

Guidelines for Professionalism Development of Kindergarten Teachers in Yunnan Province

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Abstract: The research objectives of the thesis were 1) to study the states for the Professionalism of Kindergarten Teachers in Yunnan Province. 2) to provide guidelines for the Professionalism Development of Kindergarten Teachers in Yunnan Province which including the following three aspects: teacher team, evaluation incentive mechanism and teacher development mechanism, and self-development awareness. The sample group were 201 kindergarten teachers from 8 kindergartens in Yunnan Province and The interviewees were 5 kindergarten managers from the 8 kindergartens mentioned above. The research instruments were questionnaire surveys and structured interviews, and the analysis methods include percentage, mean, standard deviation, and content analysis. The results were found that 1.The current situation of professionalism development of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province mainly includes: 1) the level of professional knowledge needs to be improved, 2) uneven development of professional skills, 3) the level of professional ethics needs to be strengthened, and 4) the sense of professional identity and belonging needs to be improved. 2. The guidelines for enhancing the professionalism development of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province include: 1) strengthening the construction of the kindergarten teachers' team, 2) improving the evaluation and incentive mechanisms, and 3) enhancing teachers' awareness of professional development.

Keywords: Professionalism development; Kindergarten teachers; Yunnan Province

1. Introduction

With the strong promotion and support of the country for preschool education, the development of preschool education has ushered in a new golden age and also brought new challenges. In December 2015, the "Comprehensive Two Child Policy" was fully implemented, resulting in a sharp increase in the number of young children and an increasingly prominent problem of difficulty in entering kindergarten. In order to solve this problem, various regions have started to increase investment in preschool education resources and build and expand kindergartens.

Yunnan Province is located on the southwestern border of China and has the most ethnic minorities in China. Compared with the development of preschool education in the eastern coastal areas, the quality of education is relatively low. In order to promote the high-quality development of education in Yunnan, Yunnan Province has also issued a series of documents. In May 2023, the "three-year action plan for high-quality development of education in Yunnan Province (2023-2025)" was released, emphasizing the promotion of the comprehensive improvement of preschool education level in Yunnan Province.

However, with the rapid increase in the number of kindergartens, the demand for kindergarten teachers has also increased significantly. The number of graduates majoring in preschool education in universities is far from meeting this huge demand. Behind the high demand, there is a reality that cannot be ignored: the personal qualities of teachers are uneven, there are differences in educational levels, and the degree of specialization is relatively low. This ultimately leads to a lack of professional expertise among kindergarten teachers, and frequent problems in the field of preschool education. How to deeply understand the professional status of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province and propose optimization strategies based on this is particularly urgent for improving the professional development of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Teacher professionalization

The concept of teacher professionalization was first proposed by Carr Saunders (1933), who defined profession as "a group of people engaged in a profession that requires specialized skills, with the aim of providing specialized services. His philosophy has had a profound impact on the education industry. Fan Lin

(2007) pointed out five characteristics of professional teachers summarized by Professor Winch of the University of Northampton in the UK: 1) teachers should have educational knowledge of applied theory, 2) educational knowledge should include normative education, running through the three aspects of curriculum, teaching, and evaluation, 3) educational knowledge should include technical knowledge, and special technical knowledge should be obtained through personal experience, interaction, and communication. 4) educational knowledge should incorporate personal moral enthusiasm, 5) Educational knowledge should possess critical rationality.

2.2 Theory of Professional Standards for Kindergarten Teachers

The concept of kindergarten teacher professional development belongs to teacher professional development, and different scholars have rich and diverse understandings and discussions on the connotation of kindergarten teacher professional development. Famous Chinese educator Ye Lan (1998) believes that the professional competence of preschool teachers can be understood as their teaching ability in preschool education and their research ability in educational issues. Cao Nengxiu (2010)

Pointed out that the three elements of professional quality, professional knowledge and understanding, and professional skills in the UK's Teacher Standards are basically similar to the three professional dimensions proposed by the Chinese Ministry of Education's Professional Standards for Kindergarten Teachers: professional philosophy and ethics, professional knowledge, and professional ability.

2.3 Problems in the Professional Development of Kindergarten Teachers

Scholars' research on the influencing factors of kindergarten teachers' professional abilities mainly focuses on two aspects: external environmental factors and internal factors. Ha liyuan (2016) pointed out that in terms of environmental creation and utilization ability, some teachers have poor professional skills and resource utilization ability, and cannot form educational synergy with parents in terms of communication and cooperation ability. Guo Jingjing (2020) pointed out that novice kindergarten teachers lack experience and various factors lead to a low sense of professional identity. Huang Yan (2019) pointed out that in remote ethnic minority areas, the overall teacher resources are weak, manifested in insufficient professional abilities and low teaching standards of teachers. Huang Chaobin and Wu Zhongquan (2014) pointed out that kindergarten teachers in ethnic minority areas generally have low educational levels and weak professional abilities; The teaching staff in remote ethnic minority areas is very weak.

2.4 Factors Influencing the Professional Development of Kindergarten

Teachers Scholars mainly divide the influencing factors on the professional ability of kindergarten teachers into external environmental factors and internal self factors. Chen Jinju (2007) pointed out that the organizational atmosphere, regulations and management systems, and teacher culture in kindergartens are the three factors with the greatest external impact. Fu Jingwen (2014) pointed out that the professional concepts and qualities, management concepts, organizational culture, incentive and assessment systems of kindergarten leadership can all affect the development of kindergarten teachers' professional abilities. Scholars Xu Weixia and Yuan Ailing (2011) proposed that the professional development of kindergarten teachers should reflect autonomy, initiative, and networking.

2.5 Research on Strategies for Improving the Professional Ability of Kindergarten Teachers

Scholars' research on professional improvement strategies for kindergarten teachers mainly focuses on two aspects: pre employment training and on-the-job training. It is believed that in terms of pre employment training, a talent training model centered on students' abilities should be formed. Xu Hong (2016) pointed out that the training institutions for kindergarten teachers should focus on the training objectives, content, methods, systems, and evaluation. In terms of training objectives, Zhang Jie (2011) believes that it is possible to improve the value orientation of educational objectives, pay attention to the differentiation of educational training, streamline course content, optimize the school's educational curriculum system, attach importance to practical training, and focus on cultivating the teaching skills that frontline teachers truly need.

In terms of in-service training, Hu Guohua (2013) proposed that the government should collaborate with various training institutions to create a multidimensional training system. In terms of kindergarten teaching and research, Li Yushu (2015) believes that in order to change teachers' inherent misconceptions, teachers should attach importance to kindergarten based teaching and research; Kindergartens should enrich the forms and approaches of kindergarten based teaching and research; Explore the development

3. Methodology and Procedures

3.1 Population and Sample

Population 420 kindergarten teachers from 8 kindergartens in Yunnan Province

The Sample Group

201 kindergarten teachers from 8 kindergartens in Yunnan Province

The sample was determined based on the table for determining the limited population sample size proposed by Robert V. Krejcie and Daryl W. Morgan in their article "Determining the Sample Size of Research Activities" published in the Journal of Education and Psychological Measurement in the 1970s.

3.2 Research Instruments

a. Questionnaire

The instrument used to collect data for studying the professionalization of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province is a questionnaire. The questionnaire is based on the three dimensions of the "Professional Standards for Kindergarten Teachers (Trial)": 1) professional knowledge, 2) professional ability, and 3) professional philosophy and ethics, covering a total of 14 fields. This includes 9 questions on professional concepts and ethics, 9 questions on professional knowledge, and 10 questions on professional abilities, totaling 28 questions. The questionnaire is designed based on the Likert scale.

The questionnaire process is as follows:

Step 1: Review and analyze relevant literature, concepts, theories, and research on the professionalism of kindergarten teachers.

Step 2: Construct a professional literacy survey questionnaire for kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province.

Step 3: The Index of Objective Consistency (IOC) of the questionnaire is checked by three experts.

Step 4: Modify the survey questionnaire based on expert suggestions.

Step 5: Distribute the questionnaire to 30 kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province for trial use.

Step 6: Conduct a questionnaire survey on 201 kindergarten teachers from 8 kindergartens in Yunnan Province.

b. Structured interview

Based on the analysis of questionnaire data, a structured interview was designed on the professional development of kindergarten teachers. The interviewees were 5 kindergarten principals from 8 kindergartens in Yunnan Province. The interview questions mainly focus on three aspects: 1) professional knowledge, 2) professional abilities, and 3) professional philosophy and teacher ethics. In this step, respondents with rich experience and professional knowledge from their respective fields provide suggestions for the professional development of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province.

3.3 Validity test of the questionnaire

In the early stage, three experts were invited to test the effectiveness of the questionnaire design, and the questionnaire passed the effectiveness test. (IOC=0.67-1.00)

3.4 Data Collection

The methods used for data collection include common Chinese social media tools such as DingTalk and WeChat.

3.5 Data Analysis

Use descriptive statistical data to analyze the questionnaire, including frequency, maximum, minimum, mean, percentage, and standard deviation. Content Analysis is used for the development of guidelines.

4. Result Analysis

The researchers distributed a survey questionnaire to 201 kindergarten teachers. A total of 199 questionnaires were collected, with a recovery rate of 99%.

4.1 Frequency and percentage analysis of respondents' personal information

The researcher analyzed the personal information of the respondents and classified them by gender, working hours of kindergarten teachers, highest education level, and major. Presented in the form of frequency and percentage.

Table 4.1 Number of people and percentage of respondents

(n=199)			
	Personal information	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	21	10.55
	Female	178	89.45
	Total	199	100
Age	21-30 years old	115	57.79
	31-40 years old	50	25.12
	41-50 years old	29	14.57
	Over 50 years old	5	2.52
	Total	199	100
Working as a kindergarten teacher	1-5 years	76	38.19
	6-10 years	63	31.66
	11-15 years	32	16.08
	16-20 years	18	9.04
	Over 20 years	10	5.03
	Total	199	100
Highest education	Secondary Education	5	2.52
	College Degree	104	52.26
	Bachelor's Degree	81	40.70
	Master's Degree	9	4.52
	Total	199	100
Major	Preschool Education Major	176	88.44
	Other Teacher Education Majors	14	7.04
	Non-teacher Majors	9	4.52
	Total	199	100

According to Table 4.1, among the respondents, there are 178 women, accounting for 89.45%, and 21 men, accounting for 10.55%. 57.79% are aged between 21 and 30, 25.12% are aged between 31 and 40, 14.57% are aged between 41 and 50, and 2.52 are aged over 50. Working as a kindergarten teacher accounted for 38.19 people in 1-5 years, 31.66% in 6-10 years, 16.08% in 11-15 years, 9.04% in 16-20 years, and 5.03% in over 20 years. Among the respondents, 104 had a college degree, accounting for 52.26%, 81 had a bachelor's degree, accounting for 40.70%, and 9 had a master's degree, accounting for 4.52%. Among the respondents, there were 176 students majoring in preschool education, accounting for 88.44%.

4.2 Analysis Results of the Professional Status of Kindergarten Teachers in Yunnan Province

The researcher presented the analysis results in the form of mean and standard deviation.

Table 4.2 The average value and standard deviation of the Professionalism of Kindergarten Teachers in Yunnan Province

(n=199)					
	Professionalism Development of Kindergarten Teachers in Yunnan Province	\bar{x}	S.D.	level	rank
1	Professional Knowledge	4.37	6.67	high	3
2	Professional Skills	4.51	15.45	high	1
3	Professional Ethic	4.42	7.64	high	2
	Total	4.43	9.92		

According to Table 4.2, it is found that the professional development status of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province is at a high level in three aspects (\bar{x} =4.43, SD=9.92). From the results of this study, from high to low, the highest level of professional skills (\bar{x} = 4.51, SD=15.45), followed by professional ethics (\bar{x} = 4.42, SD=7.64), with the lowest level of professional knowledge (\bar{x} = 4.37, SD=6.67).

Table 4.3 The average value and standard deviation of the professionalism development of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province in professional knowledge

(n=199)					
	Professional knowledge	\bar{x}	S.D.	level	rank
1	Child survival, development, regulations, laws and policies	4.35	2.37	high	2
2	Characteristics and laws of physical and mental development of young children	4.47	2.45	high	1
3	General knowledge	4.28	2.54	high	3
Total		4.37	2.45		

According to Table 4.3, it is found that the current level of professional knowledge in all three aspects is at a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.37$, $SD=2.45$). In terms of the results of this study, from high to low, the highest level is the characteristics and patterns of physical and mental development of young children ($\bar{x} = 4.47$, $SD=2.45$), followed by child survival , development, regulations, laws and regulations . Policy level ($\bar{x} = 4.35$, $SD=2.37$), with the lowest general knowledge level ($\bar{x} = 4.28$, $SD=2.54$).

Table 4.4 The average value and standard deviation of the professionalism development of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province in professional skills

(n=199)					
	Professional Skills	\bar{x}	S.D.	level	rank
1	Creation and use of environments for young children	4.51	2.91	high	4
2	Young children's daily life organization	4.57	2.23	high	1
3	Young children's game activities	4.47	2.41	high	6
4	Planning and implementation of young children education activities	4.44	2.93	high	7
5	Young children's motivational evaluation	4.56	1.81	high	2
6	Communication and cooperation	4.53	2.82	high	3
7	Reflection and development	4.47	1.52	high	5
Total		4.51	2.38		

According to Table 4.4, it is found that the current level of professional skills in seven areas is at a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.51$, $SD=2.38$). In terms of the results of this study, from the highest to the lowest level, the highest level is the daily life organization of young children ($\bar{x} = 4.57$, $SD=2.23$), the second is the evaluation of young children's motivation ($\bar{x} = 4.56$, $SD=1.81$), and the third is communication and cooperation ($\bar{x} = 4.53$, $SD=2.82$), and the fourth is the creation and utilization of young children's environment ($\bar{x} = 4.51$, $SD=2.91$), and the fifth is reflection and development ($\bar{x} = 4.47$, $SD=1.52$), and the sixth is children's play activities ($\bar{x} = 4.47$, $SD=2.41$), with the lowest level of early childhood education activities ($\bar{x} = 4.44$, $SD=2.93$).

Table 4.5 The average value and standard deviation of the professionalism development of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province in professional ethics

(n=199)					
	Professional ethics	\bar{x}	S.D.	level	rank
1	Career understanding and awareness	4.55	2.29	high	2
2	Attitudes and behavior towards young children	4.17	1.98	high	4
3	Young children care and education attitudes and behavior	4.61	2.51	high	1
4	Personal culture and behavior	4.34	2.26	high	3
Total		4.42	2.26		

According to Table 4.5, it is found that the current status of professional ethics is at a high level in four aspects ($\bar{x} = 4.42$, $SD=2.26$). In terms of the results of this study, from high to low, the highest level is the attitude and behavior towards early childhood care and education ($\bar{x} = 4.61$, $SD=2.51$), followed by professional understanding and awareness ($\bar{x} = 4.55$, $SD=2.29$), followed by personal culture and behavior ($\bar{x} = 4.34$, $SD=2.26$), with the lowest level of attitude and behavior towards young children ($\bar{x} = 4.17$, $SD=1.98$).

4.3 Analysis Results of Interview Content

The interviewees are 5 kindergarten principals from 8 kindergartens in Yunnan Province, who have rich experience and professional knowledge.

Table 4.6 Personal information of interviewee

Interviewee	Education background	Interview Date	Interview Time
Interviewee 1	Highest Education: Master’s Degree Expertise: Preschool Education :Work experience22years	August 13,2023	15:00 pm GMT +7 25 minutes
Interviewee 2	Highest Education: Master’s Degree Expertise: Preschool Education :Work experience10years	August 13,2023	20:00 pm GMT +7 25 minutes
Interviewee 3	:Highest EducationBachelor's Degree Expertise: Preschool Education :Work experience7years	August 13,2023	21:00pm GMT +7 25 minutes
Interviewee 4	:Highest EducationBachelor's Degree Expertise: Preschool Education :Work experience11yearsr	August 13,2023	21:35 pm GMT +7 25 minutes
Interviewee 5	:Highest EducationBachelor's Degree Expertise: Preschool Education :Work experience9yearsr	August 14,2023	10:00 am GMT +7 25 minutes

From the table above, it can be seen that the experts interviewed have a minimum working time of 7 years and a maximum of 22 years. Both have bachelor's or master's degrees. The interview questions mainly focus on three aspects: 1) professional knowledge, 2) professional abilities, and 3) professional philosophy and teacher ethics.

Table 4.7 Summary table of the interview results

Dimension	Summary of the results of the interview content
What do you think is the status of kindergarten teachers today? And in what areas should be developed?	Society still lacks respect and understanding for kindergarten teachers. This view should be changed. Change the current situation of unstable income and long working hours for preschool teachers. There is a significant difference in income between teachers in public and private kindergartens.
What are your suggestions for the professional development of kindergarten teachers to become professional?	Strengthen the qualification admission of kindergarten teachers, systematic learning of professional knowledge, keeping up with the trend of the times in the field of childhood education, and mastering modern information technology. It cannot be separated from the active guidance of the education authorities and the joint efforts of the government, society, and kindergartens.
What are your suggestions for the professional development of kindergarten teachers in terms of professional knowledge?	Most kindergarten teachers have solid professional knowledge. The professional knowledge level of private kindergarten teachers is significantly lower than that of public kindergarten teachers. The general knowledge of kindergarten teachers needs to be improved. Young teachers have a serious lack of knowledge in early childhood care and education.
What are your suggestions for the professional development of kindergarten teachers in terms of professional skills?	Improving the professional abilities of kindergarten teachers is a long-term process that requires systematic learning. Teachers themselves must strengthen their professional theoretical learning and lay a solid foundation. At the same time, supervision and inspection are needed.
What are your suggestions for the professional development of kindergarten teachers in terms of professional Ethics?	The professional ethics level of kindergarten teachers is closely related to personal cultivation and behavior. Establish a strict professional ethics reward and punishment mechanism for kindergarten teachers. Hold regular relevant training, increase

	supervision and guidance.
How do you have ideas or perspectives to support the development of kindergarten teachers to be professionals continuously	Kindergartens should establish effective supervision and incentive measures. The government, society, and kindergartens should build an environment that is conducive to the growth of teachers. The improvement of the guarantee system and incentive system helps kindergarten teachers to continuously enhance their professional abilities.

From the interview results, it can be found that the professional abilities of preschool teachers are recognized, but there are still problems such as imbalanced development of abilities and insufficient reflective abilities. Regarding how to enhance the professional knowledge and abilities of preschool teachers, the interviewed experts believe that there is an urgent need to enhance teachers' general knowledge. Systematic and long-term learning is a way to enhance teachers' professional abilities, enhance their personal cultivation and behavior, establish and improve the professional ethics reward and punishment mechanism for preschool teachers, and help to enhance the professional ethics level of preschool teachers. Professional development.

4.4 Current situation of specialization of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province

Based on questionnaire surveys and interview results, combined with literature research, the researcher gained an understanding of the current situation of kindergarten teacher professionalization in Yunnan Province. **Uneven development of professional skills.** From the average of the seven aspects of professional skills of preschool teachers (Table 4.5), "Planning and implementation of young children education activities" ranks last ($\bar{x} = 4.44$). The top three are "Young children's daily life organization" ($\bar{x} = 4.57$), "Young children's motivational evaluation" ($\bar{x} = 4.56$), "Communication and operation" ($\bar{x} = 4.53$).

The level of professional ethics needs to be strengthened. Researcher found that in the four aspects of professional ethics, the average value of "ATTITUDES and behavior towards young children" is in the lowest position. This is enough to illustrate the severity of the problem. The rapidly increasing number of kindergartens in China in recent years has relaxed the admission qualifications for new kindergarten teachers. Allow some teachers with lower educational qualifications or even without a kindergarten teacher qualification certificate to obtain job positions. This has to some extent affected the improvement of their professional ethics level. In the interview, researchers found that teachers from public kindergartens have higher professional ethics awareness than teachers from private kindergartens.

The sense of professional identity and belonging needs to be improved. The imperfect guarantee system affects the professional identity and sense of belonging of kindergarten teachers. The interviewed teachers raised issues such as poor salary and benefits, long working hours, limited opportunities for training, and narrow channels for promotion for kindergarten teachers. These issues have had a negative impact on kindergarten teachers' professional knowledge, abilities, and ethical development. The above situation occurs more frequently in private kindergartens. Researchers found in the survey that a large portion of kindergartens, especially private kindergartens, find it difficult to guarantee the salaries and benefits of the vast majority of teachers. The above issues have led to a weak sense of professional identity and belonging among kindergarten teachers.

4.5 Guidelines for Promoting the Professionalism Development of Kindergarten Teachers in Yunnan

The researcher proposed the following guiding principles using content analysis.

Firstly, strengthen the construction of the kindergarten teacher team. This includes increasing funding investment, standardizing access mechanisms, and innovating training models. Secondly, improve the evaluation incentive mechanism and teacher professional development mechanism. Including accelerating the improvement of evaluation and incentive mechanisms to meet the needs of teachers at different stages of development. Thirdly, strengthen the professional development awareness of kindergarten teachers themselves. This includes enhancing kindergarten teachers' awareness of self-development and strengthening reflective learning.

5. Conclusion

After comparing the current professional level of kindergarten teachers surveyed with the "Professional Standards for Preschool Teachers", researchers found that the general knowledge field is the weak link of kindergarten teachers ($\bar{x} = 4.28$). Through the questionnaire, it was found that among the three dimensions of professional development for kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province, the score of professional knowledge

dimension is the lowest ($\bar{x} = 4.37$). This indicates that kindergarten teachers have a low level of professional knowledge in their work, which also provides a breakthrough point for problem-solving. In the interview, it can be seen that the reasons for the low professional knowledge level of some kindergarten teachers present diverse characteristics. This viewpoint is consistent with the viewpoints of scholars such as Zhang Hailing, Gao Qin, and Gao Chunling. The current situation of the profession of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province is: low level of professional knowledge, imbalanced development of professional skills, low level of professional ethics, and low sense of professional identity and belonging, which seriously affects the improvement of the professional level of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province.

Based on the above analysis, researchers believe that the guidelines for professional improvement of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province include: firstly, strengthening the construction of the kindergarten teacher team. This includes increasing funding investment, standardizing access mechanisms, and innovating training models. Secondly, improve the evaluation incentive mechanism and teacher professional development mechanism. Including accelerating the improvement of evaluation and incentive mechanisms to meet the needs of teachers at different stages of development. Thirdly, strengthen the professional development awareness of kindergarten teachers themselves. This includes enhancing kindergarten teachers' awareness of self-development and strengthening reflective learning.

Recommendation

To promote the professional development of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province, it is necessary to strengthen the construction of the kindergarten teacher team, improve the evaluation incentive mechanism and teacher professional development mechanism, and strengthen the professional development awareness of kindergarten teachers themselves. We must work together from both internal and external channels to enhance the professional development of kindergarten teachers.

Future Research

Due to limitations in research scope and other factors, current research has certain limitations. For example, the selection of research scope, research methods, questionnaire dimensions, and the design of interview questions are not in-depth enough.

In future research, more in-depth research can be conducted on kindergartens in different ethnic regions or regions with different levels of economic development in Yunnan Province. Conduct in-depth research on different levels and fields, search for patterns, and propose targeted solutions. To provide reference for enhancing the professional development of kindergarten teachers in Yunnan Province and even in other regions.

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