Teacher Education Programs in Jordan: A Reform Plan

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The study presents a historical background of teacher education in Jordan and outlines the components of the present teacher education program at Hashemite University. This includes admission policy, academic study plans, practicum programs, selection of cooperative schools, selection of cooperative teachers, stages of training, and assessment of student teachers. Based on the discussion of the current teacher education program and the revision of related educational literature, this paper attempts to present a reform plan that will take into account the gaps and shortcomings in the current teacher education programs and the views of researchers in the field. The reform plan comprises three dimensions: reconsidering the admission policy, revising the academic and the educational preparation plans to meet the challenges of the 3rd millennium, and reorganizing the practicum program. It is hoped that the suggested plan, if implemented, will yield competent teachers and upgrade teacher education programs in Jordan.

Introduction

It is said that the destiny of a nation is shaped in its classrooms and it is the teacher who is a very important instrument in molding that destiny. Of all the professions, only teaching is charged with the formidable task of fostering the human skills and capabilities that will enable societies to survive and succeed in the age of information.

Teachers have a great responsibility for shaping the minds and hearts of generations of students. Therefore, there are only a few subjects in the educational literature that have received more attention than the preparation of teachers. In fact, the nature and the quality of teacher education has been the subject of much concern in many countries around the world. In an era of rapid change, higher education institutions worldwide have been under pressure to deliver high quality instruction to their students. Preparing high quality teachers necessitates continuous efforts to reform the process of teacher education. Referring to conditions in the United States, Darling-Hammond (2000) states that “over the past decade, public dissatisfaction with schools has included dissatisfaction with teacher education. In more than 40 states, policy makers have enacted alternate routes to teacher certification to create pathways into teaching other than those provided by traditional 4-year undergraduate teacher education programs” (p. 41). According to the author, voices of dissatisfaction have been raised within the profession as well. These voices have urged the redesigning of teacher education to strengthen its knowledge base, its connections to both practice and...
theory, and its capacity to support the development of powerful teaching. Berliner (2000) criticized those who devalue teacher education and provided responses to a dozen common charges against formal programs of teacher education. These observations regarding U.S. teacher education can also be informative to us regarding conditions in Jordan.

Teacher education in Jordan appears to be in crisis, as it has come under fire by some educators in the Ministry of Education and has become the subject of ongoing criticism by some influential decision-makers at universities. The basis of this criticism is that new teachers who graduate from programs of educational sciences in Jordanian universities lack the appropriate subject-matter knowledge and the pedagogical skills to teach effectively. Consequently, the departments of Curriculum and Instruction in Jordanian universities that prepare preservice teachers have also come under attack and have been criticized vehemently by a few decision-makers. This criticism amounts to a decision that was taken by the Board of Higher Education Council in May 2002 to suspend field-teacher education programs, and educational science programs in Jordanian universities (Higher Education Council, 2002). This was an unpleasant surprise to most of the educators in these programs, as the suspension was seemingly based on personal observation and subjective judgment and was not supported or verified by any empirical evidence from the field. We do not claim that those programs were running smoothly and the outcomes were a resounding success. Undoubtedly, there were some gaps and shortcomings in the implementation of the programs that could have been resolved by educators in the field. However, until the Higher Education Council finds an alternative, cohorts of new graduates will step into classrooms without any kind of field-based training. This measure, in fact, makes the situation worse and brings us back to square one, where teachers were assigned to schools without having any practical training.

This article outlines and examines the components of Jordanian teacher education programs in general and attempts to propose a reform plan that will take into account the gaps and the shortcomings that currently exist within its structure. The following highlights an historical background and outline of the mechanism of teacher education programs in Jordan. More specifically, it will address admission policies, academic study plans, and practicum programs.

**Historical Background**

The current system of teacher education in Jordan was not established until the end of the 1980s. Prior to that time, curricular teachers were assigned to schools having had no training or experience in teaching. Short, one-week in-service courses were offered in the first semester covering general issues in teaching and classroom discipline, but essentially teachers were untrained. This approach was applied to teaching all subject areas.

Since 1990, teacher education in Jordan has received significant attention. This has come as a response to the recommendation of the First Conference on Education held in Amman in 1987. Since then, in line with the Education Reform Plan approved at that conference, all new teachers at all levels and subjects are required to have at least a university degree (Ministry of Education, 1989). Thus, new Bachelor of Education (BEd) degrees have been designed and implemented, aimed at preparing teachers for the basic stage of schooling. The degrees offered were a BEd in class teacher preparation (to qualify student teachers to teach all subjects in grades 1–4) and a BEd in field-teacher preparation (to qualify student teachers to teach a particular subject, e.g., Arabic, English, science, math, etc., in grades 5–10). In addition, two new programs were developed to upgrade the qualifications of in-service teachers. The first was to upgrade teachers’ qualifications from the
level of community college diploma to the level of a university degree, while the second one was designed to upgrade teachers from a university degree to a higher diploma (one-year postgraduate) in education. In order to achieve this ambitious plan, three new official universities and nine private universities were established. These universities opened their doors widely for students who wished to be teachers, and provided materials, courses, educators, and conditions conducive to achieving that end. By the 1997–1998 school year, 46% of those teachers holding community college moderate diplomas were certified to the first university degree and 76% of teachers with university degrees were awarded a High Diploma of Education. Each university has had to establish its teacher education program within the Department of Curricula and Instruction in the Faculty of Educational Sciences in Jordan.

Since the beginning of this decade, more attention has been paid in Jordan to early childhood education (ECE). As a result of the interest in the field of ECE, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESR) has opened specialized programs in ECE in a number of Jordanian public and private universities to prepare an adequate number of ECE specialists (Heyasat, 2002). Thus, kindergarten teacher preparation programs have recently been established in these universities to qualify student teachers to teach kindergarten children (between the ages of 4 and 6 years).

**Admission Policy**

Admission to higher institutions in Jordan is decided by the MoHE. Access to higher education is open to holders of the General Secondary Education Examination (GSEE). The minimum score requirement to be admitted to a public university is 65% and 55% to a private university. The GSEE score is the only criterion that determines entry to public universities. Students who pass and score 65% or above in their GSEE are entitled to apply for admission to a public university. Every year, approximately 25,000 students are admitted and distributed throughout the universities (MoESR, 2008). It should be mentioned that admission to a public university is a big advantage for students because they pay less tuition—almost 10 times less than that for a private university. The MoHESR approved the use of quotas in public universities for different sections of society, provided that the candidates score 65% on the GSEE. These quotas, however, are for the sons and daughters of those who are working in Jordanian armed forces, teachers, and those who live in refugee campuses (see Table 1). Normally, candidates with low marks are assigned to the educational sciences. The majority of students in these programs are assigned to educational specializations contrary to their interests.

**Academic Study Plan**

Broadly speaking, there are two types of preservice teacher education programs: concurrent and consecutive. In the concurrent model, candidates are enrolled in general undergraduate programs...
courses and in educational courses simultaneously. At the end of 4 years, they receive a BEd degree. In the consecutive model, candidates complete their BA or BS program and then enroll in pedagogical courses.

The Department of Educational Sciences in Jordanian universities adopted the concurrent model in teacher education. Candidates are enrolled in general undergraduate and pedagogy courses simultaneously. The requirements of the BEd degree for field-teacher preparation are 132 credit hours. The academic study plan comprises university requirements (33 credit hours or 26.8%), faculty of educational sciences requirements (21 credit hours or 16%), specialty requirements (54 credit hours: 39 hours academic courses and 15 hours educational courses, or 40.90%), and educational courses (24 hrs or 18.18%). With regard to class teacher preparation, their program has the following contents: a) general courses, b) academic courses, c) educational courses, and d) teaching practice with a significant difference in the number of credit hours for each of these components from one university to another. Table 2 shows the number of credit hours required for class teachers related to each of these components in the public Jordanian universities (Hassan, 2001).

Students take all of the offered courses (39 credit hours) in the academic departments and complete department requirements courses (such as teaching methodology, evaluation and assessment, and psychology of teaching and learning) in the Department of Educational Sciences.

Practicum Programs

The practicum program was established as a part of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at all universities. A director and staff member from the department were assigned to undertake the responsibility of managing and organizing the program. These responsibilities were both administrative and academic. The administrative work was the responsibility of the director of the program. It included responsibilities such as making arrangements with cooperating schools, liaising with the Directorate of Education (part of the Ministry of Education), providing written documents of the program, and establishing communications between the people who are involved in the training course. The academic work was the responsibility of the university academic supervisor who works directly with the students. Their job was to help the students benefit from the training course and to develop their teaching skill and competencies by visiting them at least three times, in their schools, observing their work and performance and giving a final grade at the end of the courses. The following is a description of the components of the erstwhile practicum

<table>
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<th>Total</th>
<th>Educational courses</th>
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<td>130</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Mu’tah</td>
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<td>126</td>
<td>75</td>
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<td>Al-Albait</td>
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<td>126</td>
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<td>128.7</td>
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program at the Hashemite University, including the selection of cooperating schools, selection of mentor-teachers, stages of training, and assessment procedures.

**Selection of Cooperative Schools**

Upon successful completion of 90 credit hours of study, students start their practicum courses in schools. These courses carried only 6 credit hours of the student study plan. Those who intended to start their training had to register their names in the practicum office. Based on the number of students in each specialization, the director of the practicum program made the necessary arrangements through the official channels of the Directorate of Education in order to determine the cooperative schools in which the students would practice teaching. Then, the university sent a letter to the head teachers of the selected schools informing them of the number of students who were going to train in their schools and their specializations (Practicum Program Guideline, 1998).

**Selection of Mentor-Teachers**

In coordination with the director of the practicum program, the school’s head teacher assigned each student to one teacher with the same specialization. In some cases, as when the number of students was bigger than the number of teachers, the head teacher might decide to assign two students to one mentor. This meant that the cooperative head teacher had an important role in the student practice. It was his or her responsibility to assign the correct teachers to act as mentors. In many cases, student teachers’ past annual reports could influence the head teacher’s selection process when choosing mentors.

The expertise and subject knowledge of those selected as cooperative teachers/mentors varied. This was partly because there was little choice of mentors within one school. The university accepted the mentors regardless of their expertise and knowledge. The only way to control the quality of mentors was by monitoring their annual records and supervision reports, but, unfortunately, these reports and records were not always up to date or accurate. The university did not question inconsistencies, and there have never been any fixed criteria for choosing mentors. As a result, teachers involved in the student training in some Jordanian universities were frequently new to the role of the mentor and often had no idea of how to perform the expected duties.

**Duration and Stages of Training**

The time commitment for each practicum course was 1 day per week per semester (approximately 16 weeks). Normally, student teachers took Practicum 1 and 2 simultaneously. They carried 6 credit hours. Therefore, students spent 2 days a week in a school.

The practicum was divided into three stages: the observation stage, the partial practice stage, and the full practice stage. At each stage, there were various learning and teaching activities in which the students were to be instructed.

**Assessment of Student Teachers**

Assessment of students’ performance was a major component of the practicum program. At the end of the experience, students were to submit a portfolio that included the prescribed activities for Practicum 1 and Practicum 2. The university academic supervisor corrected them and gave the student the final score.
To sum up the procedure at the Hashemite University, one might say that the preparation and qualifying of teachers is still a new and immature process. As the heads of the Department of Curricula and Instruction, the directors of the practicum programs, and the university academic supervisors of student teachers for many years, the authors have identified some shortcomings and gaps in the components of the teacher preparation program at the Hashemite University. These shortcomings may also be applicable to other Jordanian universities.

- As a result of the current admission policy, a number of students who are not academically competent or psychologically fit have infiltrated the teacher education programs. Others have entered the profession despite their disinterest simply because they were admitted into that specialty.

- The academic study plan has the following shortcomings:
  1. It places heavy emphasis on the study of literature at the expense of the basic skills of the language.
  2. There is little relationship between most of the courses offered to student teachers in the academic departments and what they will actually need in the classroom.
  3. There is a dearth of coursework necessary to build content knowledge for teaching the language.
  4. There is a gap between theory and practice in the educational courses.
  5. There is excessive emphasis on theoretical issues, which are irrelevant to classroom practices.
  6. There is irrational repetition and overlapping among some educational courses.

- The following are some deficiencies that have been identified from our experience in the practicum program:
  1. Many cooperating schools still do not have a good understanding of the training process.
  2. There are gaps and shortcomings in the communication between the university academic supervisors and the cooperative teachers in schools.
  3. The university does not have any authority in the selection of the teachers who are to act as cooperative teachers: The responsibility of selecting cooperative teachers belongs to the head teachers of schools. In most cases, they select mentors according to their own personal convictions, and often the relationships between them and their teachers can play an important role in this selection.
  4. Most cooperative teachers involved in mentoring do not have any educational qualifications because they graduated from the faculty of arts or science without taking teaching methods courses.
  5. Cooperative teachers have not undergone university teacher preparation courses; therefore, many of them are still not qualified to undertake teacher preparation.
  6. Most cooperative teachers think that the best way to learn how to teach is through trial and error in the classroom. Therefore, they advise their student teachers to forget the theory courses they undertook at the university, because they are deemed irrelevant to the classroom.
  7. The majority of the cooperating schools do not look upon the student teacher as a trainee who needs mentoring to learn how to teach. But as an extra worker: The schools therefore exploit the students and make them perform unrelated duties, such as making a list of absent teachers, or acting as babysitters, book store clerks, or secretaries.
  8. The duration of training is too short to equip student teachers with the necessary professional skills to become successful teachers in the future.
9. There is inadequate coordination between the university academic supervisor, the cooperative school, and the cooperative teacher.
10. The number of students assigned for each university supervisor is too large to conduct meaningful and productive supervision.
11. The number of visits by the university supervisor is not enough to assess the performance of student teachers.
12. The distance between the cooperative schools and the often conflicting working hours of the student teachers makes it impossible to perform fruitful supervision.

Reform Plan

Based on the overview of the Jordanian teacher education programs, the framework of the suggested plan will address the following elements to develop and reform the current situation: admission policies, academic study plans, and practicum programs.

Admission Policies

Educational literature indicates that teacher education programs should take into account a number of integrated elements. In this context, Tambo (2001) asserts that student selection plays a crucial role in the preparation of prospective teachers. In fact, the starting point in any teacher education program is the selection of students who are interested in teaching and whose personal characteristics are in tune with the profession. The current admission criterion in Jordan is based entirely on the achievement of candidates in the General Secondary Education Examination (GSEE). This policy not only allows candidates from the bottom of the academic pool to join teacher education programs, but also those who are not psychologically fit to be teachers.

Worldwide, most universities conduct aptitude tests to select their students amongst those who pass a secondary education exam. Departments of education employ different techniques based on the requirements of the profession, the characteristics of the successful teacher, and the results of educational research. It is evident that a successful teacher should be knowledgeable in his/her field of study, have linguistic abilities, social skills, and specific personality qualities, such as: responsibility, social and emotional equilibrium, leadership, cooperation, self-confidence, flexibility, objectivity, and the ethics of the profession. Other studies have documented the need for recommendations that teachers have social intelligence, an ability to make decisions, and have a good attitude towards the profession. Among the salient characteristics that have been highlighted by Myers and Myers (1995) are: apparent enthusiasm toward the profession and level of commitment; positive attitudes; scientific, open-minded mentality; cognitive skills that facilitate exposition and communication of ideas; caring for others; and ability to work with others.

To reform the current admission policy in Jordanian universities, which is based solely on the achievement of students in the General Secondary Education Exam, the MoHESR should put into effect an alternative policy for admission. The suggested policy of admission of students into teacher education programs should be based on consistent entrance standards that stress the following aspects:

1. Basic requirements: this could be measured by conducting standardized aptitude tests and the emphasis placed on comprehension and inference. Competency tests could also be conducted to rate candidates in their specialty and thus ensure that only those who are qualified can enter the profession.
2. Qualitative requirements: this could be measured by conducting interviews in regard to the ability to argue and debate, and general education.
3. The manifestation of the above proposal requires devising and piloting various tests and ensuring their validity and reliability before putting them into effect.

**Academic Study Plan**

There is no doubt that high quality teaching begins with a teacher who has a sufficient and thorough knowledge of the content he/she teaches. Monk (1994) found that teachers’ content preparation, as measured by coursework in the subject field, is positively related to student achievement in mathematics and science. He also called for a comprehensive approach to educating teachers that combines a solid foundation in academic preparation with promising development in professional practice. The teacher education problem is not acquired levels of education, but the quality and quantity of acquired knowledge.

In the case of English teacher education for instance, one should not simplistically assume, however, that the completion of a baccalaureate degree in English literature implies that the student has obtained reasonable content-area knowledge. On the contrary, the construct of foreign language content knowledge is far more complex and encompasses a far larger picture than just the college major.

English language teachers have specific needs that are not addressed by generic teacher education programs or described by teacher education standards. One fundamental difference from other subject areas is that English language teachers are attempting to teach a second language while using that language as the mode of instruction. Since the medium is the message, unique challenges arise for English language teachers. They must first be proficient in the foreign language that they teach (Sullivan, 2001).

The design of a student’s academic study plan is determined by the competences desirable in future English language teachers and the skills they should possess in their subject matter. Schrier (1994) outlined four desirable characteristics of foreign language teachers: (a) proficiency in the foreign language and culture, (b) proficiency in the language and culture of the school community, (c) expertise in curricular design and its implementation, and (d) technological sophistication. Another key feature of teachers’ understanding that differs from the other experts is the ability to make their knowledge accessible to students. A teacher must have the ability to see the subject from the perspective of the learner. This body of knowledge is what the teacher must have beyond the scholarly content knowledge and is referred to as *pedagogical content knowledge* (Shulman, 1987).

Based on the above review of related literature and the shortcomings of the present study plan mentioned earlier, the following suggestions may help in developing and reforming the current study plan:

1. Conduct a thorough revision of the objectives and content of the courses in light of the goals and roles of prospective teachers in an era of rapid change in technology.
2. Facilitate inclusive coordination between the department of English and faculty of education to avoid the shortcomings mentioned earlier in the study plan.
3. Form academic committees from the university staff in the English department and faculty of education and the Ministry of Education to determine forms of coordination required among various components of the plan and ways of implementation to ensure quality teacher education.
4. Create a balance between specialty courses and educational courses.
The academic study plan, which is the core of teacher education, must be redesigned in a way to ensure that student teachers are provided with the essential language skills needed in their classrooms. The suggested academic study plan must enable student teachers to acquire the following competences.

**Competences Relating to Subject and Content of Teaching**

1. A sound knowledge of, and practical skills in, English at a level that allows the teacher to stimulate and challenge pupils. The emphasis in the study plan must be on the basic skills of the language and more courses in English language should be offered.

2. The ability to utilize technology to achieve specific learning outcomes and individualize the students’ learning processes through the integrated use of technology. They must learn to access and retrieve information from various sources, such as the Internet, and decipher what information is relevant and applicable to assigning learning tasks. Technological tools can enhance creative development in the language learner instead of merely promoting the mechanical, uncontextualized acquisition of facts.

3. Expertise in curricular design and implementation. This implies a degree of theoretical and clinical knowledge. The teacher who is expert in analyzing learners’ needs and developing a curriculum to meet those needs will be invaluable. Competent curricular development requires teachers to be able to select and implement language learning and teaching approaches, methods, and techniques appropriate for their instructional environments.

**Competencies Relating to the Classroom**

**A Communicative Approach to Teaching and Learning Implies.**

1. Motivating and sustaining the interest of all pupils
2. Explaining to and communicating with pupils clearly and in a stimulating manner
3. Questioning pupils effectively, responding to their questions, and supporting their contribution to discussions
4. Employing a range of teaching strategies to reinforce and extend work in class, and be able to select strategies appropriate to the subject, topic, and pupils’ needs.
5. Evaluating and justifying the approaches taken to learning and teaching and their impact on pupils.

**Regarding Classroom Organization and Management, a Teacher Should.**

1. Organize classes and lessons to ensure that all pupils are productively employed when working individually, in groups or as a class;
2. Apply the principles and practices that underlie good discipline and promote positive behavior;
3. Create and maintain a stimulating, purposeful, orderly and safe learning environment for all pupils, including those with special educational and health needs; and
4. Manage pupil behavior fairly, sensitively, and consistently through the use of appropriate rewards and sanctions—know when it is necessary to seek advice.
Assessment

A teacher should:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of assessment and the different kinds of assessment that may be used;
2. Monitor, assess, record, and report on the aptitudes, needs, and progress of individual pupils; and
3. Use the results of assessment to evaluate and improve teaching and to improve standards of attainment.

Competencies Relating to the School and the Education System

A teacher should:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the system in which he/she is working;
2. Demonstrate an awareness of his or her responsibilities for contributing to the ethos of the school;
3. Report to parents about their children’s progress and discuss matters related to their children in a sensitive and productive way; and
4. Demonstrate an understanding of how roles and responsibilities are shared among staff and how to access help from staff.

Values, Attributes, and Abilities Integral to Professionalism

The values, attributes, and abilities integral to professionalism are:

1. Being committed to and enthusiastic about teaching as a profession and encouraging pupils to become learners.
2. Being committed to promoting pupil’s achievement and raising their expectations of themselves and others.
3. Valuing and promoting the moral and spiritual well-being of pupils.
4. Being able to self-evaluate the quality of his/her teaching and set and achieve targets for professional development.
5. Demonstrating a commitment to undertaking continuing professional development to keep up to date in his/her subject.

The above suggested academic study plan is most effective when created through collaboration among university English language departments, education faculties, and the Ministry of Education. The three parties involved in this collaboration are interdependent. The English department faculty depend on the education faculty to provide foundations of professional education coursework, and the education faculty depend on the department of English faculty to provide the content-knowledge base for future teachers. The Ministry of Education depends on the departments of English and education for content-knowledge development and for preservice training of prospective teachers. The interaction among these three entities is necessary for successful language teaching and learning.

Another important experience in teacher education programs is the teaching practicum—an experience that may set the stage for success or failure in student teaching. This experience has the potential to influence students greatly by providing them with, in most instances, their first hands-on experience of their chosen career. Therefore, an individual’s
future in education may hinge on what occurs during that individual’s teaching practicum experience (Strand & Johnson, 1990).

The student teaching practicum experience is a valuable tool in the training of future teachers and must be treated as such. For many students it may be their first attempt at working with and teaching children. Therefore, the experience must be a positive and successful step toward becoming a professional teacher. Every opportunity that students have to practice teaching in the public schools must be treated as a priceless learning experience and not simply left to chance. Darling-Hammond (2000) reports that studies in different fields comparing teachers with and without preparation have typically found higher ratings and greater student learning gains for teachers who have had more formal preparation for teaching.

There is no doubt that the current practicum programs in Jordanian universities face some difficulties. The following suggestions might remedy the limited structure and haphazard organization of the current practicum programs.

- The duration of the practicum program must be extended to a full semester and student teachers must be fully involved in teaching and totally engaged all school activities.
- It is imperative that pre–student-teaching practicum experience not be left to chance if we want to enhance the value of student teaching (Taggart, 1988). Closer working relationships between the university and the Ministry of Education must be forged to organize the selection of cooperative schools and teachers.
- The selection of cooperative schools should be based on some standards, such as: the location and availability of educational facilities, competent teachers, and administration.
- The University must have a say in the selection of cooperative teachers. There must be criteria or fixed bases for choosing those mentors. Schick and Nelson (2001) stressed that care must be used to place students with cooperating teachers who are effective models of the target language and foreign language pedagogy at each level. Most students state that their cooperating teacher is the single most important influence on their development as a teacher (Dodds, 1989; Templin, 1979).
- Faculty supervisors must visit prospective cooperating schools and maintain a list of qualified cooperating teachers, spending some time with them so that all three individuals (student, cooperating teacher, and faculty supervisor) are working toward the same end.
- Faculty supervisors must meet with the cooperating teacher and provide him or her with a practicum manual, and explain in detail what is expected of the practicum student and what type of observational techniques are used to evaluate the pre–student teacher, as well as how to do it.
- Faculty supervisors must dictate more control over what the student-teaching practicum students actually do during their experiences. Too often students are on their own once they get into a field experience. Supervisors must establish a plan that describes when certain observations and activities will occur and they must insure that certain competencies are met.
- Faculty supervisors must be held accountable for the education of each teacher they prepare and send out to the practicum program. They must define precise tasks and specific objectives for practicum. When expectations are clearly defined and stated for a preservice practicum student, supervisors are able to monitor and provide
feedback that reflects those expectations, and cooperating teachers are able to understand more clearly their role in the practicum experience (McBride, 1984; Ocansey, 1987).

- Cooperating teachers can not be the only ones blamed for not knowing how to supervise student-teaching practicum students. A practicum manual, based on teaching strategies and sequences, must be prepared by the faculty supervisor. The listed requirements for the practicum student, as stated in the manual, must be fully discussed with the cooperating teacher.
- The increased time that student teachers spend in schools necessitates both in-service teacher mentors and university supervisors spending more time observing them.

Conclusion

It is clear that the process of teacher education is one of the most controversial issues among educators all over the world. Many approaches to teacher education are used to prepare teachers and develop their capacity to be effective teachers. There is no consensus among educators about which approach is best. A number of research studies in Jordan that involved the evaluation of the field-teacher preparation program found it ineffective, resulting in the MoHESR eliminating that program, shifting toward use of the Consecutive Model. This model relies on preparing teachers academically in a particular discipline first, then qualifying them through another one-year program of (24–30) credit hours, which qualifies them educationally.

Ceasing the program, however, did not solve the problem, because moving into the Consecutive Model, as Woolfolk (1989) urges is more costly and therefore discouraging to the economically disadvantaged students. Furthermore, it makes transferring the effect of learning to the classroom more difficult. The proposals for the reform of teacher education suggest that the undergraduate education major should not be eliminated (Cochran-Smith, 2005). Bruke (1987) stressed that undergraduate teacher education programs must include the following: a) a period of basic and pedagogical preparation, b) successful induction into teaching positions and tasks throughout the career, c) continuing personal and professional renewal in knowledge and teaching skills, and d) redirection of tasks and expertise as the changeable society dictates.

It must be pointed out that isolated reform in any one part of the aforementioned plan suggested by the authors would be unlikely to have much effect on teacher education programs: Concomitant reform must be made throughout the whole system. All of the components are to be addressed systematically, and not through a series of disjointed, incremental actions. Their interdependencies and interrelationships should be recognized. Through careful planning, sound organization, and appropriate supervision, the university and the Ministry of Education could institute valuable student-teacher practicum experiences. Policy makers have two choices: to continue in the same direction whistling in the dark and hoping that good educators will be produced, or to take a courageous and bold step in a new direction.

References


