

THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF JORDANIAN TEACHER TRAINERS IN PRE-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING

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Abstract

This study investigated the role and responsibilities of teacher trainers who worked in the practical education program at the University of Jordan in the second semester, 2008. Interviews with 12 teacher trainers and 24 pre-service teachers were undertaken besides the analysis of 12 portfolios developed by student teachers. The results of the study revealed several role of the teacher trainers ranging from administrative role such as scheduling visits and documenting and filing up reports to academic role represented in ensuring that pre-service teachers apply knowledge and use recent teaching and assessment methods. Other role embodied extending the role of the trainer as a change agent to develop pre-service teacher's social skills, give feedback to them and help them acquire sufficient occupational skills. The study highlighted the trainer's role in developing some school teachers' instruction and changing their old instructional methods. Finally, the study suggested that teacher trainers' role should be redefined to maintain a stable professional identity.

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Introduction

The Initial Teacher Education Initiative in Jordan reflected a governmental interest in graduating and training pre-service teachers in different subject areas. The first 1987 nation-wide educational conference sparked the need to revise and introduce wide-range structural and technical changes in the Jordanian educational system. Subsequent educational reform projects led to reinforcing efforts to sustain a positive educational change in the country. The educational change for knowledge (ERfKE) economy and her Majesty's Queen Rania educational initiative entitled ' My School' and the distinguished teacher's award aimed to make the educational change to be on-going and directed to develop the educational process in the country. The Practical Education Program at the University of Jordan aims at equipping pre-service teachers with ideas and methods of teaching that may represent an additional value to the pre-service teachers themselves and their mentors. Teacher trainers at the above university had a master's degree as a requirement to practice the training career of university student teachers. Some of these teacher trainers had a teaching experience in schools before working at the above training program. Some of them have been practicing teacher training for more than ten years at the Faculty of Educational Sciences. The current staff of trainers is prepared to train pre-service teachers in various disciplines, but with the recent suspension of training in some of these areas, teacher educators have restricted pre-service training to grade teacher and kindergarten teacher education.

With special relationship to the role of teacher educators, Tylor¹ described teacher education as having a double role: on one hand, facing the demands of the school and the classroom which focus on practicality, relevance, technique and competence. It, on the other hand, faces university structure with the world of research with emphasis on theoretical fruitfulness, scholarship and disciplinary rigour. The world literature calls for the interaction between theory and practice.

The role of the teacher trainer, in the above university, is nowadays placed and looked at in the context of the international and national teacher education as well as the instructions of the concerned departments.² Murray reported that in recent years, teacher educators in the Netherlands and the USA have developed professional standards for their occupational groups. According to Murray, these standards were used to identify the professional expertise of teacher educators, to provide their professional development needs, and to provide assessment techniques for accreditation.

Her study outlined the impact of changes in pre-service education on teacher educators' work in England and argued that a re-articulation of the work of this occupational group is needed. She seemed to rigidly criticize the already existed standards for the professional work of teacher educators. The Dutch standards for the work of the trainer encompass understanding the development of the school pupils, facilitation and supervision of the student teacher's development and assuming responsibility for the

¹ Jean, Murray. "Towards the re-articulation of the work of teacher educators in Higher Education institutions in England." *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 31, No.1(2008): pp.17-34.

² *Ibid.*

professional development of the student teacher. Other role included acting as role models and facilitating the autonomy of the student teacher. Teacher educators should share, though inexplicitly mentioned in the production of knowledge and the translation, new methods in the field. Other role also included the extension of the student teacher's knowledge, teaching skills as well as their social and organizational skills. Among other role are the influencing of the future practices, values and attitudes of the student teachers and assessing their teaching performance alongside standards.

Swennen, Volman and Essen³ studied the development of the professional identity of five teacher educators from three different generations. They discussed the development of the professional identities belonging to two youngest teacher educators, who worked in primary teacher education institutes. The questions in such a narrative-biographical study addressed the development from teacher to teacher educator and how recent developments in the field of primary teacher education have informed such a transition. The findings of the study indicated that the two teacher educators used the innovations in teacher education to professionally develop themselves.

At the beginning of their careers they developed in the context of their institutes while later they sought ways to develop outside these institutes. Teachers who reported that they were well prepared to address the demands of their first year of teaching were more likely to have completed courses that gave them deep knowledge of the content they were expected to teach, together with how students learned that content, as well as skill in identifying students' current levels of understanding of the content; planning activities that promote further development of understanding; and assessing the extent to which development had happened.

This study builds on findings of Harrison and Mckean⁴ who identified the main facilitators and barriers which support different kinds of professional learning. Barriers in the early stages include: a reliance on trial and error learning, inappropriate induction courses, poor support structures and mentoring as well as relatively few opportunities for collaborative work. On the other hand, facilitators in the above study included flexible induction programs, learning conversations with key colleagues and personal experience of learning. The data are discussed in relation to the described experiences of formal and situated (informal) learning. The positive impact of formal learning, as well as the capacity to 'fit in', show that 'learning by participation' alone is not a sufficient model to address the complexities of becoming a teacher educator in new settings.

As indicated above this study seeks to shed light on the role of the teacher trainers who are hired by the practical education program at the University of Jordan.

³ Anja, Swennen, Monique Volman, and Mineke van Essen. "The development of the professional identity of two teacher educators in the context of Dutch teacher education." *European Journal of Teacher Education*. 31, No.2 (2008): pp.169-188.

⁴ Jennifer, Harrison and Frankie Mckean. " The formal and situated learning of beginning teacher educators in England: identifying characteristics for successful induction in the transition from workplace in schools to workplace in higher education." *European Journal of Teacher Education*. 31, No.2(2008): pp.151-168.

The following table presents the assumed role expected of the teacher trainers according to the regulations of the University of Jordan.

Table (1)
Requirements of training pre-service teachers and their evaluation as approved by the concerned councils and departments at this university

Stages of training and evaluation of the student teaching performance	Details	Time/ Percentile Spent by the pre-service teacher at school
Observations	General School observation stage General classroom observation stage Specialized classroom observation stage	One week One week Two weeks
Actual Classroom Teaching	Partial Classroom Teaching stage Full practice of Teaching stage	One month long Two month long
Evaluation of the Student teacher's Teaching Performance	Weight given to the student teaching portfolio in the evaluation of the student teacher	20%
	Share of the co-operating school in the evaluation of the student teacher	20%
	University trainer's share in student teacher's evaluation	30%
	Weight given to the final student teacher's lesson evaluation	30%

Reflecting on the marginalised status of the teacher trainers as a professional group, especially in research as an under-researched and less understood one, Murray⁵ called for a re-articulation of the aspects of such an occupational group alongside with a re-articulation of its contribution to education.

Statement of the Problem

Teacher trainers at the PEP were recruited over several periods starting from as old as 1993 when the author of this study was himself a teacher trainer of English language pre-service teachers. There was a great debate about the role and responsibilities of these teacher trainers. At one time, they were viewed as Ministry of Education supervisors, at others, they were referred to as teacher trainers who together with a staff member from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction look after the pre-service teachers in their placements. The teacher trainers sought some professional stability in their training work and to feel somehow independent in training of their student teachers. Now with the long experience of most of these trainers in the supervision and contact with the network of co-operating schools with which the above university works, these trainers have become

⁵Jean, Murray, op.cit.

responsible for the training of the pre-service teachers and are entitled to decide on the final mark of the pre-service teacher's practicum course which carries 12 credit hours. This is not officially approved of by the staff members in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction who still want to have a share in what is done by these teacher trainers. Therefore, the following questions are addressed in this study:

1. What is the role of the teacher trainers as they themselves see such role in the initial preparation of the university pre-service teacher?
2. How do the teacher trainers feel about how both faculty members and the school teachers look at their role towards pre-service teachers in their practicum course?
3. What is the role of the university teacher trainers in training pre-service teachers on using teaching methods, in classroom management of their student teachers classrooms, in the evaluation of classroom students learning performance and handling the theory practice relationship?
4. How do pre-service teachers see the role of their teacher trainers in their practicum course as emerging from interviews with them and through surveying their portfolios?
5. Significance of the study

The study serves first and above all the University of Jordan practical program, the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and the Faculty of Educational Sciences. It could serve similar training programs around the world which follow a similar training strategy of this university both regionally and internationally. The Jordanian Ministry of Education could have an idea about the role of the teacher trainers in the improvement of the teaching performance of both the trainees and their co-operating teachers at the co-operating schools that may influence the learning quality of the classroom students. Researchers could also benefit from the findings of this essential study which throws light on both specified professional role and less specified ones that reflect the urgent search by the trainer to formulate a certain professional identity.

Methodology

Twelve male/female teacher trainers together with twenty four pre-service teachers took part in this study to report on the teacher trainers' role through interviews with them. Portfolios of 12 UJ pre-service teachers were also surveyed to find out evidence related to the teacher trainers' role in the ITE.

Interviews were undertaken in the second semester 2007-2008. These interviews were recorded using a special recorder to allow the researcher to analyse them and return to when needed. The author conducted a thirty minute-long interview with each of them. The interviewer did not impose any ideas on the interviewees, but let them to pronounce their ideas regarding the different questions in the interview schedule.

The interview schedule included a set of questions which were written in the light of the author's previous experience as a teacher trainer, his experience as a staff member who

used to work with teacher trainers from the PEP to supervise English language student teachers and his job as the director of the PEP. The focus of the interviews addressed the role of the teacher trainer in enabling the student teachers to apply university knowledge in the practice of teaching during the practicum course, how the student teachers can enact a change in school teaching and how the teacher trainer assists the student teachers in the field of classroom instruction, the management of the classroom, building social skills with school people and the evaluation of the classroom students' learning. Interviews also focused on how the teacher trainers' role are perceived by the student teachers and the school teachers.

Interviews were conducted at a time when teacher training was approaching the end of the term while student teachers were still under training in their practicum course and when student teachers, their mentors and trainers still had fresh ideas regarding the training mission. Regular interviews were conducted with the teacher trainers and the student teachers at the PEP. Interviewees were then asked again to check their answers to the first interview and to fill any necessary information the study demanded.

Interviews with 24 pre-service teachers were undertaken in the end of the above training semester following the same procedures used in the teacher trainer's interview. Student teachers were asked individually for about half an hour questions related to the role of the teacher trainer in their student teaching, his/ her role towards school teachers, how student teachers' knowledge from university and the training school is handled by the trainer and finally how the teacher trainer was perceived by the co-operating teachers and school administration.

Data Analysis

Data derived via teacher trainers' interviews were transcribed and changed from Arabic, the native language of the interviewees, into English after deleting unnecessary data. Cross references were made between data obtained from teacher trainers and their student teachers to confirm responses reported by both groups. Three transcripts were sent back to the interviewees to ensure their agreement on the ideas they reflected on in the interviews. A high match was noticed between original transcripts and the returned ones. Responses were reduced to allow for the author to specify them and put them together. Supporting quotes were also taken from these responses to further validate the derived role grouped in the tables.

Pre-service teachers' portfolios

A total of 12 portfolios written by the student teachers were surveyed to trace their views concerning the role of their teacher trainers in their ITE. Each of the portfolios was given a number to facilitate referring to it when needed. Quotes that pointed to the role of the trainers were located to use them to support the responses of their trainers. Worth pointing is that portfolios were used as evaluation technique as outlined in table 1 above.

Validity of the instrument

The interview and the portfolio analysis schedule were forwarded to seven university professors and lecturers who all agreed that the items in the interview schedule were appropriate and they gave some suggestions to improve them. They also agreed on the appropriateness of the portfolio analysis in light of the items contained in the interview schedule.

Reliability of the instrument

To ensure reliability of the findings of the interview, the researcher summed up the views of the interviewee and sent them back to three teacher trainers and six student teachers. A 96% match was felt between their responses in the interview and their confirmation of their views. The interviewer used to ask the question in more than one way to check if the interviewee means what he or she wanted to express in the interview. A 98% match was noticed between interviewee's responses in the interview and their responses to the follow-up questions the interviewer asked to them.

Findings of the study

Most of the teacher trainers at the PEP transferred from a school teacher life into the life of a teacher trainer at the above program which can be considered a unique experience.

Teacher trainer's professional identity

A teacher trainer in an interview with him in this study reflected on the attitudes of both university faculty members and school teachers and summed up the standpoint of the majority of the trainers in the practical program by saying:

The faculty members look at us as 'inferior' to them. They have an unclear idea and attitude towards us. They feel with pleasure when they look at us from above. They wish to use us for their instructional and research purposes. They use us in the exams of their courses and usually consider us as assistants to them in their instruction.⁶

On the other hand, this trainer reflected on the attitudes of school teachers by saying:

The school has a different view and school teachers there look at us as teacher educators, consultants of them in school teaching matters and in assisting them in their school teaching and providing feedback, sometimes, on their teaching performance and the learning performance of their students at the co-operating school. They look at by us as partners and as people who can understand them and their teaching problems and sorting out their problems.⁷

⁶ Teacher trainer 5, 16-June 2008

⁷ Ibid.

The director of the PEP noticed that the teacher trainers complained of the low status in the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the above university. They always wanted to be dealt with as faculty members who can teach courses and enjoy the privileges of staff members. These trainers were first appointed as administrators not faculty members though their training work is like between faculty members and administrators. They follow and supervise the student teachers in the practical field and put a final mark of a course which carries 12 credit hours though officially this course should be taught and evaluated jointly by a staff member from the Curriculum and Instruction Department and the teacher trainer from the PEP.

Teacher trainers' role in applying theory into practice

The teacher trainers in this study raised in interviews with them the following role and responsibilities in relation to the theory practice relationship.

Table (2)
Role of the teacher trainers in the application of university knowledge to the practicum field as emerged from interviews with teacher trainers

No	Role
1	Attending actual lesson to the student teachers to ensure what they received in their university courses is translated in the classroom instruction
2	Training the student teacher on the recent methods that were recommended by their university lecturers as up-to-date methods of instruction
3	Asking and discussing with the student teachers about their willingness and their evaluation of the process of the linkage between theory and practice
4	Discussing the possibility of revising some of the content in their university courses which might connect to their practicum
5	Discussing with the student teachers links they have established between university knowledge and school curricula knowledge
6	Discussing with the student teachers links between university instruction and the knowledge of the co-operating teachers in the field
7	Discussing with the student teachers tensions between them and their co-operating teachers
8	Attempting to sort out problems between co-operating teachers and student teachers in the instructional process

A teacher trainer expressed his role by saying

My role in the training of the pre-service teachers is to help them to apply the most recent teaching methods and techniques they received from the university. I train my students on the modern instructional techniques, classroom management, educational media and

communication skills. I feel that my role is crucial in preparing my students to future occupational life.⁸

Such emphasized the role of the educational theory in guiding the practice.

For sure, we are in the practical field to apply the new ideas in teaching methods, classroom management, teaching aids and media and their design, time management and handling contingent situations in the lesson. These are some of the ideas that we brought from the university and the school benefited from them. We also learn from the school things that we did not learn about in university courses. (Student teacher's portfolio 12)
Teacher trainers want to establish relationships with school teachers and to develop partnerships between the practical program and training schools.

Teacher trainers' role as they think that mentors perceive of them

Table three below presents the perceptions of the teacher trainers about how their role in the training of the student teachers are perceived by school teachers as emerging in interviews in this study.

Table (3)
Role of the teacher trainers as they thought that the mentors in the co-operating school perceive of such role

No	Role
1	The co-operating school people feel the impact of the teacher trainer on the pre-service teacher's teaching practice
2	The co-operating school people value the role of the teacher training in providing them with recent teaching methods from which they benefit in their instruction
3	Discussing with the co-operating teachers about most effective teaching methods and sharing views with them
4	Sharing with school teachers the focus on the learner more than the teacher in the instructional process
5	Encouraging the co-operating teachers to use group work, enquiry learning, debate and role plays in their instruction
6	Training some co-operating teachers on using recent evaluation methods of their students' learning
7	Discussing with co-operating teachers subject matter related issues
8	Developing some theoretical knowledge of the co-operating teachers through academic exchanges with them
9	Alerting co-operating teachers to the ways to sort out classroom problems
10	Changing the views of the co-operating teacher regarding the importance of giving feedback to the classroom students on their learning
11	Giving advice to the co-operating teachers regarding different teaching matters

⁸ Teacher trainer 1, 18 June 2008

12	Confirming the evaluation of the co-operating teacher to the student teacher's teaching performance
13	Confirming the evaluation of some school supervisors to the teaching performance of the co-operating teachers themselves
14	School administration looks at the university teacher trainers as people qualified with both theory and practice and so can benefit the co-operating teachers in their teaching
15	Co-operating teachers look at the student teachers acting as role models to the classroom students and benefit from this in their teaching

In line with the findings in the above table, a trainer said:

Some co-operating teachers with whom the student teacher trains on teaching ask questions related to some teaching situations and they seek our opinion regarding such situations.⁹

Another teacher trainer responded:

School teachers look at the trainer as a qualified person both theoretically and practically to train the student teachers and help the mentors of such students in using the most recent teaching methods.¹⁰

This shows that the teacher trainers have multiple role in the ITE.

Teacher trainers' role as change agents to change school teaching

The attitudes of the student teachers towards their teacher trainers were regarded as positive as expressed by the trainers themselves in this study.

Table (4)
Role as perceived teacher trainers

No	Role
1	The pre-service teachers use most of the teaching methods recommended by the teacher trainers in their interns
2	The high degree of trust shown by the pre-service teacher who trusts the teacher trainers as having both knowledge and practice about teaching
3	The positive attitudes of the pre-service teachers towards creating a change during their training in the co-operating school
4	The pre-service teacher estimates the role of the teacher trainer in acting as a change agent by transferring his pedagogical knowledge from an initial training level into a more knowledgeable and better trained potential teacher in the teaching practice by equipping him or her with modern teaching methods

⁹ Teacher trainer 7, 17 June 2008

¹⁰ Teacher trainer 1, 18 June 2008

5	Several training experiences represent success stories which reflect the role of the practicum course and the trainer's role in training the pre-service teachers
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One trainer said:

The role of the trainers in the training of the pre-service teachers in such an academic establishment is essential in the process of change and I am sure of this. I feel this role as an agent of change should be throughout my direct relationship with student teachers and represented in the effect left by changing their concepts, values and their behaviors besides enabling them to acquire professional and life skills. This is transferred through student teachers to the school teachers who benefit from the new ideas and methods of teaching which student teacher develop.¹¹

A pre-service teacher in portfolios written during the practicum course wrote:

The trainer encouraged me to apply knowledge and theories I received from the university and really I provided the school with new ideas and educational media and I think the school benefited from us.¹²

Relatively stressing the same point, another student teacher emphasized that a change was undertaken by the student teacher despite the resistance of some school teachers.

The co-operating school teachers benefited from us, especially in using the developed teaching methods in giving the lesson, handling multiple students' levels and socio-economic backgrounds besides dealing with different cognitive ability students. Few teachers were resistant to new teaching methods and they subscribed to old methods of teaching.¹³

These student teachers point to the variation in the degree of the change that the university professors and teacher trainers wanted to achieve through the teaching practice.

Other diverse role expressed by the teacher trainers

The following table outlines responses of the teacher trainers regarding their role and responsibilities in the initial training of the pre-service teachers.

¹¹ Teacher trainer 5, 16-June 2008

¹² Student teacher's portfolio 1

¹³ Student teacher's portfolio 6

Table (5)
Role of the teacher trainers in the initial preparation of the student teacher

N0	Role
1	Demonstrating to the pre-service teachers up-to-date methods of teaching in their specialist areas
2	Developing the pre-service teacher's social skills with both school and university people during the practicum
3	Developing a positive self-concept of the pre-service teachers during the practicum course
4	Providing feedback to the student teachers during the practicum course
5	Receiving feedback from the school teachers on both the role of the pre-service teacher and his or her teacher trainer
6	Urging the student teachers to apply the best teaching methods which they read about during their university instruction
7	Correcting and changing the misconceptions of the student teachers and their co-operating teachers regarding their classroom students' learning and teaching
8	Developing life and occupational skills of the student teachers to demonstrate the extent to which training responds to the needs and changes in the different occupational sectors
9	Empowering the student teacher to handle change in the co-operating teacher's teaching methods and skills
10	Empowering the student teacher to carry out change at the whole societal level
11	Negotiating with the co-operating teachers and the student teachers about how to carry out change at the instructional level at the co-operating school
12	Urging the student teachers to do their best to improve the learning skills of the school students during their training at the co-operating schools
13	Acting as a facilitator of the gradual acquisition of the teaching skills of the student teachers during their training
14	Urging student teachers to establish links between theory and practice during their teaching practice
15	Reinforcing the achievements of the student teachers during their training
16	Ensuring that student teachers act in their training alongside with standards of the best practice of teaching
17	Changing and improving the student teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession
18	Encouraging student teachers to use critical and creative skills in teaching
19	Mediating between university professors and school people by finding a compromise between what each side wants to emphasize in teaching

The table No.5 demonstrates diverse role and responsibilities belonging to the teacher trainers at the PEP such as acting out the role of mentor to the student teacher. One trainer said:

*I do not hesitate even when the pre-service teacher is in the actual classroom to show him [or her] how best to teach and to manage and evaluate classroom students' learning performance.*¹⁴

Other role are summed up in acting as a facilitator, corrector of pre-service teachers' misconceptions, negotiator with school mentors, encourager, reinforce and prompter and enabling pre-service teachers to acquire social skills.

Role of the teacher trainers in assisting pre-service teacher's in classroom instruction

The following role and responsibilities were stressed by the teacher trainers with respect to classroom instruction.

Table (6)

Role of the teacher trainer in developing pre-service teacher's instructional methods

No	Role
1	Emphasizing the use by pre-service teachers in their practicum of methods such as co-operative learning, instruction by means of dramatization, technology-assisted instruction and self-learning and evaluation
2	Alerting pre-service teachers to the use of learning styles and meta-cognitive strategies and integrating them in their learning
3	Varying teachers role to act as facilitators, mediators, managers and observers of their learning
4	Encouraging pre-service teachers to benefit and share experiences in their training, especially in teaching methods
5	Encouraging pre-service teachers to adopt recent teaching methods and convince their traditional co-operative teachers to abandon traditional instructional methods
6	Encouraging pre-service teachers to consider individual differences among learners in their instruction
7	Demonstrating to pre-service teachers the importance of the lesson in the life of the classroom students

A female trainer in this study focused on what she believed as her important role in improving the teaching performance of both the pre-service teacher and the co-operating teacher.

My role is to encourage the student teacher to use teaching methods which highlight the role of the classroom student through using methods such as activity-based instruction, co-operative learning, inquiry learning, debate and role playing. The co-operating teacher should attend the lesson given by the student teacher because she still uses traditional teaching methods.

¹⁴ Teacher trainer 1, date 18 June 2008

*Also I had a role in correcting some of the misconceptions in subject matter on the part of the co-operating teacher.*¹⁵

This quote supports the idea that the teacher trainer has an important role in helping both student teachers and their co-operating teachers with respect to several instructional issues.

Teacher trainers' assistance to the student teachers in classroom management

With regard to the role of the teacher trainers in the area of classroom management of their pre-service teachers, the following points emerged from interviews with the above teacher trainers.

Table (7)
Role of the teacher trainers in the arena of classroom management

No	Role
1	Training pre-service teachers on the recent teaching methods as emerging from the related literature
2	Training pre-service teachers on developing social skills among classroom students, organizing classroom milieu, organizing the answers of the classroom students and setting appropriate classroom rules and instructions
3	Encouraging pre-service teachers to tackle both negative and positive classroom behaviors
4	Training pre-service teachers to handle emerging classroom situations and to get classroom students to comply with the classroom regulations
5	Demonstrating authentic problems from classrooms and discussing with the student teachers best procedures to handle them
6	Training pre-service teachers to be both flexible and strict with the classroom students to manage them in the classroom
7	Training pre-service teachers to be effective decision makers in the classroom management
8	Training pre-service teachers to build confidence bridges with classroom students

A female trainer described this role by saying:

Classroom management has to do with several skills such as accepting students, understanding their age level characteristics, their role in learning process, besides raising their awareness pertaining to regulations and instructions, accepted and unaccepted behaviors, reinforcement techniques and treating behavioral problems in the classroom. These connect with the nature of the teacher whether democratic or authoritative and the sort of lesson preparation and the ability of the teacher to control

¹⁵ Teacher trainer 3: 9 May 2008

*his feelings. My role as a trainer is to draw the attention of my student teachers to the factors that influence their management of the classroom and I try to reinforce the importance of profitable classroom management to enable them to establish a good relationship with their students and give a successful lesson.*¹⁶

Worth pointing is that teacher trainers, due to lack of sufficient university instruction and because of their limited meetings with the pre-service teachers at university, they just rely on discussing and motivating the pre-service teachers to draw on their related classroom management skills.

Role of The Teacher Trainers In Enabling Pre-Service Teachers In Their Evaluation Of Classroom Students' Learning

Pertaining to the evaluation of the classroom students' learning, teacher trainers have the following role and responsibilities as expressed by them in interviews with them in this study.

Table (8)
Role of the teacher trainers in helping student teachers to evaluate classroom students' learning

No	Role
1	Training pre-service teachers on the use of alternative assessment methods such as portfolios and other methods
2	Encouraging pre-service teachers to assess classroom students' learning on the basis of criteria of best learning performance
3	Urging pre-service teachers to vary assessment methods to collect evidence about classroom students' learning performance
4	Giving instruction to the pre-service teachers regarding any lack of information about how to evaluate classroom students

A male teacher trainer explained:

*I encourage them [student teachers] to apply alternative assessment strategies and ensure their accurate application of these strategies. I encourage them to try to holistically assess the classroom students' learning and to assess it along with standards.*¹⁷

¹⁶ Teacher trainer 3: 9 May 2008

¹⁷ Teacher trainer 2, 1 May 2008

This shows how the role of the teacher trainer has to consider not only student teacher's knowledge, but their practice of teaching.

The Teacher Trainers' Role As Seen By Their Pre-Service Teachers

Major teacher trainers' role seen by the student teachers revolving around the following:

- Assisting pre-service teachers in any difficulties experienced in the teaching practicum course
- Providing necessary feedback on the pre-service teachers' teaching whilst in the practicum course
- Evaluating pre-service teacher's teaching performance and showing them their strengths and pitfalls
- Holding weekly seminars to student teachers and revising some of the relevant university theoretical stuff which they might need in the teaching practice.
- Attending lessons to the student teachers and taking note on their teaching performance
- Following up the phases of training of the student teachers
- Developing weak points on their part
- Providing student teachers with new teaching methods that, according to the pre-service teachers, arouse their interest to develop their teaching performance.

Applying The University Plan Pertaining The Teaching Practice

The majority of the pre-service teachers asserted that their trainers had a role in the following areas:

- New ideas were given to the school teachers
- New ideas in classroom management were provided to school teachers
- New teaching methods were given to co-operating teachers

These pre-service teachers also noticed that:

- Some university courses did not synergistically match up with the reality of classroom instruction
- Some university concepts did not directly relate to classroom instruction

Responses to a question about, how school teachers felt about the role of the university teacher trainer in the ITE, were diverse and revealed that some co-operating teachers benefited from the trainer while others were more willing to have a shared responsibility with the trainer in supervising student teachers. Other benefits were: that co-operating teachers knew new things such as learning by doing learned how to plan for their lessons by including objectives of high order thinking and the extension of the classroom students' learning. Co-operating teachers also developed their understanding of the professional portfolio in developing their teaching performance.

In line with the above findings, a student teacher said:

*The teacher trainer visited me several times in the teaching practice and gave me new ideas and attended lessons for me and gave me notes on my lesson in terms of strengths and weaknesses. The feedback given to me by the trainer was of much benefit to me to improve my teaching. The co-operating teacher also benefitted from the evaluation of the teacher trainer of my lessons and from the developed methods of teaching suggested by him.*¹⁸

Worth mentioning is that the above results cross confirm other results obtained through interviews with teacher trainers interviewed in this study.

Suggestions given by the teacher trainers to develop the training of the pre-service teachers

Table (9)
Suggestions provided by the PEP teacher trainers

No	Suggestions
1	Establishing partnerships with the co-operating schools and the Ministry of Education to ensure an effective process of training of the future teachers
2	Conducting research to find out the standards along which to train teachers
3	Unifying the training criteria among the trainers themselves in the PEP
4	The need to constantly assess the quality of teacher training offered by the trainers
5	The need to seek feedback from the co-operating schools and from the trainers themselves to improve training and solve any emerging difficulties
6	The need for the trainers to discuss, among themselves, any emerging problems and issues in the training field
7	Focusing on holding weekly seminars with student teachers at university to monitor achievements and examine the views of the trainees and their co-operating teachers
8	The need to liaise with the concerned department of curriculum and instruction to improve work in the PEP
9	University professors/ teacher educators should be assigned a number of schools to look after the training of their teachers and their needs

¹⁸ Teacher trainer 2, 1 May 2008

Most suggestions given by the trainers focus on building bridges with schools, conducting relevant research, unifying training strategies among the practical program trainers and establishing links between university instruction and school instruction. A teacher trainer said:

*I suggest the establishment of partnerships that attempt to unify the training efforts of all people involved in the training of student teachers and among the trainers themselves who work at the Practical Education Program and to train along with international standards of teacher education. Also I emphasize the importance of holding weekly seminars to the student teachers to discuss and listen to their achievements in the practical course.*¹⁹

This shows how the trainer's role is multi-faceted in the ITE because he or she has to tackle different training issues and people smoothly and in a way that maximizes the ability of learning to teach on the part of the student teachers.

Discussion

The results of this study though had both PEP color and taste move to some extent into international and local streams of teacher training. The study revealed the important role of the teacher trainer in the training of the student teachers during their practicum though the practice of such a role has become conditioned by the professional growth of the teacher trainers who became more experienced than was the case five or ten years ago when the current staff was employed. Most teacher trainers' role and responsibilities at the above university revolved around the provision of feedback to the student teacher, the provision with recent teaching methods, the improvement of the teaching performance of the co-operating teacher, the emphasis on the linkage between the academic stuff the student teacher received from academy and the knowledge about teaching which the student teachers got from the co-operating teachers and school curricula. Other role included establishing links between universities and the co-operating schools and providing consultation to the school teachers to develop their teaching performance and finally the attendance of lessons given by the student teachers to guide them and provide the mentoring service needed.

As for the role of the PEP teacher trainers in the field of the teaching methods, their role stressed the need to equip these student teachers with most up-to-date methods of instruction which could contribute to the improvement of the classroom students' learning performance and also challenge those of the co-operating teachers in a way that pushes them to revise their teaching methods to be more accountable for the needs and the demands of work at the co-operating school. This is in line with a call by Lunenberg

¹⁹ Teacher trainer 9: 20 April 2008

and Korthagen²⁰ who explicitly called for breaking the didactic circle of what they called traditionally trained teachers. At the classroom management level, the teacher trainer's role, as emerging from interviews with them, revealed the focus on effective classroom management, the need to care about the rapport with classroom students and securing a natural classroom environment conducive to teaching.

This role also included training the student teachers to be both strict and flexible with the classroom students and to set instructions and rules to teach classroom students to be self-disciplined themselves more than be controlled by the teacher. As to the evaluation of the classroom student's learning performance, most emphasis by the PEP teacher trainers went to the use of alternative assessment techniques such as portfolios and authentic assessment methods, the need to vary assessment methods and the readiness to provide the student teachers with necessary information in this field. Pertaining to the theory practice relationship, the PEP teacher trainers reiterated the need to build up a strong relationship between theory and practice by healing up the hiatus between them and to apply theories which student teachers learnt about during university instruction. The trainers highlighted that the student teachers should apply their recommendations through the teaching practice.

This is consistent with Finlay's²¹ study which supported the joint work between university and workplace to resolve issues encountered in the practical field. Likewise, Ingvarson, Beavis and Kleinhenz²² said that teachers who reported that they were well prepared to meet the demands of their first year of teaching were more likely to have completed courses that gave them deep knowledge of the content they were expected to teach, and how students learned that content, as well as skill in diagnosing students' existing levels of understanding of the content; planning activities that would promote further development of understanding; and assessing the extent to which development had taken place. Wimore and Bratlien²³ also argue that closely connected with authentic experiences was the feeling of being able to link theory to practice. Students benefit by experiencing and seeing manifestations of what they have been taught in informal university based coursework in real school settings. Alkhaldeh and Qualter²⁴ identified three approaches to English language teacher education in Jordan: theory-based, partnership model and school-based teacher education.

²⁰ Mieke, Lunenberg and Fred A. Korthagen. "Breaking the didactic circle: a study on some aspects of the promotion of student-directed learning by teachers and teacher educators." *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 28, No.1 (2005): pp.1-22.

²¹ Ian, Finlay. "Learning through boundary-crossing: further education lecturers learning in both the university and workplace." *European Journal of Teacher Education*. 3, No.1 (2008): pp.151-168.

²² Lawrence, Ingvarson, Adrian Beavis and Elizabeth Kleinhenz. " Factors affecting the impact of teacher education programmes on teacher preparedness: implications for accreditation policy." *European Journal of Teacher Education*. 30, No.4 (2007): pp.351 – 381.

²³ Eliane, L. Wilmore, and Maynard J. Bratlien. "Mentoring and tutoring within administrative internship programs in American Universities." *Mentoring and Tutoring*. 13, No.1(2005): pp.1-11.

²⁴ Ahmad, Alkhaldeh, and Anne Qualter. " Initial Teacher Training: Who Should Lead? University or School?" *The Educational Journal (Kuwait University)*. 18, No.72, (2004): pp.47-67.

This study highlighted the issue that some school mentors need to be trained on how to practice mentoring when they receive university students and to engage into learning communities, a trend which the Ministry of Education has recently encouraged. Tang and Choi²⁵ argue that the preparation of mentors is a weak connection in second teacher training programmes and an under-researched area.

Finally, most of the teacher trainers at the PEP officially known as 'teacher trainers' at the above university had a mixed feeling of professional identity which is described by most of them as 'trainers' sometimes as 'lecturers'. Their most complaint represented according to some of them in both money-wise and academic status. Murray clearly described this situation as that 'such an occupational group suffered from' a damaged sense of distinctiveness of their professional identities'.²⁶

Conclusion

The present study revealed the multi-faceted nature of this role in the supervision and management of the teaching experience of the pre-service teacher in the practicum course. For example, the trainers had the role of carrying out administrative duties of the PEP represented in the regular visits and supervision of the pre-service teacher whilst in the co-operating schools. At the same time, the trainers had the role of implementing the agenda of the PEP which imply that student teachers apply university knowledge and theories into practice. They tended to mediate between university tutors and school teachers where each of them wanted to shape the teaching practice of the student teacher by his or her view about best practice of teaching.

Concerning the mentoring experience, teacher trainers had the responsibility of managing the relationship between the student, teacher and the co-operating teacher, especially when the latter is successful in mentoring the student teacher. But when the co-operating teacher fails to better mentor the student teacher, the teacher trainer intervenes to do the mentoring of the student teacher him or herself. Also, the study revealed that teacher trainers had responsibility towards the teaching performance of the student teacher, that of the co-operating teacher and the classroom students' learning performance to avoid any complains flowing from parents that their children receive instruction by less experienced teachers like that of the student teacher. Finally, an integrative approach may be needed to synthesize teacher trainer's view about best teaching with the university tutor's view together with that of successful mentors in the co-operating schools.

²⁵ Sylvia Yee Fan, Tang and Piklin Choi. " Connecting theory and practice in mentor preparation: mentoring for improvement of teaching and learning." *Mentoring & Tutoring*. 13 ,No.3, (2005): pp.383-401.

²⁶ Jean, Murray, op.cit., p.7

Recommendations

It was recommended that the teacher trainers' role and responsibilities should be clearly defined by the practical education program and that the training quality should be continuously assessed. Other recommendations included the need to monitor how the relationship between university and co-operating schools develop to better understand and improve it further, the emphasis on the role played by the teacher trainer to communicate the university's message to improve the teaching performance of the different co-operating teachers, the need to benefit from feedback provided by the teacher trainers about the teaching quality of the co-operating teachers and the pre-service teachers and the need to involve university teacher trainers in university instructional community. Other recommendations included the need to ensure that a synergistic linkage between the content of some university courses and school instruction is made. At the training school level, school teachers who have a strong tendency to maintain the status quo and do not want to be challenged should be enrolled in professional development programs and an agreed upon model to teacher education in Jordan should be reached. Finally, further research could be carried out to investigate issues related to the role of teacher trainers emerging from the findings of this study.