

## Investigation and Research on the Professional Development Status of General Pre-service Teachers Majoring in Primary Education

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**Keywords:** primary education; general pre-service teachers; teaching skills; investigation and research

**Abstract:** The research subjects in this paper were general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education in three normal universities. It investigated three aspects, that is, teachers' professional essential knowledge, teachers' professional essential skills and teachers' professional essential information technology ability. It was found that the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education are most concerned about the acquisition of educational knowledge, instructional design, and technical literacy while ignoring the knowledge of general knowledge, reflection and development, assessment and diagnosis. They pay more attention to professional development but with low satisfaction. They lack professional development planning and they are confused because of the limited academic vision. Based on this, countermeasures and suggestions are proposed, to increase the educational career planning curriculum, to provide direction guidance for their professional development, to establish self-reflection awareness, to strengthen reflection and guidance, to optimize the integrated curriculum system and to increase the proportion of the information technology in the curriculum.

### 1. Introduction

In 2012, in order to implement the spirit of the Sixth Plenary Session of the Seventeenth Central Committee of the Party and fully implement the Outline of Education Planning, the Ministry of Education issued the No. 1 Teacher Document, which stipulates the basic requirements for the professional development of kindergarten teachers, primary and secondary school teachers and aims to build standard teachers' professional development and build high-quality professional teacher team. [1] In August 2014, the No. 5 Teacher Document, Opinions of the Ministry of Education on Implementing the Excellent Teacher Training Program, proposed that in the future, the field of excellent teachers in primary schools will focus on exploring the training model of primary school teachers and fostering a group of excellent teachers who love primary school education, have knowledgeable knowledge and comprehensive abilities, meeting the needs of multidisciplinary education in primary schools. [2] This determines the training direction of primary school teachers in China from the policy level, that is, to train general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education. In 2018, the document, Opinions on Comprehensively Deepening the Reform of Teacher Team Construction in the New Era also puts forward the strategic position of the construction of the teaching staff in the development of the entire country. [3] It can be seen that the construction of primary school teachers' team is an important part of promoting the development of basic education in China.

Judging from the demand for the educational development in China, the cultivation of general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education is an effective way to improve the future basic education teachers' team in China. However, judging from the actual demand of the Chinese teachers, due to the vast situation of China's vast resources and the uneven distribution of resources, the pre-service teachers variedly trained in normal colleges with different types, different regions and different levels. It is imperative to formulate a team of primary school teachers suitable for local practice based on China's national conditions and disciplinary features and to provide effective teacher reserves for local basic education.

Based on this, the study focuses on professional development status of general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education. Through the observation, questionnaire survey, in-depth interviews and other forms, this paper analyzed the current professional development status of pre-service teachers majoring in primary education and understood their professional development needs, which can provide corresponding countermeasures and suggestions for the development of the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education.

## **2. Research Methods and Processes**

### **2.1 Preparation of the research questionnaire.**

The self-edited questionnaire named Teachers' Professional Knowledge and Skills Development Status was designed to understand the current situation of the teaching skills of the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education. 11 items were designed in the questionnaire. Most of the sorting items were based on four dimensions, professional knowledge, professional skills, professional essential information technology capabilities and professional development. At the same time, in order to make up for the shortcomings of the questionnaire survey, individual interviews were conducted, as well as the internship teaching class observation of the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education, so that the potential problems of teaching skills that are difficult to present in the questionnaire survey can be found.

### **2.2 Research subjects**

The research subjects were 137 undergraduate students from three normal colleges. They are all juniors and seniors majoring in primary education. These students have already studied certain core courses of educational theory, such as pedagogy, psychology, curriculum and teaching theory. And they have also been taught some skills training courses, such as instructional design, micro-training, etc. Therefore, such a survey can better reflect the current status of the teaching skills of the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education.

### **2.3 Research data processing and analysis**

The questionnaire was conducted in the form of an online questionnaire. The research data was analyzed by using spss20.0. A total of 150 questionnaires were collected, among which 13 invalid questionnaires were excluded and 137 valid questionnaires were retrieved. The effective recovery rate was 91%.

## **3. Research Results**

### **3.1 The status of professional knowledge of general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education.**

According to the survey of the importance of the necessary professional knowledge of the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education, it was found that 42.42% of them believe that the educational knowledge should be ranked the first; 32.86% of them think that the discipline knowledge should be ranked the second; 37.36% of them suppose that the discipline teaching knowledge should be ranked the third; 61.2% of them think that the general knowledge should be ranked the fourth. It can be seen from this that in the survey, the general-school primary school students believe that the teachers' professional essential knowledge is the most concerned about "educational knowledge", while the "common knowledge" knowledge needs are the weakest. It can be inferred that because the primary education major belongs to the field of education science. Its curriculum is mainly based on education subjects, so it is more concerned by the students. In addition, the students' attention to discipline knowledge and discipline teaching knowledge is similar, indicating that in addition to educational knowledge, the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education pay close attention to knowledge and skills. Finally, the general knowledge is at

the bottom, which shows that they can recognize the value of educational theoretical knowledge, discipline knowledge and skills. Because these are important and basic requirements for their job.

### **3.2 The status of professional skills of general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education.**

According to the survey on the importance of the necessary skills for the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education, teaching design ranked the first while reflection and development ranked the last. "Teaching implementation" ranked the second (41.81%). "Class management and teaching activities" ranked the third (30.37%). "Communication and cooperation" ranked the fourth (25.19%). "Educational teaching evaluation" ranked the fifth (28.15%). This reflects that the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education think that "teaching design", "teaching implementation", "class management and educational activities" are the first three skills of teachers' professional skills while "reflection and development" is ranked the last, which shows the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education focus on professional knowledge and skills, lacking the understanding of self-reflective development and the importance of professional development in personal career growth.

### **3.3 The status of information technology capabilities of general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education.**

In the survey on the importance of the necessary information technology ability of the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education, "technical literacy" ranked the first (34.31%); "organization and management" (29.2%) ranked the second; "planning and preparation" (24.82%) ranked the third; "learning and development" (17.52%) ranked the fourth; "diagnosis and evaluation" (53.28%) ranked the fifth. These show that the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education pay more attention to "technical literacy". They do not much attention to the diagnosis and evaluation of their level of information technology.

### **3.4 Survey of professional attention of general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education.**

The survey of the professional attention of the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education found that 65.69% of them considered their professional development plans, but they did not know how to start; 24.82% of them often think and have his or her own development plan; 6.57% of them occasionally thought about it; 2.92% of them chose the other. None of them has never thought about his or her own professional development planning. This reflects that most of the pre-service teachers have thoughts about their professional development, but lack guidance.

### **3.5 Survey of professional satisfaction of general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education.**

By investigating the satisfaction degree of the professional development status of the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education, it was found that 59.85% of them think that their professional development is generalized; 22.63% of them were more satisfied with their professional development; 11.68% of them were not satisfied with his or her professional development; 2.92% of them were very dissatisfied with their professional development. Only 2.92% of the teachers were satisfied with their professional development. This reflected that the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education are not satisfied with their professional standards. The reason is that on the one hand, the orientation of primary education is not clear; the curriculum and practice are not closely related; the occupational awareness is not highlighted; some students think that employment is difficult and their professional satisfaction is not high. On the other hand, it is not the students themselves to apply for their major but the result of their parents and scores. All these caused their dissatisfaction.

### **3.6 Confusion and obstacles in the professional development of general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education.**

According to the confusion survey on the professional development of the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education, it is known that the reason of "the academic vision is not open" accounting for 67.88%; the reason of "professional identity is vague, professional status is not high and the employment difficult" accounted for 58.39%, the reason of "knowledge is outdated" accounted for 42.34%; the reason of "they are separated from basic education" accounted for 31.39%; the reason of "discipline background and current teaching work do not match" accounted for 29.93%; the reason of "scientific research level is difficult to be improved" accounted for 25.55%. These showed that the current curriculums can not reflect the latest hot issues of education, nor help the students understand the society and the future. Thus, the students' vision is not broad enough. In addition, the problems of the ambiguity of the major of primary education, the difficulty of employment, the aging of knowledge and the separation from basic education are also the confusion factors that affect the professional development of the pre-service teachers.

According to the investigation of obstacles in the professional development of the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education, "learning burnout" ranked the first (79.56%), followed by "inert" (78.1%) and "missing cooperation among students" (41.6%), "learning task is heavy" (27.72%), "poor physical condition" (9.49%), etc. These reflected the current biggest obstacle to their development is the learning burnout and inertia. The second is the cooperation among the students, the heavy learning tasks, poor physical condition and other reasons. This showed that the biggest obstacle to the professional development of the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education is the lack of self-motivation and inertia.

## **4. Conclusion**

### **4.1 To increase the education career planning curriculums to provide direction for the professional development of general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education.**

The survey found that 67.88% of general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education believe that the following factors restricting their professional development, that is, their indistinct professional identity, low professional status, difficult employment. 65.69% of them have considered their own professional development planning, but they do not know how to make it. In view of the above situation, it is recommended that the school should provide a career planning course for the pre-service teachers, guide students in career planning, make it clear of their career planning, understand the professional nature and tasks of the pre-service teachers and raise their awareness and self-identity. In addition, the pre-service teachers should also be required to establish a personal learning planning file, report on their progress of personal planning every year and promote their professional growth through gradual ascension.

### **4.2 To establish self-reflective consciousness and strengthen reflection and guidance.**

In the ranking of the importance of teachers' professional development skills, "reflection and development" is ranked the last, which shows that the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education pay too much attention to educational teaching knowledge and skills and they have not recognized the contribution of reflective awareness to their professional development. Therefore, reflection is one of the important means to promote the development of teaching skills and self-improvement of the pre-service teachers. In the process of cultivating pre-service teachers in primary education, it is necessary to examine their teaching philosophy, teaching design and information technology ability in a timely manner, so that the college students can appreciate the value brought by reflection and form a habit of reflection. [4]

### **4.3 To optimize the integrated curriculum system and increase the proportion of information technology curriculum.**

The survey results of the training courses for general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education show that the micro-course and flip classroom are in the top two, which shows that the demand for new information technology courses in primary education teachers is relatively strong. In-depth interviews have found that the current information technology courses focus on the training of multimedia ppt technology while the micro-courses and flipping classrooms are insufficient. Based on the above aspects, it is necessary to increase the proportion of information technology courses for the general pre-service teachers majoring in primary education, strengthen the practical training of information technology, increase the forum for hotspots in information technology and establish technical laboratories so as to improve their comprehensive ability.

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