

**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
EDUCATION, PSYCHOLOGY
AND COUNSELLING
(IJEPC)**www.ijepr.com**INVESTIGATING TEACHER IDENTITY AMONG PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS IN CHINESE LOCAL NORMAL UNIVERSITY**Changli Yuan¹, Norazah Abdul Aziz^{2*}, Ahmad Zulfadhli Khairuddin³, Gufeng, Wu⁴¹ Faculty of Education, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia
School of Foreign Studies, Ankang University, Shanxi, China

Email: yuanchangli@xfjphd.cn

² Faculty of Education, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Email: norazahaa@uitm.edu.my

³ Faculty of Education, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Email: ahmadzulfadhli@uitm.edu.my

⁴ Faculty of Education, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Email: wgf0829@gmail.com

* Corresponding Author

Article Info:**Article history:**

Received date: 25.04.2024

Revised date: 07.05.2024

Accepted date: 20.05.2024

Published date: 13.06.2024

To cite this document:

Yuan, C., Abdul Aziz, N., Khairuddin, A. Z., & Wu, G. (2024). Investigating Teacher Identity Among Pre-Service Teachers In Chinese Local Normal University. *International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling*, 9 (54), 144-156.

DOI: 10.35631/IJEPC.954012This work is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)**Abstract:**

The study aims to investigate pre-service teachers' teacher identity in Chinese local normal universities. It employed quantitative research method and utilized the adapted Early Teacher Identity Measure (ETIM) to collected 380 pre-service teachers' data from local normal university in Shaanxi Province, China. The data was analysed by SPSS v28. Findings reveal a notably high level of teacher identity among these students, though there remains room for further development. Moreover, female students exhibit slightly stronger teacher identities compared to their male participants. Freshmen tend to possess higher levels of teacher identity than juniors and seniors, likely influenced by their engagement in educational theory learning, teaching internships, and practical experiences. Furthermore, the teacher identity of students majoring in arts and sports is significantly higher than that of students majoring in humanities and history, and science and engineering. The level of pre-service teachers' teacher identity will affect their quality of learning, values and perception on teaching and affect the overall development of future education and society. Therefore, developing the teacher identity of pre-service teacher is meaningful for teacher education.

Keywords:Pre-service Teacher, Teacher Identity, Chinese Local Normal University,
Teacher Education**Introduction**

The "Revitalization Action Plan for Teacher Education (2018-2022)" published by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in China in 2018 encourages the development and reform of teacher education, which places emphasis on raising the quality of rural teachers. However, plenty of primary and junior schools in Chinese rural areas face severe teacher shortage and the quality of teachers in these rural schools need to be improved (An, 2018). Training-oriented teacher education programs at Chinese local normal universities take on heavy responsibility support the development of local education and to prepare teachers in accordance with the demands of the rural primary and junior middle schools (R. Wang, 2022). At the moment the main source of teachers for rural education comes from the undergraduate education program conducted in the local normal universities. However, pre-service teachers at Chinese local normal universities undergo four-year teacher education are hesitate to work as rural teachers and even give up teaching profession after their graduation (Y. Wang et al., 2023).

In the process of becoming a teacher, it is essential to encourage the development of teacher identity (Miller, 2009). Pre-service teachers are the reserve workforce of future teachers, and their teacher identity is the driving force of teacher emotion, and also the mental preparation for being a teacher. When pre-service teachers build their teacher identities, it will significantly impact how they will instruct in the future as teachers and attitudes that they will have regarding the changes occurring in the area of education (Aykan et al., 2017), because pre-service teachers' teacher identity is a combination of their positive cognition, emotional experience and behavior toward the teaching profession and professional role. Additionally, it serves as their psychological foundation and inspiration for entering the teaching profession (Chen & Mensah, 2018).

Moreover, developing teacher identity is a longitudinal process, hence it should start in the pre-service teacher education. The level of pre-service teachers' teacher identity will affect their quality of learning, values and perception on teaching and affect the overall development of future education and society (Fletcher et al., 2013). Therefore, developing the teacher identity of pre-service teacher is meaningful for teacher education.

literature Review

There are three parts will be discussed in the literature review, namely definition of teacher identity, teacher education in China, and studies on pre-service teachers' teacher identity in China.

Definition of Teacher Identity

The concept of identity defines how an individual is perceived within a given setting (O'Connor, 2008). Teacher identity, in contrast, refers to the professional identity developed over an individual's educational journey and career progression. It pertains to how educators present themselves to others (Lasky, 2005). Some scholars defined pre-service teachers' teacher identity as a quality that must be acknowledged and authentically integrated into their own sense of identity (A. da Cunha et al., 2014; Flores & Day, 2006). For instance, Fletcher

and associates emphasized that "labelling, which can appear through name or categorization, and the accompanying reactions or treatment from others" is "a fundamental element of any identification process". In a similar vein, Fletcher et al (2013) confirmed that "pre-service instructors take on the identity of a teacher once they absorb the details of the teaching profession. As such, this identity facilitates mutual recognition between parties in professional settings. On the other hand, alternative academics understood pre-service teachers' teacher identities as a process that included locating, negotiating, and connecting personal identities in social and professional contexts (Lopes & Pereira, 2012).

Adolescence is crucial for identity development for all people, which means that prospective teachers should never waver in their commitment to their sense of identity and their goals for the future (Yunus et al., 2012). According to Britzman (2012), moving into the profession of a teacher represents a "change of identity". More efficient integration of identity into teacher education is required, as college students in teacher education programs go through different stages of developing their professional identities (Beauchamp, 2009). Kelchtermans (2005) suggested that the dynamic identity among pre-service teachers can be defined as their self-perception, prompting questions such as "who am I as a teacher presently and who do I aspire to be in this job". When defining professional teacher identity, Friesen and Besley (2013) drew on self-categorization theory and described professional teacher identity as a social psychological and developmental process.

Overall, the scholars defined the pre-service teachers' teacher identity differently. Firstly, some of them emphasized the significance of labelling, reactions from others, and absorbing teaching profession specifics to adopt the identity of a teacher. Secondly, the other academics viewed this identity formation as a dynamic process involving negotiation, connection, and alignment of personal identities within social and professional contexts. In this study, Friesen and Besley's (2013) definition of pre-service teachers' teacher identity was adopted.

Teacher Education in China

A "Chinese local normal university" is a higher education institution that is governed by local government department and is responsible for providing training for prospective teachers as well as in-service instructors (Zhou, 2020). In Chinese local normal universities, teacher education programs equip students with subject-specific and general pedagogical knowledge. For instance, an English major undergoes a four-year undergraduate program encompassing English and cultural studies, teaching methodologies, and an education practicum. Typically, teaching-related courses are available in the third year, while the pivotal education practicum occurs in the fourth year, lasting approximately 14 to 16 weeks at partner schools spanning primary to secondary levels. During this practicum, student teachers engage with in-service teachers at placement schools, applying their knowledge in real teaching scenarios while reflecting on their alignment with the teaching profession. pre-service teachers often observe, teach, and handle administrative duties. Pre-service teachers from Chinese local normal university constitute a significant force in rural education in China after their graduation. Nonetheless, many college students from Chinese local normal university hesitate to pursue teaching roles in remote rural areas, particularly in central and western regions (Y. Wang & Wen, 2022).

One contributing factor is that certain normal universities, in their pursuit of comprehensive status, have shifted focus from core teacher education principles. They prioritize disciplinary

subjects over teacher knowledge and neglect the cultivation of students' teacher identity, thereby impacting the development of student teachers' instructional abilities (Yuan, 2018). Teacher education should include ideas and viewpoints on how to prepare future teachers (Beijaard, 2002). McDermott (2002) pointed that teacher education institutions are powerful resources for investigating pre-service teachers' identities and views, and he also emphasized how these organizations foster conversations about identity representation in the classroom. According to Mullen & Diamond (1998), pre-service teachers' journey in creating and evaluating their self-identities is greatly impacted by the way in which their education is provided and they emphasized classrooms as democratic venues for educational transformation.

Studies on Pre-service Teachers' Teacher Identity in China

By searching the keywords "Teacher identity", "Teachers' professional identity" and "teaching education" in Chinese database-- CNKI, Wanfang Data and Weipu Data, it retrieved a total of 167 results from 2012 to 2023 (including 39 theses and dissertations and 128 journal articles). Using "pre-service teachers' teacher identity" as the main search term, 50 results were retrieved (including 9 dissertations and 41 journal articles). Using "local normal university" and "pre-service teachers' teacher identity" as the main search terms, 10 results were retrieved (including 1 dissertation and 9 journal articles). Table 1 displays profile of selected studies.

Table 1 Profile of Selected Studies

Author	Research Title	Methodology	Main Findings
Li Xin (2012)	An Investigation and Suggestions of Normal Students' Professional Identity: Based on Jianxi Normal University	Quantitative (Questionnaire)	The focus of the research is to explore the factors affecting normal students' profession identity from normal education, factors including gender, grade, major and family.
Sun Laiqin (2012)	Identity Identification and Identity Struggle—Narrative Inquiry on Six Rural Teachers at L Town Middle School	Qualitative (Narrative inquiry)	The perception of a positive identity is evolving with inter-generational variations. Integrating identity into social contexts displays a progressive nature. Variances in field integration and adaptation complicate teacher identity formation. Disruptive events not only affect identity expansion but might accelerate identity uncertainty or changes in rural teachers.
Hu, Aihua (2014)	A case study of two pilot universities' teacher education curricula under the context of free teacher education (FTE) policy in mainland China	Qualitative (Case study, interview, open-ended questionnaires, observation)	This study found that FTE in a way helped improve teachers' quality in western and rural regions in China. However, this policy caused some student teachers to lose motivation to study.
Wang, Huamin	A Study on Building a "Three Wholes" Long-	Qualitative (Case study,	The study pointed that developing a long-term "three wholes" system

(2014)	Term Mechanism for Tuition-Free Normal University Students' Education on Career Aspiration	interview)	that encompasses the whole process, whole participation, and whole direction is a necessary prerequisite for improving the efficacy of career ambition education for regular university students who pay no tuition.
Author	Research Title	Methodology	Main Findings
Zuo Youxia et al. (2017)	A Study of Teacher Stereotypes: How Do Tuition-Free Teacher Candidates and General Undergraduates Think about Middle School and University Teachers in China?	Quantitative (Questionnaire)	A three-component stereotype model comprising occupational emotion, personality, and cognition was identified using exploratory factor analysis.
Li Lina (2020)	A Narrative of the Teacher Professional Identity of Outstanding Teacher Students	Qualitative (Narrative)	The factors influencing pre-service teachers' professional identity include internal factors like self-reflection and self-efficacy, and external factors such as key events, significant individuals, curriculum design, educational internships, and the societal environment.
Duan Qingru (2021)	Early Childhood Teacher Identity in the Context of Curriculum	Qualitative (interview, observe, case study)	This study found that the differences in kindergarten teachers' perception of curriculum reform and teachers' identity performance were the result of the combined effect of kindergarten factors, professional motivation and independent development ability.
Huang Xiaoqian (2022)	From Drifting to Embedding: Study on Rural Teachers' Self-identity in Social Change	Qualitative (Case study, interview)	It is found that rural teachers' self-identity is an identity confirmation resulted from individual reflection, which will guide and dominate rural teachers' practical choices and actions.

It is evident that research on teacher identity has become a focal point for numerous scholars in recent years. Existing studies investigate "teacher identity" from various perspectives. However, attention towards pre-service teachers' teacher identity remains relatively limited, most of which focused on tuition-free or sponsored pre-service teachers from six top normal universities rather than local normal university pre-service teachers. Numerous pre-service teachers from Chinese local normal university need to be focused. It is also thought that examining one's own identity as a teacher aids pre-service teachers in developing the emotional skills necessary for their line of work and in creating curricula for teacher preparation. The

research method in the previous studies mainly adopts qualitative research, and the quantitative data is insufficient. The study employed quantitative method to identify the level of pre-service teachers' identity and to investigate the influences of the gender, grade, major and household registration on teacher identity among Chinese local normal university pre-service teachers.

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size.
S is sample size.

Figure 1 Table of Sample Size by Krejcie and Morgan (1970)

Methodology

The research employs a quantitative data collection and analysis strategy, aiming to investigate the level of pre-service teachers' teacher identity in Chinese local normal university.

Population and Sample Size

The participants of the study are pre-service teachers chosen from local normal universities in Shaanxi Province, China. The Figure 1 below shows the table of respondents proposed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The population size is roughly 38,000 in this study. Therefore, when the target population is from 30,000 to 40,000, the participants should be 379 to 380. The questionnaire was distributed through an online platform known as Wen Juanxing (WJX). In this research, data comprises 380 pre-service teachers from local normal university in Shaanxi Province, China. Of the participating pre-service teachers, it involves students in four academic years from different majors such as humanities and history, science and engineering, arts and sports from the academic year. Table 2 displays the descriptive statistics for the study's quantitative sample.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of the Participants

Feature	Variable	Number	Percent
Gender	Male	81	21.28
	Female	299	78.82
Grade	Freshman	168	44.28
	Sophomore	84	21.9
	Junior	104	27.32

	Senior	24	6.35
Major	Humanities and history	209	55.11
	Science and Engineering	136	35.74
	Art and sports	35	9.15
Origin	Rural	285	75.09
	Urban	95	24.91
Total		380	100

Instrument

The teacher identity scale is an adaptation of Early Teacher Identity Measure (ETIM) by Friesen and Besley (2013) into Chinese to investigate the level of Chinese local normal university pre-service teachers' teacher identity. ETIM has been adapted into Turkish (ARPACI & BARDAKÇI, 2015) and used to examine the pre-service teachers' mathematics identity (HACIÖMEROĞLU, 2020). The ETIM, comprising three sub-dimensions and 17 items to measure participants' perceptions of their early teacher identity development. Within this scale, self-categorization as a teacher is evaluated through five specific items, identifying how participants view themselves in this role. Confidence in becoming a teacher is assessed via six items, which reflect participants' belief in their capability to acquire the necessary skills and resources for successful teaching. Participation as a teacher is assessed through six items, focusing on participants' inclination to engage with children autonomously and their satisfaction in teaching or guiding them. The questionnaire will utilize the five-point Likert scale ranging from 1= "Strongly Disagree", 2= "Disagree", 3= "Neutral", 4= "Agree", and 5= "Strongly Agree" for the assessment of items.

Validity and Reliability

For the validity and reliability, the teacher identity scale and items in the questionnaire that has been adapted for this study have often been used in earlier researches, where the validity and reliability have been tested. Two experts of faculty of education will be appointed as the content and language expert in order to assess the questionnaire items. Meanwhile, another two experts majoring in translation will be appointed to check the translation of the items. Later on, the scale was further investigated to test the inter-consistency and the result revealed the Cronbach's Alpha. The Cronbach's Alpha for the three dimensions in the questionnaire were 0.806, 0.819, and 0.856 respectively. Validity verification was conducted using KMO and Bartlett's tests, with a coefficient of 0.892 for teacher identity validity testing.

Data Collection and Data analysis

Data collection in this study will be carried out by arranging a questionnaire among local normal university pre-service teachers in Shaanxi Province, China. The questionnaire will be distributed through an online platform known as WJX, which will gather data from the target population and automatically save all of the gathered answers in a spreadsheet. The data will be saved to Excel and then integrated into SPSS v28 for further study.

Findings and Analysis

The Overall Level of Teacher Identity

As shown in Table 3, the average score for teacher identity among local normal university pre-service teachers is 3.641 (out of 5), indicating a relatively high overall level of teacher identity. However, there is still significant room for improvement. There are significant differences

among the three dimensions: normal students from local universities show the highest level of teacher identity with self-categorization as a teacher, followed by moderate level of teacher identity with confidence in becoming a teacher, and the lowest level of identification with participation as a teacher.

Table 3. The Overall Level of Teacher Identity of Pre-service Teachers

Dimensions	M	SD	M±SD
Self-categorization as a teacher	3.822	0.702	3.822±0.702
Confidence in becoming a teacher	3.774	0.684	3.774±0.684
Participation as a teacher	3.317	0.879	3.317±0.879
Teacher identity (total)	3.641	0.673	3.641±0.673

Gender Difference on Teacher Identity

As shown in Table 4, there was no significant difference in the first dimension between genders ($F=0.930$, $P=0.335$). Female participants had a mean of 3.87 ($SD=0.71$), while male participants had a mean of 3.81 ($SD=0.70$). However, there are differences in confidence in becoming a teacher and participation as a teacher ($P < 0.05$). In confidence in becoming a teacher, female participants reported a mean of 3.87 ($SD=0.74$), while male participants reported a mean of 3.75 ($SD=0.67$). Meanwhile, a difference was observed in the third dimension between genders ($F=4.930$, $P=0.027$), Female participants had a mean of 2.85 ($SD=0.77$), whereas male participants had a mean of 2.72 ($SD=0.68$).

Table 4 Gender Difference on Teacher Identity

Dimensions	Gender:(M±SD)		F	p
	Female(n=81)	Male(n=299)		
Self-categorization as a teacher	3.87±0.71	3.81±0.70	0.930	0.335
Confidence in becoming a teacher	3.87±0.74	3.75±0.67	4.046	0.045*
Participation as a teacher	2.85±0.77	2.72±0.68	4.930	0.027*

* $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$

Grade Difference on Teacher Identity

As shown in Table 5, significant differences were found among different grades in both self-categorization as a teacher and confidence in becoming a teacher ($P < 0.05$). For dimension--self-categorization as a teacher, freshmen reported the highest mean score of 3.93 ($SD=0.70$), followed by seniors with a mean score of 3.75 ($SD=0.64$), while sophomores and juniors had lower mean scores of 3.71 ($SD=0.68$) and 3.73 ($SD=0.71$) respectively. Similarly, in Confidence in becoming a teacher, significant differences were found across different grades ($F=5.090$, $P=0.002$). Freshmen reported the highest mean score of 3.88 ($SD=0.67$), followed by seniors with a mean score of 3.71 ($SD=0.64$), while sophomores and juniors had lower mean scores of 3.67 ($SD=0.65$) and 3.71 ($SD=0.72$) respectively. There were no significant differences in terms of participation as a teacher among different grades ($P > 0.05$). there was

a trend indicating higher participation scores for freshmen ($M=2.80$, $SD=0.72$) compared to sophomores ($M=2.67$, $SD=0.68$), juniors ($M=2.70$, $SD=0.72$), and seniors ($M=2.74$, $SD=0.58$).

Table 5. Grade Difference on Teacher Identity

Dimensions	Grade: (M±SD)				F	p
	Freshman (n=168)	Sophomore (n=84)	Junior (n=104)	Senior (n=24)		
Self-categorization as a teacher	3.93±0.70	3.71±0.68	3.73±0.71	3.75±0.64	5.788	0.001**
Confidence in becoming a teacher	3.88±0.67	3.67±0.65	3.71±0.72	3.71±0.64	5.090	0.002**
Participation as a teacher	2.80±0.72	2.67±0.68	2.70±0.72	2.74±0.58	2.224	0.084

* $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$

Major Difference on Teacher Identity

As shown in Table 6, significant differences were observed among pre-service teachers of different majors in terms of three dimensions ($P < 0.05$). In the first dimension, students majoring in Humanities and History reported a mean score of 3.76 ($SD=0.68$), those in Science and Engineering reported a mean score of 3.86 ($SD=0.74$), while students in Art and Sports reported the highest mean score of 4.03 ($SD=0.65$). As for the second dimension, students majoring in Humanities and History reported a mean score of 3.67 ($SD=0.66$), those in Science and Engineering reported a mean score of 3.89 ($SD=0.69$), and students in Art and Sports reported the highest mean score of 3.95 ($SD=0.68$). In the third dimension, students majoring in Humanities and History reported a mean score of 2.67 ($SD=0.65$), those in Science and Engineering reported a mean score of 2.77 ($SD=0.77$), while students in Art and Sports reported the highest mean score of 3.13 ($SD=0.57$).

Table 6. Major Difference on Teacher Identity

Dimensions	Major: (M±SD)			F	p
	Humanities and history (n=209)	Science and Engineering (n=136)	Art and sports (n=35)		
Self-categorization as a teacher	3.76±0.68	3.86±0.74	4.03±0.65	5.568	0.004**
Confidence in becoming a teacher	3.67±0.66	3.89±0.69	3.95±0.68	12.499	0.000**
Participation as a teacher	2.67±0.65	2.77±0.77	3.13±0.57	14.313	0.000**

* $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$

Household Registration Difference on Teacher Identity

As shown in Table 7, teacher identity of students living in rural areas scored higher than those in urban areas across three dimensions. In the first dimension, rural pre-service teachers scored slightly higher with a mean of 3.83 ($SD=0.70$), compared to urban participants who scored

marginally lower at 3.78 (SD=0.71). In Confidence in becoming a teacher, both rural and urban participants exhibited comparable mean scores, with rural participants at 3.78 (SD=0.68) and urban participants at 3.76 (SD=0.69). Regarding Participation as a teacher, pre-service teachers from rural areas scored slightly higher with a mean of 2.77 (SD=0.70), whereas those from urban areas scored marginally lower at 2.69 (SD=0.71). Further analysis of variance indicates that there were no significant differences in terms of household registration (rural or urban) in three dimensions among pre-service teachers ($P > 0.05$).

Table 7 Household Registration Difference on Teacher Identity

Dimensions	Household Registration: (M±SD)		F	p
	Rural(n=285)	Urban (n=95)		
Self-categorization as a teacher	3.83±0.70	3.78±0.71	0.909	0.341
Confidence in becoming a teacher	3.78±0.68	3.76±0.69	0.172	0.679
Participation as a teacher	2.77±0.70	2.69±0.71	1.589	0.208

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

Conclusion and Suggestions

The data suggests that pre-service teachers in local normal universities generally exhibit a high level of teacher identity, yet there remains considerable room for improvement. External challenges such as employment difficulties and heightened workload for teachers may significantly influence the teacher identity of pre-service teachers in local normal universities (A. Wang, 2024). This influence can lead to conflicting attitudes, where they recognize the intrinsic value of the teaching profession but display negative behaviors in response.

The teacher identity level of female students is slightly higher than that of male students, and this holds true for both self-categorization as a teacher and confidence in becoming a teacher, as well as participation as a teacher, which is consistent with the research findings of Lopes and Pereira (2012). Students in the first year show a relatively high level of teacher identity, possibly because they have not yet experienced educational theory learning, teaching practicum, and internships, leading them to underestimate the complexity of the teaching profession. After experiencing educational theory learning and teaching practicum, pre-service teachers reevaluate the nature and specific content of teaching, which may have some negative effects on their teacher identity construction. The level of teacher identity among pre-service teachers majoring in art and sports is significantly higher than that of pre-service teachers in other two disciplines. The implementation of "Revitalization Action Plan for Teacher Education (2018-2022)" has led training institutions to transform, and there is a growing demand for art and physical education teacher candidates. Rural students show a higher level of teacher identity, as becoming a teacher and having a stable job are considered good choices for them.

The construction of pre-service teachers' teacher identity incorporates information from a variety of sources, such as "students' personalities, familial or influential relationships, instructional experiences, policy frameworks, educational traditions, and cultural settings" (Sugrue, 1997). Freire (2000) proposed that the creation of conditions that support the production and construction of knowledge, rather than only the knowledge transfer. Therefore, the pedagogy used in teacher education should seek to assist prospective teachers in becoming "excellent" teachers in both their personal and professional development (Korthagen, 2004). Local normal universities should prioritize pre-service teachers' training, improve training mechanisms, and increase per-service teachers' attention to teaching methods and practices. Teachers, in turn, should demonstrate the essence and value of teaching work in their teaching, and provide personalized education for students with low teacher identity. Pre-service teachers should actively direct their own career advancement (Schepens et al., 2009). Pre-service teachers from local normal universities should establish correct views on the teaching profession, make career plans, identify their own personality traits, objectively evaluate their abilities, and find the right career direction during their growth process.

Acknowledgement

The participants and people who took time and made the effort to fill out this research questionnaire are greatly appreciated.

References

- A. da Cunha, M., Batista, P., & Graça, A. (2014). Pre-Service Physical Education Teachers' Discourses on Learning How to Become a Teacher: [Re]Constructing a Professional Identity Based on Visual Evidence. *The Open Sports Sciences Journal*, 7(1), 141–171. <https://doi.org/10.2174/1875399X01407010141>
- An, X. (2018). Teacher Salaries and the Shortage of High-Quality Teachers in China's Rural Primary and Secondary Schools. *Chinese Education & Society*, 51(2), 103–116. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10611932.2018.1433411>
- ARPACI, D., & BARDAKÇI, M. (2015). Adaptation of Early Teacher Identity Measure into Turkish. *Gaziantep University Journal of Social Sciences*, 14(24222), 687–719. <https://doi.org/10.21547/jss.256762>
- Aykac, N., Yildirim, K., Altinkurt, Y., & Marsh, M. M. (2017). Understanding the Underlying Factors Affecting the Perception of Pre-Service Teachers' Teacher Identity: A New Instrument to Support Teacher Education. *Üniversitepark Bülten*, 6(1), 67–78. <https://doi.org/10.22521/unibulletin.2017.61.6>
- Beauchamp, C. (2009). Preparing prospective teachers for a context of change: reconsidering the role of teacher education in the development of identity. *Cambridge Journal of Education*.
- Beijaard, D. (2002). *Teacher induction at the crossroads: an attempt to harmonize the chaos (Essay review)*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/28648184>
- Britzman, D. P. (2012). *Practice makes practice: A critical study of learning to teach*. Albany. SUNY Press.
- Chen, J. L., & Mensah, F. M. (2018). Teaching Contexts That Influence Elementary Preservice Teachers' Teacher and Science Teacher Identity Development. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, 29(5), 420–439. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1046560X.2018.1469187>
- Duan, Q. (2021). *Early Childhood Teacher Identity in the Context of Curriculum*. Huadong Normal University.

- Fletcher, T., Mandigo, J., & Kosnik, C. (2013). Elementary classroom teachers and physical education: change in teacher-related factors during pre-service teacher education. *Physical Education & Sport Pedagogy*, 18(2), 169–183. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17408989.2011.649723>
- Flores, M. A., & Day, C. (2006). Contexts which shape and reshape new teachers' identities: A multi-perspective study. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 22(2), 219–232. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2005.09.002>
- Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy, and civic courage*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Friesen, M. D., & Besley, S. C. (2013). Teacher identity development in the first year of teacher education: A developmental and social psychological perspective. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 36, 23–32. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2013.06.005>
- HACIÖMEROĞLU, G. (2020). Examining the Pre-service Teachers' Mathematics Identity, Early Teacher Identity, and STEM Teaching Intentions. *Sınırsız Eğitim ve Araştırma Dergisi*, 5(3), 261–320. <https://doi.org/10.29250/sead.772062>
- Hu, A. (2014). *A CASE STUDY OF TWO PILOT UNIVERSITIES' TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULA UNDER THE CONTEXT OF FREE TEACHER EDUCATION POLICY IN MAINLAND CHINA*. Beijing Normal University.
- Huang, X. (2022). *From Drifting to Embedding: Study on Rural Teachers' Self-identity in Social Change*. Xinjiang Normal University.
- Kelchtermans, G. (2005). Teachers' emotions in educational reforms: Self-understanding, vulnerable commitment and micropolitical literacy. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21(8), 995–1006. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2005.06.009>
- Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining Sample Size for Research Activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30(3), 607–610. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001316447003000308>
- Lasky, S. (2005). A sociocultural approach to understanding teacher identity, agency and professional vulnerability in a context of secondary school reform. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21(8), 899–916. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2005.06.003>
- Li, L. (2020). *A Narrative of the Teacher Professional Identity of Outstanding Teacher Students*. Xibei Normal University.
- Li, X. (2012). *An Investigation and Suggestions of Normal Students' Professional Identity: Based on Jianxi Normal University*. Jianxi Normal University.
- Lopes, A., & Pereira, F. (2012). Everyday life and everyday learning: the ways in which pre-service teacher education curriculum can encourage personal dimensions of teacher identity. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 35(1), 17–38. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2011.633995>
- McDermott, M. (2002). Collaging pre-service teacher identity. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 53–68. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23478451>
- Miller, J. (2009). Teacher Identity. In *Cambridge Guide to Second Language Teacher Education* (pp. 172–181). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781139042710.023>
- O'Connor, K. E. (2008). “You choose to care”: Teachers, emotions and professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(1), 117–126. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2006.11.008>
- Schepens, A., Aelterman, A., & Vlerick, P. (2009). Student teachers' professional identity formation: between being born as a teacher and becoming one. *Educational Studies*, 35(4), 361–378. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055690802648317>

- Sugrue, C. (1997). Student Teachers' Lay Theories and Teaching Identities: their implications for professional development. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 20(3), 213–225. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0261976970200302>
- Sun, L. (2012). *Identity Identification and Identity Struggle—Narrative Inquiry on Six Rural Teachers at L Town Middle School*. Dongbei Normal University.
- Wang, A. (2024). The Impact of The Double Reduction Policy on The Construction of The Professional Identity of Tutoring Class Teachers. *Journal of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 26, 29–38. <https://doi.org/10.54097/gj768p91>
- Wang, H. (2014). A Study on Building a “Three Wholes” Long-Term Mechanism for Tuition-Free Normal University Students' Education on Career Aspiration. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 10(2), 112–117. <https://doi.org/10.3968/4627>
- Wang, R. (2022). Research on the Service of Normal Universities to Local Economic Development under the Background of “New Strengthening Normal University Project.” *Frontiers in Educational Research*, 5(13). <https://doi.org/10.25236/FER.2022.051307>
- Wang, Y., & Wen, Z. (2022). An Empirical Study of Rural Teachers' Turnover Intention: Based on a Survey of 5342 Rural Teachers in Yunnan Province. *Teacher and Teacher Education*, 82–90. <https://www.cnki.net/kns/defaultresult/index>
- Wang, Y., Yang, L., Zhang, X., & Shao, Z. (2023). Students' Career Intention to Teach in Rural Areas by Region and Household Registration: A Study of Students at an Eastern Chinese Local Normal University. *Sustainability*, 15(15), 11755. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su151511755>
- Yuan, Y. C. (2018). A Survey on English normal students' career choice and their professional willingness of pre-service teachers in the transitional period. *Popular Science*, 161–162. <https://www.cnki.net/kns/defaultresult/index>
- Yunus, F. W., Malik, M., & Zakaria, A. (2012). A Study on the Identity Status of Future English Teachers. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 35, 146–153. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.02.073>
- Zhou, X. (2020). The change of the teacher education system and the dispute on the ideas of teacher education in China. *Teacher Development Research*, 46–53. <https://www.cnki.net/kns/defaultresult/index>
- Zuo, Y., Zhao, Y., Peng, C., & Chen, Y. (2017). A Study of Teacher Stereotypes: How Do Tuition-Free Teacher Candidates and General Undergraduates Think about Middle School and University Teachers in China? *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00576>