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Investigating Teacher Artist Partnership Programmes as possible intervention for the professional development of creative arts educators at public schools in South Africa

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ABSTRACT

This research report is a documentation of a qualitative study which is supported by empirical evidence to investigate teacher artist partnership programmes as a possible intervention for the professional development of creative arts educators at public schools in South Africa. Although evidence of some studies and scholars have suggested that the impact of Teacher Artist Partnership Programmes on students is inevitable and highly valuable, the focus of the research is on Teacher Artist Partnership Programmes themselves as well as the impact they have on creative arts curriculum implementation post the programmes as well as the professional development of the creative arts educators. The aim of the study was to explore the experiences of creative arts educators at public schools in South Africa as well as their partnerships with artist facilitators whilst participating in Teacher Artist Partnership Programmes. The objectives of the research were to describe the implementation challenges that creative arts educators are experiencing at public schools in South Africa and to make recommendations about the policies concerning the professional development of creative arts educators.

The study utilised a qualitative, exploratory, descriptive, and contextual research design. The target group comprised of creative arts educators and artist facilitators who had undergone Teacher Artist Partnership Programmes. A non-probability sampling method was used and a purposive sampling technique to select ten participants for this study. The researcher interviewed participants regarding their experiences and challenges with curriculum implementation related to the creative arts subject as it is set out by the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement. Data in this study was collected through semi-structured interviews with the use of open-ended questions. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. All the ethical principles were adhered to by the researcher while conducting the research.

Findings revealed that there is in fact a need for professional skills development of creative arts educators in the form of Teacher Artist Partnership Programmes and that Teacher Artist Partnership Programmes add real value to the professional skills of creative arts educators. Therefore the researcher recommends that further study be conducted so as to provide further insight into how Teacher Artist Partnerships can serve

the education system in valuable ways. Further research on this subject will contribute further observations and understandings into how Teacher Artist Partnership Programmes improve best practice in teaching and learning and to possibly transform their approaches to creative arts education in South African public schools.

Key Words:

Creative arts, arts education, professional development, curriculum implementation, teaching and learning, teacher artist partnership programmes