

An Empirical Study on the Impact of Preschool Teacher Teaching Community on Teachers' Professional Development

Na Wang, Fei Rong

Qingdao Binhai University, Qingdao, Shandong, 266555, China

Keywords: Kindergarten teachers' teaching community; Teachers' professional development; Improving teaching skills; Professional self identity

Abstract: This study deeply discusses the influence of preschool teachers' teaching community on professional development. Through empirical research, this paper reveals the key role of this community in promoting the growth of preschool teachers. Questionnaire survey, in-depth interview and observation were used to ensure the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the data. The questionnaire survey covered teachers in many kindergartens and collected their knowledge, attitude and participation in the teaching community. In-depth interviews selected representative teachers to gain an in-depth understanding of their teaching community experience. Participation in observation directly observed the activity organization of the teaching community and the participation of teachers. The research results show that teaching community plays a significant role in improving teachers' teaching skills, updating professional knowledge, improving educational attitude, enhancing professional identity and broadening educational horizons. Most teachers have a positive evaluation of the community and regard it as an important platform for professional growth. Through in-depth interviews and observation, the positive role of teaching community in promoting teachers' professional development is further confirmed.

1. Introduction

In the vast world of education, preschool education is the most delicate and critical fertile ground. It is not only the starting point of personal education journey, but also the decisive stage of shaping personality, cultivating basic ability and stimulating learning enthusiasm [1]. The professional quality of preschool teachers directly affects the growth and development of children. Therefore, the professional development of preschool teachers is not only related to personal career growth, but also related to the future and hope of the whole society [2]. For preschool teachers, professional development is a complex process involving knowledge accumulation, skills upgrading, attitude change and the formation of values [3]. In this process, teachers need to constantly learn new knowledge and skills, and also need to constantly reflect and summarize in practice, and combine theory with practice to form their own educational ideas and teaching methods [4]. This development process was not built in a day. It relies on a continuous and systematic support system to provide teachers with a space for learning and growth.

Teaching community, as a new way to promote teachers' professional development, is gradually being paid attention to by the education sector [5]. This group of teachers, driven by common vision and goals, realizes mutual learning, mutual support and common progress by sharing teaching experience, discussing teaching problems and studying teaching strategies [6]. In such a community, teachers are no longer alone, but form a collective that is interrelated and meets challenges together, sharing teaching achievements and exploring the way of education together [7]. The particularity of preschool education requires teachers to have more emotional input, patience and innovative thinking. In this community, teachers can deeply exchange teaching experience, share interactive stories with children, and jointly study how to more effectively stimulate learning interest, cultivate good habits and promote all-round development [8]. This kind of communication is helpful to improve teaching skills and promote the formation of more scientific and humanized educational concepts. Teaching community provides a valuable growth platform for preschool teachers, allowing them to get in touch with cutting-edge educational concepts, teaching methods and

technologies, and understand the practice and experience of their peers [9]. Through interactive communication, teachers can broaden their horizons and improve their professional quality and comprehensive ability.

Although the teaching community has obvious advantages in promoting the professional development of preschool teachers, its actual effect varies with individual differences. Different communities have their own characteristics in organizational form, activity content and operation mechanism, and have different influences on teachers' professional development [10]. Therefore, this study aims to explore the influence of teaching community on the professional development of preschool teachers through empirical research, and reveal its mechanism and law. This study will use questionnaires, interviews, observation and other means to collect the data of preschool teachers' participation in the teaching community, learning experience and professional development feelings, and make in-depth analysis. Through this study, this paper hopes to clarify the value of teaching community in promoting the professional development of preschool teachers and provide reference for preschool education practice.

2. Research and design

The purpose of this study is to deeply explore the influence of kindergarten teachers' teaching community on teachers' professional development. Through empirical research, this paper aims to reveal the specific role and value of teaching community in promoting the professional growth of preschool teachers. In order to ensure the scientific validity of the research, this section carefully designed the research plan.

2.1. Research objectives and issues clear

This study first established the focus of inquiry, that is, analyzing the influence of kindergarten teachers' teaching community on teachers' professional growth. Specifically, the research focuses on the effect of community in improving teachers' professional knowledge, teaching ability, educational attitude and professional identity, and discusses the participation and benefit differences of teachers with different backgrounds (teaching experience, education level, professional title, etc.) in this process.

Around this research focus, this section puts forward a series of specific questions: How does the teaching community affect teachers' knowledge update? How does it help teachers improve their teaching skills? What is the role of teaching community in changing teachers' educational attitude and professional identity? Are there obvious differences in the participation and benefits of teachers with different backgrounds in the teaching community?

2.2. Selection of research methods

The research adopts diversified methods, including questionnaire survey, in-depth interview and participation in observation.

Questionnaire survey: A comprehensive questionnaire was designed to collect data on preschool teachers' participation, learning experience and professional development perception in the teaching community. The questionnaire covers teachers' teaching background, their cognition and attitude towards the teaching community, their participation in activities in the teaching community, and the influence of the teaching community on teachers' professional development.

In-depth interview: In order to gain a deeper insight into the practical experience of preschool teachers in the teaching community, some questionnaire participants were selected for in-depth interviews. The interview content mainly involves teachers' learning process, growth challenges and opportunities in the community, so as to obtain more detailed and in-depth information.

Participation in observation: In order to understand the operation mechanism and actual effect of teaching communities more intuitively, several representative teaching communities were selected to participate in observation. In the observation, the activity organization, teacher interaction and the specific promotion of the community to teachers' professional development were recorded.

2.3. Research sample selection

Sample selection adopts the method of combining random sampling with target sampling. A certain number of teachers were randomly selected from kindergartens in an area as the subjects of questionnaire survey. Based on the questionnaire feedback, teachers with different characteristics (teaching age, educational background, professional title, etc.) were selected for further in-depth interviews and observation. This sample selection strategy not only ensures the wide coverage of the research, but also realizes the in-depth exploration.

2.4. Preparation of research tools and materials

In order to ensure the smooth research process, this paper carefully prepared research tools and materials. Detailed questions and options are designed for the questionnaire survey, and the validity of the questionnaire is verified by pre-test. For the in-depth interview, the outline of the interview was formulated, and the core content and direction of the interview were established. For participating in the observation, this paper prepared an observation record table to record the activities of the community, the interaction of teachers and other information.

2.5. Data collection and analysis plan

In terms of data collection, the research will distribute questionnaires online and offline to ensure the recovery rate and effectiveness of the questionnaires. For in-depth interviews and participation in observation, we will communicate with the interviewees or community leaders in advance, determine the time and place of interviews and observation, and make full preparations.

In terms of data analysis, the research will use a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis. The questionnaire data will be analyzed by descriptive statistics and differences using statistical software, so as to reveal the influence of teaching community on teachers' professional development and the differences among teachers with different characteristics. For the data obtained from in-depth interviews and observation, the key information and themes will be refined through content analysis, and the actual experience and feelings of teachers in the teaching community will be deeply understood.

3. Research results and analysis

This section will show in detail the data collected through questionnaires, in-depth interviews and participation in observation, and conduct in-depth analysis and discussion on these data. In order to reveal the concrete influence of kindergarten teachers' teaching community on teachers' professional development.

3.1. Results and analysis of questionnaire survey

In this paper, questionnaires were distributed to kindergarten teachers in a region, and 350 valid questionnaires were collected. The questionnaire covers teachers' teaching background, their cognition and attitude towards the teaching community, their participation in activities in the teaching community, and the influence of the teaching community on teachers' professional development. Tables 1 ~ 3 show and analyze the key data:

Table 1: Teachers' Perceptions and Attitudes towards Teaching Communities

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Teaching communities contribute to professional growth	60%	30%	5%	3%	2%
Teaching communities provide learning opportunities	58%	35%	4%	2%	1%
Teaching communities enhance professional identity	55%	32%	8%	3%	2%

As can be seen from Table 1, most teachers have a positive attitude towards the teaching

community. They think it helps professional growth, provides learning opportunities and enhances professional identity. This shows that the teaching community has extensive recognition and acceptance in the professional development of preschool teachers.

Table 2: Teachers' Participation in Teaching Community Activities

Activity Type	Frequently Participate	Occasionally Participate	Never Participate
Teaching seminars	70%	25%	5%
Teaching observations	65%	28%	7%
Teaching skills training	58%	33%	9%
Educational philosophy sharing	50%	35%	15%

Table 2 shows that teachers mainly participate in teaching seminars, teaching observation and teaching skills training in the teaching community, while the participation in educational concept sharing activities is relatively low. This is related to teachers paying more attention to the improvement of practical level, and it also suggests that we should strengthen the exchange and sharing of educational concepts in the future.

Table 3: Impact of Teaching Communities on Teachers' Professional Development

Impact Aspect	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Improve teaching skills	220	85%
Update professional knowledge	190	73%
Improve educational attitude	160	62%
Enhance professional identity	150	58%
Broaden educational horizons	130	50%

Table 3 shows that the teaching community has many influences on teachers' professional development. Among them, improving teaching skills and updating professional knowledge are the most significant influences. Teaching community has also improved teachers' educational attitude to some extent, enhanced their professional identity and broadened their educational horizons.

3.2. In-depth interview results and analysis

In this section, 10 representative teachers were selected for in-depth interviews. The interview results show that teachers generally believe that the teaching community provides them with a valuable platform for learning and communication, which enables them to be exposed to more teaching concepts and teaching methods, thus improving their teaching level and professionalism. The following is an excerpt from an interview with a teacher: "After joining the teaching community, I have the opportunity to discuss teaching problems and share teaching experience with other teachers. This has benefited me a lot, improved my teaching skills and strengthened my educational beliefs. "

3.3. Participate in observation results and analysis

This department selected three representative teaching communities for field observation. The observation data show that the activities of these communities are arranged in an orderly way, and the teachers' participation attitude is extremely positive. In the discussion session, teachers spoke enthusiastically and shared their personal opinions and suggestions. In the teaching observation, teachers carefully observe and record carefully. In skills training, teachers study hard and practice actively. These phenomena fully reflect the positive influence of teaching community in promoting teachers' professional growth.

To sum up, through the methods of questionnaire survey, in-depth interview and participation in observation, the study draws the following conclusions: the teaching community of kindergarten teachers has played an important role in accelerating the professional development of teachers. It not only improves teachers' teaching skills and professional knowledge, but also optimizes their educational concepts, strengthens their professional identity and broadens their educational horizons.

In view of this, we should vigorously promote and develop the teaching community, create more platforms for preschool teachers to learn and communicate, and promote their professional growth and development.

4. Conclusions

Through the empirical study of this paper, we deeply realize the important role of teaching community in promoting teachers' professional development. Teaching community provides a valuable platform for teachers to learn and communicate, and also improves teachers' teaching skills and professional knowledge through various forms of activities. Teaching community has also improved teachers' educational attitude, enhanced their professional identity and broadened their educational horizons. In the process of questionnaire survey, in-depth interview and observation, this paper deeply felt the teachers' love and expectation for the teaching community. They are eager to learn and grow in such a platform, share their teaching experience with their peers and discuss teaching problems together. This fully shows the great potential of teaching community in promoting teachers' professional development.

In view of this, this paper calls on relevant departments and kindergartens to pay more attention to the construction and management of teaching communities and provide more opportunities for teachers to learn and communicate. It is the common responsibility of the whole society to attach importance to the professional growth of preschool teachers and provide them with more learning opportunities, good growth environment and broad development space. We firmly believe that through the help of teaching community and other forms, preschool teachers will be able to continuously improve their own quality and contribute more wisdom and strength to the growth of children.

Acknowledgements

2022 Qingdao Binhai University Special Research Project of the Collaborative Innovation Center for Early Childhood Education- "Construction and Application of Network Space for Preschool Teacher Teaching Communities"(Project Approval Number: 2023KFKT015).

References

- [1] Wang Yanfeng, Wang Yaoyun. The Views of Kindergarten Teachers on Teachers and Children: Three Transitions in the New Era [J]. Journal of Educational Science of Hunan Normal University, 2019, 18(4): 59-64.
- [2] Xu Qunying, Li Hui, Zhou Zhongxian, et al. Analysis of the Current Situation and Influencing Factors of Teachers' Participation in Early Childhood Sex Education Training [J]. Acta Academiae Medicinae Sinicae, 2024, 46(4): 507-512.
- [3] Yang Dehua, Yang Mengqiu. Reconstruction of the Professional Development Needs of Rural Kindergarten Teachers in the Era of Big Data [J]. China Adult Education, 2020(10): 82-85.
- [4] Zuo Zhihong, Qiu Xiaohong, Xia Ting, et al. The Implicit Attitudes of Kindergarten Teachers towards Professional Ethical Decision-making [J]. Research in Educational Development, 2022, 42(24): 77-84.
- [5] Guo Liping, Cao Juan, He Ting. Teacher Training Based on Learning Paths: A New Idea for the Professional Development of Kindergarten Teachers [J]. Studies in Preschool Education, 2022(7): 1-11.
- [6] Sun Lihua. The Evaluation Literacy of Kindergarten Teachers from the Perspective of Digitalization: Developmental Judgments and Optimization Approaches [J]. Educational Science, 2024, 40(3): 90-96.

- [7] He Tingting. A Study on the Construction Strategies of the Learning Community of Kindergarten Teachers Based on Social Networks [J]. Journal of the Chinese Society of Education, 2023(S1): 180-182.
- [8] Chen Zhiqi, Li Zhongying. A Study on the Professional Development Mechanism of Beginning Kindergarten Teachers from the Perspective of the Community of Practice [J]. Educational Review, 2021(4): 123-130.
- [9] Hua Hongxia. The Development Path of Kindergarten Teachers' Professional Reflection Ability Oriented by Practice [J]. Studies in Preschool Education, 2021(5): 85-88.
- [10] Cai Hongmei, Lü Fang. The Mechanism of the Digital Awareness of Kindergarten Teachers in the Western Region Promoting Their Professional Development [J]. Contemporary Education and Culture, 2024, 16(6): 102-112.