

The Relationship between Empathy and Teachers' Moral Consciousness of Preschool Normal Students

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KEYWORDS: Preschool Normal Students, Empathy, Teachers' Moral Consciousness

ABSTRACT: This research takes 300 preschool normal students as the research object, using the Interpersonal Response Index Scale and the Teachers' Moral Awareness Scale for Normal School Students as research tools, exploring the relationship between empathy and teacher ethics consciousness of preschool normal students. The results showed that the empathy and teacher ethics scores of preschool normal students were both at the upper-middle level; there are significant differences in the sense of teacher ethics between preschool normal students of different grades and those who have participated in internships; there is a significant positive correlation between empathy and teacher ethics of preschool normal students. Recommendations: Raise the level of preschool teacher ethics awareness in educational practice; attach importance to the empathy of preschool teacher students to promote the improvement of the level of teacher ethics awareness.

1. Introduction

Teacher professional ethics refers to the sum of the code of conduct and the necessary moral character that should be followed by people engaged in the education profession, and it is the special embodiment of general social morality in the teacher profession.^[1]The professional ethics of preschool teachers not only has a significant impact on children's physical and mental development,^[2]but also has an impact on their own professional development.^[3]After all kinds of "child abuse" incidents, the professional ethics of preschool teachers have received high attention. Teacher's moral consciousness is the result of individual's internalization of teacher's moral, the product of the combination of external provisions and individual cognitive experience, and the cognitive experience state of professional ethics stored in people's minds long before the teacher's moral behavior becomes explicit.^[4]The level of teacher ethics consciousness affects the behavior of preschool normal university students, which is of great significance to the work effectiveness of normal university students, the quality of teachers in kindergartens and the healthy development of children.^[5]

Empathy is one of the most important moral emotions, which is the tendency of individuals to respond to others' experience. It is an emotional response based on the understanding of others' emotional states or conditions.^[6]Davis believed that empathy was composed of four dimensions: compassionate concern, fantasy, personal pain, and viewpoint selection. Viewpoint selection is the tendency of individuals to actively consider the ideas and opinions of others. Compassionate concern refers to the degree of individual sympathy and concern for others. Imagination is the ability of individuals to experience the emotions and behaviors of characters in novels, movies and other scenes through imagination. Personal distress is an individual's response to the suffering of others, such as fear, anxiety, and discomfort.^[7]Teacher empathy means that teachers sincerely consider problems from the standpoint of students, and can put themselves in the feelings and ideas of students, so as to adjust their teaching and guide students in an appropriate way in academic and emotional growth of all aspects.^[8]In

the past, a large number of studies have consistently held that teacher empathy can promote students' development. Barr's research shows that teacher empathy promotes the development of students' social ability and career. ^[9]Raskauskas and Gregory believe that teacher empathy can promote students' prosocial behavior. ^[10]Which is of great value to the professional development of teachers. ^[11]

According to previous studies, there are few studies on normal university students' moral consciousness, and most of them are superficial investigations. Moreover, there are few studies on factors that affect normal university students' moral consciousness, and most of the discussions are attributed to external factors, such as school curriculum setting, and few discussions on the influence of internal factors of individuals. Previous studies believe that moral identity is an important variable to explain moral behavior, and empathy is an emotional factor to induce moral behavior. ^[12]Sun Binghai puts forward that the determinants of teachers' professional moral behavior are the result of comprehensive effects of caring reasoning, caring identification, empathy and many other factors. As a group of teachers, caring morality is an important embodiment of the particularity of teachers' professional ethics, and teachers' caring behavior is an important part of teachers' caring morality. Teachers' caring behavior is affected by caring reasoning, caring identification and empathy. Through the empirical research, it is proved that empathy is the affective factor that affects teachers' professional moral behavior. ^[6]Therefore, this study takes preschool normal university students as the research object to explore the relationship between empathy and moral consciousness of preschool normal university students.

2. Methodology

2.1 Participants

Convenient sampling was used to select students majoring in preschool education from two universities in Xi 'an, Shaanxi Province. Considering that compared with freshmen and sophomores, juniors and seniors have learned professional knowledge of preschool education for a longer time and have deeper experience, and will soon work in kindergartens, this study selects juniors and seniors as research objects. A total of 320 questionnaires were sent out, and 300 valid questionnaires were recovered, with an effective rate of 93.8%. Among them, 289 are female students and 11 are male students. 156 junior students and 144 senior students; 172 students from cities and 128 students from rural areas; 224 students participated in the educational practice arranged by the school, while 76 students did not participate in the educational practice arranged by the school.

2.2 Research Tools

The questionnaire of this study consists of three parts. The first part is demographic variables, including subjects' gender, grade, origin and other items. The second part is empathy scale. The third part is the teacher morality consciousness scale.

The Interpersonal Response Index Scale compiled by Davis and revised by Zhan Zhiyu was adopted. ^[14]The scale was divided into four dimensions: 6 items of sympathy and care, 6 items of fantasy, 5 items of personal pain, and 5 items of viewpoint selection, with a total of 22 questions. The scale uses 5 points, 1 point, which is not consistent at all; 2 points, less agreement; 3 points, some match; 4, very true; five points, a perfect match. A higher score indicates a higher level of empathy. In this study, the Cronbach α coefficient of the scale is 0.81, indicating that the scale has good reliability.

In this study, Xuezhao Weng compiled the "Teacher ethics Awareness Questionnaire of Normal University students". ^[15]Based on the professional characteristics of preschool teachers, the language was slightly modified and questionnaires were issued to the research objects. The questionnaire is divided into four dimensions: 4 professional role consciousness, 6 caring consciousness, 7 teaching consciousness, 8 professional interpersonal consciousness, a total of 25 questions. The scale uses 5

points, 1 point, which is not consistent at all; 2 points, less agreement; 3 points, some match; 4, very true; five points, a perfect match. The higher the score is, the higher the individual moral awareness level is. The Cronbach α coefficient of the scale in this study is 0.94, indicating that the scale has good reliability.

2.3 Analysis

SPSS 23.0 was used for descriptive statistics, one-way analysis of variance, correlation analysis and regression analysis.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Descriptive Statistics

The general situation of empathy and teacher ethics consciousness of pre-school normal students. The overall situation of empathy among pre-school normal students

Table 1 the Overall Situation of Empathy among Pre-School Normal Students (n=300)

	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Range
Sympathy and care	3.467	0.569	1.833	4.667	2.833
Imagine	3.600	0.612	1.333	5.000	3.667
Personal pain	2.559	0.851	1.000	4.600	3.600
Opinion picking	3.079	0.774	1.200	5.000	3.800
Empathy	3.176	0.493	1.775	4.408	2.633

The overall situation of pre-school teacher's moral consciousness

Table 2 the Overall Situation of Pre-School Teacher's Moral Consciousness (n= 300)

	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Range
Professional role awareness	3.819	0.639	1.000	5.000	4.000
Caring for student awareness	3.375	0.503	1.429	4.571	3.143
Teach and educate people 3.373	0.622	1.667	4.833	3.167	
Professional interpersonal	4.369	0.543	2.875	5.000	2.125
Teacher ethics	3.734	0.388	2.524	4.682	2.158

Correlations between Study Variables

Table 3 the Correlation Analysis of Empathy and Teachers' Ethics Consciousness of Preschool Normal Students

	Sympathy and care	Imagine	Personal pain	Opinion picking	Professional role awareness	Caring for student awareness	Teach and educate people	Professional interpersonal	Empathy	Teacher ethics
Sympathy and care	1									
Imagine	0.623**	1								
Personal pain	0.268**	0.173**	1							
Opinion picking	0.467**	0.343**	0.199**	1						
Professional role awareness	0.263**	0.116*	0.008	0.302**	1					
Caring for student awareness	0.636**	0.654**	0.311**	0.594**	0.227**	1				

Teach and educate people	0.765**	0.671**	0.479**	0.538**	0.168**	0.514**	1			
Professional interpersonal	0.134*	0.113	-0.082	0.242**	0.400**	0.203**	0.114*	1		
Empathy	0.780**	0.699**	0.640**	0.719**	0.234**	0.753**	0.847**	0.133*	1	
Teacher ethics	0.667**	0.568**	0.267**	0.617**	0.692**	0.694**	0.676**	0.626**	0.726**	1

* $P < 0.05$, ** $P < 0.01$

It can be seen from Table 3 that there is a significant positive correlation between the total score of empathy and the total score of teacher ethics, the correlation coefficient is 0.726, and the significance is 0.000.

Regression Analysis of Empathy and Teacher Ethics Consciousness of Pre-school Normal Students

Table 4 the Predictive Effect of Empathy on Teachers' Moral Consciousness of Pre-School Normal Students

	B	Standard error	Beta	t
(constant)	1.783	0.099		17.931**
Sympathy and care	0.233	0.035	0.342	6.701**
Imagine	0.138	0.030	0.217	4.584**
Personal pain	0.029	0.018	0.065	1.680
Opinion picking	0.186	0.021	0.371	8.819**

$R=0.773, R^2=0.597, \Delta R^2=0.592, F=109.467$

* $P < 0.05$, ** $P < 0.01$

It can be seen from Table4 that the correlation coefficient between the four variables and teacher ethics awareness is 0.773, and than can explain 59.7% of the variance of the teacher ethics awareness variable.

3.2 Discussion

There are significant differences in the level of teacher ethics awareness among pre-school normal students of different grades, which is consistent with previous research conclusions.^{[16][17]} Among them, senior students have significantly higher teacher ethics awareness than junior students. This may be because the senior students have taken courses related to the professional ethics of preschool teachers, Have more systematic and in-depth understanding of teacher ethics, And most of the seniors have experienced internships and trainees, Have a practical understanding of the work of kindergarten teachers, Therefore, seniors have a higher level of teacher ethics awareness. From all dimensions, there are significant differences in the professional role awareness of senior students and the two dimensions of teaching and educating people. Occupational role awareness is the belief and persistence of normal students in education and teaching, It is the psychological basis of teacher ethics.^[16] The seniors have gone through the first three years of professional courses, Have a deeper understanding of the role of preschool teachers, Lay a good foundation for entering the job role, So have a stronger sense of professional role. Moreover, most senior students have experienced educational internships, educational internships or post positions, and have completed part or complete teaching jobs, has richer experience than juniors' in house sales such as activity arrangements, guiding children's growth, teaching management, etc. Therefore, the awareness of teaching and educating people is stronger.

The teacher ethics consciousness of pre-school normal students with internship experience is significantly higher than that of pre-school normal students without internship experience, This is consistent with previous research conclusions.^[19] Pre-school teacher students in educational practice, Have a deeper understanding of the job characteristics and job responsibilities of preschool teachers' professional positions. Research has shown that, The behavior example, professional status,

relationship support and interactive mode of the intern instructor will also affect the teaching beliefs of the normal students.^[20]In the sense of caring for students, The pre-school normal students who have gone through the educational internship went to the kindergarten and actually contacted the children, Better understand teachers' responsibilities to students, I also know more about how to respect, pay attention to, educate and take care of young children. And in the kindergarten internship, I learned how to get along with colleagues, parents, etc., and improved professional interpersonal awareness.

Individual empathy plays a vital role in individual socialization and interpersonal interaction.^[20]The empathy level of pre-school normal students also plays an important role in their integration into the role of teachers, When pre-school normal students have a deep understanding of the job responsibilities of kindergarten teachers, Empathize with what kindergarten teachers think and think, Conducive to pre-school normal students to enhance their professional role awareness and professional interpersonal awareness. When pre-school normal students empathize with their children, they can experience their daily life in the kindergarten, Respect and tolerate children from the perspective of children, it is conducive to pre-school normal students to improve their awareness of caring for students and the awareness of teaching and educating people.

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