

The Degree of Applying the Theoretical Frameworks of Child-Raising Special Courses in the Field of Training among the Female Students of Princess Alia University College

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Abstract

This paper aims at studying to what extent the female students in Child Education department at Princess Alia University College manage to apply the theoretical part in field training program. The data, which is the scope of this study, consists of 42 staff members and 36 educational supervisors responsible for the program. The two researchers have developed their own approach which is based on the main objects of the program and the theoretical literature used in child education department. The results have shown distinguished differences in statistics which reflect a deeper difference between the two points of view of the members of staff and educational supervisors. However, both parties agree on professional qualities. Qualities related to management of educational processes were given priority by the two parties while developing processes came later. Based on these results, the researchers provide a number of recommendations related to the main theme of this paper.

Keywords: theoretical aspects, field training, child education

1. Introduction

Advanced countries seek to develop their university educational systems related to teaching programs and students' preparation and training according to the highest international standards to be prepared for future careers and ready to confront the continuous changes at the cognitive and educational levels. What confirms the stead of the teacher in the educational process is that whatever methods and strategies are invented, new subjects and developed curricula are added or buildings with modern technological devices and furniture are constructed they will not achieve the desired goals without the teacher who possesses developed per formative competencies.

Developing the teacher's level will lead to the development and distinction of their students. The cognitive backgrounds, skills and behavior of doctors, engineers, businessmen and other categories of society are affected by those of their teachers and by the efforts exerted by their teachers throughout schooling years. This reflects the great position teachers occupy in society.

Field training is considered as the spine cord of pre-service teachers preparation programs at education colleges being the practical application of the experiences the student acquires in different scholastic courses as it makes him acquainted with the problems of the future career because among the purposes of practical training are refining specialized theoretical information and improving the student's capacity in teaching skills and his adaptation with the scholastic atmosphere.

The preparation of the student teacher (trainee) includes the academic scientific side and the educational professional side together with the cultural curricula. The scientific preparation is embodied in providing the trainee with the theories and concepts related to the subject he is going to teach, while the professional preparation is concerned with supplying the trainee with the educational theories and concepts and the educational strategies that help him efficiently perform his work. By this, the trainee makes sure of the relevance and appropriation of all what he has learnt in the theoretical preparation programs as one of the most important criteria of teachers preparation programs, as affirmed by the National Council of Academic Adoption of Teachers preparation programs, is to graduate a teacher who is able to connect theory with practice which facilitates his role as a teacher in general education stages (Wise & Leibbrand, 2001).

The co-ordination between general and university education is clearly noticed in the united kingdom; schools participate in the pre-service training of teachers to the degree that teachers of participant schools take part in the university admission tests and classroom visits that aim at solving the teachers' problems in addition to holding courses and meetings that promote their professional development plus involving them in the planning, execution and evaluation processes of all aspects of the educational process (Pimm & Selinger, 1995).

In Princess Alia University College, the student's scholastic plan consists of 12 adopted hours of field training (practical education) registered by the student after she accomplished the previous requirements of the academic and educational subjects of her scholastic plan after she finishes 90 hours. She is allowed to register any other subject in the training semester.

The plan requires the attendance of 16 weeks according to the Jordanian Ministry of Education calendar as the student spends one week in the classroom observation and the rest of the training period as a class teacher. The field supervisor (one of the college staff) follows her up during the field training period by performing one field visit every two weeks i.e eight classroom visits during each semester. She is also subject to supervision by the educational supervisor of the cooperative school (Al-Balqa Applied University, 2008, p. 3).

1.1 The Study's Problem

The field training program for child-care specialty students aims at connecting the theoretical knowledge the students receive within 120 adopted hours with the applied practical reality of the supposed performance of the working teacher. The theoretical frameworks keep still with limited effect unless practically applied in performance practices that give high productivity.

Therefore, the study's problem comes from the feelings of the researchers, who are teaching the theoretical courses of child-care and follow up with a number of students within the field training program, that there is a gap between the theoretical courses and field training activates. That is why this study came to clarify the degree of the students of Princess Alia University College application of the theoretical frameworks included in field training child care courses as those students join some elementary schools and kindergartens in order to apply the theoretical courses. This study attempts to answer the following main questions:

What is the degree of Princess Alia University College students' application of the theoretical frameworks of field training program?

1.2 From This Question Stem the Following Questions

- (1) What is the degree of princess Alia University College students of child care specially application of the theoretical farmworks of field training program through the perspective of the College staff?
- (2) What is the degree of Princess Alia University college students of child care specialty's application of the theoretical frameworks of the field training through the perspective of the educational supervisors of the cooperative schools?
- (3) Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the perspectives of the college's staff and the educational supervisors of the cooperative schools?

1.3 The Study's Importance

The importance of this study comes from the following:

- (1) Identifying the degree of child care specially students' employment of the theoretical ideas and principles of the theoretical courses in their practical performance of school ideas and principles of the theoretical courses in their practical performance at schools and kindergartens.
- (2) Informing those in charge of placing scholastic plans and field training programs to deal with the problems the trainees may face in their jobs e and developing the inputs of plans and programs to achieve a higher level of effectiveness in the light of the study's results.

1.4 Procedural Definitions

Theoretical frameworks: The concepts, terminology, principles and generalizations included in the theoretical courses the student exposed to at University with a total of 120 adopted hours that qualify her to join the field training program.

Field training: It is the organized scheduled practical program offered by AL-Balqa Applied University through the educational sciences departments in the various university faculties to help the student (the teacher) with an average of 12 adopted hours to acquire the behavioral and professional competencies she needs to perform her educational tasks inside or outside the classroom to prepare her for teaching at kindergartens under the

supervision of an academic board.

Child-care: A university specialty with a total of 132 hours after which a bachelor degree is granted, and it deals with courses in childhood, human conduct, children learning environment, learning strategies and special children teaching material (Al-Balqa Applied University, 2008, p. 4).

1.5 The Study's Limitations

The study was restricted to the female students of child-care specialty who joined the field training program of the scholastic year 2012/2013.

2. The Theoretical Farm

Field training is the real opportunity for the student-teacher in his professional preparation to acquire the skills, practices and real teaching experiences especially with the presence of effective supervision and guidance. Considering practical education as internationally the most important factor of teacher preparation, new developments incorporated it to be driven towards direct improvement to prepare the successful future teacher (Guyton & McIntyre, 1999).

The modern outlook confirms that the educational process is one comprehensive system whose various components are organically interwoven to produce an integrated unit. The evaluation process is seen as one of the key elements of the educational system because of the diagnosis, treatment and feedback it offers to direct its course towards the desired objectives. Therefore the development of an evaluation system for learners is regarded as an effective input to develop the other aspects of the educational system namely objectives, curricula, teaching methods and teaching aids; as the evaluation results determine the track of the various aspects of the educational process, and this reveals the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of the field training program (Abdul-Hamed, 2005).

Educators agree that practical education stands for the corner stone of teachers preparation programs as such programs would be void of any purpose when said practical education is excluded. The importance of field training for teachers students stems from the following:

- (1) It is regarded as the bold bridge that connects theoretical knowledge to practical applications that limit their responsibilities and duties.
- (2) Enables them to adapt with school life and accept its requirements and obligations with determination and confidence.
- (3) Provides realistic opportunities to examine the educational principles and concepts they learned.
- (4) Provides the chance to co-live with the educational environment with its materialistic and human resources which motivates them to develop behaviors and methods of performance that come out of reality.
- (5) Gives the chance to recognize teachers and their abilities, readiness, educational needs and behavioral patterns (Al-Kandar & Salah, 2004).

2.1 Previous Studies

The studies that dealt with field training at universities concerning its effectiveness and the problems that encounter achieving its goals are many.

2.2 Arabic Studies

Al-Ba'dani (2005) conducted a study that aimed at evaluating the practical teaching programs at the faculty of education at Sana' University through the prespective of the teaching board members in charge of supervising the program of practical education counting 67 students and the fourth year students of the literary and scientific departments subject to the practical education program of the scholastic year 2004/2005 counting 1915 students. The results revealed a low level in the implementation of the practical education program evaluation standards in its presumed image. The study also showed statistically significant differences between the means of the teaching board and the students' scores in favor of the students, the researcher recommended the revision of the practical education program to meet the standards that should be available in the program at the international universities.

The study of Shaheen (2007) aimed at evaluating the program of practical education at Al-Quds Open University through the perspective of the student teachers. The study sought to identify the students' views concerning various domains that contained the objectives and stages of the program in addition to the roles of the school management and the cooperative teacher.

The sample consisted of 389 teacher-student randomly chosen according to stratified distribution and represented 25% of the study's population. The researcher used a questionnaire of 63 items spread over the four domains. The results revealed high estimates of the general effect of the program and showed statistically significant differences within those estimates due to the functional status variables, specialty and the tool's dimensions while there were no significant differences concerning the variables of sex and marital status in those estimates. In the light of these results, the researcher pointed out the necessity of re-organizing the practical education program to cope with the requirements of the age, the provision of a special guide about practical education for the supervisor, the student, the school head and the cooperative teacher assuring the integration of their roles under specific criteria.

Kasem (2008) conducted a study titled "The evaluation of student teachers performance in the practical side of practical education subject of the education program in Nabl's educational region at Al-Quds open University", The sample of the study consisted of 81 male and female students of 5 specialties. The researcher used the form of trainee evaluation of the practical education adopted for this purpose at Al-Quds Open University to evaluate of the practical education subject. The study revealed clear failure in the student teachers performance in the practical side as the performance was weak in 4 activates while 14 activities reached a medium level.

2.3 Foreign Studies

The study of Keith (2000) aimed at identifying the extent of practical education program contribution in the students' understanding of the teaching process. The researcher conducted the study on a sample of practical education students at London University in the United Kingdom and used opposition as a tool to collect data. The results showed that the practical education program contributed in providing the student teachers with more profound understanding to teaching after they had employed the theoretical studies in their applied performances. The study also assured that some student teachers who lacked deep understanding of teaching would face some problem in their practical life such as the disability to respond to the educational needs of their students, to perform a comprehensive evaluation or to adopt developing strategies in teaching.

Hoffman et al. (2005) performed a qualitative study that aimed at identifying the impact of teachers' enrollment in training programs on the planning of their educational practices when joining the schools in Texas in the United States as the results revealed high level of performance in comparison with experienced teachers.

The study of Waleign and Fantahun (2006) was titled "Assessment on problems of the new pre-service teachers training program in Jimma University in Etheopia", the sample of the study consisted of 285 student teachers of various specializations at the faculty of education and 7 administrative officials of the college. The researcher followed the method of personal interviews in addition to a questionnaire prepared by him to contribute in achieving the goals of the study. The results revealed poor provision of the needed means and services and pointed out that the administrative system does not care for meeting the and interests of the trainees.

Perry and Phillips (2006) conducted a study which aimed at clarifying the effect of training years on the performance and self-learning of the student teachers through exposing their abilities in the designation of plans and executing them on the students of a Canadian elementary school where their actual practice was subject to visualization then analyzation. The study showed high capability among the student teachers in designing and executing plans and pointed out that their practices are similar to those of the trainers and supervisors. The study also excreted a high correlative relation between theory and practice in their performance.

Macgillvray and Lan (2008) produced a study titled "The impact of an international field experience on pre-service teachers". The study attempted to determine the impact of such experience on the trainee teachers. The study was conducted on 15 trainee teachers in the United States who completed four-week practical training at an elementary school and another secondary school in Rome-Italy. The results of the training were assessed in various methods.

The results referred to some benefits of this experience which included professional and personal changes among the trainees by increasing their self-confidence and the estimation of others and their views.

The previous studies reveal a variance in the effectiveness of training programs. Some of the studies showed high effects while others demonstrated lowness in the impact of those programs on the student teachers practices of the required professional competencies for reasons related to programs planning, executing or following up. This study comes as an effort to identify the degree of application of the concepts, principles and generalizations contained in the theoretical courses of field practice program of child care specialty at princess Alia University College which is distinguished from other Jordanian University institutions in teaching only females.

3. The Methodology of the Study

The researchers used the descriptive analytical method to describe the facts related to the study's subject and to determine the degree of theoretical frameworks application in the practical implementation of the field training program.

3.1 The Study's Population and Sample

The study's population consisted of two categories:

The staffs who are observing the field training program activities counting 42 teachers.

Educational Supervisors who are following the performance of the cooperative schools in which the program is implemented, counting 36 educators.

Table 1. Repetitions and percentages according to the study's variables

	Categories	Repetition	percentage
Functional position	Teaching board member	42	53.8
	educational supervisor	36	46.2
	Total	78	100.0

It is worth to mention here that the numbers of students who joined the program of the scholastic year 2012/2013 was 137 students; and because of the smallness of the study's population, the sample incorporated all the members of the two said categories.

3.2 The Study's Tool

The researchers developed a tool to answer the study's questions based on the program's goals and the theoretical literature related to child care specialty in planning, execution and evaluation processes.

3.3 Tool Validity

The researchers adopted the validity of the arbitrators as it was offered to 12 specialist arbitrators from Jordanian Universities and the Aministry of Education. After taking the views and remarks of the specialist and considering their deletion, adjustment and addition concerning the tool's items; it rested upon 20 items.

3.4 Tool Reliability

Chronbach Alpa correlation coefficient was used to determine the internal consistency among the items of the tool which reached 0.89 which is an acceptable percentage for the aims of this study.

After ensuring the validity and reliability of the tool, it was distributed to the samples members and then retrieved by the researchers.

3.5 Statistical Treatment

Filling the data, it was entered in the computer in (SPSS) program to be statistically treated as follows:

To answer the first and second questions, the researchers used the arithmetic means and standard deviations of each item and organized them according to their relative importance:

To answer the third question, T-test was used to locate the differences between the perspectives of the teaching board members and the educational supervisors concerning the degree of the students' application of the theoretical frameworks in field training.

4. The Results and Their Discussion

First question: What is the degree of application of Princess Alia University College students of child care specialty of the theoretical frameworks in field training program through the perspective of their teaching board members?

To answer this question, the researchers extracted the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the degree of application of princess Alia University College students of child care specialty of the theoretical frameworks in filed training program through the perspective of their teaching board members. The following table explains that.

Table 2. The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the degree of application of the theoretical frameworks of field training program by the students of child care specialty at princess Alia University College through the perspective of their teaching board members in descending order according to the arithmetic means

Grade	Number	Items	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Score
1	16	Meeting the personal needs of children.	4.71	0.457	Very high
2	3	Enthusiasm to the profession and commitment to its ethics.	4.55	0.504	Very high
2	5	Ability to treat the problems that confront performance.	4.55	0.404	Very high
4	18	Constructing positive tendencies by the children.	4.52	0.552	Very high
5	8	Accepting constructive criticism and guidance.	4.43	0.703	Very high
6	17	Accepting children and respecting their feelings.	4.31	0.468	Very high
7	14	Class management in the light of the children's needs.	4.29	0.596	Very high
8	6	Adaptation with emergency situations.	4.12	0.803	high
9	4	Ability to hold responsibility.	4.10	0.484	high
9	7	Accuracy and perfection in work.	4.10	0.790	high
11	10	Forming a learning environment adorable for children.	4.00	0.765	high
11	15	Provoking children's motivation and enhancing their response.	4.00	0.541	high
13	11	Building an organizational atmosphere described with ease and freedom.	3.98	0.897	high
13	19	Directing children to initiative and participation in activities.	3.98	0.975	high
15	1	Renewed scientific knowledge in the cognitive fields of children.	3.90	0.759	high
16	20	Using comprehensive evaluation tools.	3.74	0.885	high
17	13	Employing renewed technical instruments in performance.	3.71	1.175	high
18	2	Keeping with modern developments and developing the professional self.	3.62	0.764	high
19	9	Planning learning processes through a developmental perspective.	3.60	1.251	high
20	12	Employing modern teaching strategies.	3.48	1.292	high
Total Score			4.08	0.410	high

Table 2 shows that the total arithmetic means of the items reached 4.08 with a standard deviation of 0.410. This indicates a high level of profession competencies among child care specialty students at princess Alia University College through the perspective of the teaching board members. This may be related to the affectionate nature of a woman and her ability to deal with Child with her warmly & tenderly.

This motivates a woman to fulfill her children's needs and treat them with love & respect.

This result agrees with the results of Hoffman et al. (2005) and Shaheen (2007) but it contradicts with Al-Badani (2005) and Kasem (2008).

It is noticed that the arithmetic means ranged between 3.48-4.71 but they occurred in two levels, as the competencies related to children classroom management, meeting their needs, respecting their feeling, enthusiasm to work with them and holding responsibility towards them came in the first level while the competencies related to the developmental aspects of planning, learning strategies, evaluation tools and the employment of technical instruments came in a lower level. This outcome agrees with the results of Keith (2000), Pray and Phillips (2006), and Macgillvray and Lan (2008). This can be attributed to the incapability of the scholastic plan in both theoretical and practical frames in addition to its need to continuous development in the light of the novel international changes in the educational field concerning the panoramic outlook to human personality, the transformation from teaching conception to the learning conception using learning strategies that release the thinking energies of learners and the employment of information and communication technology in performance.

The second question: what is the degree of field training program's theoretical frameworks application by child care specialty students at princess Alia University College through the perspective of the educational supervisors of the cooperative schools?

To answer this question the researchers extracted the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the degree of field training program's theoretical frameworks application by child care specialty students at princess Alia University College through the perspective of the educational supervisors of the cooperative schools as explained in the below stated table.

Table 3. The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the degree of field training program's theoretical frameworks application by child care specialty students at Princess Alia University College through the perspective of the educational supervisors of the cooperative schools in descending order according to the arithmetic means

Grade	number	Items	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Score
1	4	Ability to hold responsibility.	3.36	0.833	Medium
2	3	Enthusiasm to the profession and commitment to tis ethics.	3.28	1.085	Medium
3	18	Constructing positive tendencies by the children.	3.17	0.811	Medium
4	15	Provoking children's motivation and enhancing their response.	3.06	0.893	Medium
5	5	Ability to treat the problems that confront performance.	3.03	0.810	Medium
6	14	Class management in the light of the children's needs.	2.94	0.583	Medium
6	16	Meeting the personal needs of children.	2.94	0.715	Medium
8	8	Accepting constructive criticism and guidance.	2.92	0.500	Medium
8	17	Accepting children and respecting their feelings.	2.92	0.649	Medium
10	6	Adaptation with emergency situations.	2.89	0.575	Medium
11	1	Renewed scientific knowledge in the cognitive fields of children.	2.86	0.639	Medium
12	7	Accuracy and perfection in work.	2.83	0.561	Medium
13	10	Forming a learning environment adorable for children.	2.67	0.632	Medium
13	11	Building an organizational atmosphere described with ease and freedom.	2.67	0.676	Medium
15	2	Keeping with modern developments and developing the professional self.	2.61	0.494	Medium
16	12	Employing modern teaching strategies.	2.39	0.838	Low
17	13	Employing renewed technical instruments in performance.	2.25	0.604	Low
18	20	Using comprehensive evaluation tools.	2.22	0.722	Low
19	9	Planning learning processes through a developmental perspective.	2.14	1.125	Low
19	19	Directing children to initiative and participation in activities.	2.14	0.683	Low
Total Score			2.76	0.330	Medium

Table 3 indicates a medium level of competencies as the total means of this category reached 2.76 with a standard deviation of 0.330. The arithmetic means ranged 2.14–3.36. Although the variance is clear between the perspectives of the teaching board members and the educational supervisor concerning the students' possession to those competencies, there is an obvious concord in their order as they also came in two levels where the items related to the management of learning operations and holding the burden and work responsibilities occupied the first level while the items connected to the developmental operations in planning, execution and evaluation took a lower level. This fosters the result that emerged from answering the first question.

Third Question: Are there any statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the perspectives of the college's teaching board members and the educational supervisors of the cooperative school?

To answer this question, the researchers extracted the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the degree of the theoretical frameworks in field training program application by child care specialty students at Princess Alia University College according to the functional position variable (teaching board member, educational supervisor); and to identify the statistical differences among the arithmetic means, T-test method was used as specified in the following table.

Table 4. Arithmetic means, standard deviations and T-test for the impact of functional position on the degree of theoretical frameworks in field training program application by the students of child care specialty at Princess Alia University College

	Number	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	T Value	Freedom score	Statistical significance
Teaching board member	42	4.08	0.410	15.474	76	0.000
Educational supervisor	36	2.76	0.330			

Table 4 shows statistically significant differences ($\alpha=0.05$) due to the impact of functional position. The differences were in favor of the teaching board members as the arithmetic mean among the teaching board members was high at 4.08 while the arithmetic mean of the educational supervisors scored an intermediate level 2.76 and the "T" value was (15.474) with a statistical significance of 0.000.

The researchers refer these differences to the variance in the nature of the evaluational instruments of the two responsive categories and the absence of coordination between universities and The Ministry of Education regarding the scholastic plans and curricula and their developmental requirements. The researchers noticed, through their field experience in educational supervision and teaching at universities, the precedence of The Ministry of Education over the universities in Jordan regarding the development of scholastic curricula, the adoption of developed learning strategies and the construction of evaluational instruments that are not limited by scholastic achievement while universities still follow the method of lectures and the adoption of one chosen textbook in addition to concentrating on the theoretical aspects as basis for evaluation processes.

5. Recommendations

In the light of the study's results, the researchers recommend the following:

- (1) The reconstruction of the scholastic plan for this specialty to include workshops, practical applications in scholastic planning, learning strategies based on thinking and creative thinking, comprehensive evaluation and employment of developed techniques in performance.
- (2) Coordination between The Ministry of Education and Princess Alia University College to move forward starting from a clear mutual view in purposes, procedures and evaluation processes of this specialty.
- (3) Adopting a specific mark for field training subject to be part of the general rating and not to be satisfied with terms such as (passed, or non-accomplished) in order to increase the interest of the students in this subject.

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