

Issues on Quality Assurances of Pre-service Teacher Education

IWATA, Yasuyuki

Professor, Deputy President, Tokyo Gakugei University (TGU)

Coordinator, the Research Group 1, ICUE

1. Progress of RG1 from the Beginning

In the international collaborative research groups of International Consortium of University of Education in East Asia (ICUE), this group (RG1) aims to consider about the trends on quality assurances of pre-service teacher education. At the beginning of RG1's research activities, the coordinator has shown two issues as (a) policies about quality assurances of pre-service teacher education among East Asian area, and (b) what each university do (or will do) as its quality assurance for prospective teachers, then asked to 'core member' of each universities for sending materials concerning on the two issues above (on June-July, 2012 by e-mail). At this point, the coordinator has got valuable materials from five universities as follows alphabetically.

Fukuoka University of Education (FUE)

- Research report on the assessment for teacher education program

Nanjing Normal University (NNU)

- About curriculum reform and quality assurance in NNU

Nara University of Education (NUE)

- Assessment Guidebook for professional graduate school of education

National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU)

- 1) Trends on quality assurances for teachers in Taiwan
- 2) About quality assurances in NTNU

Northeast Normal University (NENU)

- 1) National Statistics about teacher and teacher education (2010, MOE)
- 2) Professional Standard of Teachers (2012, MOE)
- 3) Abstracts, the meeting for sharing experiences of curriculum reform of teacher education (June 2012 at Changchun)

Though these materials show quite important things what universities do as their quality assurance fore teacher education, there are nothing from Korea nor Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). So it is still not enough to consider concretely about quality assurances for pre-service teacher education among East-Asian areas as a whole.

In this report, the coordinator would like to overview on pre-service teacher education among East Asian area, then show some issues and points of arguments for

future discussion.

2. Outline of 'Quality Assurances of Pre-service Teacher Education' in East-Asia

2-1. Aspects on the Policies of Quality Assurance for Teacher Education

'Quality Assurances' or 'Quality Control' about teacher education has been becoming more and more crucial among governmental policies. This issue may be due to popular trends of 'Open System' for educating prospective teachers among East Asian areas. In these areas, since not only higher education institutes focused on pre-service teacher education (such as 'Normal Universities' or 'Universities of Education'), but also diverse institutes in general can provide pre-service teacher education, rich human resources from various backgrounds can enrol as school teachers. Thus nation-wide policies for 'Quality Assurances' or 'Quality Control' for prospective teachers are needed for continuous management of the public education system and trust for teachers from people. It seems that three types of 'Quality Assurances' are as follows. More than one type is introduced simultaneously among most of the areas.

(A) Direct control for new teachers

National examination by government, setting up the professional standard, etc.

(B) Management plan for pre-service teacher education programme

Standards of teacher education programme, curriculum models, certification for programme, etc.

(C) Control against teacher education providers

Control of capacity and budgets, certification/accreditation system for teacher education providers, etc.

Though (A) has not been introduced in Japan, Taiwan shows an example in East Asian areas of governmental examination for a relatively long time. In Taiwan, prospective teachers have to pass the governmental examination after they have finished required teacher training courses in universities, then they get teachers' certificate and some of them will try screening for employment in each prefectural level. In mainland China, nation-wide examination for teachers' certificate has been introduced from 2011 to improve the plural system of 'Teacher Training Courses' (graduates get teachers' certificate) and other 'Non-teacher Training Courses'. A little different example can be shown in HKSAR that induction scheme¹ for new teachers has been set up, since HKSAR has several kinds of ways for pre-service teacher education. 'Professional Standards of Teachers' in mainland China also has a meaning of setting up a way to control teachers' quality from various academic basis – less than Bachelor, Bachelor, Master, and so on.

Almost all the areas have (B). Among higher education institutes, pre-service

teacher education providers have to meet special requirement for programme, such as so-called 'Approved Course System' in Japan. There are some examples that governments set up guidelines for not only external matters but also for curriculum contents. In mainland China, 'Curriculum Standards for Teacher Education' has been set up by the Ministry of Education, and then each teacher education providers are setting up their own curricula in detail. In Japan, as shown later, Japanese Association of Universities of Education (JAUE) has considered about the curriculum model for pre-service teacher education.

Accreditation systems in the US are typical one of (C). Professional groups for teacher education make standards for teacher education provides voluntary, and they demonstrate the quality of each institute. Among most of the States in the US, the accreditation system has a close relationship with approved course system by State government. Among East Asian areas, Korea shows an only example of governmental control by Korean Education Development Institute (KEDI) for teacher education providers. KEDI's control for capacity and budget are mainly driven by the government. However, other areas have no policies of (C), but partial ones in Japan and HKSAR.

2-2. Quality Assurances for Pre-service Teacher Education: in Japanese Case

In Japan, recent policies for quality assurances for pre-service teacher education are as follows.

At the beginning of 21st century, 'Curriculum Model' for teacher education has been required, as a way of solution for confusion of various teacher educations by many universities. JAUE has made a research about teacher education curricula, then published its final report on 2004, which recommends to make up teacher education curricula with the lap between 'experiences' at schools and the 'reflections' as its core. However, among about 600 universities in Japan providing teacher education under the 'Open System', only a few of them have reformed their curricula along JAUE report. On the other hand, JAUE report has made an influence upon 'Curriculum Standard for Teacher Education Curricula' in China.

Then, under the neo-liberalistic 'deregulation' policies of Prime Minister KOIZUMI Jun-ichiro from 2001, so-called 'control at the exit' has been emphasized as a way to make quality assurances for teacher education. In other words, prospective teachers have to make clear about their competencies so-called 'minimum knowledge and skills required for new teacher' when they finish their teacher education courses in universities. Typical example is shown on the new subject (from 2010 students) 'Seminar for Practical Teacher', in which each university qualifies the 'minimum knowledge and skills required for new teacher'

In addition, professional graduate schools for education (established after 2008) are obliged to pass the certification every five years, as a kind of professional schools in Japan. However, this is not so popular in Japan

As shown above, policies for quality assurances of pre-service teacher education have so many variation and diversity, though few of them are effective. Since many institutes are providing teacher education under the 'Open System', it is difficult to settle solid criteria for teachers' knowledge and skills for Japanese teachers. A report "On the policies for developing teachers' total competency throughout the teachers' career" by Central Council of Educationⁱⁱ on August 28th 2012 includes one independent chapter for 'Quality Assurances of Teacher Training Courses' and shows some policy ideas. However, it contains no new ideas. For instance, introduction of national examination for teachers' certificate is only one of the 'future issues' in the report.

3. Points of Argument & Discussion

At this point, the coordinator would like to show some points of arguments as crucial issues for 'Quality Assurances' research project by ICUE as below.

What is the 'Quality'? may be the first issue. In previous arguments about quality assurances for teacher education among East Asian areas, teachers' competency is not limited to their knowledge and skills (or wisdom) but humanistic factors are also required – such as motivation for leading pupils and students, teachers' identities, behaviours and so on. The latter ones are not so adoptive with the aims of higher education in general as other ones. Concerning on this matter, it is important to pay attention to the difference between elementary school teachers who teach all subjects (as in Japan, Korea and Taiwan) and those who teach only specialized subject (as in mainland China and HKSAR).

How 'Quality' should be shown? is the second issue to be consider. Highly itemized criteria can be clear, but we cannot stop being afraid that too many manuals might spoil teachers who can make autonomous thought and decision. On the other hand, only a general guideline may be ineffective.

Who are responsible for 'Quality Assurances'? as the third issue can be led from the way of presenting criteria. It is crucial to consider about the conflict between government (who sets up the condition of public education through recruiting teachers with high talent) and universities (who actually provide 'unique' teacher education each other). This issue necessarily concerns to the standing points of researchers who work as teacher educators.

There has been a conflict with long history between 'Academic-oriented' and 'Practical-oriented' on teacher education in universities. Now it is a chance to conquer the conflict and consider across the border: What should future teachers, future teacher educators, and teacher education providers do?

ⁱ ACTEQ(in HKSAR), 'Teacher Induction Scheme'
http://www.edb.gov.hk/FileManager/EN/Content_2227/pamphlet-eng-final.pdf

ⁱⁱ http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/shingi/chukyo/chukyo0/toushin/1325092.htm