Role Conflict Between Theoretical Preparation and Practical Training: A Case Study of Faculty members and Students at Tiji Faculty of Education

Haneen Almabrouk Othman Alsayiq

English Department, Faculty of Education Tiji, Zintan University, , Libya
haneen.alsayiq@uoz.edu.ly

صراع الأدوار بين الإعداد النظري والتدريب العملي:
دراسة حالة لأعضاء هيئة التدريس والطلاب بكلية التربية تيجي
حنين المبروك عثمان
قسم اللغة الانجليزية، كلية التربية تيجي، جامعة الزنتان، ليبيا.

Abstract:

This study examines the challenges of integrating theoretical preparation with practical training in Colleges of Education, focusing on the Faculty of Education in Tiji, University of Zintan. Using a descriptive-analytical method, data were collected from 20 faculty members and 33 student teachers through structured questionnaires. Results showed that both groups face difficulties in linking theory and practice, with faculty members reporting higher role conflict (M = 3.70) than students (M = 3.39), a statistically significant difference (p = 0.013). The dominance of theoretical content, limited administrative support, and short practicum periods contribute to this gap. The study recommends curriculum redesign, better supervision, and investment in modern educational laboratories to strengthen the connection between academic and professional preparation.

Keywords: Faculties of Education, Faculty Members, Student teachers, Practicum **(**Practical Training), Role Conflict of Education.

الملخص:

تتناول هذه الدراسة التحديات المرتبطة بدمج الإعداد النظري مع التدريب العملي في كليات التربية، مع التركيز على كلية التربية تيجي، جامعة الزنتان. استخدمت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، وجُمعت البيانات من (20) عضو هيئة تدريس و(33) طالبًا معلمًا من خلال استبانة مهيكلة. أظهرت النتائج أن كلا المجموعتين تواجهان صعوبات في الربط بين النظرية والتطبيق، حيث سجّل أعضاء هيئة التدريس مستوى أعلى من الصراع الوظيفي (بمتوسط 3.70) مقارنة بالطلبة (بمتوسط 3.39)، وكان الفرق دالًا إحصائيًا (0.013 = p) وتُعزى هذه الفجوة إلى هيمنة الجانب النظري وضعف الدعم الإداري وقِصر فترة التدريب الميداني. وتوصي الدراسة بإعادة تصميم المناهج، وتحسين الإشراف التربوي، والاستثمار في مختبرات تعليمية حديثة لتعزيز الترابط بين الإعداد الأكاديمي والمهني.

الكلمات المفتاحية: كليات التربية، أعضاء هيئة التدريس، الطالب المعلم، التدريب العملي، صراع الأدوار الوظيفي.

1.1 Introduction

Faculties of Education serve as a bridge between theoretical academic knowledge and practical professional training, aiming to prepare teachers capable of meeting the demands of real-world education. These institutions have a dual function: they strive to enhance scientific research on one hand, and provide students with the pedagogical skills necessary for effective teaching on the other [1]. However, this combination often leads to role conflicts, as both students and faculty members experience tension between academic expectations and professional duties [2].

The contradiction between academic theory and professional practice can cause confusion, dissatisfaction, and reduced effectiveness in the teaching and learning processes [3]. Students may feel unprepared for educational practice despite their academic achievements [4], while faculty members often struggle to reconcile their roles as researchers, lecturers, and supervisors of professional development [5]. Understanding this conflict from both perspectives is crucial for improving educational practices and implementing appropriate policies in Faculties of Education. [6]

While existing literature has often examined these challenges from either the student or the faculty perspective, there is a scarcity of research that concurrently explores the viewpoints of both groups within the same context. This study seeks to fill this gap by providing a comparative analysis of the experiences and perceptions of both faculty members and students.

1.2 Research Problem

The primary challenge facing Colleges of Education lies in the tension between their dual roles: academic-theoretical preparation and professional-practical training. This disparity creates a research gap regarding how such duality manifests as a 'Role Conflict' within the specific context of Libyan higher education. The problem is characterized by a persistent gap between theoretical curricula and field-work realities for students, coupled with faculty members' struggle to balance research demands with intensive field supervision. This study investigates whether this conflict originates from an identity crisis regarding professional roles or an organizational flaw in the institutional support system.

1.3 Research Objectives

1-To examine students' perceptions of the relationship between their academic learning and professional training.
2-To explore faculty members' perspectives on balancing their academic responsibilities with professional field supervision.
3-To identify whether there are significant differences between students' and faculty members' perceptions regarding role conflicts.
4-To propose practical recommendations for minimizing role conflicts and enhancing the integration of theory and practice.

1.4 Research Questions

1-How do students perceive the relationship between their academic learning and professional training?
2-What are the faculty members' perspectives on the balance between their academic responsibilities and professional field supervision?
3-Are there significant differences between students' and faculty members' perceptions regarding role conflicts?
4-What are the potential strategies to minimize role conflicts and improve the alignment between academic and professional aspects?

1.5 Significance of the Study: This study gains its significance from addressing a fundamental challenge in teacher preparation, directly impacting the quality of education and the efficiency of educational institutions. By comparing the perspectives of students and faculty members, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of the problem and offers practical insights beneficial to educational leaders and policymakers. The study's findings may also contribute to curriculum redesign, improved workload distribution, and development of supervision strategies to ensure better integration between academic theory and professional practice.

1.6 Methodology: This study relies on a descriptive-analytical approach, suitable for the nature of the research. Quantitative data will be collected through closed questionnaires distributed to both students and faculty members, providing deep personal insights and experiences regarding role conflicts.

7.1 Sample: The study sample consists of:

-A group of final-year students and those who have completed field training.

-Faculty members at the Faculty of Education, Tiji, University of Zintan, particularly those involved in academic teaching and practical supervision.
Participants were selected using purposive sampling . The purposive sampling technique was employed for two primary reasons: First, to target specific groups directly involved in the field training process (senior students and supervising faculty). Second, the researcher's position as a faculty member at the same institution provided unique access to the participants and an in-depth understanding of the internal organizational dynamics. This 'insider perspective' ensured the collection of high-quality, authentic data regarding the nuances of role conflict within this specific environment."

8.1 Research Terms

-Faculties of Education: Faculties of Education are academic institutions concerned with preparing and qualifying teachers academically and professionally for the teaching profession across various educational stages. They aim to equip student teachers with pedagogical and psychological knowledge [7].

-Faculty Members: Faculty members are academics responsible for teaching, research, and academic supervision in higher education institutions, including professors, lecturers, and assistants who contribute to knowledge development and dissemination, in addition to participating in scientific and community activities [8].

-Student Teachers: Student teachers are individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs before their actual teaching practice. These programs aim to provide them with theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary for effective teaching within the classroom environment [9].

-Practicum (Practical Training): The practicum is a field-based training phase considered an essential part of teacher preparation programs, during which theoretical knowledge is applied to real classroom situations under academic and pedagogical supervision, aiming to enhance professional competencies and develop student teachers' educational identity [10].

-Role Conflict in Education: Role conflict in educational contexts refers to a state of overlap or contradiction in the tasks and responsibilities performed by individuals in the educational field, leading to professional and psychological stress affecting teaching performance. This conflict occurs when academic work requirements conflict with personal or administrative roles [8].

-The Researcher's Operational Definition: Both the student teacher and the supervising faculty member (the pedagogical supervisor) perform conflicting tasks during the practicum, as each is required to fulfill two simultaneous roles: an administrative role related to classroom management, and an academic role related to teaching. Since teacher preparation programs in Faculties of Education largely focus on the technical and instructional aspects without sufficient attention to administrative dimensions, both the student teacher and the pedagogical supervisor experience a degree of confusion and tension when implementing practical education in the classroom environment.

2. Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies
2.1 Theoretical Preparation in Faculties of Education
Theoretical preparation is the academic component that equips student teachers with essential pedagogical and psychological knowledge required to understand the teaching profession. It is defined as the process of providing students with philosophical and educational principles guiding their classroom practices [11]. Similarly, [12] emphasizes that theoretical programs in Faculties of Education focus on delivering teaching concepts and strategies, but they often fall short in effectively linking these concepts to actual classroom realities. Contemporary research indicates that the fundamental principles of integrating theory, practice, and holistic education in teacher preparation programs are often not fully realized in practical application [6].

2.2 Practicum and Field Training
Field training is recognized as a core pillar in teacher preparation, serving as a critical bridge for translating theoretical knowledge into real classroom situations under academic and pedagogical supervision [13]. This process aims to develop essential teaching competencies, including instructional skills, classroom management, and social interaction with students [14]. Despite its importance, the effectiveness of field training may be hindered by poor coordination between the college and host schools, leading to difficulties for student teachers in adapting to the school environment [15]. Furthermore, challenges persist beyond the training phase, as novice teachers often report feeling unprepared when facing high classroom workloads and stressful conditions, indicating that field training alone is insufficient without ongoing support in real contexts [4].

2.3 Role Conflict Between Theory and Practice
Role Theory explains the tension experienced by students or faculty members when encountering conflicting expectations from their environment. As [16] explained, role conflict arises when student teachers face contradictory expectations, such as being both learners and teachers simultaneously, while faculty members are tasked with combining research, teaching, and supervision duties. This conflict is recognized as a central challenge in teacher education, often leading to professional identity confusion and reduced performance in the field [17]. Recent analyses suggest that enhancing "teacher professional efficacy" — the ability to make independent decisions and engage in critical thinking — is key to mitigating role conflict and bridging the gap between theoretical learning and practical application [5].

2.4 Gap Between Theory and Practice in Teacher Preparation

Literature highlights a persistent gap between knowledge acquired in university settings and experiences in school environments. Studies attribute this gap to insufficient guidance and supervision for student teachers, undermining their confidence [18], as well as short practicum durations, weak university-school partnerships, and absence of psychological support programs [19]. Often, the root cause is an overemphasis on theoretical content at the expense of practical application within university curricula [20]. This challenge remains prevalent, as recent findings show that student teachers continue to struggle with applying theoretical knowledge in real school environments even when field training is provided [21]. Conversely, innovative approaches, such as problem-based digital case studies, show promise in effectively integrating theory and practice [22].

2.5 Importance of Integrating Administrative and Leadership Preparation

Comprehensive teacher preparation extends beyond instructional methodology to include leadership and administrative skill development. [23] posits that educational leadership is indispensable for effective teaching, asserting that teachers cannot fully realize their potential without assuming leadership roles within their classrooms. Similarly, [24] argues that preparing teachers as educational leaders enhances both the quality of education and the resilience of educational institutions in facing challenges. Recent research emphasizes that preparing teachers as educational leaders requires deliberate translation of theoretical knowledge into practical leadership strategies applicable within the teaching role [25].

2.6 Thematic Classification of Previous Studies

Theme I: Studies on Theoretical Preparation

This theme includes studies that examine the nature, content, and effectiveness of the theoretical component of teacher education programs, particularly focusing on the gap between academic theory and practical application.

-Study by Al-Jassar et al. (2004): The Effectiveness of Educational Preparation Programs in Qualifying Student Teachers. This study aimed to analyze the extent to which student teachers are prepared to face the realistic school environment through practical application. The results showed that students face difficulty in adapting to the school reality, especially in terms of classroom management and dealing with students. The study concluded that academic guidance does not sufficiently prepare them for field work, pointing to a defect in the coordination between universities and schools [15].

-Study by Korthagen, Loughran, and Russell (2021): Developing fundamental principles for teacher education programs and practices. This study presented a theoretical framework for improving teacher education programs through a critical analysis of accumulated literature and experiences. It highlighted the persistent gap between the educational theories taught at universities and actual classroom practices, calling for the design of programs that more effectively bridge this divide [29] .

Theme II: Studies on Practical Training

This theme focuses on studies that investigated the period of practical application (field training), the challenges encountered by the student teacher in the field, and the impact of this experience on their professional competence.

-Study by Al-Abadi (2007): The Problems Facing Student Teachers During the Practical Application Period. This study addressed the challenges faced by student teachers during the practical application period in schools. It found a clear gap between what students learn in college and what is required of them in the field. Crucially, it noted that the student teacher suffers from role conflict between being a learner and being a teacher, compounded by a lack of educational guidance and supervision [18].

-Study by Abu Daqqa et al. (2007): Field Training Problems for Faculty of Education Students from Their Point of View. This research aimed to investigate the obstacles faced by students during the practical training period, particularly concerning the relationship with supervising teachers and school administration. It found that role conflict appears clearly when permanent teachers interfere with the teaching method of the trainee student, leading to students feeling lost due to the lack of clarity regarding the roles expected of them [13].

-Study by Hammad (2005): Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Field Training for Student Teachers. This study focused on the psychological and social factors affecting performance during practical training. The results showed that students suffer from psychological pressure resulting from trying to prove their competence. The

interference of social roles (as a student, as a teacher, as a member of the school team) causes tension and low self-confidence, which limits training effectiveness [14].

-Study by Al-Miqdadi (2003): The Role of Institutional Support in the Success of the Practical Training Experience for Faculty of Education Students. The study aimed to find out the impact of the absence of institutional support on the student teacher's experience. It concluded that the absence of administrative and educational support leads to the student feeling isolated. Role conflict is manifested in the inability to reconcile the requirements of the university and the requirements of the school, emphasizing the need for a clear framework defining the roles of all parties [26].

-Study by Hudson (2020): Navigating the emotional landscape of pre-service teacher identity: The role of mentor relationships. This qualitative study examined the significant psychological and emotional stress experienced by student teachers while trying to demonstrate competence and build their professional identity during their placement. The findings emphasized that the quality of the relationship with the mentor plays a crucial role in helping them overcome these challenges [28].

-Study by Rumschlag and Adkins (2022): Preservice teacher preparation for classroom management: A meta-analysis. This quantitative meta-analysis showed that classroom management represents the greatest challenge for student teachers. It revealed that university programs do not provide sufficient practical training in this area, which often leads to low self-confidence and limits teaching effectiveness[30].

Theme III: Studies on Educational Role Conflict

This theme focuses directly on the concept of role conflict, ambiguity, and the resulting stress among educational stakeholders, particularly where theoretical and practical expectations conflict.

-Study by Clarke, Triggs, and Nielsen (2018): Cooperating teacher participation in teacher education: A review of the literature. This comprehensive literature review revealed that a lack of clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of the cooperating teacher within the school is one of the main obstacles. This lack of clarity leads to conflicting expectations and increases the confusion and role conflict experienced by student teachers during their practicum [27].

-Study by Abu Daqqa et al. (2007): Field Training Problems for Faculty of Education Students from Their Point of View. This study highlights a source of role conflict when permanent teachers interfere with the trainee's teaching methods, creating conflicting directives and expectations for the student teacher[13] .

3.1 Discussion of Previous Studies

When reviewing previous studies related to academic (teaching) and professional (educational) application, as well as when practicing leadership roles such as school administration for Educational Administration students or student teachers in classroom management during the practical training of Faculty of Education students, it is clear that there is a recurring pattern of challenges facing trainee students, especially concerning the role conflict between being students who are still learning and being required to perform the role of the teacher inside the classroom in terms of management and teaching.

Study [2], indicated a clear gap between the theoretical aspect students receive at the university and the practical reality they face in the field—a result that was also repeated in the studies by [3] and [14]. These findings reflect a problem in the design of professional educational preparation programs and their connection to realistic educational contexts. Similarly, [19] emphasized that the gap between educational theory and classroom practice persists globally, calling for teacher education programs that more effectively bridge this divide through authentic, reflective, and practice-based learning experiences.

The researcher believes that this discrepancy between theory and practice is not only due to weak coordination between colleges and schools but also to the ambiguity of the roles assigned to the student during their preparation period before facing the actual application (training). This was confirmed by the study [1], which showed that students suffer from a lack of clarity in understanding what is expected of them, in addition to conflicting instructions between educational supervisors and cooperating teachers within the school. [19] supported this perspective, revealing that the lack of clear role definitions and responsibilities among cooperating teachers remains one of the major barriers to successful teacher preparation, often leading to confusion and misaligned expectations for student teachers.

The psychological and social aspect addressed by [9], cannot be overlooked, as it showed that the psychological pressure resulting from trying to prove oneself, along with challenges in interacting with the school community, exacerbates the state of internal conflict among students. This point aligns with) [16] findings, which highlighted that emotional tension and identity struggles are central to the practicum experience. According to Hudson, the quality of mentor–mentee relationships significantly influences how student teachers navigate these emotional and professional challenges, emphasizing the importance of supportive supervision structures.

Similarly, [26] discussed the impact of the absence of institutional support on the effectiveness of training. This issue continues to appear in more recent contexts; [23], through a large-scale meta-analysis, demonstrated that student teachers worldwide struggle particularly with classroom management, as university programs still fail to provide adequate hands-on preparation. Consequently, low self-confidence and inconsistent supervisory support remain obstacles to effective professional practice.

Based on both the Arab and international studies, the researcher concludes that role conflict in practical application is not a coincidental phenomenon but a systemic outcome of multiple intertwined factors—curriculum design weaknesses, limited coordination between universities and schools, unclear supervision frameworks, and insufficient psychological and institutional support. These findings also suggest that such challenges are universal rather than context-specific, persisting across both developing and developed educational systems.

Therefore, it is important in this research to shed light on these aspects in depth and to seek to clarify the distribution of roles and mechanisms for supporting the student teacher and educational leaders within the faculties of education and during field application in schools. The goal is to transform the training period from a psychological burden into an effective, integrative, and empowering educational experience.

This study differs from others by adding the administrative role for graduates of Educational Administration departments within faculties of education through the preparation of professional educational leadership, as well as by examining the capabilities of the student teacher during his administrative leadership of the classroom. It also attempts to precisely define the roles of both the academic and educational supervisors during training

3. Statistical Method

The study employed a descriptive and comparative quantitative research design to explore faculty members' and students' perceptions regarding challenges in balancing academic and professional roles in Colleges of Education. Data were collected using structured questionnaires consisting of Likert-scale items. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize responses and determine the overall level of agreement for each item. To compare perceptions between faculty members and students, an independent samples t-test was conducted to assess whether differences in mean scores were statistically significant. All analyses were performed using SPSS 27, and a significance level of $p < .05$ was used to determine statistical significance.

3.1 Face Validity of the Questionnaire (Validity of Experts)

The researcher tested the validity of the study questionnaire by using the expert validity method. The questionnaire was presented to a group of experts who have experience in the field of the study. The researcher considered the majority of the experts' comments to finalize the questionnaire's formulation.

3.1.1 Reliability of the questionnaire

To test the reliability of the study tool, Cronbach's alpha test was used to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire. The results shown in Table (1) indicate a reliability level of 72.1% for teachers' questionnaire, and 70.9% for students' questionnaire, which are an acceptable percentage since alpha values above 70% are considered reliable. Therefore, it can be concluded that this scale is reliable, meaning that the respondents understand its items in the same way as intended by the researcher. Consequently, it can be relied upon in this field study, as the likelihood of obtaining consistent results upon reapplication is estimated at 72.1% for teachers' questionnaire and 70.9% for students' questionnaire.

Table number (1): Results of the test for the reliability of the study questionnaire

(Cronbach's Alpha)

Dimension	Number of statements	Cronbach's Alpha
Teachers' questionnaire	15	0.721
Students' questionnaire	10	0.709

Table (2): Distribution of Faculty members sample based on their Position

Position	Count	%
Head of Department	6	30.0
Faculty Member	14	70.0
Total	20	100.0

Table 2 shows the distribution of faculty members by position, with 70% serving as regular faculty members and 30% holding the position of Head of Department. This indicates that the sample includes both academic staff and leadership roles, providing a balanced perspective on educational role challenges.
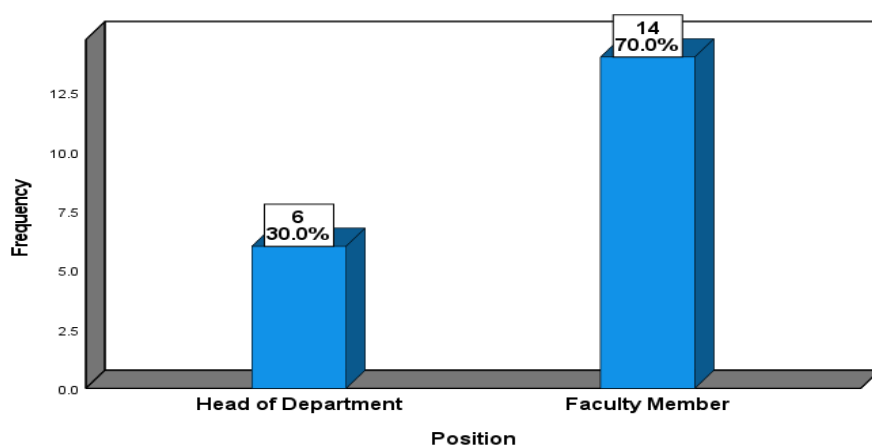

Table (3): Distribution of Faculty members sample based on their Specialization

Specialization	Count	%
Teaching Only	9	45.0
Field Supervision Only	1	5.0
Both	10	50.0
Total	20	100.0

Table 3 presents the distribution of faculty members based on their specialization. Half of the sample (50%) are involved in both teaching and field supervision, 45% focus exclusively on teaching, and a small portion (5%) specialize only in field supervision. This distribution reflects a mix of roles that combine academic instruction with practical training responsibilities among the faculty.
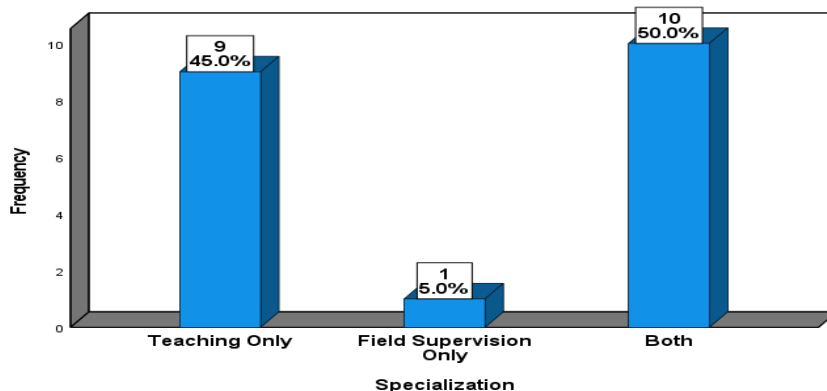
Table (4) :Distribution of Students sample based on their Major

Major	Count	%
English	5	15.2
Biology	6	18.2
Educational management	5	15.2
Arabic language	3	9.1
Islamic studies	1	3.0
Chemistry	3	9.1
Computer	3	9.1
Geography	3	9.1
Physics	4	12.4
Total	**33**	**100.0**

Table 4 illustrates the distribution of student participants by their major. The largest groups are Biology (18.2%) and English (15.2%) along with Educational Management (15.2%). Other majors such as Physics (12.4%), Arabic, Chemistry, Computer, and Geography each represent around 9%, while Islamic Studies accounts for the smallest portion (3%). This variety indicates a diverse student sample across multiple academic disciplines.
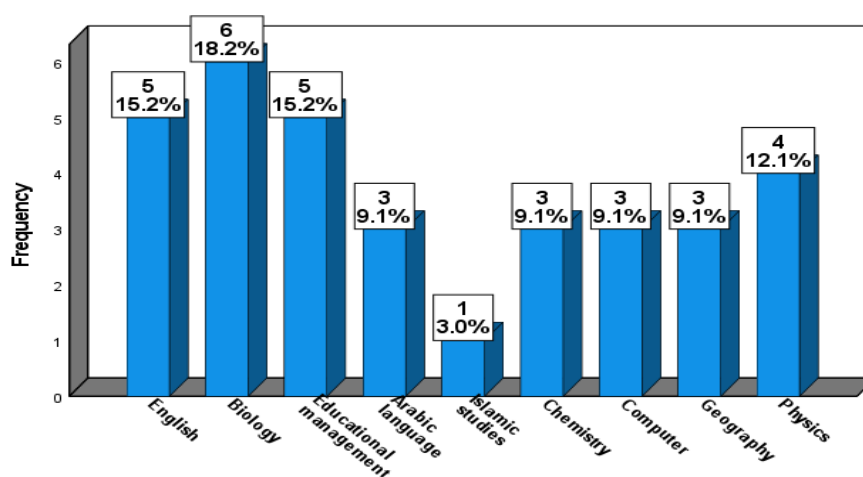

Table (5): Faculty members' responses on statements of Perspectives on Educational Role Challenges

Statement	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%

Balancing practical training and teaching represents a major challenge for educators.	8	40.0	9	45.0	2	10.0	1	5.0	0	0.0
Practical education is separated from theoretical aspects and requires a longer period.	3	15.0	8	40.0	0	0.0	7	35.0	2	10.0
The administration of Colleges of Education supports a balance between academic and professional roles and emphasizes the practical aspect.	2	10.0	7	35.0	4	20.0	1	5.0	6	30.0
Students face difficulty in reconciling practical training with theoretical study.	8	40.0	6	30.0	1	5.0	5	25.0	0	0.0
There is a conflict between academic and professional roles in teacher preparation, which appears during implementation.	6	30.0	7	35.0	2	10.0	5	25.0	0	0.0
There is more focus on theoretical aspects in preparing leaders and teachers at the expense of practical training.	11	55.0	5	25.0	3	15.0	1	5.0	0	0.0
Field training is given higher priority than academic courses in Colleges of Education.	2	10.0	4	20.0	2	10.0	7	35.0	5	25.0
Training benefits faculty members in applying a balance between academic and professional roles.	8	40.0	10	50.0	0	0.0	2	10.0	0	0.0
The educational process is not sufficiently monitored or evaluated in its administrative and academic aspects to ensure desired outcomes.	8	40.0	7	35.0	2	10.0	3	15.0	0	0.0

Statement										
The evaluation standards for field training need regulation and improvement.	7	35.0	8	40.0	2	10.0	3	15.0	0	0.0
Theoretical curricula do not support professional application.	4	20.0	6	30.0	1	5.0	5	25.0	4	20.0
Academic courses appropriately connect academic and professional aspects.	2	10.0	7	35.0	4	20.0	5	25.0	2	10.0
The internal environment in Colleges of Education is ideal for developing students' skills in both academic and professional aspects.	2	10.0	8	40.0	1	5.0	4	20.0	5	25.0
There is a need for modern educational media laboratories in colleges to develop learners' capabilities and increase their skills, which supports their self-confidence.	20	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
The alignment between academic and professional roles enhances the quality of the outcomes of Colleges of Education.	15	75.0	5	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Based on the results presented in Table (5), faculty members at the Faculty of Education in Tiji perceive multiple significant challenges related to the alignment between theoretical preparation and practical training in teacher education. A strong majority of respondents (85%) either strongly agreed or agreed that balancing practical training and teaching is a major challenge, suggesting widespread concern over workload distribution. Similarly, 70% of participants acknowledged that students face difficulties in reconciling practical and theoretical study, reinforcing the existence of systemic tensions in training programs.

Notably, 80% of faculty members agreed that training benefits faculty members in achieving balance between academic and professional roles, and 100% strongly agreed that there is a need for modern educational media laboratories to enhance students' capabilities and confidence —indicating a clear consensus on the importance of infrastructure for effective teacher preparation. Furthermore, 75% strongly agreed and 25% agreed that alignment between academic and professional roles improves the quality of educational outcomes, showing strong support for better integration of these elements.

However, there is also evidence of perceived administrative and structural shortcomings. For instance, only 45% agreed that the college administration supports a balance between academic and professional roles, while 30%

strongly disagreed. Similarly, 60% of faculty disagreed or strongly disagreed that field training is prioritized over academic courses, suggesting dissatisfaction with current training emphases. Concerns were also raised about evaluation, as 75% agreed that educational processes are insufficiently monitored and that field training evaluation standards need regulation and improvement.

While some faculty members (45%) believed that academic courses appropriately connect academic and professional aspects, a substantial proportion (35%) disagreed. Additionally, 50% expressed concern that theoretical curricula do not support professional application. These findings suggest a disconnect between curriculum design and field-based competencies.

In conclusion, the responses indicate strong faculty agreement on the need for structural reforms, enhanced practical infrastructure, and better alignment between theoretical and applied elements of teacher education to overcome current challenges and improve outcomes.

Table (6): Mean and standard deviation of Faculty members' responses on statements of Perspectives on Educational Role Challenges

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation	Level of agreement
Balancing practical training and teaching represents a major challenge for educators.	4.20	0.834	Very high
Practical education is separated from theoretical aspects and requires a longer period.	3.15	1.348	Moderate
The administration of Colleges of Education supports a balance between academic and professional roles and emphasizes the practical aspect.	2.90	1.447	Moderate
Students face difficulty in reconciling practical training with theoretical study.	3.85	1.226	High
There is a conflict between academic and professional roles in teacher preparation, which appears during implementation.	3.70	1.174	High
There is more focus on theoretical aspects in preparing leaders and teachers at the expense of practical training.	4.25	1.070	Very high
Field training is given higher priority than academic courses in Colleges of Education.	2.55	1.356	Low
Training benefits faculty members in applying a balance between academic and professional roles.	4.20	0.894	Very high
The educational process is not sufficiently monitored or evaluated in its administrative and academic aspects to ensure desired outcomes.	4.00	1.076	High
The evaluation standards for field training need regulation and improvement.	3.95	1.050	High
Theoretical curricula do not support professional application.	3.05	1.504	Moderate
Academic courses appropriately connect academic and professional aspects.	3.10	1.210	Moderate
The internal environment in Colleges of Education is ideal for developing students' skills in both academic and professional aspects.	2.90	1.447	Moderate
There is a need for modern educational media laboratories in colleges to develop learners' capabilities and increase their skills, which supports their self-confidence.	5.00	0.000	Very high
The alignment between academic and professional roles enhances the quality of the outcomes of Colleges of Education.	4.75	0.444	Very high
Overall	**3.70**	**0411**	**High**

Based on the data presented in Table (6), the faculty members' responses reveal generally high levels of agreement regarding the challenges and gaps in aligning theoretical and practical components in Colleges of Education, particularly in the context of the Faculty of Education in Tiji.

The overall mean score of 3.70 (SD = 0.411) indicates a high level of agreement with the statements related to educational role challenges. Notably, the highest rated item was the need for modern educational media

laboratories (M = 5.00, SD = 0.000), with unanimous agreement among faculty, emphasizing the urgency of upgrading infrastructure to support learners' skills and confidence. Similarly, the importance of aligning academic and professional roles to enhance educational outcomes received a very high level of agreement (M = 4.75, SD = 0.444), reflecting a strong consensus on the positive impact of integration on the quality of teacher preparation.

Faculty also strongly agreed that there is an imbalance in favor of theoretical training over practical aspects (M = 4.25, SD = 1.070), and that balancing practical training and teaching is a major challenge (M = 4.20, SD = 0.834). These results align with concerns raised in the frequency table (Table 5), indicating consistency between categorical and scale-based responses.

Several items reflected moderate agreement, such as the perception that theoretical curricula do not support professional application (M = 3.05), and that the administration supports balance between academic and professional roles (M = 2.90). This suggests a recognition of institutional attempts to bridge theory and practice, though not to a fully satisfactory level. The lowest-rated item was the claim that field training is prioritized over academic courses (M = 2.55), indicating disagreement with the notion that practical components are adequately emphasized.

High agreement levels were also observed regarding the need for improved monitoring and evaluation of both administrative and academic processes (M = 4.00), and the regulation of field training standards (M = 3.95), pointing to a demand for more structured and quality-assured practices.

In conclusion, faculty members perceive significant gaps in the integration of theoretical and practical training, with strong support for enhancing infrastructure, evaluation, and curriculum alignment. These insights highlight clear areas for policy and institutional improvement in Colleges of Education.

Table (7): Students' responses on statements of Perspectives on Educational Role Challenges

Statement	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
What we learn in theoretical courses aligns with the needs of practical application.	7	21.2	5	15.2	8	24.2	7	21.2	6	18.2
We face difficulty in applying what we have academically learned in the professional field (during practical training).	8	24.2	11	33.3	9	27.3	3	9.1	2	6.1
Simulation (college-based training) provides an opportunity to develop practical teaching and leadership skills.	10	30.3	11	33.3	1	3.0	7	21.2	4	12.1
The balance between academic and professional educational aspects is unclear during actual academic and administrative practice	9	27.3	7	21.2	7	21.2	5	15.3	5	15.2
Colleges of Education need to reconsider the academic and professional roles in both teaching and educational administration.	17	51.5	8	24.2	4	12.1	2	6.1	2	6.1

Statement	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The college administration provides the necessary support to reconcile academic and professional roles, which facilitates practical training.	6	18.2	8	24.2	7	21.2	5	15.2	7	21.2
There is a lack of connection between the theoretical curriculum and the requirements of practical application during field training.	9	27.3	6	18.2	6	18..2	10	30.3	2	6.1
The courses in Colleges of Education are sufficiently balanced between theory and field practice.	6	18.2	4	12.1	8	24.2	7	21.2	8	24.2
The time allocated for both theoretical and practical aspects in the final year is insufficient	14	42.4	8	24.2	6	18.2	3	9.1	2	6.1
Professors tend to focus more on the academic aspect at the expense of the professional aspects	8	24.2	11	33.3	4	12.1	6	18.2	4	12.1

Based on the results of Table (7), the students' responses reveal mixed but insightful perspectives on the challenges associated with the integration of academic and professional roles in teacher education at the Faculty of Education.

A notable proportion of students expressed dissatisfaction with the alignment between theory and practice. Only 36.4% of students agreed or strongly agreed that theoretical courses align with the needs of practical application, while 39.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 24.2% remained neutral. This suggests a significant gap between the curriculum and the real-world demands of teaching.

Similarly, a majority (57.5%) agreed that they face difficulty in applying academic learning in professional contexts, highlighting a perceived inadequacy in the transition from theoretical knowledge to practical performance during field training. This is further supported by 42.4% of respondents indicating that professors focus more on academic content at the expense of practical training.

While simulation-based training received relatively positive responses—with 63.6% agreeing or strongly agreeing that it helps develop practical and leadership skills—over one-third of the students (33.3%) were either neutral or disagreed, indicating that the simulation experience may be inconsistent or insufficient for some students.

The lack of clear balance between academic and professional aspects was also evident, as only 48.5% of students agreed with the statement about the balance being unclear, while 30.5% disagreed and 21.2% were neutral. Furthermore, 75.7% agreed or strongly agreed that Colleges of Education need to reconsider the academic and professional roles, suggesting strong student demand for reform in how teacher education is structured and delivered.

Regarding institutional support, students were divided: only 42.4% agreed that the college administration provides the necessary support to facilitate the integration of roles, while 36.4% disagreed, and 21.2% remained neutral. This points to variability in students' experiences with administrative support.

The time allocated for theoretical and practical components was also a significant concern. A majority of students (66.6%) believed that the final year does not provide sufficient time for both aspects, reinforcing the need to revise the curriculum's time distribution.

Finally, when asked whether the curriculum is balanced between theory and field practice, only 30.3% agreed or strongly agreed, while 45.4% disagreed and 24.2% were neutral—indicating that many students perceive the current balance as inadequate.

In conclusion: The results show that students experience real and perceived gaps between theoretical instruction and practical application. The dominant issues revolve around insufficient support, misaligned curricula, inadequate simulation experiences, and time constraints. These findings strongly support the need for strategic reforms in the design, delivery, and administrative support of teacher preparation programs.

Table (8): Mean and standard deviation of Students' responses on statements of Perspectives on Educational Role Challenges

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation	Level of agreement
What we learn in theoretical courses aligns with the needs of practical application.	3.00	1.414	Moderate
We face difficulty in applying what we have academically learned in the professional field (during practical training).	3.61	1.144	High
Simulation (college-based training) provides an opportunity to develop practical teaching and leadership skills.	3.48	1.439	High
The balance between academic and professional educational aspects is unclear during actual academic and administrative practice	3.30	1.425	Moderate
Colleges of Education need to reconsider the academic and professional roles in both teaching and educational administration.	4.09	1.208	High
The college administration provides the necessary support to reconcile academic and professional roles, which facilitates practical training.	3.03	1.425	Moderate
There is a lack of connection between the theoretical curriculum and the requirements of practical application during field training.	3.30	1.334	Moderate
The courses in Colleges of Education are sufficiently balanced between theory and field practice.	2.79	1.431	Moderate
The time allocated for both theoretical and practical aspects in the final year is insufficient	3.88	1.244	High
Professors tend to focus more on the academic aspect at the expense of the professional aspects	3.39	1.368	Moderate
Overall	**3.39**	**0.448**	**Moderate**

The results presented in Table (8) provide a quantitative summary of students' perspectives on the educational role challenges in Colleges of Education, specifically reflecting the experience at the Faculty of Education in Tiji. The overall mean score was 3.39 (SD = 0.448), indicating a moderate level of agreement with the set of statements evaluated.

Several key items demonstrated a high level of agreement, pointing to specific concerns among students. The highest-rated item was the need to reconsider the academic and professional roles within teacher preparation (M = 4.09, SD = 1.208), reinforcing a strong demand for curriculum and structural reforms. Students also agreed that the time allocated for theoretical and practical aspects in the final year is insufficient (M = 3.88, SD = 1.244), and that they face difficulties in applying academic learning in professional settings (M = 3.61, SD = 1.144). These findings confirm concerns raised in Table (7), particularly around the practical implementation of theoretical knowledge.

Additionally, simulation-based training received a relatively high mean (M = 3.48, SD = 1.439), suggesting that while students see value in simulated experiences, variability in effectiveness may exist, possibly due to inconsistent implementation or resource limitations.

Items with moderate agreement levels include:

- The alignment between theory and practice (M = 3.00),

- Clarity of the balance between academic and professional roles (M = 3.30),

- College support for reconciling both aspects (M = 3.03),

- Professors' focus being skewed toward academic content (M = 3.39), and

- The sufficiency of course balance between theory and practice (M = 2.79).

These moderate scores indicate uncertainty or mixed experiences among students, implying that some may perceive improvements, while others still encounter significant challenges.

In summary, the results highlight moderate overall satisfaction but also significant areas of concern. High agreement levels regarding time constraints, practical application difficulties, and the need for role reassessment point to systemic issues within the teacher preparation framework. These findings call for strategic interventions aimed at better integrating theoretical knowledge with professional practice and improving institutional support mechanisms.

Table (9): Comparison between students' and faculty members' perceptions regarding role conflict

Category	N	Mean	Standard deviation	T value	P value
Teachers	20	3.70	0.411	2.559	0.013
Students	33	3.39	0.448		

The results in Table (9) present a comparative analysis of the perceptions of faculty members and students regarding educational role conflict in Colleges of Education.

Faculty members reported a mean score of 3.70 (SD = 0.411), indicating a high level of agreement on the presence and impact of role conflict between academic and professional responsibilities. In contrast, students recorded a lower mean score of 3.39 (SD = 0.448), reflecting a moderate level of agreement. This difference suggests that faculty members perceive the challenges of balancing academic and professional roles more intensely than students do.

The independent samples t-test result (t = 2.559, p = 0.013) shows that this difference is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This means there is a meaningful disparity between how these two groups experience or perceive role conflict, with faculty members showing significantly greater concern.

3.2 Research Questions:

1. How do students perceive the relationship between their academic learning and professional training?

Based on the results from Tables (7) and (8): Students expressed mixed views on how well their academic coursework translates into professional practice. According to Table (7), only 36.4% of students agreed or strongly agreed that what they learn in theoretical courses aligns with practical application needs, while an almost equal proportion (39.4%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 24.2% were neutral. This suggests a lack of confidence among students in the practical relevance of their academic learning.

Table (8) quantifies this perception, with the statement "What we learn in theoretical courses aligns with the needs of practical application" receiving a mean score of 3.00 (SD = 1.414), indicating a moderate level of agreement.

Moreover, students reported difficulty in applying academic knowledge during practical training, with 57.5% agreeing or strongly agreeing with that statement (Table 7), and the corresponding mean value in Table (8) being 3.61 (SD = 1.144) — interpreted as a high level of agreement. This reinforces the existence of a gap between theory and practice.

Further, students recognized the value of simulation-based training in developing practical teaching and leadership skills (M = 3.48, SD = 1.439), but responses were still varied, suggesting inconsistent experiences with simulation in different contexts.

Finally, the lack of integration was also highlighted in students' opinions that professors tend to focus more on theoretical aspects at the expense of professional training (M = 3.39), and that courses are not sufficiently balanced between theory and practice (M = 2.79), which was among the lowest-rated items.

In Conclusion: Students perceive the relationship between academic learning and professional training as partially effective but insufficiently integrated. While some see benefits in simulation and certain training components, many struggle to apply theoretical knowledge in practice and feel that their academic programs need restructuring to better align with the realities of teaching and leadership roles in the field.

2. **What are the faculty members' perspectives on the balance between their academic responsibilities and professional field supervision?**

Based on the results from Tables (5) and (6): Faculty members largely agree that balancing academic teaching with practical training is a significant challenge. As shown in Table (6), the statement "Balancing practical training and teaching represents a major challenge for educators" received a very high agreement level with a mean score of 4.20 (SD = 0.834). Similarly, "Training benefits faculty members in applying a balance between academic and professional roles" also received a very high rating (M = 4.20, SD = 0.894), indicating that practical involvement contributes positively to managing this balance, but also highlights the need for institutional mechanisms to support it.

The perceived imbalance is further illustrated by responses to the statement "There is more focus on theoretical aspects in preparing leaders and teachers at the expense of practical training" (M = 4.25, SD = 1.070), reflecting frustration over curriculum design that favors academic instruction over field-based application.

Conversely, the item assessing whether "The administration of Colleges of Education supports a balance between academic and professional roles" scored lower (M = 2.90, SD = 1.447), indicating doubt or dissatisfaction with administrative support. Similarly, faculty perceptions of the environment being ideal for skill development (M = 2.90) and of academic courses adequately linking theory and practice (M = 3.10) were only moderate, reflecting concern over structural and curricular gaps.

In Conclusion: Faculty members perceive a strong and persistent conflict between their academic and professional roles. They express concern that current administrative and curricular structures do not sufficiently support an effective balance. While faculty recognize the benefits of training and acknowledge the importance of aligning academic and practical functions, they highlight the need for institutional reform, enhanced support systems, and more practice-oriented curricula to achieve true role integration.

3. **Are there significant differences between students' and faculty members' perceptions regarding role conflicts?**

Yes, there is a statistically significant difference between students' and faculty members' perceptions regarding role conflict in Colleges of Education.

Based on the results from Tables (9), An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare perceptions of role conflict between faculty members and students. The results showed a significant difference, t = 2.559, p = .013, with faculty members (M = 3.70, SD = 0.411) reporting higher levels of perceived role conflict than students (M = 3.39, SD = 0.448). This suggests that faculty members experience more pressure or difficulty in balancing academic and professional responsibilities than students perceive or experience during their training.

4. **Summary of Results**

The study's findings from Tables (5) through (9) indicate that both faculty members and students perceive significant challenges in balancing the academic and professional aspects of teacher education at the Faculty of Education in Tiji. Faculty members reported a high level of concern regarding the difficulty of balancing practical training and teaching duties, highlighting inadequate administrative support and infrastructural deficiencies, particularly the urgent need for modern educational laboratories. Students showed moderate agreement regarding the alignment between theoretical learning and practical application, expressing difficulties in applying academic

knowledge during field training and perceiving a gap between theory and practice. Additionally, there was a statistically significant difference between faculty and students' perceptions of role conflict, with faculty experiencing greater conflict. Both groups identified insufficient time allocation for practical training, along with the need for improved monitoring and evaluation processes to better integrate academic and professional responsibilities.

4.1 Conclusions

1. Significant challenges exist for faculty members and students in achieving a balance between academic and professional roles in Colleges of Education.

2. Faculty members experience higher levels of role conflict than students, linked to limited administrative support and inadequate practical training infrastructure.

3. Students face difficulties in translating theoretical knowledge into practical skills during field training.

4. The time allocated for practical training is perceived as insufficient by both faculty and students.

5. There is a critical need for development and modernization of educational media laboratories and simulation tools.

6. Monitoring and evaluation of practical training lack systematic and standardized approaches.

4.2 Recommendations

1. Redesign curricula to better integrate theoretical and practical components throughout the entire teacher education program.

2. To mitigate the high role conflict observed among faculty members (M=3.70), it is recommended that field supervision hours be formally recognized as part of the actual teaching load rather than an additional administrative burden.

3. To address the dominance of theoretical content, 20% of the evaluation in theoretical courses should be allocated to "Micro-teaching" or simulated practical tasks within the college before students enter field training.

4. To reduce role ambiguity, the Faculties of Education should hold bi-weekly coordination meetings between theoretical course instructors and field supervisors to align their expectations and evaluation rubrics for student teachers.

5. Based on the identified need for better facilities, the Faculties should prioritize the use of "Smart Classrooms" or educational labs as mandatory training hubs to bridge the gap between classroom theory and school-site reality.

4.3 Suggestion for Further Research

1. Conducting a longitudinal study to track graduates of the Faculty of Education, Tiji, during their first year of actual teaching to evaluate how the "role conflict" experienced during their studies impacts their professional performance and job satisfaction.

2. Performing a qualitative study using semi-structured interviews with faculty members to gain deeper insights into the "identity crisis" they face and the personal strategies they employ to balance academic and professional mandates.

3. Expanding the scope of the study to include a larger and more diverse sample of Faculties of Education across various Libyan universities. This would help identify the prevalence of role conflict and determine common systemic challenges facing teacher preparation at the national level."

4. Investigating the impact of virtual learning environments and "Smart Laboratories" on reducing the theory-practice gap and its subsequent effect on minimizing role conflict among student teachers.

Although Educational Administration students were part of the study sample, their perspectives revealed a somewhat different view from those of students in other specializations. However, this aspect was not examined in depth in the current study. Therefore, future research is recommended to focus more specifically on the field training experiences and role challenges of Educational Administration students, as this area remains underexplored despite its significance in preparing future educational leaders.

4.4 Final Discussion of Results in Comparison with Previous Studies

The results of this study revealed a clear gap between theoretical preparation and practical training in Colleges of Education, as confirmed by the responses of both faculty members and students. The majority of faculty members (85%) agreed that balancing practical training and teaching represents a significant challenge, while 70% acknowledged the difficulty of reconciling theoretical study with field practice. Similarly, 57.5% of students indicated that they find it difficult to apply academic knowledge in professional contexts, while 66.6% believed that the final year does not provide sufficient time to cover both theoretical and practical aspects. These percentages clearly reflect the findings of [18], [15], [14], which highlighted a persistent shortfall in aligning academic content with field practice.

The results also showed that role ambiguity and weak clarity of expectations constitute an ongoing issue. About 75.7% of students agreed on the need to reconsider academic and professional roles in teacher preparation programs, which aligns with [13], who noted that unclear roles and conflicting instructions between supervising teachers and cooperating teachers intensify the challenges faced by trainees.

Regarding infrastructure and institutional support, all faculty members (100%) emphasized the urgent need for modern educational media laboratories, whereas only 42.4% of students expressed satisfaction with the support provided by the college administration to facilitate the integration of academic and professional roles, compared to 36.4% who expressed dissatisfaction. This gap between faculty and student perceptions of institutional support confirms [26], who indicated that the absence of institutional support negatively affects the effectiveness of field training.

The results also revealed a difference in problem perception between the two groups; faculty members reported a mean agreement of (M = 3.70, SD = 0.411) compared to (M = 3.39, SD = 0.448) for students, and this difference was statistically significant (t = 2.559, p = 0.013). This can be explained by the fact that faculty members possess a broader perspective due to their long experience and repeated observation of these challenges, while students may evaluate their experience more partially, depending on the conditions of their individual training.

Although most of the findings of this study align with previous studies, this study introduced a new dimension by focusing on the administrative role of graduates of Educational Administration departments and the importance of preparing professional educational leaders capable of managing classrooms effectively during practical training. The study also aimed to precisely define the role of academic and pedagogical supervisors, a dimension not addressed in previous studies in such detail.

Based on the above, the findings of this study confirm that conflicts in educational roles within teacher preparation programs are not incidental but rather reflect a structural shortfall in curriculum design and coordination between preparation institutions and the field, in addition to limited psychological, pedagogical, and administrative support. Therefore, the study recommends restructuring preparation programs to ensure clarity of roles, achieve integration between the academic and professional aspects, and provide appropriate infrastructure, thereby transforming field training from a burden on student-teachers into a comprehensive and enriching educational experience.

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