



A Comparative Study of Teacher Education Systems of Iran and South Korea with an Emphasis on Recruitment and Training Process

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Received: 23 July 2023 Revised: 03 October 2023 Accepted: 24 November 2023 Online: 29 August 2024</p>	<p>Studying teacher education system in various countries and taking advantage of their experiences can influence teacher's professional development. The aim of the present study is to compare teacher education system of Iran and South Korea. Research method is qualitative comparative and the strategy of selecting countries -Iran and South Korea- was "differences in social systems and similarities in the output of the educational systems". To collect data, documentary method has been utilized and international and Iran's information databases were used to find sources. Data analysis is done based on Bereday's model. The findings indicate that attention to professional and general qualifications for recruiting teachers, using centers and universities specialized for teacher education, and the content of curriculum are similar in both systems. As far as the standards and qualifications required to get accepted in teacher education centers, the process of issuing a license or professional activity certificate to teachers, and the strategies and methods used for in-service training are concerned, these systems are fundamentally different from each other. According to the research findings, the authorities of teacher education in Iran are suggested to review the qualifications and competencies required to be recruited in teacher education universities. They are also suggested to plan the process of recruiting and issuing professional activity certificates in the form of level one and level two certificates.</p>
<p>KEYWORDS</p> <p>In-service Training Recruitment Teacher Education Iran South Korea</p>	

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1. Introduction

Teachers play an important role in the development of societies. Since teachers have a close relationship with students - the future generation - and are the main implementers of the programs of the education system, they are considered as an influential factor in the education system (Jamil, Razak, Raju & Mohamed, 2011). Therefore, authorities do their best to plan the process of teacher training as well as possible. In recent years, paying attention to teacher training programs has become even more important, because researches have revealed that other factors - such as the quality of equipment, class size, etc. are not as important as teachers' performance in affecting the quality of the teaching-learning process (Pidi, Muhamad & Sudirman, 2023; Rad, 2023; Diane, 2017). Nowadays, teachers are under great pressure to perform well in the classroom and respond favorably to student's needs. Therefore, it is very important that teachers receive the necessary training before they begin their teaching career and continuously enhance their knowledge and skills throughout their professional career (Jamil, et al. 2011). In general, regarding how to recruit and train teachers and equip them with the required skills and competencies various theories have been proposed (Hattie, 2009). In this regard, researchers put particular emphasis on teaching various specialized, professional, moral, general knowledge, personal, and soft skills (States, et al. 2018; Tang, 2015; Huntley, 2008).

Teacher education system in Iran also has a relatively long history and has gone through various developments. Organizing special courses for teaching principles of education and enhancing the level of teachers' knowledge in *Darolfonoon School* at the beginning of 1851 is considered as the first step (Safi, 2019). However, Iran's teacher education system has undergone transformations in recent years and many of its shortcomings have been overcome, there is still a relatively significant gap between the current situation and the ideal situation (Azazi, Noorian, Khosrobabadi and Norouzi, 2017). Accordingly, taking advantage of the experiences of successful countries -such as South Korea- can be useful for Iran's teacher education authorities. In this regard, it should be acknowledged that like many other developing countries, Iranian authorities want to emulate successful teacher education systems. For this reason, it is necessary to briefly refer to the researches conducted in other countries as well as Iran:

To know more about successful policies and guide the implementation of teacher education programs based on this policy, Tatto (2022) puts particular emphasis on the necessity of utilizing comparative study in the field of teacher education. Afdal (2019) examines the advantages and shortcomings of comparative studies in the field of teacher education. He believes that although comparative studies in the field of teacher education results in a better understanding of

international trends in this field, uncritically using such research may culminate in transferring and developing inappropriate and undesirable educational policies. Barzane, Essalih, Ourahay, and Khzami (2020) believe that using the experiences of other countries can be useful in preventing similar mistakes and solving common problems. Aykc and Sahin (2018) compared the teacher education system of Bulgaria, Poland, Russia and Turkey and concluded that the teacher education system of these four countries is different from each other in terms of the way of accepting candidates in teacher education centers, training course, curriculum, institutions responsible for teacher education and recruitment process. Aras (2018), in a comparative study of the teacher education system of Australia, Singapore, and South Korea, has reported that the teaching profession in these countries is a prestigious profession and teachers have a relatively high social status and it is difficult to obtain a teacher qualification certificate, particularly in Singapore and South Korea where candidates must pass various tests. This researcher believes that the rationale behind the success of these countries in teacher education is not the amount of funds allocated to teacher education, but the issue is related to the way these funds are spent, especially the investment in the professional development of teachers. In fact, the key to the success of Australia, Singapore, and South Korea in teacher education is sustainable professional development.

In a comparative study of the teacher education system of Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan, Khan and Haseeb (2017) concluded that, compared to Indonesia and Malaysia, the teacher education system in Pakistan, especially in indicators such as the ratio of students to teachers, investment in teacher training and access to free education for the general public is not in good condition, So the government should pay attention to the issue of teacher training. By examining the problems and challenges of the teacher education system in India and Pakistan, Khan, Fauzee and Daud (2016) concluded that during the last 43 years, compared to Pakistan, India has invested more in the teacher education system. However, both countries face many challenges such as low quality of education, bad management, limited budget, lack of motivation, and lack of good infrastructure. By studying the educational content of teacher education programs in Canada, Denmark, Finland and Singapore, Rasmussen and Bayer (2014) concluded that Danish teacher education programs emphasize professional philosophy-based knowledge. Also, the educational programs of Canada and Singapore encompass research-based knowledge combined with experiential knowledge, while in the educational programs of Denmark and Finland, these forms of knowledge are considered separately.

By studying the evolution of the discourse of teacher education programs in Sweden and England, Beach and Bagley (2013) come to the conclusion that these programs have evolved from

teacher education to a teacher training paradigm. In a comparative study of in-service training system of teachers in Japan and Egypt, Maklad (2008) emphasized the necessity of enhancing the teaching skills of teachers in Egyptian schools. He also believed that Egyptian teachers should be equipped with skills in using information technology in teaching and learning. In a comparative study of pre-service teacher education policies in England and Norway, Stephens, Egil Tønnessen and Kyriacou (2004) found that both countries aim to help teachers understand the theoretical and practical concepts of education and to teach students regarding national curriculum subjects and the methods of classroom management. By comparing the teacher education system of Pakistan and the USA, Ramzan (2003) concluded that by far, the US teacher education system is better in terms of persuading student-teachers of the goals of education and curriculum, using various methods and strategies of teaching and learning, and equipping teachers with skills necessary for teaching.

In Iran, investigating the status of teacher education system has a long history. By comparing the process of teacher recruitment in Iran and Malaysia, Nazari, Bahrami and Namdari (2023) concluded that the most important similarity between these two systems is the minimum educational qualification required to get accepted as a teacher, interviewing candidates for accepting student-teachers and the length of the teacher education period. The main difference between these countries is the teacher recruitment methods, the educational background of the candidates in secondary school and the scientific assessment of the student-teachers after graduation from teacher education centers. By comparing in-service training in the teacher education systems of Iran, Finland, England and Japan, Passalari, Azizi and Gholami (2022) reported that while educational approaches are education-oriented in Iran, they are diverse, research-oriented and in harmony with scientific and technical discourses and current social changes in three other countries. Also, the content of teacher training programs in England, Finland and Japan is derived from the real needs of the teachers' community and scientific necessities, while in Iran particular emphasis is put on religious issues. Karimi Baghmalek, Tahernia, Sarsarabi, Pak-Seresht and Mahigir (2022) found that the main differences between Iran and Finland are five primary dimensions of policymaking, the content of the teacher training curriculum, the implementation of teacher training programs, monitoring and evaluation of teacher training programs, and the social and professional status of teachers. Soleimani, Motakallem, and Namvar (2021) have reported that the criteria for accepting students in the teacher education centers of South Korea, Japan, Canada, and Finland are similar to Iran in using tests and interviews, but there are fundamental differences in the type of interview and its content.

Fathi and Kian (2019) have reported that in both Iran and Norway the main policies are made at the high levels of educational structure and special attention is paid to the professional competencies of teachers. However, in Norway's teacher training curriculum particular emphasis is put on the relationship between teacher education and school and collaboration between them.

By comparing the teacher education system of Iran and Japan, Hosseini, Brahman and Dadashi Moghadam (2016) concluded that the Japanese have made comprehensive plans, codified laws, rules, and specific standards for teacher training. By examining pre-service teacher training, novice teacher training and in-service teacher training in Iran and several countries in the world, Khoroushi, Liaqatdar and Kalbasi (2015) have reported that factors such as the continuous relationship between the teacher education system and universities and schools, establishing a relationship between pre-service and in-service training as well as creating coordination between teacher training institutions in these countries, have been among the factors influencing the success of their training.

By conducting a comparative study of evaluating process of the quality of teacher training curriculum in South Korea, England and Iran, Amrollah and Hakimzadeh (2013) concluded that there are differences in evaluation of the curriculum's goals, content and teaching-learning process. Teacher education has faced various challenges in Iran, so it is necessary to improve these programs (Safarnavadeh, Mousa Pour, Azhari and Shafiei, 2018; Ghanbari, Nikkhah and Nikbakht, 2017). On the one hand, there are serious shortages of facilities and resources, and on the other hand, teachers' salary and their social status are low (Sharif, Ghafouri and Salehi, 2019). Teachers' social status and income are not high enough to attract most talented graduates to teaching profession. Although teacher training curriculum at Farhangian University and Shahid Rajaei's teacher training college is favorable, the annual student intake in these universities is not enough to meet the demand for teachers. Graduates of these universities are permanently employed, and their performance is not seriously supervised during their teaching career. In regard to in-service training programs, a mechanism has been established for the empowerment of teachers which is more focused on the quantity of training programs (Farsi Aliabadi, Nateghi and Seifi, 2016). Different stages of teacher training in Iran such as recruiting student-teachers, developing and implementing curriculum and in-service training must be seriously and continuously supervised and evaluated, so that its challenges be identified and take action to solve them.

As noted, several researches have been conducted with the aim of comparing different aspects of Iran's teacher education system with that of other countries such as Malaysia, Japan, Canada, Finland, and England and valuable findings have been presented. The current research, on

one hand, compares teacher education in Iran and South Korea which is one of the most successful education systems in the world and on the other hand, examines different aspects of the teacher education system such as selection and recruitment, pre-service and in-service training. It must be added that the concepts of selection and recruitment have their own special meanings. Selection refers to examining the general and specific competencies of candidates and recruitment refers to the process of employing them. But since all these activities lead to the recruitment of student-teachers in the teaching profession, in the current research they are used together and in relation to each other. The sub-goals of the current research are:

- Identifying the similarities and differences of teacher selection and recruitment methods in Iran and South Korea.
- Identifying the similarities and differences of teachers' pre-service training methods in Iran and South Korea.
- Identifying the similarities and differences of teachers' in-service training methods in Iran and South Korea.

2. Research Method

The research method is qualitative comparative and the strategy of selecting countries -Iran and South Korea- was “differences in social systems and similarities in the output of the educational systems”. Data was collected using library method and reviewing documents and sources, articles and researches by referring to Iranian and international databases. Data analysis is done based on comparative study model of George Bereday. This model consists of four stages; description, interpretation, juxtaposition, and comparison. It is necessary to note that the choosing comparison indicators in the field of education is completely arbitrary and is not based on a comprehensive model. These indicators are derived from the gathered information or the researchers' interests (Azazi et al., 2017). In the current research, three aspects of the teacher education system in Iran and South Korea including selection and recruitment, pre-service and in-service training are compared and examined.

4. Findings

A) Description

In this section, education systems in Iran and South Korea are briefly introduced and then their similarities and differences are examined.

1) South Korea

Three aspects of teacher education system in South Korea including selection and recruitment, pre-service and in-service trainings are examined.

Selecting and recruiting teachers in South Korea

Responsibility for recruitment: in South Korea, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the relevant national and provincial offices are in charge of recruiting teachers. Also, teacher education universities and colleges take part in the process of training and recruiting teachers (Min, 2021).

Recruiting methods: two tests are planned to recruit teachers in South Korea. Firstly, high school graduates who get the highest grade in an exam and required points in an interview are recruited by teacher education universities and colleges and receive 4 years of training. After graduation, student-teachers are issued a grade II certificate which is a permanent certificate. However, obtaining this certificate does not guarantee recruiting them as teachers. To be employed in public schools, candidates must participate in the National Teacher Employment Test (NTET) and obtain required grades. Although working in private schools does not require participating in this test, since 98 percent of South Korean schools are public, most of teachers participate in this test (Park, 2019). National Teacher Employment Test (NTET) is planned by Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE) (Kang and Hong, 2008). This test is held for both elementary teacher candidates and secondary teacher candidates. The content of the test is different for two groups of candidates. Also, candidates must take part in an interview and on the condition of obtaining required points, they will be issued a permanent and formal certificate for teaching in public schools (Kim and Tak, 2023; Min, 2021).

Entry requirements and qualifications: Although in South Korea, a particular emphasis is put scientific qualifications for admission to universities and teacher education colleges, and there are relatively high standards, working as a professional teacher requires high standards and other qualifications (Park, 2004). In this regard, Interest in teaching profession, mental health, management skills, social skills, responsibility, good character, skills in working with computer and information technology are considered (Min, 2021).

Specific requirements and qualifications: Since the teaching profession in South Korea is a prestigious profession and South Korean teachers benefit from a high income and social status, admission to teacher education institutions is highly competitive (Park, 2019). Since employment in teaching profession is highly competitive, teacher education centers offer admission to the most talented students (Im, Yoon and Cha, 2016). Candidates can choose among only 12 national educational centers based on each provision and one private college (Ewha Women's University), so students who have very good academic records and obtained high points in the entrance exams of teacher education centers can be accepted into teacher education universities and centers (Min, 2021). Ingvarson and Rowley (2017) reported that only five percent of students who have the highest points can participate in teacher training programs. Therefore, students who get the highest points in this tough competition can enter teacher training centers.

Pre-service trainings of teachers in South Korea

- **Responsible organizations:** the main responsibility for teacher education in South Korea rests with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. There are two different types of teacher education centers in South Korea. Universities of education are responsible for training elementary teachers and educational colleges have responsibility for training secondary school teachers (Kim, 2012). Some of other licensed higher education institutes and universities can participate in running teacher training courses.
- **The length of the training period:** Training period in teacher education universities and colleges lasts four years. After this period, student-teachers are issued a grade II certificate (Park, 2019). It is necessary to say that after graduation from the four-year training period, student-teachers must take part in National Teacher Employment Test (NTET) in order to obtain a permanent certificate for teaching in public schools. Teachers are encouraged by the government to take part in master or doctoral programs.
- **Curricula:** the curricula of pre-service training of elementary and secondary teachers in South Korea are planned by teacher education colleges and universities under supervision of the government and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (Min, 2021; Im et al. 2016). The content of the curricula of teacher's training courses includes educational psychology, philosophy of education, sociology of education, classroom management, Field Pedagogy, art and physical education, information and communication technology, practical teaching and teaching applications (Balbay and Kilis, 2018). These course units are included

to enhance the practical skills of student-teachers through doing school internships. Secondary schools' student-teachers also take courses related to their specialized field (for example, mathematics, chemistry, physics, literature, etc.) (I, Chang and Son, 2019).

In-service trainings of teachers

Primary and secondary school teachers receive in-service training during their careers to enhance their skills and knowledge. In South Korea, there is a particular emphasis on the quality of in-service training (Sami, 2013). In-service training courses revolve around general and specialized subjects. Most of these (around 80 percent) are specialized courses. In-service training courses are often organized in the form of intensive lectures, face-to-face or online classes, and study opportunities. Lectures are generally held in teachers' free time or on holidays and face-to-face or online classes are held during the academic year. Study opportunities are often offered to teachers who have remarkable performance and are under 45. In general, the South Korean education system has established mechanisms by which encourage the development and empowerment of teachers (Pang, Reinking, Hutchison, and Ramey, 2015).

The South Korea' government tries to enhance the quality of teachers' in-service training and respond to their needs. In this regard, the government develops and enhances the competencies and qualifications of teachers by implementing strategies to encourage teachers to take part in master's and doctoral programs, providing opportunities for teachers to pursue long-term overseas studies and supervising and evaluating in-service training programs (Kim and Han, 2022; Kim, 2011). Also, it is tried to make the most of the facilities and opportunities of online education and information and communication technology, so the cost of organizing courses is cut by a large amount and teachers' challenges of attending these courses are addressed (Pang, et al. 2015). Another issue worth mentioning is that the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology also tries to motivate teachers to develop their professional skills through running various evaluation programs - which are directly related to the promotion of teachers' careers and income. These programs include Teacher Appraisal for Performance (TAP) (Jeon, 2020), Performance-Based Incentive System (PIS) (Choi and Park, 2016) and Teacher Appraisal for Professional Development (TAPD) (Youngs, Kim and Pippin, 2015; Min, 2021).

2) Iran

Teacher education system in Iran: three aspects of teacher education system in Iran including selection and recruitment, pre-service and in-service trainings are examined.

Selecting and recruiting teachers in Iran

- *Responsibility for recruitment:* in Iran, teachers are selected and recruited by Ministry of Education in cooperation with National Organization of Educational Testing, Farhangian University and Shahid Rajaei's teacher training college (Hosseini et al., 2016).
- *Selecting and recruiting methods:* in Iran, recruiting and employing teachers is done through national entrance exam and the exam of article 28 of Farhangian university' constitution (Nabavi, 2018). The article 28 of Farhangian university' constitution declares that: "Supplying a part of the Ministry of Education's needs for specialized majors that can not be developed by through recruiting graduates of other universities and educational and research institutions is allowed by the rules and regulations of the Ministry of Education on the condition that they go on a one-year training course at Farhangian University" (Farhangian university, 2013). The article 28 of Farhangian University' constitution allowed the Ministry of Education to supply a part of its needs for teachers through recruiting graduates of other universities and educational and research institutions on the condition that they go on a one-year training course at Farhangian University. Specific and general requirements for gaining admission to Farhangian University are as follows:
 - *General requirements and qualifications:* some of the general requirements and qualifications mentioned in related documents such as course selection manual of the National entrance exam (National Organization of Educational Testing, 2022) include: believing in Islam or one of the other religions recognized in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic, adherence to the Constitution, having good morals and behavior and appropriate to the status of a teacher, having no criminal records, having Iranian citizenship, not being addicted to drugs, tobacco and alcohol and being in a complete mental and physical health.
 - *Specific requirements and qualifications:* specific requirements include: a maximum age of 22 years, taking part in the specialized interview (based on the results of the national entrance exam, twice the number of required teachers are invited to the interview), obtaining an academic score of at least 6500 in the national entrance exam, having a minimum GPA of 14 in the secondary school course, passing the interview, not having problems with conscription into the military service (for male candidates), having at least a

pre-university degree of the old educational system or a diploma of the new educational system, taking part in a practical test, prioritizing native candidates in the recruitment process (National Organization of Educational Testing, 2022, pages 37-38).

It is necessary to say that the candidates who participate in the exam of article 28 of Farhangian university' constitution based on the majors and expertise required and announced by the ministry, must have at least a bachelor's degree and if they pass the exam, they will be invited the interview. On the condition that the candidates gain a passing score, they will go on a one-year pre-service training. Concerning the requirements for recruiting teachers through the exam of article 28 of Farhangian university' constitution, the followings are mentioned:

- Maximum age of 35 years for the candidates having a bachelor's degree, 40 years for the candidates having a master's degree, and 45 years for the candidates having a doctoral degree
- Having the military service completion card
- No drug addiction
- Mental health
- Having no criminal records
- Good eyesight and hearing (Farhangian University, 2017)

Pre-service trainings of teachers in Iran

- *Responsible organizations:* the main responsibility for teacher education in Iran rests with the Ministry of Education and student-teachers are trained at Farhangian universities and Shahid Rajaei's teacher training college (Hosseini et al., 2016).
- *Length of the training period:* Training period lasts four years for those admitted through the national entrance exam (Nabavi, 2018) and one year for those admitted through the exam of article 28 of Farhangian University (Farhangian University, 2013).
- *Content of teacher training's curricula:* the content of teacher training's curricula includes two main courses of specialized/theoretical training (including content knowledge and general training knowledge) and professional training (training knowledge combined with internship and initial program for entering the teaching profession) (Koushi and Soltani, 2017). Candidates who passed the exam of article 28 of Farhangian University constitution

go on a one-year course as a teacher trainee and take courses related to specialized knowledge and teaching profession. Some of the most important of these courses are professional ethics, internship, methods of assessing students' learning, action research, educational psychology, and teaching methods and techniques. Candidates admitted through the national entrance exam are required to take a variety of courses, including teaching methods, theories of learning and education, Islamic education and the Quran, mathematics, biological sciences, physical education, and Persian literature. Additionally, teachers from various disciplines, including elementary school educators, undertake specialized courses relevant to their fields as well as courses approved by the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology (Vatan pour and Bagheri Yazdi, 2019).

In-service training

The responsibility for in-service teacher training in Iran rests with the Ministry of Education. These courses are held with the aim of the development and empowerment of teachers and updating their knowledge and skills. Two different kinds of for in-service teacher training courses are held; long-term courses results in issuing a degree and short-term courses results in issuing a certificate of attendance to teachers (Samiei Zafarghandi, 2018). Long-term courses are held at public universities, Azad, Payam Noor and Farhangian universities. Short-term courses are held every year. Some of these courses include general topics such as religious and political, ethical and cultural topics and some courses include specialized topics such as teaching and evaluation methods. All teachers are required to take part in training courses for a certain number of hours throughout the year. In-service teacher training courses are held both face-to-face and online. Face-to-face courses are organized by either the Ministry of Education or other institutes or schools suggested by the Ministry (Habibi Azar, Keyhan and Talebi, 2021).

B) Interpretation

1. South Korea

South Korea is a country located in the southern part of the Korean Peninsula in East Asia and has a population of 51 million people. In just a few decades, this country has turned from an underdeveloped country into an industrial country exporting high-tech products (Domjahn, 2013). One of the most obvious characteristics of South Korean people is their unequalled passion for

education and learning. This passion and interest are rooted in South Koreans' traditional respect for knowledge and their strong belief in continuous and lifelong human development (Bermeo, 2014). General and higher education systems are both organized by "the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology". In South Korean governments, education is at the top of the agenda, because the education system is considered as an efficient and vital mechanism to strengthen the national power and improve the development process of the society (Park, 2019). The importance of education and learning in South Korea is internalized and is deeply rooted in the culture of the people of this country. The formal education system of South Korea includes elementary school (6 years), secondary school (3 years of middle school and 3 years of high school) and higher education (4 years). Elementary school and middle school are compulsory (lee, Kang and Park, 2019). Secondary education consists of four separate sections: general education, professional education (agricultural, industrial, etc.), specialized education (sciences and arts), and foreign language education (English, German, Spanish, etc.). In South Korea, educational goals and content are formulated at the national level and schools are required to plan their curricula within the framework provided by the central government (Yazdi, 2013). South Korea has made great progress in providing access to education for all. World Bank (2014) reported that the elementary and secondary school enrollment rate in South Korea is virtually one hundred percent. Also, South Korea's education system has been able to adapt to structural changes in the economy (Kim-Renaud, 2005). Researches conducted by Park (2004), Garcia and Sandoval (2013) have revealed that the factors affecting the enhancement the quality of South Korea's education system include: placing education at the core of a long-term development strategy, recruiting qualified people for the teaching profession, training these people as effective educators, prioritizing information and communication technology in education.

Based on the information presented in the description of the teacher education system in South Korea, it seems that three main factors play an important role in the development of the teacher education system of South Korea. The first factor is to pay attention to the importance of education. As already mentioned, respect for knowledge is rooted in South Korea's traditions (Beremo, 2014) and South Koreans' teachers benefit high income and social status (Park, 2019). Because of these benefits, many candidates compete for entering teacher education universities and centers. Intense competition in entering teacher education universities has given them opportunity to recruit the best and most talented people for teaching (Im et al., 2016). This is one of the important factors guaranteeing the quality of South Korea's teacher education system. Another factor that seems to play an important role in improving the performance of the teacher education

system in South Korea is the serious and continuous supervising and evaluating teacher training programs (Min, 2021; Im et al., 2016). Supervision and evaluation of teacher training programs are carried out seriously by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in different stages such as selection and employment, pre-service and in-service training. This will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of teacher training programs and potential challenges will be identified and overcome. Another important factor that seems to play an effective role in improving the quality of teacher training programs in South Korea is related to issuing a professional teacher's certificate. As explained in previous sections, two types of teacher's certificates such as grade I and grade II certificates are issued to teachers.

2. Iran

Iran consists of 31 provinces and according to the statistics compiles by the United Nations, Iran's population in 2023 is estimated to be around 88 million people. The National Assembly passed the Law of Compulsory Education on November 9, 1911 for the first time (Safi, 2018). In 1915, government's supervision over education was proposed as an amendment to the constitution and since then educational organizations in Iran are centralized and the government's supervision over the country's educational centers became legal (Akbari, Moeini, Fotouhi, and Khob Chehreh, 2015). It seems that after the constitutional revolution and the establishment of the constitution and its amendments, Iran's formal education system was created. Until the constitutional revolution, education was provided at traditional schools. The government has not supervised them and the lessons delivered to students included reading, writing, arithmetic, calligraphy, Quran and Arabic grammar and syntax. Darolfonoon, which was the first institute of higher education in Iran, was established by the royal vizir to Nasereddin Shah, Amir Kabir, in 1851 (Hosseini, 2021). Iran's education system is largely centralized and includes kindergartens, elementary schools, high schools, higher education institutions and universities.

C) Juxtaposition

In this section, the features of the teacher education system in Iran and South Korea in relation to the studied dimensions such as selection and employment (including responsible organization, recruitment methods and qualification), pre-service training (including responsibility for education, curriculum content and length of training period), in-service training (including responsible for in-service education, training goal, and strategies and methods) are juxtaposed and

presented in juxtaposition table (Table No. 1). Providing the mentioned information in juxtaposition table will facilitates comparing teacher education system of Iran and South Korea.

Table 1: Juxtaposition of the features of teacher education systems in selected countries

Iran	selection and employment	Responsible organization	Ministry of Education
		Recruitment method	National entrance exam Exam of article 28 of Farhangian university
		qualifications	General qualifications Specific qualifications
	pre-service training	Responsible organization	Ministry of Education through Farhangian university and Shahid Rajaei's teacher training college
		Curriculum	professional ethics, internship, methods of assessing students' learning, action research, educational psychology, and teaching methods and techniques, theories of learning and education, Islamic education and Quran, mathematics, environment, biological sciences, physical education, Persian literature, specialized courses
		length of training period	Four years for those admitted through the national entrance exam One year for those admitted through the exam of article 28 of Farhangian university
	in-service training	Responsible organization	Ministry of Education
		goal	Improving, enhancing and updating teachers' skills, knowledge and qualifications
		strategies and methods	Long-term and short-term courses Face-to-face and online training courses Utilizing other centers and institutions for in-service training
	South Korea	selection and employment	Responsible organization
Recruitment method			Holding test (universities and teacher education colleges hold tests to recruit from the graduates of high schools or secondary schools and issue grade II teaching certificate) Holding National Teacher Employment Test for grade II certificate holders in order to issue a grade I certificate to those pass the test
qualifications			Very high scientific-specialized standards and qualifications
pre-service training		Responsible organization	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology through universities of education for training elementary teachers and educational colleges for training secondary school teachers
		Curriculum	Educational Psychology, Philosophy of Education, Sociology of Education, Classroom Management, Field Pedagogy, Art and Physical Education, Information and Communication Technology, Practical Teaching, Teaching Applications, Internship, and Specialized Courses (mostly for secondary school teachers and appropriate to their field; science, mathematics, chemistry, physics, etc.)
		length of training	The length of training period in both universities of education and teacher education colleges is 4 years

		period	
	in-service training	Responsible organization	Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education
		goal	Improving, enhancing and updating teachers' skills, knowledge and qualifications
		strategies and methods	Long-term and short-term training periods Face-to-face and online training courses Utilizing other centers and institutions for in-service training Opportunity for collaborative learning and teaching Study opportunities

D) Comparison

Similarities

As mentioned in the description of the teacher education system in South Korea and Iran, both countries aim to enhance the quality of their education systems by improving the teacher education system using various strategies and policies. According to reports, South Korea has made remarkable achievements in training teachers. In both countries, Ministry of Education (in South Korea called Ministry of Education, Science and Technology) plays an important role in recruiting, training and empowering teachers. In both countries, scientific-specialized qualifications to enter teaching profession are considered and personality and individual competencies are emphasized. Specialized centers and institutions in training teachers are established in both countries. In Iran, Farhangian University and Shahid Rajaei's teacher training college are responsible for training teachers and in South Korea, this responsibility rests with universities of education (for training elementary teachers) and educational colleges (for training secondary school teachers). Pre-service teacher training's curriculum includes courses such as teaching and learning, psychology and learning theories, education and classroom management and subject-specific courses (for example mathematics or Persian literature). Also, in both countries' teacher training's curriculum, internships and practical courses for training teachers are considered. The length of pre-service training period in both countries is 4 years. However, teachers are given opportunities to continue their studies in master and doctoral levels.

In regard with the development and empowerment of teachers through in-service trainings, in both countries, mechanisms are established to enhance, improve and update teachers' skills and qualifications making use of various methods and educational tools (particularly information and communication technology). In this regard, Ministry of Education and other educational centers play important role. Also, in both countries, other centers and institutions specialized in in-service teacher trainings collaborate in retraining teachers.

Differences

Apart from the similarities between the teacher education system of Iran and South Korea, there are important differences between them. Since the teaching profession in South Korea is a prestigious profession and South Korean teachers benefit a high income and social status, admission to teacher education institutions is highly competitive, and teacher education centers offer admission to the most talented students and students who have very good academic records. As opposed to Iran, in South Korea, those who go on teacher training courses are not issued formal and permanent certificates for teaching in public schools; namely there two different kinds of teaching certificates (grade I and II). Graduates of teacher education universities and centers are issued grade II certificate. Grade II certificate holders are allowed to teach in private schools and temporarily teach in public schools. In order to be employed as permanent and formal teachers, they must be issued a grade I certificate by taking part in National Teacher Employment and gaining required scores.

Furthermore, teacher education centers in Iran and South Korea are somewhat different. In South Korea, universities of education are responsible for training elementary teachers and educational colleges are responsible for training secondary school teachers. However, secondary school teachers can complete their training course in universities that are licensed to train teachers. In regard of in-service teacher training, it seems that there are main differences between Iran and South Korea. While in Iran particular emphasis is put on the quantity of training and teachers are required to take part in in-service training courses for a certain number of hours throughout the year, in South Korea, in addition to other aspects of teacher education system such as recruitment and pre-service training, the quality of in-service training is emphasized and the government supervises the quality of these programs. Moreover, with regard to the various types of in-service training courses, there are differences between these two countries. In South Korea, in-service training is provided for teachers in the form of study opportunities. In order to enhance their knowledge and skills, qualified teachers are sent abroad to participate in long-term and short-term educational courses. Also, in South Korea, information and communication technology is utilized for holding online in-service courses. In addition to addressing teachers' challenges in attending these courses, by organizing online courses, training centers can save in cost and time by a large amount. Based on what was mentioned, the similarities and differences between the teacher education systems of Iran and South Korea in dimensions investigated in current study such as recruitment, pre-service training and in-service training, are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Similarities and differences of teacher education systems in selected countries

Indicators	Dimensions	South Korea	Iran
Recruitment	Responsible organization	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology	Ministry of Education
	Recruitment method	Holding tests (written and oral), temporary and permanent employment (grade I and II certificates)	Holding tests (written and oral), permanent employment (permanent teaching certificate)
	Qualifications	Specific and general	Specific and general
Pre-service training	Responsible organization	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology	Ministry of Education
	Curriculum	Educational Psychology, Philosophy of Education, Sociology of Education, Classroom Management, Field Pedagogy, Art and Physical Education, Information and Communication Technology, Practical Teaching, Teaching Applications, Internship, and Specialized Courses (mostly for secondary school teachers and appropriate to their field; science, mathematics, chemistry, physics, etc.)	professional ethics, internship, methods of assessing students' learning, action research, educational psychology, and teaching methods and techniques, theories of learning and education, Islamic education and Quran, mathematics, environment, biological sciences, physical education, Persian literature, specialized courses
	Length of the period	The length of training period in both universities of education and teacher education colleges is 4 years	Four years for those admitted through the national entrance exam One year for those admitted through the exam of article 28 of Farhangian university
In-service training	Responsible organization	Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education	Ministry of Education
	Goal	Improving, enhancing and updating teachers' skills, knowledge and qualifications	Improving, enhancing and updating teachers' skills, knowledge and qualifications
	Strategies and methods	Long-term and short-term training periods Face-to-face and online training courses Utilizing other centers and institutions for in-service training Opportunity for collaborative learning and teaching Study opportunities	Long-term and short-term courses Face-to-face and online training courses Utilizing other centers and institutions for in-service training

Based on the similarities and differences between the teacher education systems of Iran and South Korea in related to recruitment, pre-service training and in-service training, the comparison between the teacher education systems of Iran and South Korea is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: The comparison between the teacher education systems of Iran and South Korea

Indicators	Dimensions	South Korea	Iran
Recruitment	Responsible organization	✓	✓
	Recruitment method	×	*
	Qualifications	✓	✓
Pre-service training	Responsible organization	✓	✓
	Curriculum	×	*
	Length of the period	×	*
In-service training	Responsible organization	✓	✓
	Goal	✓	✓
	Strategies and methods	×	*

As shown in Table 3, there are five differences and four similarities between the teacher education systems of Iran and South Korea in three dimensions including recruitment, pre-service training and in-service training. In terms of recruitment, there are similarities in responsible organization and the qualifications, but in recruitment methods, these two systems are different from each other. Also, in regard of pre-service training, there is similarity in responsible organizations and there are differences between the teacher education systems of these countries in the content of curriculum and length of the period. In regard of in-service training, despite the similarity in responsible organizations and the goal of in-service training programs, there are differences in the strategies and methods of in-service training of teachers.

4. Conclusion

In the current research, the teacher education systems of Iran and South Korea in three dimensions including recruitment, pre-service training and in-service training are examined and compared. Based on the studies, the teacher education systems of Iran and South Korea have differences in all three dimensions. In terms of the similarities, in both countries professional and scientific qualifications of teaching profession candidates are considered and the Ministry of

Education plays an important role. Centers and colleges are established with the aim of training future teachers and developing their competencies. Also, both countries are similar in the teacher training curriculum which include subjects such as Educational Psychology, Philosophy of Education, Sociology of Education, Classroom Management, Field Pedagogy, Art and Physical Education, Information and Communication Technology, Practical Teaching, Teaching Applications, Internship, and Specialized Courses (mostly for secondary school teachers and appropriate to their field; science, mathematics, chemistry, physics, etc.). In both countries, mechanisms are established for in-service teacher training and developing teachers' competencies and teachers are encouraged to enhance and improve their skills and qualifications. Despite the similarities between the teacher education systems of Iran and South Korea, there are differences in this regard. Based on the results of the study, one of the differences is related to teacher recruitment methods and strategies. Since the teaching profession in South Korea is a prestigious profession and South Korean teachers benefit a high income and social status, admission to teacher education institutions is highly competitive and teacher education centers offer admission to the most talented students. It is clear that these high standards and clear criteria can guarantee the quality of teacher education system. It should be noted that the teaching profession in Iran is also popular due to labor shortage, low rate of unemployment among university graduates and issuing permanent certificate to teacher candidates. In other words, while in South Korea, high income and social status of teachers is the main reason why the most talented students are attracted to teaching profession, in Iran, job stability plays an important role. While South Korea is not facing a shortage of teachers, factors such as the retirement of teachers and the restricted capacity of Farhangian and Shahid Rajaei universities for teacher training have caused the Ministry of Education of Iran to hold a one-year training course for bachelor's degree holders -who do not participate in teacher training courses- and prepare them immediately to teach at schools. In this regard, Rasta, Baghmalek et al., (2022) have paid attention to the importance of setting required standards of training teachers and specifying expectations and capabilities appropriate for teaching profession in achieving the overall goal of qualifying teachers. Soleimani et al., (2021) have emphasized the necessity of evaluating the qualifications and skills of student-teachers after completing the pre-service training course at Farhangian University. They also believe that after graduating from university, candidates of teaching profession must participate in the qualification process and obtain required points and documents.

Findings reveal that there are differences between these countries in pre-service and in-service teacher trainings. South Korean education authorities pay attention to seriously and

continuously supervising and evaluating teacher training programs and put particular emphasis on enhancing the quality of these programs. Amrollah and Hakimzadeh (2013) pay attention to the importance of supervising and evaluating the quality of teacher training curricula and according to the results of their findings, they believe that difference in the quality of teacher training curricula in these countries resulted from the mechanism for evaluating teacher training programs in these countries. They point to the basic differences in this regard. Concerning the differences between the teacher education systems of South Korea and Iran, South Korea emphasizes on holding online in-service training courses and the use of information and communication technology. In South Korea, in-service training opportunities for qualified teachers play a crucial role in enhancing their scientific and professional skills while keeping their knowledge up to date. In contrast, Iran faces challenges due to underdeveloped online education infrastructure. Additionally, Iranian teachers have missed opportunities to gain international experience in schools abroad due to a lack of financial resources and supportive legislation. According to the findings of the research, the following suggestions are provided in order to enhance and improve the quality of Iran's teacher education system:

- Troubleshooting the process of recruiting teachers and presenting a framework for recruiting talented and motivated people.
- Formulating and setting the optimal mechanism for monitoring and evaluating teacher training programs.
- Reviewing standards and required qualifications for entering teacher education universities and centers.
- Considering grade I and II certificates for teaching profession and making issuing grade II certificate to the graduates of teacher education centers and universities conditional upon gaining the required qualifications and competencies through a standard evaluation.
- Seriously and continuously supervising in-service teacher training programs and emphasizing the quality of these programs.
- Using various in-service teacher training methods (such as study opportunities abroad) and different methods of holding courses (face-to-face and online courses).
- Allocating more financial resources to the Ministry of Education and teacher education universities.

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