

TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND TEACHER ADMINISTRATION: A COMPARISON BETWEEN VIETNAM AND NEW ZEALAND IN THE CURRENT PERIOD - ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS

Tran Thi Ngoc Yen

Department of Foreign Languages, Vinh University

Received on 22/11/2017, accepted for publication on 21/4/2018

Abstract: Teacher education programs play a crucial role in the educational system of a country. This paper describes the teacher education programs offered by a university in New Zealand (NZ) and a university in Vietnam (VN) from the comparative perspective. The description focuses on such issues as learning outcomes, admission criteria, course selection, practicum periods, management, and teacher qualifications. A comparison between the teacher administration system of Vietnam and that of New Zealand is also presented.

1. Overview

There are two school levels in NZ: Primary schools for children from 5 to 12 and Secondary schools for teenagers from 13 to 17/18. According to the NZ law, all children must go to school from 6 to 16 years of age. Most of them begin at 5 and many also go to early childhood education centers such as kindergartens before the age of 5. After leaving school students may go on to a university, polytechnic or college of education. Most NZ schools are state schools and some are private schools.

There are three school levels in VN: Primary schools for children from 6 to 11, Secondary schools for teenager from 11 to 15 and High schools for teenagers from 15 to 18. According to the VN education law, children must go to school from 5 to 15 years of age. Most children in VN begin Primary school at 6 and many go to kindergartens from the age of 3. Like students in NZ, after leaving school, students in VN may go on to a university, polytechnic or college. There are organizations responsible for different duties in both countries' educational systems. As it can be seen from Table 1,

NZ does not have the so-called DOET (Department of Education and Training) as Vietnam does. The NZ Qualifications Authority, which administers national exams and testing, do not belong to the MoE. This equivalent organization in VN is one part of the MOET. While NZ has the Board of Trustees, which is in charge of setting up policy for the school, recruiting and paying teachers (using money from the MoE), the VN MOET and DOETs take care of these duties. Teachers in NZ may have more chances to voice their opinion as they can resort to the Teacher Union, which negotiates with the MoE the pay and conditions of work. In VN, the pay, if ever negotiable, can only be done with the Ministry of Finance and The National Assembly. In addition, the Education Council in NZ plays an independent role from the MoE. This organization issues and renews teachers' certificate, gives advice to schools based on their evaluation of the school and promotes the teaching profession all over the country. It can therefore be suggested that the VN MOET and DOETs scatter their power over a wider range of angles whereas the NZ educational organizations are more independent from each other.

Table 1: Important organizations in NZ educational system

Name of organizations	Duties
The Ministry of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gives advice to the Minister of Education - Owns most of the schools and their grounds - Provides funding to the schools - Develops curriculum
Board of Trustees Local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sets policy for the school - Employs the teachers - Pay the teacher using the money from the MoE
Teacher Unions National level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negotiates with the MoE the pay and conditions of work for teachers
NZ Qualifications Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-ordinates and monitors qualifications - Sets and organizes national examinations - Monitors the quality of qualifications
Education Review Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluates and reports on all schools and early childhood centers - Visits each school 2-3 years and reports on the school
NZ Teachers Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Registers teachers as members
Education Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluates and gives advice to schools - Certifies teachers - Issues and renews the teacher license

2. Teacher education programs

The NZ MoE focuses on *‘building a world-leading education system that provides all New Zealanders with the knowledge, skills and values to be successful citizens in the 21st century’* (NZ MoE). In order to fulfill this mission, they have set up regulations that nurture the teaching practice and professional development at institutions across different levels. There are certain requirements that people have to meet if they want to work as a teacher at secondary schools in NZ.

Similarly, the VN MOET has recently paid attention to the improvement of teaching quality at secondary and high schools. One of the strategies that have been implemented is to provide in-service courses to teachers and upgrade teacher education programs at universities. This

section presents a summary of teacher education programs at a university in NZ and a university in VN, regarding admission criteria for teacher education programs, syllabus and requirements, teaching experience, the staff and administrators.

Admission

It can be seen from Table 2 that NZ and VN own different systems of teacher education. While NZ requires that people obtain a Bachelor degree before applying for a teacher education program, VN integrate the teacher education program into the Bachelor degree program. NZ does not permit people with a criminal record to pursuit the teaching profession and requires references. Many schools also conduct interviews with applicants. In short, VN seems to have a looser admission system for teacher education.

Table 2: Admission requirements for teacher training programs in NZ and VN

Requirements	NZ	VN
Bachelor degree	Yes	N/A
Interview	Yes	No
Math test	Yes	Yes
Literacy test	Yes	Yes
Clear record	Yes	No
References	Yes	No

Courses

A scrutiny into the teacher education programs at different universities in NZ showed that most teacher education programs last one year. Victoria University of Wellington, for example, provides one-year graduate diploma of teaching, which requires students to complete 155 points from eight courses (See Table 3). The program gives a grounding in the principles and theories of teaching and learning, human development and curriculum studies in secondary school subjects. Vinh University in VN, for instance, used to provide courses that are taught throughout the four-year undergraduate degree program.

It seems that the two universities follow similar program structures with courses focusing on general issues in

teaching and courses focusing on issues related to teaching the subject in question. Both universities require two periods of teaching practice. The NZ university, however, requires candidates to follow a course on the Maori culture which shows that the NZ government is concerned with tradition preservation. Additionally, Victoria University’s curriculum contains courses that deal with specific areas of teaching while Vinh University’s curriculum contains courses that deal with broader topics. The NZ university uses point (equal to 10 hours) as the unit of learning and the VN university uses credit (equal to 15,5 hours of classroom time, or 25-27,5 hours of practice). Apparently the NZ university requires students to spend more hours on teacher education courses than the VN university (1500 hours compared to 625-880 hours).

Table 3: Typical teacher education programs at two universities in NZ and VN

Courses at Victoria University, NZ	Courses at Vinh University, VN
The learner in context	Theoretical pedagogy
The teacher in context	Psychology
Matauranga Maori in education	Subject teaching methodology
Teaching models and strategies	Subject related course
Selected course (related to the subject)	Subject related course
Selected course	Subject related course
Selected course	Subject related course
Selected course	Subject related course
Teaching Practice 1	Teaching Practice 1
Teaching Practice 2	Teaching Practice 2
Total: 155 points	Total: 25-32 credits

Teaching experience

Both universities stress the importance of practice by requiring candidates to fulfill two periods of teaching experience. For NZ, there are

two periods of seven weeks and for VN, the first period lasts one month and the other lasts two months. They are a compulsory component of all teacher education programs at both universities.

Table 4: Cooperation between university, school and students during teaching practice in NZ and VN

Tasks	VN	NZ
Students write Teaching Experience Log	Yes	Yes
Students write Teaching Experience Summary	Yes	Yes
Students fill in the Teaching Experience Cover Sheet	No	Yes
Students fill in the Summary of Associate Teacher and Visiting Lecturers Assessment	No	Yes
Students fills in the Information Sheet for Visiting Lecturers	No	Yes
Students write the Interim Report	No	Yes
Students write Observation of Associate Teacher	No	Yes
Students design lesson plans	Yes	Yes
Associate teacher and visiting lecturer write reports	Yes	Yes
Associate teacher assesses students' teaching	Yes	Yes
Associate teacher/School gives students grades	Yes	No

During the teaching experience time, student teachers observe classes and get help from qualified teachers at the school. 'Learning alongside qualified teachers allows students to see how theory and practice interlink' (VUW). Most students begin with planning parts of a lesson, one entire lesson, then proceed with one week plan, one month plan and so forth. The NZ student teachers receive assessment from both the university and the school for both periods while the VN student teachers received assessment from the university for the first period and from the school for the second period. During and at the end of each period, student teachers in NZ have to write more reports and it seems that the university and school in NZ are in a tighter cooperation. Table 4 illustrates what the NZ and VN universities, schools and students do in the teaching experience time.

Management and lecturer qualifications

It is mandatory that all lecturers who give courses in the teacher education programs in NZ have previously taught at secondary schools and own a doctorate degree. On the contrary, most lecturers at university in VN, including the ones who teach teacher education programs, have not taught at secondary school. This is probably the biggest difference between the two systems in terms of teaching faculty qualifications.

A typical education school in NZ has a head of school, a program director, who takes care of all the courses, a teaching experience office, which organizes placements for student teachers in suitable schools, and lecturers.

3. Teacher administration

In order to become a teacher, after

graduating from the diploma course in education, graduates have to apply for a practicing certificate, which allows them to be a provisional teacher. After two years of practicing, they can apply for the full practicing certificate if they meet the following criteria:

- be employed in a teaching position of at least 0.5 Full Time Teacher Equivalent;
- teach in a continuous position (teaching of less than six weeks is not considered);
- be employed as a teacher - not a teacher aide or a volunteer worker - in the general education system;
- participate in an induction program being mentored and supported by a fully certificated mentor teacher for at least two years;
- hold a current practicing certificate;
- have completed satisfactory recent teaching experience.

Once a teacher is fully certificated teacher, s/he needs to renew the certificate once in every three years. Teachers are eligible to maintain full certificate if they:

- are of good character and fit to be a teacher;
- have completed satisfactory professional development within the last three years;
- have completed satisfactory recent teaching service;
- have been meaningfully assessed against and have met the *Standards for the Teaching Profession*;
- have a clear background check.

The Education Council in NZ managing concerns about teachers' conduct and competence and in the most serious cases the Education Council can cancel the teacher's practicing certificate.

In VN, once a teacher has been recruited in a state school, it is almost impossible that s/he is fired or requested to stop teaching. There is no practice of issuing teaching certificate and renewing it. However, teachers at secondary schools have to be under various types of pressure such as conforming to the rules of the MOET, DOET, school, doing research every year, obtaining a certificate in a foreign language, and so forth. It can therefore be concluded that both systems apply strict administration but in different ways.

4. Conclusion

This paper, in the first place, has presented an overview of the school systems in NZ and VN. The most remarkable difference found is that NZ has two levels whereas VN has three levels of schools. Both countries have kindergartens and colleges/universities.

The paper has also discussed the educational organizations in both countries. NZ and VN both have the MoE/MOET, which governs the educational system at the national level. However, NZ do not have such organizations as provincial and city DOETs. Instead, NZ has independent bodies, two of which are the Education Council, which manages teacher registration, school quality and concerns about teacher conduct and competence, and the NZ Qualifications Authority, which is in charge of exams and testing. These bodies are part of the VN MOET. Teachers in NZ can join the Teacher Unions, one of which is for primary and early childhood teachers and the other is for secondary teachers. The union is

responsible for negotiating with the MoE the pay and working conditions for all teachers in the country.

Another topic that has been addressed in this paper is the teacher education programs in NZ and VN. While NZ follows the 1 plus 1 approach, VN follows the 2 in 1 approach. A person in NZ has to hold a BA degree before s/he can apply for a teacher education program, but people in VN can apply for a BA degree in teaching right after they finish high school. A comparison between a program of a university in NZ and that of a university in VN showed that the NZ programs tend to focus on theories and practice of learning and teaching in general whereas the VN programs tend to specify those in subject related courses. The NZ programs also include more

courses on the subject curriculum at secondary school than the VN programs.

Last but not least, the teacher administration in both countries has been described. It has been suggested that NZ and VN administration systems are strict in different ways. People in NZ have to be provisional teachers before they can apply for a full practicing certificate, which has to be renewed once in every three years. It can be concluded that the two countries follow different approaches in educating and administering teachers. While VN has a long way to go to reach the education quality rank that NZ has gained, there is light throughout this way as the VN MOET and Pedagogy universities have been initiating action plans on teacher education programs and educational administration.

***Acknowledgements:** I would like to thank Dr. Carolyn Tait, Head of the Education School, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, for providing most of the information presented in this paper.*

REFERENCES

- [1] Vinh University, *Chương trình giáo dục đại học hệ chính quy theo hệ thống tín chỉ*, Vinh University Press, 2005.
- [2] Vinh University (in draft), *Khung chương trình đào tạo đại học hệ chính quy tiếp cận CDIO*.
- [3] <http://www.educationcouncil.org.nz>
- [4] <http://www.education.govt.nz>
- [5] <http://esolonline.tki.org.nz/ESOL-Online>.
- [6] <http://www.victoria.ac.nz>

TÓM TẮT

CHƯƠNG TRÌNH ĐÀO TẠO VÀ CÔNG TÁC QUẢN LÝ GIÁO VIÊN SO SÁNH GIỮA VIỆT NAM VÀ NEW ZEALAND

Bài viết này giới thiệu chương trình đào tạo và công tác quản lý giáo viên phổ thông ở New Zealand dưới góc nhìn so sánh với chương trình đào tạo và công tác quản lý giáo viên phổ thông ở Việt Nam: Các yếu tố trong chương trình đào tạo như chuẩn đầu ra, số giờ học, số học phần, các điều kiện cần, các đợt thực tập, đội ngũ giảng viên và đội ngũ quản lý được miêu tả và phân tích cụ thể. Mặt khác, bài viết cũng trình bày các hình thức quản lý giáo viên phổ thông, các yêu cầu về phát triển chuyên môn nghiệp vụ và hệ thống quản lý giáo dục nói chung của New Zealand.