

Teacher Authority: The Internal Motivation for Professional Growth among University Students Majoring in Preschool Education

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Abstract: Preschool teacher authority is a theoretical issue in the context of teacher-student relationship. Previous studies on preschool teacher authority focus on the relationship mechanism of teacher-child interaction and the relationship result after interaction, and mostly evaluate preschool teacher groups from the perspective of social education purposes. There is a lack of traceability analysis on the origin of the authority of preschool teachers from the perspective of the pre-service stage of cultivating students majoring in preschool education, that is, the forward-looking perspective. Through the analysis of the connotation, forming factors and social expectations of preschool teachers' authority, the current study found that it provided an important internal basis for the professional growth of preschool normal university students. Thus, it can provide valuable inspiration for preschool teacher education.

1. Introduction

If culture makes man stand out in the process of conquering nature; education does amplify the power of human beings to continually surpass themselves. Preschool education is like an umbilical cord, allowing children to be inextricably linked to education at the beginning of their cognition of the world, and the spirit and body are nourished through this "umbilical cord" for their development. However, in contrast, the public's attention to the professional growth and pre-service training of college students majoring in preschool education, who are the reserve effective force of preschool teachers, is a little cold [1]. Facing the double changes from student to teacher and from university to job in the future, pre-school normal university students are prone to internal conflicts in the process of role adaptation. One of the problems they need to solve urgently is to establish teacher authority, which is an important prerequisite for novice preschool teachers to adapt to the role of teachers and carry out education and teaching work.

As a cross-topic between sociology and pedagogy, the question of teacher authority has been a hot topic of debate for many years. In both basic education and higher education systems, teachers have been studied and thought about their authority in different degrees by scholars [2]. However, there are very few authoritative studies on preschool teachers, and related, the individual life

meaning and inner dignity of pre-service education of preschool normal university students are also on the edge of the research and out of focus.

2. Concept Tracing: Connotation of Preschool Teacher Authority

Like many other fundamental concepts in the social sciences that are difficult to define, the concept of "authority" is difficult to define. As a social phenomenon, it is often difficult to exist in a pure form in the course of history. Because social science itself is a kind of science involving the discussion of value philosophy, the concepts in it all contain different types of value orientation, which also determines the diversity of its conceptual definition. Teachers' authority is no exception. The academic circles in China and the West have been arguing about its definition, and have not given a unified aperture to the public. These include Max Weber's "three types theory", which is often regarded as a classical theory for authority conception [3], and R. Clifton and L. Robert's "four levels theory", which is based on Weber's theory [4]. In general, they all seem to think and treat teacher authority as a subordinate factor of authority, and project corresponding results in the field of education.

Inevitably, this has aroused criticism from some scholars, who believe that the above mentioned theories lack concern for human values while pursuing scientific qualities. For example, in his translation of Weber's *Scholarship and Politics*, Vonkley commented, "His failure may also lie in this 'scientific spirit', which has been stripped of the pressure of value and thus lost the ability to judge value - which regime is more likely to obtain stable and lasting 'authority' ?[5]" Although the diversity of understanding and interpretation of teacher authority has blurred people's definition of it, it also provides a rich perspective and action opportunity for further exploring the essential connotation of teacher authority in the future. Different thinkers in history have different expressions about the source of teacher authority. Therefore, we may as well start from the theoretical source of teacher authority and comb out a way of thinking by tracing its origin in the field of education.

One of them, in Chinese traditional culture, holds that there is some absolute idea or ultimate value which has the highest moral quality - "Shan", that is, all that is good in human nature. Education is to lead people to this kind of "Shan", and the root of teachers' authority is from this kind of guidance behavior between teachers and students, from the pursuit of this "Shan" concept [6]. To paraphrase the concept of "education" already existed in ancient China: teaching: giving from above, and receiving from below; breeding: raise children so that they could be "Shan". On the one hand, it does not rule out the suspicion that teachers have a certain degree of forced "indoctrination" of learners; On the other hand, the emphasis on this kind of "coercion" is to guide its development to the "Shan" aspect. However, in the traditional culture of education in China and many other Asian countries, people tend to emphasize the first aspect and ignore the latter.

Moreover, in the West, Yasbales argues more bluntly that authority comes from ultimate values. "Belief in authority is first and foremost the only source and essence of education," and the authority of education comes from "devotion to ultimate values and absolute truth" [7]. In order to make man a human being, a moral being, education must use some coercive means to remove the "inhuman" element. Kant also supported this view, arguing that humans are the only creatures who must be educated. Kant regards coercion as the necessary means for the individual to move from heteronomy to self-discipline [8]. This activity, which leads the individual from an uneducated state to an educated state, actually contains a negation, that is, the negation and sublation of the animality of man. If educators want children to follow and accept this kind of guidance, the ideal state is that children have a certain positive love and trust in teachers, which is inevitably accompanied by the effective participation of preschool teachers' authority.

In ancient society, although the relationship between teachers and students was characterized by a strong hierarchy, the legitimacy of teachers' authority did not need to be discussed because the hierarchy concept was deeply in line with the prevailing social concepts at that time. The early view was that education without authority was terrible, and that children's obedience to teachers was good for children themselves, as well as for social stability and cultural inheritance. Whereas, in modern society, due to the qualitative change in the mainstream concept of society, the legitimacy of preschool teachers' authority has been directly criticized by some people as the "unequal" relationship between teachers and students. However, this public questioning of the "legitimacy" of teachers' authority may itself be based on a false understanding that the "illegitimate authority" of those teachers is not effectively distinguished from the true authority of teachers. The reason why "illegitimate authority" is improper is that it does not have the orientation of pursuing the "Shan", or further, it cannot be regarded as teacher authority, but can only belong to the teacher power that has been misused. As some scholars have said, the essence of the question of teacher authority is not whether we want teacher authority, but what kind of teacher authority we should want [9].

The second view is that the normal and continuous operation of the education system in real life is inseparable from the cooperation of many factors. Teacher authority is an essential ingredient in making education work between teachers and students. Proponents of this view argue that authority gives the world continuity and permanence, which is necessary for human beings. Teacher authority has always been a natural necessity in the broadest sense. However, it is necessary to clarify the internal relationship between authority and freedom in the educational space. Russell tends to find an organic balance point between the two, so he points out the necessity of authority on the basis of recognizing the value of freedom in education, and at the same time emphasizes that "power, in education, is inevitable to some extent, and those who teach must find a way to exercise power in accordance with the spirit of freedom" [10]. Dewey went further, arguing that the conditions of freedom included limitations on freedom. Education in the pursuit of children's freedom and development at the same time, there will certainly be adult authority guidance [11]. In fact, the so-called teacher authority is by no means a force in the sense of violence or repression, although it is true that there are some people whose disorderly abuse of authority constantly destroys the rational value of authority. This study emphasizes the positive bonding effect of authority on the community of teachers and students in the public life of education, and the authority of teachers plays a constitutive element of the public space of education.

To sum up, the source of teachers' authority mainly comes from two sides: one is from the pursuit of "Shan" of education itself, and the other is from the benign maintenance of public life of education.

3. Mechanism of Authority: the Original Engine of Professional Growth

It can be seen that the authority of preschool teachers involves multi-level requirements from the root, covering not only the professional knowledge and ability of teachers, but also the moral sentiment of teachers. To inherit the traditional culture, but also meet the needs of the new era of education reform; It not only reflects the external social factors, but also highlights the internal main factors; It is a collection of complex relationships between teachers and children, teachers and parents, teachers and preschool education system. Whether from the perspective of education theory itself or from the perspective of education public life, the authority of preschool teachers is different from the authority of teachers at other levels and types of schools. The biggest difference is that the educational objects they face are 3-6 years old children. In other words, the training of pre-school normal university students and the planning of their professional growth path require the integration of the focus on children. How to treat children, what kind of view they have on children, what kind

of philosophical theory of human nature they base their understanding of children's nature on, or what kind of philosophical theory of human nature they use to build preschool education and its intrinsic value, these may directly affect the nature and future development trend of preschool education. At the same time, those mentioned above also outline the development radius of preschool normal university students' talent training and the common rules that their professional growth path will face.

The size of China's preschool education makes the quality of teachers an issue that can never be avoided and deserves continuous concern. Most of the teacher's authority is subordinate to the public sphere, which is a branch of institutional authority. These power relations usually exist in the existing social structure and are presented to the public in the form of explicit policy instruments. Although teacher authority exists in education under different political systems and is deeply affected by institutional factors, it does not affect the fact that the essence of teacher authority is the authority in educational relations, that is, "educational authority". However, in all levels of education, the authority of preschool teachers and the corresponding "preschool education authority" are always in a weak position.

In fact, all in all, some members of the public underestimate or even despise the nature and content of preschool teachers' work, and ignore or deny the authority of preschool teachers. The reason for this is nothing more than contempt for children and contempt for the critical period of development in the preschool stage. Those people do not have a modern scientific view of children, although they have been children, but still do not understand children, they are likely to know preschool education is still very superficial, not to mention respect for the child's personality and development of the main status. Because they look down on children, they also look down on preschool teachers. This group even includes a large number of parents, who are prejudiced to believe that pre-school education does not have the normative participation of so-called "knowledge", and that the work of preschool teachers is only to satisfy children's childish play. However, almost all previous studies have repeatedly emphasized that the work of preschool teachers has its technical complexity and is accompanied by high labor consumption. Moreover, the culturality in the preschool education process cannot be simply measured by the so-called subject knowledge, because it has special values and teaching difficulties that are different from primary and secondary education. Careful and flexible use of teaching methods and means, not only taking into account the current level of children, but also guiding their development and progress, the process of training children can be called a wonderful cultural creation.

Preschool education has a very special place in people's life. For this, many people in the past and today may not be fully aware of it. Usually, people are used to thinking that preschool education plays a trivial role in their life. Because, in their view, children are not aware of their actions and their consequences. But we know that on the whole, in the general direction, children are developing beings. Children not only have their own body growth, but also through learning to supplement and expand their own system with cultural things, and continue to open to the outside world. Children need the long-term blessing of education in the process of growth and development, and seizing this critical period of development can stimulate the huge and unknown potential of every child.

Indeed, this is not only an opportunity but also brings challenges and difficulties for pre-school education student, namely future preschool teachers. Because it must be clear that children's development has its own diverse characteristics, preferences, principles and laws. In addition, the child is in the embryonic stage of self-consciousness, and the tendency of heteronomy prevails in this period. The professional growth of pre-school education students is actually professional preparation for their future teacher authority. How to become a qualified early childhood educator who can be recognized, loved and relied on by children in the future, which further puts forward

higher requirements for pre-school education students how to improve their professional level.

How pre-school education students in the college education stage interpret the authority of teachers has a great impact on the formation of their professional feelings and professional ideals, the establishment of professional quality, and even the internal motivation (subjective initiative) of professional development. All return to the core purpose of children's development, we may find the convergence of the two to promote development. Therefore, from the perspective of the source of authority and the analysis of the concept of children, students majoring in preschool education should correctly understand the components of teacher authority, follow the training objectives of the professional development path, improve their own literacy, improve their education level, and learn to use reasonable strategies and ways to take into account the laws of children's physiological and psychological development.

4. Conclusions

"Both internal and external training" can be described as the growth goals and requirements put forward by teachers' authority for pre-service normal university students. Meanwhile, the accumulation process of teachers' authority helps to enrich pre-school normal university students' experience of personal value and inner dignity in their future professional career, consolidate professional ideals and beliefs, enhance self-efficacy, and finally obtain inexhaustible motivation for lifelong learning and development. The society also needs to give active cooperation in the face of preschool normal school students and preschool teachers. At present, compared with other types of education at all levels, the attention and respect that preschool education should be given may not be proportional to the heavy mission it shoulders to some extent. College students majoring in preschool education need to realize that professional growth and teacher authority are mutually reinforcing cycles and maintain confidence in their own professional authority. Because, preschool teacher is not an "anyone can be competent" job; This occupation requires pre-school teachers should be professional, excellent quality, and have patience, love, childlike innocence, so as to sow sunshine for children and add wings for their development.

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