools, UNI is complementary

As Scribner Bartholomew and Haymore Sandholtz (2009) phrase it, the least intensive partnership might be agreements on the placement of student teachers, while the most intensive might be the creation of professional development schools (PDS). PDSs are organized in close collaboration between schools and universities, with the aim of supporting the learning process of student teachers as well as staff, and include restricting the number of schools and ITEs. Collaborative research is an important part of PDS (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster and Cobb 1995)

In their study on partnership, Smith, Brisard, and Mentor (2006) came to the conclusion that a partnership might well be collaborative, with the university collaborating with other stakeholders, and the knowledge from universities as well as from schools being accredited. The collaborative model is often compared with other models. One of these is where the university forms the foundation for ITE. Staff from the university visit schools, assessing the student teachers at several occasions, and the supervisor's role is to observe the student teachers. This model might be labelled ''duplication', the lessons of the university teachers and the schools in a sense being overlapping (Cameron-Jones and O'Hara 1993, in Smith et al. 2006). A similar model was termed ''integrated' by Furlong et al. (2006), which is not the same as collaboration, but rather an integration of experience, the consequence being unclear borderlines between teacher and mentor, and between school and university. The supervisor's responsibility is minimal. Contrasting the integration and duplication models, Smith et al., (2006)

proposed a complementary, university-based "separatist' model, in which the roles and responsibilities are clear. In this model, the university teachers visit the student teacher when specifically required. The student teacher must transfer to the classroom what occurs at the university. The university may also assemble a partnership model, presiding over the university courses as well as the practicum conducted at school, the control being exerted during meetings with selected central staff at the university and the schools.

Furlong has persisted in critically discussing partnership in ITE. Furlong *et al.* (2006) delineated a partnership model (Furlong *et al.* 2000, in Furlong *et al.* 2006, p. 42) as follows:

> Planning: Lead provider is the lead agent, cooperating with (other) schools for the delivery of a nationally defined programme of teacher training, in which course structures and contents (standards) are centrally defined. Planning is about formulating by what means the lead provider and partner schools are able to "deliver'.
>
> Lead provider visits schools and other partners: Strong emphasis on quality assurance and control, monitoring that training is delivered in line with nationally prescribed learning and opportunities. Documentation: Strongly emphasized, defining tasks across different schools.
> Content: Government-defined standards determine what students should learn in school and where, appropriate in the HEI.
>
> Mentoring: School-based mentors, trained to deliver government-defined standards.
> Assessment: Schools as well as lead provider work within a framework of common standards.
> Contractual relationship: Lead provider becomes the "agent' for the delivery of a government relationship programme, and schools are sub-contractors, agreeing to deliver their share of listed tasks and responsibilities, clearly defined in the partnership agreement.
>
> Legitimation: A clear framework of national standards for the delivery of a national system of initial teacher training.

The model above emanated from findings by Furlong *et al.* (2006), showing that partnership was voluntary, resulting in some schools taking part, while others did not. They furthermore found variations in terms of the frequency with which university teachers visited student teachers during practicum, and also how the practicum was structured. Some partnership designs were very structured, with university and practicum schools collaborating, while in others, the practicum schools carried out their own design, albeit within a framework. There were also differences in how assessment of student teachers was carried out. Finally, some schools offered mentor training, but not in collaboration with the university. On the other hand, Furlong *et al.* (2006) found an increased commitment to engage in ITE among the organizers. They had observed that the manner by which partnership was carried out encouraged a technical-rationalist approach to training, and argue that during the 1990s, the approach was rather directed towards epistemological and pedagogical dimensions. The university and schools were in those days perceived as providing different forms of professional knowledge. Epistemological and pedagogical dimensions formed the core of the partnership. Increased school autonomy might be perceived as positive, but when it results in offering in-house mentor training, and recruiting other schools for networking, leaving out the university, ITE might become too simplified, turning into fulfilling technical-rationalist tasks. The ITE becomes training, not education.

According to Moran, Abbott, and Clarke (2009), certain issues concerning partnership in ITE are often brought up to discussion: transfer of resources to schools, roles and responsibilities of partners, mentoring and assessment of student teachers, and selection of training schools. Other matters are for instance institutional differences in terms of responses to reform policies (Scribner Bartholomew and Haymore Sandholtz 2009). These issues are comparable to the themes under constant discussion

according to Niklasson (2014), such as knowledge during practicum, where, and from whom this knowledge should be obtained, timing of practicum, who should learn together with whom, or from whom, and also organizational and administrative issues.

The present paper mainly focuses on organizational and administrative issues. Finally, there are organizational and administrative issues, where the UNI and the field/practice should resolve their mode of association:

- Contract between national authority and organization, work team, or individual teachers
- Contract between UNI and organization, work team, or individual teachers
- Payment to organization, team, or individual teachers
- Diplomas to supervisors, useful for career
- Further education at the UNI for supervising teachers (compulsory)
- All teachers, or special field schools, may function as supervisors

The practicum part of the Swedish ITE is presently in the process of being reorganized; and the complete implementation can thus not be studied. Nonetheless, the prerequisites along with a suggested logic model with its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, may still be scrutinized in an ex-ante evaluation.

4.0   Method

Texts concerning current practicum and the forthcoming practicum was studied (Niklasson 2011; SFS 2014:2; Utbildningsdepartementet 2014; Mälardalens högskola, 2014). In addition observations were carried out during most of the planning meetings during spring 2014, organized by the planning committee for the application for national funding. The participants in the planning committee was informed about the evaluation assignment and that the research applied ethic rules according to the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet, 2011).

With the results from, mainly, the texts studied, a logic model was created. A logic model is often used either to discuss whether to start a project or a program, or in the beginning of an evaluation. The starting point is a long-term vision of how the participants will benefit from the alteration of the activity, the goal/objective. This outcome is then placed on a time-line. A simple model can consist boxes for: resources/input, activities, outputs, as well as immediate, intermediate, long-term, and ultimate outcomes for the participants (the longitudinal goals concerning change). In educational context a logic model, or as Holliday (2014) phrases it, a logic map, can be used to show challenges and needs. The logic model can either be shaped in collaboration with stakeholders or created preliminary by the researcher; and used for critical discussions with the stakeholders (Fitzpatrick, Sanders & Worthen 2004; Fielden, Rusch, Masinda, Sands, Frankish, & Evoy, 2007; Poon, Leung Wing-sea, Louie, & Vergel de Dios, 2013). A logic model may be useful for an additional framing of a research subject, as it proposes how change may be perceived and accomplished. A critical discussion on the hypothesis of change can by that means be conducted, based on different parts of the logic model, along with the question to which degree there is coherence in the logic model.

In addition to the logic model, some of the issues brought to attention in earlier studies were used for a SWOT-analysis, which is short for Strengths and Weaknesses, which are internal, and Opportunities and Threats, which are external. The choice of a SWOT-analysis is based on its usefulness to discuss an earlier or a forthcoming change. It has been used in educational context as a basis for suggestions for reflection (Cojocariu, Lazar, Nedeff and Lazar, 2014) and creating principles for a certain issue, like professional practical training (Iucu and Platis, 2012). Descriptions of its use have been published since the 1960s, mostly with the aim to improve decision-making. It has also been used in educational settings, often in combination with other administrative resources, and aiming at discussions and decisions about the future. Even though, used, it is not possible to find the origin of the SWOT-analysis, according to Helms and Nixon (2010).

5.0   Current practicum in ITE

The presentation of the current practicum reorganization is based on earlier studies of practicum (Niklasson, 2011) and the application from MDH (Mälardalens högskola, 2014).

Once an organizer has been accredited for offering ITE, the government decides the number of student teachers the organizer will receive payment for. In this payment, a sum is earmarked for organizing practicum, to be divided between the ITE organizer and the organizers offering practicum places (Niklasson, 2011). When discussing earlier days of the organization, the expression *field school* is used in this article, as this was the expression used at MDH at the time. The term *practice school* will further on be used in this article for the new organization.

To create and maintain the practicum organization, a contract is written between MDH and the organizers, such as preschool, compulsory schools, and upper secondary school (together called K-12, as stated above). A partnership is formed between the two. The organizers can be either public or private. MDH is then distributing the means to the different organizers, based on the amount of student teachers they supervise, and the organizers will in turn distribute these means on the background of the structure decided upon. No selection of organizers or schools for practicum is effectuated. The only criterion is that the schools predominantly are located in the nearby geographical region of MDH. It is included in the contract that MDH shall offer further education to the student teacher supervisors at the practice schools, so called 'handledarutbildning' [education for supervisors] comprising 7.5 ECTS. An established organization is thus since several years' operating at MDH.

Currently, MDH has agreements with 18 municipalities in the region, along with agreements with 52 private organizers of K-12. More than 300 teams of supervisors are working with practicum. Each supervisor team has a contact person, and for each school having a supervisor team, there is a responsible partner, the school leader. Each municipality (or equivalent) has a central contact person who is responsible for practicum issues.

Practicum is specifically described in the curriculum for ITE, with details about when the student teachers should observe teaching methods, collect data during subject studies or professional studies, and be supervised and assessed during practicum. The practicum is designed as 3 courses with specific learning goals. One course (7.5 ETCS) is carried out in the beginning of ITE, one in the middle (7.5 ECTS), and one towards the end of ITE (15 ECTS).

During the courses, the course teacher at the university is expected to carry out a formative assessment. After a course has been completed, an automatic web inquiry is sent to the student teachers. The course teacher has to provide a written response to the student teacher's answers, and must also, depending on the results, suggest future actions. This response will be sent to the student teacher and to the administration at the department. Every year, the study counsellors carry out a program evaluation.

The reorganization from 2014 does not include the curriculum or course plans for the ITE, at least not in the first step. It rather concerns the organizational level of partnerships, and the change involves the manner in which the curriculum is realized in the practicum.

6.0   Forthcoming practicum in ITE

The presentation of the forthcoming reorganization is based on the directives from the government (SFS 2014:2) and their application at MDH (Mälardalens högskola, 2014). The documents are used as a basis to create a logic model.

Government initiative

During early 2014, the government offered financial means, via the Ministry of Education, for reorganization of the practicum in ITE (SFS 2014:2). Reasons behind taking these measures, according to the government, are several reports on problems within this segment of the ITE programmes (Skolverket 2007, Högskoleverket 2008:8R, and Lärarförbundet 2008 in Utbildningsdepartementet 2014). A reference was also made to the official committee report *En hållbar lärarutbildning* [A sustainable ITE] (SOU 2008:109), in which it is suggested that practicum should be strengthened by a system that involves 'field schools' (Utbildningsdepartementet 2014). Implementation of the reorganization is anticipated during 2014-2018.

Local response
At MDH, a decision was taken to participate in the implementation of selected practice schools, admitting a larger amount of student teachers. The reorganization of practicum should be carried out in the suggested direction, even if the government turned down the application for additional financing (Mälardalens högskola, 2014).

As previously described, an established partnership for practicum during ITE already exists between MDH and public and private organizers. A consequence of the reorganization from field schools to practice schools is that some organizers of K-12 will not admit any new student teachers, but only keep those already enrolled. The selection of practice schools is based on new partnership agreements, and involves certain criteria (presented below). This will create a temporary parallel system of field schools and practice schools. Gradually, the field school organization will be replaced by the practice school organization.

Criteria for practice schools
The criteria for becoming a practice school emanates from directives stated by the government (SFS 2014:2). First of all, the student teachers should have their placement at the selected practice school during the main part of their practicum. The practice schools should organize K-12 education. The number of practice schools should be restricted, attaining a concentration of student teachers at each school to support peer-learning. MDH is of the opinion that these criteria are being fulfilled.

The reorganization should occur successively, encompassing at least 50% of the ITE participants at the end of the implementation time (2018). MDH maintains that 100% of the ITE participants should have placement in practice schools. The planned recruitment is presented below in Table 5, and extends to 2019. The table does not display how previous recruitments are phased out.

Table 1: Recruitment to ITE 2014-2019

Year	2014	2015	2015	2016	2016	2017	2017	2018	2018	2019
Semester	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring
Preschool ITE	80	160	240	320	400	480	560	560	560	560
Primary year ITE K-3	40	60	120	160	200	240	280	320	320	320
Primary year ITE 4-6	40	40	80	80	120	120	160	160	160	160
Subject-teacher 7-9 and upper secondary	50	50	100	100	150	150	200	200	250	250
Total	210	330	540	660	870	990	1200	1240	1290	1290

School- or preschool teachers (from now on *teacher* includes both categories) at the practice schools should have completed a supervision education comprising at least 7.5 ECTS. The number of supervisors should be sufficient, granting only a few student teachers per supervisor. The teachers working with

practicum and in ITE at the university should be highly skilled[2]. The university should contribute with supervisor education, comprising 7.5 ECTS. At the university, there should be teachers following and contributing to the development of the student teachers during practicum. These teachers should aid the supervisors in the assessment of the practicum. During 2007-2013, approximately 600 teachers participated in the supervisor education at MDH. Furthermore, a number of supervisors participated in supervisor education offered by other universities. The response at MDH to this is that the criteria are being met. Even so, MDH is in the process of extending the offer of supervisor education, 7.5 ETCS, doubling the number of places. A supplementary course, 7.5 ETCS, is moreover planned for those who already have completed the first course.

The university should have an agreement with the organizers of K-12 that regulates the responsibilities during practicum. The agreement should particularly focus on:

1. That leadership, organization, teaching quality, and development work at the practice schools is of high quality
2. That the student teachers are able to participate in practicum at practice schools, with certain prerequisites being met.
3. That the teachers at the practice school have adequate teacher- as well as supervisor education.

MDH have (in response to no. 1) created a letter of intent and a future contract. It is in the contract agreed that the organizers of K-12 are the ones that shall select the schools in accordance with criterion 1 above. An agreement has also been made that the new career option for highly skilled teachers incorporates into their assignment a paragraph stating that they should lead the supervisor team at their school. A dialogue has been initiated between the university and organizers of K-12, concerning the feasibility of teachers having a combination assignment, working in school as well as at university. This combination assignment is also meant to encourage collaborative research. In response to the second criterion, MDH has assumed responsibility for the main placement of student teachers. Should a need for temporary placement arise, the school leader and the supervisor team will make the arrangements. If required, the practicum coordinators at MDH will provide support. Criterion number 3 is addressed by MDH offering extra courses in supervisor education, comprising 7.5 ETCS. The organizers of K-12 are responsible for supervisors being given the opportunity to participate.

Organization during implementation
During the implementation, a coordinating group will be formed, with a chairperson organizing and leading the meetings at MDH, and with the organizers of K-12 conducting the follow-up. A project leader will, in collaboration with the local school leaders, implement, lead, and organize the trial at the practice school. The practice team at MDH will support the supervisor teams and student teachers during practicum, and be supportive in the assessment of the students.

Practicum courses
During spring 2014 four teachers acted as practicum coordinators at MDH. They stayed in contact with stakeholders at all levels. An administrator of economy is employed, and a database has been set up containing placement information, accessible for filed schools staff and Teacher Students via the MDH internal web. MDH teachers will visit the practice school during the three practicum courses, and will have a three-party dialogue as part of the assessment of the student teachers. They should also lead seminars with student teachers and supervisors. All student teachers will receive a *Student handbook for practicum*, in which the three courses during practicum are presented. They will document their learning process in this book, and the supervisor will write comments about their process. This document will subsequently be given to the responsible course teacher at MDH, who will be doing the final assessment of each course after a concluding seminar at MDH, to which the supervisors are invited.

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[2] The expression 'highly skilled teacher' provides a new career possibility within education; teachers could be labelled 'highly skilled teachers' warranting a higher salary along with a great responsibility for developing the teaching of a specific subject. At present, the organizers of K-12 have access to national funding for this extra cost.

Time line

The reorganization into practice schools may be perceived as comprising several phases. The model below, containing three phases, is *hypothetical*. Nonetheless, the wording in the boxes is retrieved from the MDH's application for funding of implementation of practice schools:

Table 2: Phases of implementation of practice schools

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3
Spring 2014	Autumn 2014	2015 – 2018
Formulate application to the government for financing	Reorganization starts/is implemented	Organization is established
Contact between MDH and organizers of preschool, compulsory school, and upper secondary school – letter of intent	Extended offer of further education for supervisors is realized	Extended offer of further education for supervisors is realized
Contact between MDH and organizers of preschool, compulsory school, and upper secondary school – agreement/contract		
Extended offer of further education for supervisors		

Spring 2014 has now passed, and consequently, MDH has already initiated the process of reorganization. MDH started drafting the plan of action in 2013, when information about the forthcoming reform was issued. As mentioned earlier, a decision was taken that reorganization of practicum should be carried out in the suggested direction, even if the government turned down the application for additional financing (Mälardalens högskola, 2014).

The leaders of ITE organized information meetings with representatives from the region. During spring 2014, a project leader of the reform effectuation contacted the organizers of K-12 in the two biggest municipalities, primarily the central administration, the local school leaders, and potential supervisors at schools. These were all asked to sign a letter of intention. They would in turn, in accordance with the criteria, choose which schools that should participate. A contract was formulated and will be applied when the trial with practice schools begins, autumn 2014.

Logic model

In addition to the model above, which is based on a time plan, a hypothetical logic model for the reorganization has been constructed. In this model, the application produced by MDH, along with suggestions made by the author of this paper, forms the foundation. Bold text represents suggestions from the researcher:

Table 3: A suggested logic model:

	Challenge – Opportunity	Resources	Activities	Desired change
National level	Practicum-related problems in ITE	National financing	Directives for application, information about acceptance, potential follow-up	Quality assurance of practicum in ITE
Local level	Sustaining and improving quality of practicum in ITE **Participation in national initiative**	**PHASE 1** An acting project leader Work team for the application of funding **Researcher** Local financing	Formulate the application Formulate letter of intent **Approaching for letter of intent** Signing letter of intent	Sustained and improved quality of practicum in ITE

	PHASE 2 Coordinating team, comprising chair person, project leader, researcher, doctoral student, and persons responsible for practicum at MDH Appointing teacher for supervisor course National and local financing	Appointing chair person Appointing project leader Additional research support Supervisor education	Fewer schools Increased number of student teachers on each school Supervising team, with educated supervisors
	PHASE 3 Coordinating team, comprising chair person, project leader, researcher, doctoral student, and persons responsible for practicum at MDH Appointing teacher for supervisor course National and local financing	Supervising team, at least 6 of the supervisors having accomplished supervisor education Each supervisor supervises 2 student teachers At least 12 student teachers at each practice school Supervisor education Staff from supervising team works at MDH All students have practicum at practice schools 2018	Stakeholders report increased satisfaction with practicum Student teachers pass practicum, and attain the learning goals to a greater extent The planned reorganization of practicum is realized Teachers at practicum schools are granted the necessary prerequisites for developing pedagogic work The teacher profession acquires a higher status

The logic model reveals that explicit incentives for changing the practicum organization are lacking. Few examples are given of proceedings not working in reality, giving the impression that the organization is indeed functioning, at least on a local level. One interpretation is that MDH is keen to engage in the reorganization now, anxious to "not miss the train' and the opportunity to acquire financing. The question of money is although contradicted as a decision was already made that the change should be carried out, even if the application for money would not be accepted.

7.0   Discussion

As an addition to the logic model a SWOT-analysis was carried out, founded on the government initiative, the application formulated at MDH, and general information, obtained from MDH.

Internal strengths: An organization for practicum is already in existence. No arguments have been put forward showing resistance to the application or the reorganization. The application has been accomplished, and as a complement, a letter of intent was formulated and included. A contract has been formulated. A plan for a team during the implementation has been devised.

Internal weaknesses: No documentation exists on whether information about the reorganization reached administrative staff. The staff worked with a large number of schools, and some schools not being included in the new practicum organization might give rise to apprehension. Motivations behind the change were not offered, and examples of forthcoming improved quality were not given. It was not explained what 'achieving higher quality' entails, and the goals were not clear. A recruitment plan for the team meant to carry out and support the implementation was formulated, but with no documentation on announcements for the team. Since the recruitment pertains to autumn 2014, there is a risk of failure. If recruitment is meant to be an internal procedure, then this is not clear. Local (and hopefully national)

resources for implementation are available, but there is a risk for decisions being made to use the funds in a manner not supportive of the implementation process.

External opportunities: An established network between MDH and organizers of K-12 exists, a letter of intention reinforcing the continuation of the collaboration. It appears that organizers of K-12 perceive MDH to be reliable. The reorganization does not entail a complete change for the involved organizers of K-12. Hundreds of supervisors are already adequately educated. There is a possibility of acquiring national funding.

External threats: It is not clear whether information about the reorganization reached all levels of organizers of K-12. The motivations behind change can hardly be put forward as these have not been clarified. Examples of expected achievements are not conveyed. Reorganization occurring too speedy might result in failure. The exclusion of certain K-12s might create perturbation among the organizers of K-12. The forthcoming national election in autumn 2014 may cause the national funding plans to collapse in the case of change of government.

Notwithstanding the existence of various organizational matters, the findings in the logic model were confirmed by the SWOT-analysis. The biggest challenge is probably not the practicalities of reorganization, but to explain the motivations behind the reorganization and what the anticipated achievements are. Another issue, put to attention via the SWOT-analysis, is communication. It is not always clear whether all stakeholders are aware of the reorganization and its time schedule.

The key word for changing the organization appears to be *quality*. The need for improved quality has been implicated in various documents. The quality of practicum must be improved. A causal reasoning argues that decreasing the number of schools, while increasing the number of educated supervisors, will increase the quality of practicum. Although criteria for practicum development are communicated to all schools, these are not free to choose to join. It is the organizers of K-12 who select the schools. The earlier vision, engaging all schools and all teachers, has been altered, and schools and teachers are now scrutinized in order to establish capability of functioning as supervisors at the decided age levels and in the subjects in question. The reduced number of selected schools and supervisors participating in practicum development may be perceived as an advancement of the promotion of formal education for professions being carried out at the UNI, urged by e.g. Darling-Hammond (Darling-Hammond 1999, 2006).

The concentration into a few schools may be advantageous for research and development (R&D) opportunities. With partnership contract stipulating collaborative R&D, and with fewer schools to collaborate with, researchers and teachers gaining access to each other might be facilitated. In this context, the change might be towards designing professional development schools (PDS) (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster and Cobb 1995; Scribner Bartholomew and Haymore Sandholtz 2009).

8.0   Limitations of the study

There are several limitations of the study. One limitation is the use of a logic model in itself. A logic model implies that there is a causal progression in the activities, if an activity is carried out a certain goal is reached. This rational thinking can be criticized as excluding for example side effects. As the reorganization of practicum is at the beginning, caution has to be taken concerning use of logic model, and add other possibilities for interpretation. The selection of few texts as a basis for logic model and SWOT-analysis can cause a more critical interpretation than necessary. Other texts and discussions among stakeholders have probably occurred. Another limitation is a critical discussion of specified target groups for activities in the presented model. This underlines the necessity to clarify the perceptions of the stakeholders as a future step in the evaluation.

9.0   Conclusion

In spite of reforms of the Education Act, curricula, and ITE already having been implemented, the ITE is again on the agenda for reform. The suggested reform concerns a reorganization of practicum for student teachers, to be executed during 2014-2018 and financially supported by a government initiative. All organizers of ITE must now decide whether to reorganize or not, and how to accomplish the reorganization. By examining previous studies on ITE, focusing particularly on partnership between the university and organizers of K-12, along with creating a hypothetical logic model for the implementation of such reorganization, and complementing with a SWOT-analysis, it became clear that the motivation behind the reorganization, i.e. improving the quality of practicum, may well meet some challenges. The use of a logic model and a SWOT-analysis contributed to clarify areas to consider in the further development.

Although there are challenges, the results showed that the implementation was supported by earlier good relations between the university and the organizers of K-12 and there seems to be a common idea of developing practicum in ITE. It might be positive that decisions on what needs to be improved are made by the partnership at the local level. Notwithstanding, the course of action for the development seems established. Reorganization, aimed at selected practice schools, along with concentrating the student teachers, is expected to improve the practicum quality.

The implication for implementation of the re-organisation of practicum in ITE is a need to have a dialogue about indicators for quality among the stakeholders. Without such a dialogue it can be disputed whether the change in practicum was successful.

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