

Pre-service Teacher Training in Indonesia and Egypt: A Comparative Study

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Abstract: This study was aimed at comparing the implementation of pre-service teacher training programs at two different institutions—the faculty of education of a public university in South Sumatera, Indonesia and the faculty of education of a public university in Cairo, Egypt. The data were obtained through documentation and interview. Documentation dealt with rules, regulations, and all related documents used in running the pre-service teacher education of both institutions. Interviews were conducted to the lecturers and management of the two institutions. Both data were analysed qualitatively using thematic analysis. Four main findings were revealed. First, both institutions apply different recruitment methods in accepting prospective students by considering minimum qualification required, recruitment process, entrance test, and terms and conditions of acceptance. Second, both institutions run the pre-service training program differently in terms of period of study, number of credits required, kind of curriculum applied, level of curriculum, lecturer qualification, student grade point average, and grading system of subjects. Third, the graduates of both institutions qualify to become teachers at both the primary education and secondary education. Last, both institutions encounter problems in running the programs. The problems vary from student recruitment, process of educating, training, and preparing student during their study timeline, and problem related to long job-waiting time and number of vacancy provided.

1 INTRODUCTION

One of the objectives of the Indonesian independence as stated in the UUD 1945 is to escalate the quality of education of Indonesian people equally and justly. Referring to this objective, the development of national education is based on the paradigm of developing whole Indonesian people who have the capacity to actualize human potency optimally. In order to develop whole Indonesian people who have such a capacity, the provision of qualified teachers are certainly required.

In responding to the demand of providing qualified teachers, some serious efforts have been taken by the Indonesian government. One of them is the issuance of some laws and regulations related to education, such as Law No 20/2003 about the System of National Education; Law No 14/2005 about Teacher and Lecturer; Government Regulation No 19/2005 about National Education Standard; and Minister of National Education Regulation No 16/2007 about Teacher's Competence and Academic Qualification Standard. These laws and regulations

mandate that teachers play a strategic and crucial role in fostering the quality of education in building the national education. As the agent of change, teachers need to be qualified and competent in their disciplines. Qualification and competence can be achieved through a stage of education process. A teacher education is the place where such a process takes place. It is a place where future teachers are educated, trained, and prepared. So important is the role of a teacher education that it needs to be planned, organized, and managed seriously.

As one of the teacher education institutions in South Sumatera province, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sriwijaya University (FTTESU) aims at producing qualified and professional teachers. This objective is in line with the vision and mission of the faculty in providing qualified pre-service teachers who are competent to fulfil the national demand and are able to compete in globalized world as well.

FTTESU has been operating since 1961. There are more than two hundred certified lecturers involved in educating both pre-service teachers at

undergraduate degree program and pre- and in-service teachers at postgraduate degree program. Besides, representative infrastructure and updated facilities to support academic life are also provided. In addition, FTTESU also builds academic cooperation with other institutions, both public and private, such as the Education Provincial Office of South Sumatera Province and Bangka Belitung Islands Province, South Sumatera Province Quality Assurance Institute, Education and Culture Palembang City Office, and other partner-schools in primary, junior secondary, senior secondary and vocational levels. This collaboration is meant to involve the stakeholders to take part in assisting the development of national education. Furthermore, international collaboration in academic field with other stakeholders overseas has also been initiated and conducted in the last three years. The academic collaborations are in terms of oversea student-exchange program, inviting students from overseas to study, and international collaborative research.

This study is focused on comparing the pre-service teacher training programs at FTTESU in Indonesia and the Faculty of Graduate Studies for Education, Cairo University (FGSECU) in Egypt. Since the two faculties are dealing with the provision of prospective teachers, there may be some similarities and differences in terms of policy and the implementation of the program. Therefore it is worth investigating to find out the typical characteristics of each. One could learn from the expertise of the other or vice versa. Therefore, each could benefit from the other. In relation to that, this study is aimed at investigating: (1) students recruitment procedures; (2) implementations of curricula; (3) graduates' academic and professional competencies; and (4) problems in running the pre-service teacher training programs at the two faculties from the perspectives of the lecturers and students.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Given the fact that teachers play a crucial role in achieving qualified education, how effective teacher education program is managed in enabling pre-service teachers to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will allow them to succeed, is important to consider. In relation to this, issues such as student recruitment, curriculum, and pre-service teachers' academic and professional competence deserve attention as described below.

Concerning student recruitment, attending a state university is what every high school graduates in

Indonesia aiming for. It is believed that a state university has high legality. Public puts more trust on state university than a private university. Besides, a state university has relatively more qualified human resources, especially the teaching staff as compared to a private university. It is also true that a state university offers a variety of majors and disciplines for students to choose. In addition, a number of scholarships are provided by the government and private sectors to support eligible students' study. In other words, a state university offers more opportunities and academic conveniences than a private university. To enrol oneself in a state university, students need to follow certain recruitment procedures which are different from one university to the others.

Curriculum is an educational program which states (a) the educational purpose of the program (the ends), (b) the content, teaching procedures and learning experiences which will be necessary to achieve this purpose (the means), and (c) some means for assessing whether or not the educational ends have been achieved (Richards et al, 1997). A teacher education is fundamentally about educating and preparing pre-service teachers. It follows that one of the duties of the management is to prepare the curriculum based on the need of the stakeholders. This involves considering what lecturers teach and what students learn, how learning is organized and with what success. In order to be successful, aims and objectives of what is intended to be learned, sequence the objectives into a learning sequence, and choose appropriate teaching, learning and assessment methods need to be set. This is what curriculum involves.

Pre-service teachers need to possess qualified academic and professional competence because are responsible for a noble duty in the process of humanity, humanization, and the nation character building. This strategic value is accommodated in the acknowledgement of teachers' job as a profession. The issuance of Law No 14/2005 about teacher and lecturer legalizes teachers' job status as a profession.

A teacher is a professional educator whose primary task is to educate, teach, guide, direct, coach, assess, and evaluate students of formal education in early childhood education, primary education, and secondary education (Government Regulation No 19/2005). It is worth saying that teachers play a major role in the development of education. Teachers also determine the students' success, particularly in relation to teaching and learning. In addition, teachers have great influence in shaping the outcome of the education (Sembiring, 2002). Therefore, any attempt

made to improve the quality of education would not provide a meaningful contribution without the support of professional and qualified teachers (Baumgartner, Koerner, & Rust, 2002).

Nowadays teachers need to be able to do a complex set of responsibilities in doing their job, starting from planning, teaching, and evaluating learning effectively. Teachers need to know how to make students learn. In this case, they are required to understand their students, aware of their spirit in learning, and know how to nurture the spirit. They also need to have skills in managing classroom efficiently, communicating well, and making use of technology to support teaching (Fullan, 1993). Back to previous decades, teachers were expected to organize minor ambitious intellectual work, whereas as now they are demanded to be able to carry out lots of responsibilities to make teaching successful. Given the reality of 21st century schooling, a teacher education program needs to consider what to offer to support the kinds of learning prospective teachers require to undertake successful teaching.

In order to contribute to qualified education, teachers should meet the qualification prescribed. Qualified teachers are needed to maximize efficient role of education system and to improve the quality of students' learning. Qualified teachers are claimed to be those who can provide optimal learning outcomes for every learner in the classroom; an outcome considered central to national development (UNESCO, 2014). In line with this, Indonesian government has stipulated the Decree of Ministry of Education and Culture No 16/2007 about the Academic Standard and Competency Qualification that teachers have to fulfil the standard of academic qualifications and competences.

Competence is an underlying characteristic of a person which enables him to deliver superior performance in a given job, role or situation (Marshall, 1996). In other words, competence means a skill and a standard of performance. Teacher competences have been investigated to increase the quality of teaching and teacher education. Studies (Arikan, Tager & Sarac-Suzer, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2006) indicate that teacher competence correlated with the students' success.

According to Indonesian Government Regulation No 19/2005 about the Standard of National Education, teachers have to possess four basic competences, viz: professional competence, pedagogical competence, personal competence, and social competence. Professional competence is related to their mastery of the subject matter. Pedagogical competence is associated with their

knowledge of instructional design and teaching practices. Personal competence is linked to the teachers' personality in carrying out their profession as teachers. Social competence is concerned with their ability to socialize with the schools and stakeholders.

3 RESEARCH METHOD

This was a comparative study. It compared the implementation of pre-service teacher training at FTTESU in Indonesia and FGSECU in Egypt. The data of this study were obtained through documentation and interview. Documentation was related to the rules, regulations and all related documents in implementing pre-service teacher education at both institutions. Interviews were conducted to eight respondents consisting of lecturers and management of the two teacher education programs of the two institutions (4 respondents from each institution) to find out possible problems in running the pre-service teacher training programs. Then, the data obtained were analysed qualitatively using thematic analysis.

4 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings are presented following the objectives of the study. In relation to the first objective—students' recruitment procedures, it was found that the recruitment was classified into four aspects: (1) the minimum qualification required, (2) recruitment process, (3) entrance test, and (4) terms and conditions of acceptance.

Both FTTESU and FGSECU apply different minimum *qualification* required for a student to be accepted. At FTTESU, a high school graduate or equivalent is eligible to enrol as a student as long as he or she passes the entry test; on the other hand, someone needs to finish an undergraduate degree first before he or she is admitted at the FGSECU. In relation to the *recruitment process*, there are three lines on recruitment applied at FTTESU, namely (1) national entrance test to state university (SNMPTN or Invitation track), (2) joint selection entrance to state university (SBMPTN), and (3) local entrance test (USM); whereas FGSECU only applies one line of recruitment that is local entrance test. Of total acceptance in a state university, sixty percent is allocated for those recruited through SNMPTN, twenty percent for SBMPTN, and another twenty

percent for USM respectively (Ministry of National Education Regulation No 34/2013). This scheme is based on some considerations. First, more chance is given to students who have continuous and consistent achievement during their study in senior secondary school. It is believed that such a success is better than the one which is merely based on the result of the final test prior leaving the school. Second, more opportunity is also given to fresh graduates of the year to be accepted than those who graduated in the previous years. Third, to trigger more schools to have better accreditation status so that they will have more quotas of graduates accepted in state universities. In relation to this, FTTESU does not recruit the students itself; rather Sriwijaya University does the recruitment. Once students are admitted, they will be sent to the faculty and majors they applied based on their interest. Since there are various study programs in the undergraduate degree, students majoring in a study program will be educated and trained in the program until they graduate.

Regarding the *entrance test*, FTTESU requires every candidate to take a written test consisting of mathematics, science or social, English, Indonesian language, and aptitude test. In addition, a performance test is compulsory if a candidate chooses a major which requires him or her to have performance skill such as the one who chooses to study physical education discipline. However, FGSECU requires every candidate to take a written test covering proficiency English and Arabic test, psychology test, and computer application test. Specific *terms and conditions* are applied in recruiting prospective students at the two faculties. Every candidate can apply to study at FTTESU only if he or she graduates from high school within two years, on the other hand there is no such prerequisite applied at FGSECU.

In relation to the student recruitment at FTTESU, one respondent revealed that more portions are allocated to the students selected through invitation track, as cited below.

... as has been implemented in the last three years of the student recruitment ... sixty percent is allocated for students admitted through invitation track or SNMPTN line ... the other forty percent is for those accepted through joint selection entrance to state university or SBMPTN and local entrance test or USM lines.... (Participant 1)

These lines of selecting students applied at FTTESU do not apply at FGSECU. Rather, it applies

only one way of student recruitment, as informed by one respondent as follows.

... at the Faculty of Education, here in Cairo University, we only accept students through local test. So, every prospective student applying to study here... has to take the entry test... err ... the test is about English and Arabic proficiency test, psychology test, and computer application test (Participant 5)

In addition, student recruitment at FTTESU limits only those graduated from senior high school within the last two years if they want to join national entrance test to state university (SNMPTN or Invitation track) and joint selection entrance to state university (SBMPTN). Those who graduated their undergraduate degree more than two years are only allowed to enrol by taking local entrance test (USM). Different scheme is applied at FGSECU. Candidate can be admitted at the teacher education program as long as they have finished undergraduate degree, no matter how long they have graduated.

In relation to the second objective—implementations of curricula, the curriculum were classified into seven aspects: (1) period of study, (2) number of credits required, (3) kind of curriculum applied, (4) level of curriculum, (5) lecturer qualification, (6) student grade point average, and (7) grading system of subjects.

A student of FTTESU is required to finish his or her study within the *period* of 4 to 5 years (8-10 semesters). It is possible if a student is able to finish his or her study less than 4 years (around 7 semesters) but it is not possible to finish more than 10 semesters. If a student could not finish his or her study during 5 years, he or she will drop out from this teacher education program. Different length of study is needed at the FGSECU. A student is given only one year to complete his or her study. This is with the consideration that this institution only prepares student to have both knowledge and skills in pedagogical aspect. In other words, this faculty only trains every student to be a knowledgeable and skilful teacher of any disciplines a student comes from. There is also different *number of credits* a student requires to take at the two faculties. At FTTESU, a student needs to complete 140-144 credits during his or her candidature consisting of a group of subjects related to: (1) personal development (MPK), (2) knowledge and skills (MKB), (3) major study (MPB), and (5) community interaction (MBB). The total number of credits every student has to take is between 144-146

credits. MPK is offered from 6-8 credits, MKK 15-17 credits, MKB 96-99 credits, MPB 22-23 credits, and MBB 6 credits respectively (Minister of National Education Regulations No 232/2000, No 45/U/2002; Presidential Regulation No 8/2012). It means that he or she has to attend 48 hours meeting a week, whereas at the FGSECU, a student has to take 36 credits during one year study or 12 hours meeting a week. This number is only one-fourth compared to the number of hours a student has to take at FTTESU. However, this is reasonable considering different year span of the two places of study.

Concerning the *curriculum* applied, FTTESU applies the Indonesian National Qualification Framework (KKNI) as mandated in the Minister of National Education Regulations No 232/2000, No 45/U/2002, and Presidential Regulation No 8/2012. This curriculum has been developed to prepare the graduates to have professional competence in their majors, pedagogical competence in teaching, as well as personal competence and social competence as educators. Through this curriculum, from the commencement of their study, students have been introduced to professional duties of a teacher. FGSECU curriculum, on the other hand, focuses on the pedagogical competence of the prospective teacher only. It does not train students to have professional competence since they have already had this competence in their previous study. Regarding the *level of curriculum*, FTTESU Sriwijaya University combines both national and local (institution-based) content. Eighty percent of the curriculum is devoted to local content and the other twenty percent is for the national content. FGSECU also accommodates local and national contents in its curriculum. More percentage is allocated for the national content (80%) than the local content (20%).

In relation to the *lecturers' qualification*, FGSECU is more demanding than FTTESU. Only those who have doctoral degree are eligible to teach at the faculty, whereas at the FTTESU although doctorate degree holders are preferred, those who have master's degree qualification are still allowed to teach at the undergraduate program. Not only lecturers have such a rule, students also have to fulfil required achievement in order to complete their study. At the FTTESU, a student has to have at least 2.00 *great point average* (GPA, in the scale of 0-4) in order to complete his or her study. The same terms and conditions also apply to FGSECU. Similarly, *grading system* of subjects uses the scale E to A at both faculties.

Concerning the third objective—graduates' academic and professional competencies, students

were taught and trained to possess academic and professional competencies for teaching at the primary education (kindergarten and primary school) and secondary education (junior and senior high school as well as vocational school). This is in line with Law No 20/2003 about the System of National Education, Law No 14/2005 about Teacher and Lecturer, and Government Regulation No 19/2005 about National Education Standard. These law and regulation stipulate that teacher has to have at least undergraduate degree or diploma IV academic qualification in order to teach at primary and secondary education. Certainly he or she is illegible to teach a subject that is in line with his or her major such as a subject teacher is only allowed to teach the subject of his major either in junior high school, senior high school or senior vocational school, while a class teacher is only permitted to teach at primary school. All of these are meant to empower teachers according to their competence and to maintain the quality of Indonesian education. Similarly, FGSECU also prepares the graduates to teach at both primary and secondary education.

Concerning the fourth objective—problems in running the pre-service teacher training programs, it was revealed that the problems occurred in three stages: (1) problems in student recruitment, (2) problems encountered during student study timeline, and (3) problems encountered after student graduation.

In general, both FTTESU and FGSECU encountered problems related to *student recruitment*. FTTESU faces difficulty in picking the most interested and talented candidate from the applicant. For those who are recruited through invitation track, it is difficult to know their actual competence related to the program they choose and their potential to be prospective teachers. It is due to non-test recruitment which was merely based on the record of the students' previous academic achievement. This phenomenon is highlighted in the responses of the interview with the participants as cited below.

...err... what I and other colleagues experienced so far, since the invitation track line was applied in the last four years, it seemed that the input (the students I mean)... was different from the previous students selected through the national test... I felt that ... in general ... their competence was not that good! (Participant 2)

I don't know what matters with most of the students nowadays... they seem okay, but their

academic ability, I felt...somewhat different from the former students. I guess the input was different. I learn that many of them were admitted through invitation track recruitment... I believed that's the cause... compared to some students accepted through the test, those students have lower ability in general... May be I'm wrong...but that's what I felt...sorry... (Participant 4)

In many cases, their academic achievement was weaker than those selected through university entrance test (joint selection entrance to state university (SBMPTN) and local entrance test (USM). Similarly, FGSECU also encounters difficulty in selecting most appropriate prospective students who apply to study at the faculty. Since all students are from non-teaching background, it was not easy to select candidate whose main interest in teaching profession. They may be competent in their majors but lack of knowledge and skills about pedagogy. Moreover, they come from many disciplines while the programs offered are limited. As a result, not every candidate students' expectation can be met, as mentioned by one of the participants below.

You know... preparing pre-service teachers in a year program is not that easy to carry out. They... come from various disciplines, while not all of what they require is provided in this teacher education program. Sometimes they took a program that is not in line with their previous education background (Participant 7)

... err... another difficulty we have related to candidate students' interest and talent. At the beginning it is commonly difficult to find out whether have such an interest and talent for becoming teachers... we sometimes think that they choose to continue to this program because they did not find a job related to their majors so that they decided to become teachers... may be I'm wrong but... that's what I am thinking... (Participant 6)

The problems encountered by the two faculties do not end in the student recruitment only. The two faculties also encountered *problems related to process of educating, training, and preparing* student during their study timeline. FTTESU commonly encountered problem related to students' stable motivation during four-year study. There are usually up and down in students' motivation as young adults.

In addition, applying consecutive curriculum results in the sequence of subjects students have to take. Offering both professional subjects and pedagogical subjects during the four-year program divides the students' focus to both directions. On the one side they have not mastered the content knowledge of their majors, on the other side they have to learn how to teach those contents to students. This is certainly not easy to manage by students. These facts are admitted by some participants in the interview, as cited below.

What I saw, often students' motivation drops in the middle of the program, may be they are tired or bored, but when it comes to the end of their study usually they were motivated again. I think it's a four-year program where they have to learn many subjects and doing teaching practice concurrently...(Participant 4)

... based on my experience in teaching and guiding students doing practice, ... not easy to make students knowledgeable in their major and skilful in pedagogical matters. You know... at FTTESU and many other teacher educations in Indonesia, students follow consecutive curriculum ... they have to take subjects related to their majors and pedagogical knowledge and skills at relatively the same time during the four-year program... (Participant 2)

Studying and practicing teaching at the same time is difficult to do I think... in one side, students are not skilful yet, but they have to take teaching practice... For me, it's better finishing all the subjects in their major first, then practice teaching afterwards... (Participant 3)

Unlikely, FGSECU experiences problem related to short timeline the students have to take. During this one-year program, there are many pedagogical knowledge and skills that students have to master and practice. On the one side, they need to really master the knowledge which is certainly scaffolded; on the other side, they need to have sufficient practice in learning how to teach well. These two needs require sufficient attention over a period of time in order to make professional teacher, as acknowledged by participant 8 below.

...you know... one year pre-service teacher education is very short actually, during this time, students have to master both pedagogical knowledge and skills, even it is possible but it's very demanding. What I saw, students still lack of having teaching practice... (Participant 8)

The above interview excerpts indicate that it is imperative to give students sufficient time to do teaching practice. By having adequate teaching practice, it would give them a lot of opportunities to experience teaching and doing education tasks as teachers. Hopefully once they already become teachers, they will be professional in doing their job as teachers. Both FTTESU and FGSECU need to consider this need.

After the student *graduation*, problem which is usually encountered by both faculties are the long job-waiting time and number of vacancy available. Although it is relatively not very long time spent for the graduates to get a job in line with their major, not many positions are available for every graduate of FTTESU, especially position of permanent public servant teacher. Some of them tried to grab other possible jobs available such as teachers of English at English courses or Math and Science courses in many supplementary education institutions. Still some others tend to choose other professions apart from being teachers such as working in private sectors like working in a bank, insurance company, department stores, etc. These chosen professions are certainly not related to education sectors where they were educated and trained. Ironically many graduates involve in this business. Similar problems are likely encountered by the graduates of FGSECU, as well. The following interview quotes narrate this phenomenon.

...usually it takes some times for the graduates to get job as a teacher, it's not easy you now! They need to wait ... sometimes years to get a permanent job as a teacher in a school...due to so many pre-service teachers graduated from other teacher education institutions queuing for similar job... (Participant 3)

... what we learn from our graduates, err... they sometimes cannot stand for waiting for jobs once they graduated...so they just took whatever available from the market... though not related to their educational background, such jobs as working in a bank, insurance company, department stores, or even at

automobile dealers as marketing sales ... (Participant 4)

... I think in many places, teacher education may face similar problem... dealing with graduates, like here in our university, it's not quite easy to get a job as a teacher directly after graduation...errr...they usually have to wait months or years to get a job as permanent teachers, in the meantime, they usually get some temporary jobs...not related to their education or qualification... (Participant 6)

The above excerpts of interview data reveal that both teacher education institutions are likely to encounter problems related to the graduates' opportunity in finding for the jobs after graduation. Although the percentage of the graduates' long waiting time for employment is not that many but it happens. This certainly needs the efforts from the two institutions to take further plan in managing schooling at the teacher education programs.

5 CONCLUSIONS

There are some conclusions that can be drawn from the study. Firstly, both FTTESU and FGSECU apply different recruitment methods in accepting their prospective students by considering minimum qualification required, recruitment process, entrance test, and terms and conditions of acceptance. Secondly, the two faculties also run the pre-service training program differently in terms of period of study, number of credits required, kind of curriculum applied, level of curriculum, lecturer qualification, student grade point average, and grading system of subjects. Thirdly, the graduates of both faculties have the qualification to become teachers at both the primary education (kindergarten and primary school) and secondary education (junior and senior high school as well as vocational school). Lastly, both FTTESU and FGSECU encounter problems in running the pre-service teacher training program. The problems vary from student recruitment, process of educating, training, and preparing student during their study timeline, and problem related to long job-waiting time and number of vacancy provided.

Since the two faculties are teacher education institutions which deal with the provision of prospective teachers. Certainly there are some similarities and differences in terms of policy and the implementation of the program. Therefore it is worth learning the typical characteristics of each. One could

learn from the expertise of the other or vice versa. Therefore, each could benefit from the other.

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