



Online Professional Experiences in Teacher Preparation Program: A Preservice Teacher Study

EXPERIENCES PROFESSIONNELLES DANS LE PROGRAMME DE LA PREPARATION DES ENSEIGNANTS EN LIGNE: UNE ETUDE PREALABLE DES ENSEIGNANTS

Prasart Nuangchalerm^{1,*}; Veena Prachagool¹; Patcharee Sriputta¹

¹Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Faculty of Education, Maharakham University Maharakham 44000 Thailand.

*Corresponding author.

Address: Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Faculty of Education, Maharakham University Maharakham 44000 Thailand
Email: prasart.n@msu.ac.th

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Abstract

Teacher preparation is a process of instructional fulfillment in teacher education. This program is widely used in school that need professionalism in terms of networking. Supervisor take their role to support preservice teacher in many expected attributes which school workers should be known and learned in various kind of school contexts. This study aims to investigate the implementation of professional experiences through online reflection in teacher preparation program. The study divided into 3 phases: analyze criteria relevant to professional experience, develop online reflection, implement how online react with preservice teachers. Two hundred and thirty nine preservice teachers in seven majors of Maharakham university, enrolled in Professional Experiences I, academic year 2010 in which provide their expression about professional experiences through online reflection. Data were collected by questionnaire and supporting interview. This study revealed that professional experiences can enable preservice teachers to remain connected to peers and university supervisors. However, it did not reach some preservice teachers who those no need internet and also some criteria relevant to time at online was limited due to lots of responsibilities to do in school hours.

Key words: Professional experiences; Teacher preparation programs; Online practicum, Preservice teacher

Résumé

La préparation des enseignants est un processus d'accomplissement d'enseignement dans la formation des enseignants. Ce programme est largement utilisé dans les écoles qui ont besoin de professionnalisme en matière de réseautage. Superviseur prendre leur rôle de soutien préalable des enseignants dans de nombreux attributs attendus dont les travailleurs scolaires devraient être connues et apprises dans différents types de contextes scolaires. Cette étude vise à étudier la mise en œuvre d'expériences professionnelles à travers la réflexion en ligne dans le programme de préparation des enseignants. L'étude divisée en 3 phases: l'analyse des critères pertinents pour l'expérience professionnelle, développer une réflexion en ligne, mettre en œuvre en ligne comment réagir avec les futurs enseignants. Deux cent trente-neuf futurs enseignants dans sept majors du Maharakham universitaire, inscrits dans des expériences professionnelles, je, l'année académique 2010 en ce qui fournissent leur expression au sujet des expériences professionnelles à travers la réflexion en ligne. Les données ont été recueillies par questionnaire et entretien de soutien. Cette étude a révélé que les expériences professionnelles peuvent permettre futurs enseignants de rester connectés à leurs pairs et des superviseurs universitaires. Cependant, il n'a pas atteint certains futurs enseignants qui sont ces pas besoin d'Internet et aussi quelques critères pertinents en temps à la ligne a été limitée en raison de beaucoup de responsabilités à faire dans les heures d'école.

Mots clés:

Expériences professionnelles; Programmes de préparation des enseignants; Stages en ligne; Préalable des enseignants

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INTRODUCTION

Professional experiences are a foundation in preservice teacher education programs. It will help teacher students decide to solve problem occurring in the classroom, if teaching is the right career choice, providing an opportunity to practice instructional skills prior to student teaching (Hixon and So, 2009). Teacher preparation program need to be explained based on the differences between possibilities. Preservice teacher might want to have learned how to teach best and acts as a role model at the front of classroom. That is, Preservice teachers acquire their proficiency and competence in teaching, instructional strategies, classroom controls, and so on which teachers should be done (Chong and Cheah, 2009). It is impossible for teacher education programs at the right of choices to prepare teachers for all situations. Therefore, it is important that beginning teachers are willing to learn from their experiences in changing circumstances. The professional experiences needs to be developmental in all achievement, not only responsibilities to teach, but also expected attributes should be developed (Nuangchalerm and Prachagool, 2010).

Professional experiences are also typically offered in conjunction with a course as a way of helping preservice teachers take a better understand the conceptual and theoretical knowledge being presented (Hopkins, 1995). The outcomes of professional experiences are concerned teacher educators is the fact that prospective teachers may not be cognitively prepared to benefit from experiences in the school field, especially when they occur early in their education program (Hannah, 1995). The varied experiences of preservice teachers in the school also make it difficult to ensure consistent quality of experiences. They are usually participated in a field of professional experience individually. It can be difficult to hold meaningful discussions when they have not had the same experiences. The ways to solve this problem might want to have consideration in benefit and opportunity is sharing in appropriate tools.

Recently, online professional experience has been used in terms of teacher preparation program. It can be developed and delivered online classes effectively, but the challenges of online professional experience delivery are multiplied (Dell, Hobbs, & Miller, 2008). So that, teacher education is mostly attend to the role of that field experiences may play in helping preservice teachers learn how to effectively integrate technology into their teaching (Evans, 2004; Wentworth, Graham, & Tripp, 2008). Teacher preparation program requires attention to the needs of teacher students who may be isolated from others sharing their interests. Findings of best practices for online delivery can help teacher preparation program to learn how to manipulate and focus online in this era (Johnson, 2007; McElrath & McDowell, 2008). However, online manipulations in professional experiences need to

have more consideration because it differs from traditional teacher preparation.

The faculty members and online administrators in teacher preparation programs could understand and address the many unique challenges that come from offering and administering a teacher preparation program online. It is impossible for teacher education programs to prepare teachers for all situations even world is changed and shaped by disciplines, especially technology role is transforming learning paradigm. This paper This study aims to investigate the implementation of online professional experiences in teacher preparation program through online reflection. Based on believed, it can enable preservice teachers to remain connected to peers and university supervisors. The result could be used to integrate of what teacher preparation program in the future aware and prepare for the best. Previous findings showed that teacher preparation in which online professional experiences might want to have enrichment (Willis and Montes, 2002; Sime and Pristley, 2005; Smarkola, 2008; Efe, 2011; Feghali, Zbib & Hallal, 2011) This study provide appropriate support for preservice teachers to develop their instructional skills, pedagogical strategies, and online reflection as well.

1. METHODOLOGY

The study focused on how to use online professional experience in teacher preparation program. It can be given details of how to develop and use online professional experiences. It can be informed and promoted in teacher education program. In this study, Two hundred and thirty nine preservice teachers in seven majors of Mahasarakham university, enrolled in Professional Experiences I, academic year 2010, Faculty of Education, Mahasarakham university. The stage of study can be divided into 3 stages.

Stage I: Preparing online professional experiences, this stage allowed research team to plan and develop online tools to serve preservice teacher by bridging preservice teacher and allied persons' professional experiences to have rich teaching practicum in what they assigned to work with networking schools. The online tool was decided and uploaded to server which is supported by faculty of education, Mahasarakham university. The site online contained diversity ways of communication among peer, supervisor, and professional experiences and development center. Web board, news feedings, downloadable documents, and important information were that serving them to meet teacher education program.

Stage II: Collecting data through online activities, this stage is performed by 3 months for allowing teacher students to have sharing knowledge and other opinions in professional experiences. During of time study, preservice teachers might want to have access website by generating criterias in professional practices and reflecting how professional experiences change their beliefs in teacher

profession. The questionnaires were sent to all of them at half-year seminar on professional experiences. The researchers collect, code, and analyze data by qualitative analysis.

Twenty items were asked preservice teachers about online professional experiences. The criteria were asked which relevant to personal knowledge. Data were compiled in separate folders for each participant. It uses to conceptualize the data. Some of each case was developed after reading and rereading the data. Then, preservice teacher response to this approach, the data have been defined and interpreted. The level of satisfaction to be consider with Likert's five-point rating scale. Each respondent is asked to rate each item on some response scale. They could rate each item on a 1-5 response scale where; 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = undecided, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree.

Stage III: Analyzing data and reflection, this stage employed descriptive statistics to explain phenomena when preservice teachers meet their role in apprenticeship school. Data were analyzed by mean and standard deviation. Finally, the researcher analyzed collected data by using a computer program, checked the completeness of the data and then obtained data from responses to the questionnaire. Data were recorded; statistic values were calculated and interpreted by using the criteria as below:

| Mean | Interpretation |
|-----------|----------------|
| 4.51-5.00 | Highest |
| 3.51-4.50 | High |
| 2.51-3.50 | Medium |
| 1.51-2.50 | Low |
| 1.00-1.50 | Lowest |

The data was respond and reflected to the professional experiences and development center, Mahasarakham

university for information serving of professional practice. The professional experiences will be fruitful to preservice teachers even though they meet real situation and solve classroom problem by self. However, Faculty of Education tries to prepare e-professional experiences and is interested in online professional practices. The result can be given to educational administrator for making a change of procedure in teacher preparation program as well.

2. RESULT

The result can be shown in Table 1, most of preservice teachers expressed their opinion about online professional experiences at high level of response. They believed that online professional experience can lead students to monitor and update information about teacher professionalism (Mean=4.13, SD=0.72), online professional experience seems to communication are more faster and trendy (Mean=4.12, SD=0.67), online professional experience is easily to communicate between students and professional experiences and development center (Mean=4.10, SD=0.62), online professional experience provides learning sources for teacher professionalism (Mean=4.08, SD=0.68), and online professional experience is suit for field experiences (Mean=4.08, SD=0.66) were as follows. On the other hands, the result indicated that preservice teachers are still believed that online professional experience is very difficult to access and more complexity (Mean=2.94, SD=0.95). This item responded to professional experiences and development center in negative function.

Table 1
Preservice Teachers' Reflection About Online Professional Experiences

| Item | Mean | SD | Level of response |
|--|------|------|-------------------|
| 1. Online professional experience is easily to communicate between students and professional experiences and development center | 4.10 | 0.62 | High |
| 2. Online professional experience is very difficult to access and more complexity | 2.94 | 0.95 | Medium |
| 3. Online professional experience engage students to learn new things and making connection between prior knowledge and new concepts | 3.73 | 0.72 | High |
| 4. Online professional experience stimulate students to have habit of mind to learn in professionalism among school contexts | 3.69 | 0.75 | High |
| 5. Online professional experience does a communication with university supervisor in easily | 3.69 | 0.87 | High |
| 6. Online professional experience seems to communication are more faster and trendy | 4.12 | 0.67 | High |
| 7. Online professional experience helps students to have flexible to prepare lesson plans and learning activities | 3.64 | 0.76 | High |
| 8. Online professional experience reduces students' anxiety with professional experiences | 3.51 | 0.86 | High |
| 9. Online professional experience help students to prepare self becoming teacher professionalism | 3.87 | 0.65 | High |

To be continued

Continued

| Item | Mean | SD | Level of response |
|--|------|------|-------------------|
| 10. Online professional experience can lead students to monitor and update information about teacher professionalism | 4.13 | 0.72 | High |
| 11. Online professional experience allows students to express the opinions as well | 4.02 | 0.72 | High |
| 12. Online professional experience can make communication between students and university supervisor in explicitly | 3.90 | 0.72 | High |
| 13. Questions and queries can be made clearly through online professional experience | 3.82 | 0.73 | High |
| 14. Online professional experience provides learning sources for teacher professionalism | 4.08 | 0.68 | High |
| 15. Online professional experience has diversely of learning resources | 3.95 | 0.70 | High |
| 16. Online professional experience keep in touch with university and faculty members | 4.05 | 0.72 | High |
| 17. Online professional experience makes students to have awareness in teacher professionalism | 3.92 | 0.66 | High |
| 18. Online professional experience presents outcomes of teacher field experiences in many patterns | 3.85 | 0.72 | High |
| 19. Online professional experience provides faster and updated feedback to students | 3.86 | 0.71 | High |
| 20. Online professional experience is suit for school field experiences | 4.08 | 0.66 | High |

The result can be indicated that preservice teachers are mostly accepted professional experiences through online reflection. However, they expressed online professional experience is very difficult to access and more complexity at medium level.

DISCUSSION

Professional experience is a program of study that engages preservice teachers to do what make the best tomorrow teachers. Teacher preparation programs typically need preservice teachers to have course in instructional technology to serve and design to teaching skills and applications. This study implemented online professional experiences according to Evans and Gunter (2004) studied preservice teachers' self-efficacy with respect to their technology proficiency in exposing to a variety of technology tools and applications in their content and school field experiences. Also this study is still recommended preservice teachers felt that they need more technology preparation for future classroom. It is important to adequately train preservice teachers to use educational technology by increasing online professional experiences. When preservice teachers confidence, they becomes more likely to see importance of using technology in classroom activities (Efe, 2011).

In the context of teacher preparation program, online professional experiences need to support cooperated teacher and supervisor in several parts. In addition, the program of study has to support the face-to-face meeting between preservice teacher and allied persons' professional experiences (Feghali, Zbib & Hallal, 2011). It has to provide supervisor more time to focus on

instructional development. In the sense of information access, that is, preservice teachers need supported online facilities. It did not allowed them to have understandable. It is very difficult to access and seems to had more complexity. They expressed their opinions at medium level, in that, faculty of education is preparing e-learning course. The finding provided that preservice teachers had backward positive in online professional experiences in dimension of accessibility. Thus, they were mostly familiar with information technology. This criteria should be discussed and seek ways to develop patterns in terms of online uses at various purposes, especially academic aspects relevant to distance networking schools (Hixon and So, 2009).

Preservice teachers have to develop instructional skills through online professional experiences. The future of teacher preparation tend to employ educational technology and face-to-face meeting in program of study (Efe, 2011). Dell, Hobbs & Miller (2008) provided the way of success in online teacher preparation programs, it must address issues of preservice teacher isolation, the difficulty of ongoing online courses, campus infrastructure that may lack flexibility for meeting online needs, and the challenge in providing preservice teachers with diverse field experiences in their school communities. The result of this study can be used for teacher preparation and online school fields consideration. It should be discussed and take opportunity to integrate in academic development.

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