



THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL COMPETENCE IN THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE PRESCHOOL EDUCATORS

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Abstract: *Social competence is an essential part of professional development for aspiring preschool teachers. The significance of social competence in preschool teacher preparation and its function in efficient teaching methods are examined in this article. The study emphasizes communication skills, empathy, emotional control, and teamwork as fundamental components of social competence. Additionally, it discusses how these abilities support professional wellbeing, child development, and classroom climate. The article examines the structural components of social competence, its pedagogical significance, and its impact on the effectiveness of professional practice in preschool educational settings.*

Keywords: *Preschool educators, professional development, social interaction, communication skills.*

Introduction

A new generation of educators who are socially conscious, proficient communicators, and professionally accountable is required due to the rapid changes in society and the modernization of the educational system. Since it establishes the foundation for children's intellectual, emotional, and social development, preschool education is the first and most important phase of lifelong learning. Future preschool teachers' professional development must therefore take into account the pedagogical and social demands of the present. In modern preschool environments, teachers collaborate closely with parents, coworkers, and the community at large in addition to working with the children. Social competence is a key component of effective



teaching in this professional setting because it fosters cooperative learning, emotional control, ethical professional behavior, constructive communication, and conflict resolution (Khalilova D, 2026).

Additionally, the ability of educators to engage in reflective practice and advance their careers is intimately related to their social competence. Resilience in demanding educational environments and ongoing professional development are facilitated by the capacity to evaluate one's own interactions, react adaptably to obstacles, and uphold positive relationships (Donald Schön, 1983). Reflective practitioners in early childhood education are better equipped to modify their communication tactics to meet the needs of kids and families from various social and cultural backgrounds.

Recent studies also highlight the importance of integrating social and emotional learning components into teacher education curricula. Systematic training in communication, empathy, stress management, and conflict resolution can strengthen future educators' readiness for professional practice and reduce the risk of emotional exhaustion and burnout in the early stages of their careers (Jennings Patricia & Mark Greenberg, 2009). Therefore, developing social competence should be viewed as a strategic priority in the professional preparation of preschool educators, rather than as an implicit outcome of teaching experience alone.

Social Competence in Teacher Education

The ability to communicate effectively in a variety of social settings, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal skills are all components of social competence. These abilities are crucial for preschool teachers since their work requires ongoing social and emotional interaction. High social competence teachers are more adept at establishing trustworthy bonds with students, communicating with parents, and working cooperatively with other teachers (Robert Pianta, 1999).

Studies show that social competence is not automatically developed through teaching experience alone but requires targeted training during teacher education. Programs that include reflective practice, role-playing, mentorship, and experiential learning help pre-service teachers develop empathy, communication, and conflict-



resolution skills. Such training improves both professional confidence and classroom effectiveness (Daniel Goleman, 1995; Jennings Patricia & Mark Greenberg, 2009).

The Role of Social Competence in Early Childhood Education

Social competence affects not just the teacher but also the students they instruct. Positive classroom environments that foster children's social and emotional development are produced by teachers who are able to control their emotions, communicate effectively, and settle disputes. Children who attend classes taught by socially adept teachers are more involved, cooperate better with their peers, and become better communicators themselves (Robert Pianta, 1999).

Teachers' professional well-being is also enhanced by social competence. Teachers are more likely to stay motivated, prevent burnout, and have long-term job satisfaction if they can effectively manage stress, collaborate with others, and maintain positive relationships with parents and coworkers. As a result, social competence is a strategic and useful skill for early childhood educators' professional development.

Conclusion

The development of social competence during teacher training greatly increases professional readiness and contributes to high-quality preschool education. Therefore, higher pedagogical education institutions should prioritize the systematic development of social competence as an integral part of professional training programs. Strengthening social competence among future preschool educators will increase the overall effectiveness of preschool education and support the comprehensive development of children's minds. Social competence is a crucial component of the professional development of future preschool educators. It ensures effective communication, emotional stability, ethical responsibility, and productive cooperation in educational settings.



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