



Pedagogical Competency of Prospective Teacher Educators as a Predictor of Professional Identity

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Abstract

This proposed quantitative study aims to explore the relationship between pedagogical competency and professional identity among prospective teacher educators, with a focus on determining whether pedagogical competency serves as a predictor of professional identity. Pedagogical competency, defined as the ability to design, deliver, and assess instruction effectively, will be examined alongside professional identity, which refers to the sense of self as a committed and confident educator. The study will employ correlation and regression analysis to assess the extent to which pedagogical competency predicts the development of professional identity. Data will be collected through structured questionnaires administered to a sample of prospective teacher educators enrolled in a teacher education program. The research seeks to provide insights into the importance of pedagogical skills in shaping the professional identity of future educators, emphasizing their role in fostering confidence, commitment, and a clear understanding of the profession. The findings are expected to contribute to the design of teacher education programs that prioritize the development of pedagogical competencies, ultimately supporting the formation of a strong professional identity among prospective teacher educators.

Keywords: Pedagogical Competency, Professional Identity, Prospective Teacher Educators, Profession, Teacher Education.

INTRODUCTION

A successful educational system is necessary for a country and effective education system needs effective teacher training for its teacher (Elster,2009). The 21st-century learning approach refers to teaching and learning methods that focus on developing skills and competencies relevant to the demands and challenges of the 21st-century (Nurhidayat et al., 2024). Therefore, teacher educators need to be more than just experts in their field. They also need to be the key individuals in charge of ensuring the professional growth of aspiring teachers. In addition to providing knowledge, they have a role in training future educators who will continue to educate the next generation of students, must maintain their professional identities. The attitudes, principles, and self-concept that make up an educator's professional identity are crucial in determining their efficacy and level of dedication to their educational profession. Professional identity shapes teachers' comprehensive understanding of how to perceive their profession and how they view themselves as a teacher (Ilfiandra et al., 2018; Lai & Jin, 2021). A competency is associated to domains of cognitive, affective and skills upon which performance can be assessed (Arulselvi V & Singaravelu G., 2021). As a learning agent, the teacher must have some competencies like Pedagogical Competence, Personality Competence, Professional Competence, and Social Competence (Fauziyah et.al.,2021). Pedagogical commitment is a broad concept that emphasizes educators' devotion to their jobs, including their fondness of teaching, close consideration to student achievement, and adherence to ethical standards that support successful learning. Research shows that compassionate and credible educators are crucial for encouraging student participation because they build supportive learning settings that boost students' enthusiasm for learning (Frymier & Thompson, 1992). Since job satisfaction and sustainable teaching techniques are connected with professional commitment and dedication over time, these factors are equally crucial (Day, 2004). Educators who are very committed to their professions are more likely to combine their self-efficacy with pedagogical expertise, which improves the quality of their education (Bandura, 1997).

Prospective Teacher Educators

According to the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) in India, people presently enrolled in teacher education programs to become future teacher educators are referred to



as prospective teacher educators. To prepare them for teacher training institutes, these people are usually enrolled in programs like the Master of Education (M.Ed.), or other specialized teacher education programs. It indicates their future role as professional educators who will instruct and prepare the next generation of teachers.

Professional Identity of Prospective Teacher Educators

According to Hall (1996) "identities are constructed within, not outside discourse, our need to understand them as produced in specific, historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices". To shift from being students to potential teacher educators, prospective teacher educators must establish a complex professional identity that includes values, beliefs, and professional attributes. A key component of educators' educational careers is their professional identity (PI), which gives them a framework to develop their own ideas about "the way of being," "the way of action," and "the style of understanding their work and their position in the public" (Sachs, 2005). Some view professional identity as a personal synthesis of qualities, values, social roles, interests, physical attributes, and experience (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Understanding teachers' professional lives and career decisions—related to their interactions with coworkers, students, and families and their opinions of themselves—requires an understanding of their professional identities. (Pérez Gracia, Serrano Rodríguez and Pontes Pedrajas, 2022).

Pedagogical Competency of Prospective Teacher Educators

One of the most significant professional skills for a teacher educator is pedagogical competency, which focuses on being able to effectively manage the course of instruction. It entails knowing how to create learning opportunities, carry out teaching strategies, and evaluate the progress of students (Nessipbayeva, 2012). In order to engage students and promote learning, educators with good pedagogical competence are adept at utilizing a variety of instructional strategies and tools, including technology (Foulger et al., 2017). Student-centered approaches are emphasized by pedagogical competence, which adapts instruction to meet different needs and abilities of learners. Maintaining and improving these abilities requires ongoing professional development, which keeps educators updated with emerging technology and best practices.

Need and significance of the Study

Teaching is becoming more than just presenting knowledge; it's also about creating meaningful learning experiences that are individualized to meet the requirements of a diverse student body. Future teacher educators must become more pedagogically competent to become true professionals in the current educational system. A teacher possessing good pedagogical competency is cognizant of the methods through which students establish mental habits, acquire skills, construct knowledge, and cultivate a positive attitude toward learning. (Orakova et al., 2024). Additionally, it makes the required adjustments. When creating a constructivist approach to practicing pedagogy, the process of constructing a prospective teacher's professional identity is directly linked to the learning experience (Lestari & Mayasari, 2023). Learning theories, differentiated instruction, effective use of formative and summative assessments, and mastery of various instructional techniques are different components of pedagogical competency. With the help of it, educators may modify their lessons to suit the needs of all students, integrate technology, and create inclusive learning environments. Teachers' performance in the classroom are all influenced by having a strong professional identity. By establishing a connection between pedagogical competency and identity development, this research closes a gap in knowledge and provides guidance for improving teacher education programs to build highly skilled, reflective, and adaptive teachers. This will ultimately raise the standard of education as a whole.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is a significant positive relationship between pedagogical competency and professional identity of prospective teacher educators.
2. Professional identity of prospective teacher educators can be predicted on terms of



professional competency of prospective teacher educators.

OBJECTIVES

- 1.To find out whether the Pedagogical Competency is significantly correlated to the Professional Identity of prospective teacher educators.
2. To formulate a regression equation for predicting Professional Identity of Prospective Teacher Educators in terms of Pedagogical Competency.

METHODOLOGY

Method

The present study is intended to find out the significant relationship between the Pedagogical Competency and Professional Identity of prospective teacher educators and to formulate a regression equation for predicting Professional Identity of Prospective Teacher Educators in terms of Pedagogical Competency. Descriptive survey method was adopted for the present study.

Sample selected

For the present study a sample of 102 Prospective teacher educators studying in different teacher education institutions, in Thiruvananthapuram district, Kerala were selected randomly.

Tools used

The present study utilized two scales developed by the investigator: the Professional Identity Scale and the Pedagogical Competency Scale. Both scales consist of 40 items, each using a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree). seven dimensions: Skills and Expertise, Self-Concept, Commitment to the Profession, Professional Values and Ethics, Reflective Practice, Lifelong Learning, Adaptability and Resilience. The Pedagogical Competency Scale consists seven dimensions: Content Knowledge, Instructional Strategies & Methods, Classroom Management, Technology Integration in Teaching, Differentiation and Inclusivity, Communication Skills, Assessment & Evaluation Competency.

Statistical Techniques used

- Karl Pearson's Product Moment Co-efficient of Correlation
- Linear Regression

Limitations

Following were the limitations of the study.

- 1.The study was limited to only 102 prospective teacher educators.
- 2.The study was limited only to Thiruvananthapuram district in Kerala.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

1. Relationship between Professional Identity and Pedagogical Competency of Prospective Teacher Educators.

To find out the relationship between Professional Identity and Pedagogical Competency, the details are given in Table 1.

Table 1 Results of the product moment coefficient of correlation between Professional Identity and Pedagogical Competency of Prospective Teacher Educators.

Variables	Pedagogical Competency (r and p value of the variables)	Professional Identity
Pedagogical Competency	1	0.875
Professional Identity	0.875	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

From Table 1, it is clear that, the correlation coefficient (r) of 0.875 between Professional Identity and Pedagogical Competency indicates a strong positive relationship, which indicates that if Pedagogical Competency increases, Professional Identity also tends to increase. The calculated r- value (0.875) is greater than the critical value (0.254) at the 0.01 significance level, therefore the relationship is statistically significant.

2. Regression Analysis for predicting Professional Identity of Prospective Teacher Educators in terms of Pedagogical Competency.

To formulate a regression equation for predicting Professional Identity of prospective teacher



educators in terms of Pedagogical Competency, the details are given in Table no 2.

Table 2 Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²
1	0.875	0.766	0.764

- a. **Predictor:** Pedagogical Competency
- b. **Dependent Variable:** Professional Identity

Table 3 Model Coefficient - Professional Identity

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p	Stand. Estimate
Intercept	-3.823	6.1663	-0.620	0.537	0.875
Pedagogical Competency	0.938	0.0518	18.109	<.001	

- a) **Dependent Variable:** Professional Identity

Regression analysis was computed to identify the efficiency of Pedagogical Competency to predict the Professional identity of Prospective Teacher Educators. A simple linear regression analysis was conducted, where Pedagogical Competency was treated as the independent variable (predictor) and Professional Identity as the dependent variable (outcome). From **Table 2**, it is found that the regression model yielded a coefficient of determination (R²) of 0.766, meaning that 76.6% of the variance in Professional Identity can be explained by Pedagogical Competency. The adjusted R² (0.764) is very close to R², confirming that the model has a strong fit with minimal bias.

Thus, the Regression equation is,

$$Y (\text{Professional Identity}) = -3.823 + 0.938 \times X (\text{Pedagogical Competency})$$

The coefficient 0.938 (p < .001) indicates that for every one-unit increase in Pedagogical Competency, Professional Identity increases by 0.938 units. This positive and significant estimate suggests that enhancing pedagogical competency can significantly contribute to the development of a stronger professional identity among prospective teacher educators. The intercept (-3.823, p=0.537) is not statistically significant, implying that its practical interpretation is limited, especially since Pedagogical Competency values of zero are not realistic in real-world scenarios.

The high t-value (18.109, p < .001) for Pedagogical Competency confirms that it is a highly significant predictor of Professional Identity. This reinforces the conclusion that improvements in pedagogical skills and knowledge positively influence how teacher educators perceive their professional roles and identities.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

1. Pedagogical Competency and Professional Identity showed a significant positive relationship (r = 0.875, p < 0.01) according to the Pearson product-moment correlation. This suggests that among aspiring teacher educators, an increase in Pedagogical Competency corresponds to an increase in Professional Identity. Given the robustness of this link, it may be concluded that teacher educators with more pedagogical competency also typically have more established professional identities. This emphasizes the critical role that pedagogical ability plays in forming instructors' expertise and self-concept. Furthermore, the strong link suggests that pedagogical skills are not only technical aptitudes but also crucial components that impact teachers' attitudes toward their professional responsibilities and obligations.

2. A simple linear regression analysis was carried out in order to have a better understanding of the predictive power of Pedagogical Competency on Professional Identity of Prospective Teacher Educators. According to the findings, Professional Identity is strongly predicted by Pedagogical Competency (B = 0.938, t = 18.109, p < 0.001), which accounts for 76.6% of the variance (R² = 0.766). This strong R² value suggests that Pedagogical Competency has a significant impact on how Professional Identity develops. According to the regression equation



(Professional Identity = $-3.823 + 0.938 \times \text{Pedagogical Competency}$) Professional Identity increases by 0.938 units for every unit increase in Pedagogical Competency. This supports the idea that Teacher Educators' professional identity is strongly influenced by pedagogical competency. The significance of competency growth is further supported by the non-significant intercept ($-3.823, p = 0.537$), which indicates that Professional Identity would not have much practical relevance at a theoretical zero level of Pedagogical Competency.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from the outcomes of the regression and correlation analyses that pedagogical competency is crucial in enhancing the professional identity of prospective teacher educators. To improve pedagogical competency, it is important to incorporate organized competency-based training programs into teacher education curriculum. To help teacher educators have a better grasp of their responsibilities, it is also important to promote collaborative learning opportunities, mentorship programs, and self-reflection practices. Digital technologies and blended learning techniques should be actively included in training programs as they are essential to pedagogical proficiency. Additionally, research-based teaching methods and ongoing seminars for professional development can support and enhance professional identity lifelong. Future studies could examine how various pedagogical competency factors can contribute distinctively to professional identity and how this relationship may be moderated by other elements like teaching experience and institutional support.

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