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Evaluation of the Field Training Program in the Classroom Teacher Department at Yarmouk University from the Perspective of Cooperating Teachers

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Research Article

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Abstract

Background/purpose. Field training is a cornerstone in preparing future teachers, as it bridges theoretical knowledge with real classroom practice. This study aimed to evaluate the level of the field training program in the Classroom Teacher Department at Yarmouk University from the perspective of cooperating teachers. It also examined whether teachers' evaluations varied by school type (public or private).

Materials/methods. A stratified random sample was drawn from cooperating teachers in public and private schools. The study tool, an electronic questionnaire, was distributed to both groups, with a total of 260 respondents (136 from public schools and 124 from private schools). The instrument consisted of 15 items covering five domains: the academic supervisor, the cooperating teacher, the school principal, the cooperating institution, and the program procedures. Validity and reliability were verified prior to administration.

Results. The findings showed that the overall level of the field training program was rated as moderate by cooperating teachers. Significant statistical differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) were found in responses across the total scale and all domains, attributed to the school type variable, in favor of cooperating teachers from private schools.

Conclusion. The study concluded that the program is moderately effective but requires further development, particularly in public schools, to achieve more consistent and balanced training outcomes.

1. Introduction

Preparing and training teachers to meet the demands of the profession in line with contemporary educational requirements is a top priority for universities, as teachers represent the cornerstone of the educational process and the primary implementers of its objectives. They play a vital role in shaping students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes in ways that enable them to face various learning challenges effectively. This importance is further amplified for elementary school teachers, given the foundational role of this stage in shaping children's learning and development (Al-Hajj & Al-Hamidiyah, 2022). Accordingly, teacher preparation programs must ensure that future teachers acquire pedagogical and professional competencies that align with modern educational reforms.

Field training provides student teachers with the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in real-life classroom settings under the guidance of experienced educators. It enables them to develop instructional skills, classroom management strategies, and a practical understanding of teaching–learning processes (Abu Namrah & Ghanem, 2007). Leko et al. (2012) emphasized that field training represents the applied dimension of teacher preparation, through which future teachers gain authentic professional experience. Thus, field training serves as a crucial bridge between theoretical study and practical implementation in schools.

The Classroom Teacher specialization is particularly important because of the responsibility placed on teachers in the early grades, where foundational learning is established. Colleges of education are responsible for preparing qualified teachers capable of supporting students' academic and developmental needs (Al-Kassab et al., 2021). In this regard, field training plays a major role in shaping teachers' professional identity and preparing them for the diverse demands of classroom practice.

Although field training aims to equip student teachers with essential teaching skills and professional readiness, its effectiveness depends on the quality of program design, supervision, and implementation. A review of relevant literature shows recurring challenges related to the gap between theoretical preparation and practical application, highlighting the importance of evaluating training programs from the perspective of cooperating teachers who directly supervise trainees in schools.

Research Gap and Rationale:

Existing studies have predominantly explored field training from the perspectives of student teachers or university supervisors, while paying limited attention to cooperating teachers who observe trainees' performance in authentic educational contexts. This gap is particularly evident within the Jordanian context, especially in programs preparing classroom teachers. Therefore, this study seeks to address this gap by evaluating cooperating teachers' perspectives on the field training program at Yarmouk University.

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the level of the field training program in the Classroom Teacher Department at Yarmouk University from the perspective of cooperating teachers.

Research Questions:

1. What is the level of the field training program for student teachers in the Classroom Teacher Department at Yarmouk University as perceived by cooperating teachers?

2. Are there statistically significant differences at the level of ($\alpha = 0.05$) in cooperating teachers' evaluations attributed to the type of school (public vs. private)?

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Significance of the Study:

This study provides important insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the field training program from the viewpoint of cooperating teachers. Their evaluations are essential for improving field training processes and guiding future revisions in teacher preparation programs.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Role of Field Training in Teacher Preparation

Field training constitutes a critical component of teacher education, offering student teachers the opportunity to engage with real classroom environments beyond theoretical instruction. According to Saad (2000), field training is "that aspect of teacher preparation programs which focuses on practical application, allowing student teachers to implement the concepts, principles, and educational theories they have studied in an applied, behavioral manner." The philosophy of field training emphasizes the gradual development of the trainee's personal teaching style and professional identity, allowing them to adapt and respond effectively to classroom dynamics (Al-Murai'i, 2007; Abdullah, 2004).

Field training bridges the gap between university-based theoretical preparation and the practical demands of the classroom, ensuring that student teachers can apply educational concepts effectively.

The main objectives of field training include: understanding the roles of cooperating teachers, becoming familiar with students' behaviors, applying theoretical knowledge in practice, developing lesson plans that account for individual differences, and acquiring professional, ethical, and collaborative skills (Morewood & Condo, 2012). These objectives collectively aim to produce teachers capable of reflective practice, creative thinking, and effective classroom management, aligning with contemporary educational standards.

2.2. Responsibilities and Influence of Cooperating Teachers

The success of field training largely depends on cooperating teachers, who serve as mentors and role models for student teachers. Their responsibilities include encouraging participation in school activities, guiding classroom management, providing constructive feedback, and fostering creative and critical thinking skills (Abdullah, 2004; Al-Momani & Dlalah, 2018).

Cooperating teachers also facilitate the practical application of formative assessment strategies, helping trainees evaluate and improve instructional practices, thereby strengthening the connection between theoretical knowledge and classroom practice (Al-Momani, 2019; Dlalah, 2018).

2.3. Previous Studies in the Arab Context

Several studies have examined field training in Arab countries. Abu Ria & Al-Khmaisah (2010) evaluated the program at Hail University from the perspectives of school principals, cooperating teachers, and student teachers, highlighting the effectiveness of administrative structures and the value of cooperating teachers. Almakanin et al. (2018) investigated the level of support provided by cooperating teachers in special education programs in Jordan, finding moderate levels of support and gender-related differences. Al-Dosari (2020) assessed the effectiveness of cooperating schools from the perspective of student teachers at King Saud University, revealing high overall effectiveness but identifying differences across gender and specialization. These studies emphasize that cooperating teachers play a central role in practical teacher training, and their evaluations provide essential insights for improving program quality and implementation.

Studies by Cacers (2015), Alfassafah & Al-Toubi (2015), and Amorim & Ribeiro-Silva (2024) highlighted the essential roles of cooperating teachers in mentoring, modeling professional behavior,

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guiding lesson planning, and shaping professional identity. These studies underline the importance of structured mentorship, continuous professional development, and effective collaboration between universities and schools to ensure high-quality teacher preparation programs.

2.4. International Perspectives on Field Training

International research corroborates the significance of cooperating teachers in teacher education. Genelyn et al. (2024) demonstrated that cooperating teachers play a critical role in creating supportive learning environments and modeling effective communication and collaboration. Rasheed (2025) highlighted the importance of field training in bridging theory and practice, enhancing reflective teaching practices, and promoting professional competency development among pre-service teachers. These findings align with Arab studies, confirming that the active engagement of cooperating teachers is crucial for both theoretical and practical teacher preparation.

2.5. Gaps in Literature and Rationale for the Current Study

Despite substantial research on field training, most studies focus primarily on student teachers' perspectives. Few have examined the program from the viewpoint of cooperating teachers, whose insights are crucial for program improvement and alignment with classroom needs. In the Jordanian context, this gap is particularly evident. The current study addresses this gap by evaluating the field training program in the Classroom Teacher Department at Yarmouk University from the perspective of cooperating teachers, providing actionable insights for program development and the preparation of future teachers.

3. Methodology

This section presents the study methodology, including the research design, study population, sample, research instrument, procedures for verifying validity and reliability, data collection procedures, and statistical methods used for data analysis. The methodology emphasizes a descriptive–inferential approach, acknowledging that t-tests introduce inferential aspects rather than purely descriptive design.

3.1. Research Design

The study employed a descriptive–analytical research design using a questionnaire to collect quantitative data. Although primarily descriptive, the use of statistical tests (t-test) allows for inferential analysis to examine differences based on school type. This approach aligns with previous studies in the Arab context (Almakanin et al., 2018; Al-Dosari, 2020) and ensures that both descriptive and inferential insights are captured.

3.2. Study Population

The study population consisted of all cooperating female teachers in public and private schools during the second semester of the 2024–2025 academic year, totaling 748 teachers. The inclusion criteria focused on teachers who actively supervise student teachers in the field training program, ensuring that their evaluations reflect practical observations rather than theoretical expectations.

3.3. Study Sample

A stratified random sample was selected from the study population. Electronic links to the research instrument were sent to public and private schools.

The stratification was based on school type (public vs. private) to ensure proportional representation in the sample.

The final sample consisted of:

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- 136 cooperating female teachers from public schools
- 124 cooperating female teachers from private schools

The finite population sampling formula was used to determine the sample size, ensuring representativeness within each stratum.

3.4. Research Instrument

The instrument was a questionnaire consisting of several items distributed across five domains of field training:

1. Academic supervisor
2. Cooperating teacher
3. School principal/manager
4. The cooperating institution
5. Field training program procedures

The questionnaire was developed based on previous studies (Almakanin et al., 2018; Al-Dosari, 2020) and tailored to the Jordanian context. It aimed to evaluate the level of field training for basic stage student teachers from the cooperating teachers' perspective.

Validity of the Instrument

To verify validity, the instrument was reviewed by a committee of experts in the field. Experts assessed:

- Relevance of each item to its intended domain
- Suitability of items for measuring the construct
- Alignment of semi-open questions with objectives
- Recommendations for modification

After expert review, 80% agreement was reached, and the instrument was finalized with 15 items that reflect all domains.

Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability was tested using a pilot sample from the same population but outside the main study sample. The questionnaire was administered twice, two weeks apart, and Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated. Internal consistency was verified using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding 0.83, indicating high reliability.

3.5. Procedures for Implementing the Instrument

The following steps were taken:

1. Reviewing theoretical literature and previous studies
2. Identifying the study population and sample
3. Developing the research instrument
4. Verifying validity and reliability
5. Administering the instrument to the study sample
6. Organizing data into tables for statistical analysis
7. Analyzing the questionnaire data

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8. Presenting and discussing the study results

These steps ensured a systematic approach from instrument development to data analysis, reflecting both descriptive and inferential components of the study.

3.6. Statistical Methods Used

To answer the research questions, the following statistical analyses were conducted:

- First research question: Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and ranks of responses to evaluate the level of the field training program.
- Second research question: Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and t-test were used to examine differences based on school type (public vs. private).

This combination of descriptive and inferential statistics aligns with the study's objective to assess both general levels and statistically significant differences.

4. Results

This study aimed to evaluate the level of the Field Training Program for student teachers in the Classroom Teacher Department at Yarmouk University from the perspective of cooperating teachers. The results are presented in a narrative structure directly aligned with the research questions, avoiding bullet points and highlighting theoretical implications.

4.1. Results Related to the First Research Question

Research Question 1: What is the level of the Field Training Program for student teachers in the Classroom Teacher Department at Yarmouk University as perceived by cooperating teachers?

Arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated based on cooperating teachers' responses (Table 1).

Table 1. Arithmetic Means and Standard Deviations According to Cooperating Teachers' Responses

#	Item	Mean	SD	Level
1	Field training highlights the vocabulary that the student will study.	4.00	0.78	High
2	Field training reveals problems that hinder effective teaching for students.	3.83	0.93	High
3	Field training highlights weaknesses in the relationship between academic courses and school needs.	3.59	0.91	Moderate
4	Field training helps increase the trainee's personal maturity.	3.57	0.94	Moderate
5	Field training shows the trainee's appropriate interaction with the teaching staff.	3.21	1.04	Moderate
6	Field training clarifies the competencies the trainee possesses in their field.	3.17	1.01	Moderate
7	Field training indicates the suitability of courses in the specialty for the needs of future graduates.	3.14	1.22	Moderate
8	Field training helps increase the trainee's motivation toward the teaching profession.	3.12	1.41	Moderate

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#	Item	Mean	SD	Level
9	Field training demonstrates the trainee's ability to address student problems pedagogically.	3.08	0.81	Moderate
10	Field training shows the suitability of educational facilities for future graduates' requirements.	3.03	1.26	Moderate
11	Field training shows the breadth of general knowledge the trainee possesses in their specialty.	3.02	0.92	Moderate
12	Field training shows the breadth of knowledge the trainee possesses.	2.87	0.94	Moderate
13	Field training highlights the suitability of teaching methods used in courses for school needs.	2.86	1.01	Moderate
14	Field training demonstrates the trainee's ability to participate in school activities.	2.33	0.93	Low
15	Practical training highlights the materials graduates need to perform their future work effectively.	2.30	1.22	Low

Overall Mean: 3.14 | Overall SD: 0.87 | Level: Moderate

The findings indicate that the overall level of the program is moderate (Mean = 3.14, SD = 0.87). The highest-rated item was "Field training highlights the vocabulary that the student will study" (Mean = 4.00, SD = 0.78), reflecting strong attention to academic content. The lowest-rated item was "Practical training highlights the materials graduates need to perform their future work effectively" (Mean = 2.30, SD = 1.22), suggesting limited practical preparedness for future professional duties. These results are consistent with previous studies in the Arab context (Almakanin et al., 2018; Abu Ria & Al-Khmaisah, 2010), which also reported moderate effectiveness of field training programs, with strengths in curriculum-related knowledge and weaknesses in practical application.

4.2. Results Related to the Second Research Question

Research Question 2: Are there statistically significant differences at α = 0.05 between cooperating teachers' evaluations based on school type (public vs. private)?

An Independent Samples t-Test was conducted.

Table 2. Independent Samples T-Test Results by School Type

School Type	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.	Significant at α=0.05
Private	124	58.18	4.10	4.15	0.01	Yes
Public	136	53.10	6.13			

The results indicate statistically significant differences favoring private schools ($t(258) = 4.15$, $p = 0.01 < 0.05$). The mean for private schools was 58.18, while the mean for public schools was 53.10.

This suggests that school type influences perceived program effectiveness, potentially due to greater administrative support, resource availability, and active supervision in private schools. These findings are aligned with Al-Dosari (2020), who highlighted the impact of institutional support on cooperating teachers' evaluations of field training programs.

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4.3. General Interpretation

Overall, the Field Training Program provides a solid academic and professional foundation for student teachers, but practical readiness and application require improvement.

High ratings on content-focused items indicate that cooperating teachers prioritize curriculum knowledge, while lower ratings on practical skills suggest the need for enhanced hands-on training and materials.

The moderate overall rating reinforces the importance of integrating theoretical knowledge with practical experience and highlights areas for program development and alignment with contemporary educational standards.

5. Discussion

The current study aimed to evaluate the level of the Field Training Program for student teachers in the Classroom Teacher Department at Yarmouk University from the perspective of cooperating teachers. The discussion integrates the study's findings with prior literature and theoretical frameworks, highlighting both consistencies and areas for improvement.

5.1. Discussion of Results Related to the Level of the Field Training Program

The overall level of the program was moderate (Mean = 3.14, SD = 0.87), indicating that while essential aspects are adequately addressed, there is room for improvement in practical preparedness.

The highest-rated item, related to highlighting the academic vocabulary for students, reflects cooperating teachers' emphasis on curriculum knowledge, particularly in private schools where oversight is intensive.

The lowest-rated item, concerning practical materials for future work, indicates a gap in hands-on training and preparation for real-world teaching responsibilities.

These findings align with Almakanin et al. (2018) and Abu Ria & Al-Khmaisah (2010), who reported moderate effectiveness of field training programs in the Arab context, emphasizing strengths in academic content delivery but weaknesses in practical readiness.

Additionally, items related to professional and personal skills, such as trainee interaction with staff, mastery of competencies, and participation in school activities, were rated moderately, suggesting that the integration of theory with practice could be further strengthened.

These results support the conclusions of Al-Dosari (2020), who stressed the need for field training programs to balance theoretical knowledge and practical experience to optimize trainee development.

5.2. Discussion of Differences by School Type

The study found statistically significant differences in program evaluation based on school type, favoring private schools. This suggests that institutional factors, such as administrative support, resource availability, and structured supervision, directly influence the effectiveness of field training.

Private schools often provide more structured mentorship, continuous supervision, and practical opportunities, which enhance the trainee experience and contribute to higher evaluations. This aligns with Al-Dosari (2020), who indicated that school environment and institutional support are key determinants of cooperating teachers' evaluations.

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The findings underscore the importance of context in teacher training programs and the need for public schools to adopt strategies that enhance support and practical opportunities for trainees, potentially narrowing the gap observed between public and private schools.

5.3. General Interpretation

Overall, the study indicates that the Field Training Program provides a strong academic and professional foundation, but improvements are needed in practical readiness and application.

Cooperating teachers recognize both strengths, such as curriculum-related content and professional guidance, and weaknesses, particularly in providing hands-on experiences and encouraging active participation in school activities.

Enhancing practical training, integrating supervision with real-world teaching challenges, and increasing trainee engagement are essential for improving the effectiveness of field training. These conclusions are consistent with prior research (Almakanin et al., 2018; Abu Ria & Al-Khmaisah, 2010; Al-Dosari, 2020), which emphasizes the moderate effectiveness of field training programs and the need to balance theoretical knowledge with practical skill development.

6. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The overall level of the Field Training Program for student teachers in the Classroom Teacher Department at Yarmouk University, as perceived by cooperating teachers, was moderate (Mean = 3.14, SD = 0.87). This indicates that the program provides a reasonable foundation for student teachers, but improvements are needed, especially in practical training and hands-on experiences.

2. The highest-rated aspect of the program focused on academic content and curriculum-related knowledge, highlighting cooperating teachers' emphasis on ensuring students acquire theoretical foundations. Conversely, the lowest-rated aspect involved practical preparation for graduates to perform future professional tasks effectively, suggesting a need for stronger integration of theory and practice.

3. Statistically significant differences were found in evaluations based on school type, with private school teachers rating the program higher than public school teachers. This underscores the influence of institutional support, available resources, and the quality of supervision on perceived program effectiveness.

4. These findings align with previous research (Almakanin et al., 2018; Abu Ria & Al-Khmaisah, 2010; Al-Dosari, 2020), confirming that field training programs in the Arab context are moderately effective and highlight the need for balanced development of theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

5. Overall, the Field Training Program contributes significantly to developing academic and professional competencies of student teachers. Yet enhancements to practical training, active participation in school activities, and additional support in public schools are recommended to strengthen the program's impact.

7. Suggestion

Based on the study results, the following recommendations are suggested to enhance the effectiveness of the Field Training Program:

1. Enhancing Practical Training: Increase focus on providing student teachers with practical materials, hands-on teaching experiences, and real-world problem-solving tasks to better prepare them for future professional roles.

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2. Strengthening Cooperation with Schools: Promote collaboration between universities and both public and private schools, ensuring cooperating teachers receive guidance and resources to support student teachers efficiently.

3. Professional Development for Cooperating Teachers: Organize regular workshops and professional development programs to enhance mentoring skills, focusing on classroom management, lesson planning, and evaluation strategies.

4. Increasing Field Training Duration: Extend the duration of field training to allow student teachers to gain more comprehensive teaching and school experience, improving readiness for professional careers.

5. Focusing on Active Participation: Encourage student teachers to engage in school activities beyond teaching, such as administrative tasks, student counseling, and extracurricular programs, to develop a broader understanding of school operations.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation: Develop a systematic mechanism to monitor and evaluate the Field Training Program regularly, using feedback from student teachers, cooperating teachers, and school administrators to ensure continuous improvement.

7. Addressing School Type Differences: Provide additional support and resources for student teachers in public schools to bridge gaps in training effectiveness, addressing disparities in supervision, administrative support, and available resources.

Declarations

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Ethical Approval. Ethical procedures for the research, including participants' voluntariness, anonymity, and informed consent, were approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education at Yarmouk University.
Data Availability Statement. The data used in this research is confidential and thus cannot be shared with third parties.

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