

# A Study on the Reasons and Countermeasures for the Lack of Male Preschool Education Majors in Shandong

## -- Take Jinan Preschool Teachers College as an Example

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### Abstract

For a long time, there has been a situation of "yin flourishes while yang declines" in China's kindergarten education, and the lack of resources for male kindergarten teachers has been a hot topic. Taking Jinan Preschool Teachers College as an example, this paper analyzes the reasons for the lack of boys in preschool education through the current situation of preschool teachers and the cultivation of boys in preschool education, discusses the strategies for increasing the proportion of boys in preschool education, and puts forward suggestions for improving the proportion of male teachers in kindergartens where the college is located.

### Keywords

Preschool education; Male kindergarten teachers, promote; Strategy.

### 1. Introduction

Kindergarten education is an important part of basic education and the foundation stage of school education and lifelong education. Kindergarten education in urban and rural areas should proceed from reality and implement quality education according to local conditions, so as to lay a good foundation for the development of children throughout their lives<sup>[1]</sup>. With the development of society, the importance of preschool education has become increasingly prominent. With the aging of China's population, the original national family planning policy has gradually loosened. From the two only two child policy implemented in 2011 and the single two child policy implemented in 2013, to the comprehensive two child policy implemented in 2015, and then to the three child policy implemented in 2021, all of these policies have been continuously adjusted<sup>[2]</sup>. Whether from the perspective of policy guidance at the national level or from the perspective of the needs of the public, the development and improvement of preschool education are all aimed at continuously meeting the people's needs for a better life. From the perspective of theoretical logic, the healthy development of early childhood education should set the proportion of male teachers, and kindergartens should be equipped with male teachers and female teachers in a balanced way<sup>[3]</sup>. Moreover, there is an international consensus and verification on the involvement of male teachers in kindergartens. In Japan, the law stipulates that the proportion of male kindergarten teachers must reach more than 1/4; In the United States, male teachers in kindergartens account for about 10 percent. American laws also stipulate that each class in kindergartens should have at least one male teacher. However, for a long time, in kindergartens all over China, preschool teachers are dominated by women. Most kindergartens are equipped with uniformly female teachers, and the proportion of male and female teachers is seriously unbalanced. The reality that kindergarten teachers thrive in yin and decline in yang seriously restricts the healthy development of children's personality, temperament and even body and mind<sup>[4]</sup>.

## 2. An Analysis of the Current Situation of Preschool Education in China

"New progress has been made in providing children with education, education, income from work, medical care for the sick, care for the elderly, housing and support for the weak." So what is "having children"? Having children means to cover all preschool children aged 0-6 in China, and give them better upbringing and education. Children's education should not only be reflected in providing all pre-school children in China with fair access to education, but also in providing all pre-school children in China with high-quality pre-school education and family education. This is not only related to the people's livelihood, but also closely linked to the people's hearts and minds, and is more practical for the masses. People expect fair and beautiful education, because it directly affects people's sense of gain and happiness.

In recent years, China has made remarkable achievements in the development of preschool education. The country has implemented three successive preschool education action plans, promoting the rapid development of preschool education and effectively alleviating the problem of "difficult and expensive access to schools". Over the past ten years, the scale of early childhood teacher training has been expanding. According to statistics, in 2021, there are 1,095 undergraduate colleges and universities offering preschool education, with 265,000 graduates, 591 and 231,000 more than in 2011, an increase of 1.2 times and 6.7 times respectively<sup>[5]</sup>, providing strong support for the continuous replenishment of kindergarten teachers. In 2021, the total number of kindergarten directors and full-time teachers will exceed 3.5 million, an increase of 2 million or 1.3 times compared with 2011, and the student-teacher ratio will drop from 26:1 in 2011 to 15:1 in 2021, basically reaching the standard of "two teachers and one security". The problem of teacher shortage has been effectively solved. The quality of teachers has improved significantly, and the educational structure has been further optimized, with 87.8% of kindergarten directors and full-time teachers with a specialist degree or higher in 2021, an increase of 24 percentage points from 2011. China has continuously implemented the "National Training Program" for kindergarten teachers, with a total investment of 4.3 billion yuan from 2012 to 2020, training kindergarten teachers more than 2.43 million times, and significantly improving the professional level of teachers. However, according to statistics released by the Ministry of Education in 2021<sup>[6]</sup>, the number of female teachers and staff at all levels of schools nationwide in 2020 shows that the proportion of full-time female teachers in preschool education is as high as 97.78%, which means that the proportion of male teachers in preschool education is only 2.22%, and there is a serious imbalance in the ratio of male to female kindergarten teachers. In the case of Jinan, there is also a large shortage of male kindergarten teachers in the early childhood education industry. According to statistics, in 2021, nearly 14,500 teachers from all counties and districts in Jinan participated in the full kindergarten teacher training, but only about 130 of them were male teachers, and the proportion of male kindergarten teachers in the whole Jinan area was less than 1%, which is lower than the national average.

## 3. Page Numbers

The shortage of male kindergarten teachers is not a new topic. There is a huge demand for male kindergarten teachers, but there is a shortage of resources for several reasons.

### 3.1. Low application rate for male students in preschool education

There are two factors that influence the candidates' choice of what to apply for: one is to choose a major according to their interests and hobbies; the other factor is how the future employment prospects of the major are. The main training of preschool education is kindergarten teachers, to be a qualified early childhood teacher, not only need to master a solid theoretical knowledge of early childhood education and a wealth of talent, but also to have love, patience and care for

children. From the perspective of interests and hobbies alone, male students are generally less interested in preschool education than female students. From a gender perspective, women are also generally more patient and attentive than men. This is not to mention that in many parents' and students' perceptions, they believe that kindergarten teachers are originally female majors and that it is not a good idea for boys to apply for kindergarten teachers, so it is not surprising that many boys who are interested in working in kindergarten education are discouraged from applying for preschool education.

### **3.2. High separation rate of male students in preschool education**

It is an indisputable fact that kindergarten salaries are low compared to other industries. In the Jinan area, the monthly salary of teachers employed in public kindergartens is basically kept between RMB 1,500 and 2,000. For male kindergarten teachers, who are responsible for supporting their families, there is not enough room for them to dedicate themselves to the cause of kindergarten education, and if the economic pressure is not relieved for a long time, it will eventually lead to the loss of a large number of male kindergarten teachers who are already rare. Many male kindergarten teachers do not teach in kindergartens for a long time, but use them as a "springboard" to find a better career, often choosing to work in higher-paying early childhood institutions or start a business in a field related to the children's industry, while others simply change careers and do not become teachers. The worse thing is that behind the low wages of kindergarten teachers is the inability of male kindergarten teachers to adapt to kindergarten teaching and external pressures and the uncertainty of future promotion space, although all kindergartens are rushing to male kindergarten teachers, but the low wages, personal development space and other factors continue to force the entry of male kindergarten teachers have eventually left the preschool front.

### **3.3. Lack of social acceptance of male kindergarten teachers**

The role that male kindergarten teachers play in preschool education cannot be ignored, and the role they play in the healthy growth of young children cannot be replaced by female teachers. This is like a family where the parents have their own roles to play. The mother's influence is unparalleled, but the father's influence is irreplaceable. The addition of male kindergarten teachers can help children establish gender awareness from an early age, adding masculinity to the kindergarten, which is more conducive to the development of young children's character, and more conducive to the perfection of young children's personality, thus helping them grow up healthily. However, due to traditional thinking, there are still many people in society who think that "male kindergarten teachers" are "male aunts" and have prejudice against male students in preschool education, resulting in the low social status of male kindergarten teachers. There is always a prejudice in the society that preschool education is not suitable for boys. If a boy every day with a group of children together, when the "king of the children", or every day to study how to manage and educate the children in kindergarten, it is easy for others to "look at", and the basic preschool education is engaged in girls. The girls, boys are less likely to get attention, and career prospects are not looked upon.

## **4. Strategies for Improving the Proportion of Male Students in Preschool Education**

In terms of the protection of basic education around the world, because preschool education is not included in compulsory education and does not have the same emphasis as high school education, the treatment of public preschool teachers is not as high as that of public compulsory education teachers. The treatment of public preschool teachers is not as high as that of public compulsory education teachers. Therefore, to completely solve the problem of shortage of male kindergarten teachers, the government, employers, and training colleges must take a multi-

pronged approach. In terms of the government, it should continuously increase the investment in preschool education, effectively improve the treatment of preschool teachers, and guarantee the salary treatment of preschool teachers according to the salary level of compulsory education teachers, and also introduce corresponding policies to clarify the career planning and promotion space of male kindergarten teachers, so as to provide corresponding institutional protection for their personal development; in terms of employing units, kindergartens should keep people with feelings, treatment and development. In terms of employing units, kindergartens should provide a broad platform for male kindergarten teachers to display their professional talents and a steady channel for career advancement; in terms of training institutions, they should consider how to expand the enrollment ratio of male preschool education majors and how to improve the stability of male preschool education majors engaged in kindergarten education. In view of the general lack of male kindergarten teachers, the author proposes the following suggestions on how to promote the proportion of male kindergarten teachers in local kindergartens. The author proposes the following strategies to improve the proportion of male teachers in local kindergartens.

#### **4.1. High priority is given to the professional development and planning orientation of male kindergarten teachers**

Education authorities and kindergarten administrators should provide effective practical paths for the professional development of male kindergarten teachers and strengthen guidance and support for their career. The education authorities and kindergarten administrators should provide effective practical paths for the professional development of male kindergarten teachers, strengthen guidance for their career planning and support for their professional development, so as to help them continue to move toward comprehensive professional development. Kindergartens need professional, individualistic and well-rounded male teachers, and all of this cannot be achieved without the recognition and encouragement of male kindergarten teachers by the whole society and the career development support and professional quality improvement guidance provided by preschool administrators for male kindergarten teachers. Only by raising the level of male kindergarten teachers' professional beliefs and providing them with stronger internal motivation for their professional development can male kindergarten teachers' sense of professional identity, professional pride and collective belonging be continuously enhanced; only by expanding the scope of male kindergarten teachers' professional activities and clarifying their professional development orientation can male kindergarten teachers be given opportunities for self-fulfillment.

#### **4.2. Effectively improve the economic treatment of male kindergarten teachers**

To run a good preschool education to the people's confidence and satisfaction, to meet the needs of the people for a better life, we must create a "high quality. The first thing you need to do is to make sure that you have a good team of early childhood teachers. The actual fact is that you can find a lot of people who have been in the business for a long time. The actual development and treatment of the male kindergarten teachers should be done in addition to the emotional retention of people. In addition to their career development prospects, more attention should be paid to the economic treatment of male kindergarten teachers to improve, such as targeted special wage allowances for male kindergarten teachers.

#### **4.3. Continuing to increase the training of male students in preschool education**

Talent cultivation is one of the five functions of colleges and universities. Local colleges and universities should deepen the reform of teacher education and improve the quality of teacher training. They should focus on the goal of cultivating excellent teachers, specifically develop the training program for male kindergarten teachers according to the requirements of early

childhood education development and curriculum reform, deepen the reform of teacher training mode and curriculum, and strengthen the practical teaching link. At the same time, schools should strengthen education on ideals and beliefs and teacher ethics, enhance the sense of honor, responsibility and mission of preschool boys to engage in the early childhood teaching profession, and motivate them to engage in long-term and lifelong teaching. In addition, schools should establish a tracking and training mechanism to care about students' learning and growth. After the graduation of preschool boys, schools should keep close contact with employers, care about the professional development of male kindergarten teachers in kindergartens, consolidate their professional ideas in time, and provide professional support for boys to engage in long-term and stable kindergarten teaching positions in kindergartens.

## 5. Conclusion

Jinan, as the capital city of the province, has to attract talents for the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, and can attract more excellent male kindergarten teachers to work in Jinan through the introduction of talents. The Jinan government can cooperate with local universities to increase the training of male kindergarten teachers and guide male students who are interested in preschool education to actively apply for the kindergarten teacher program by commissioning universities to train male kindergarten teachers at public expense, so as to improve the overall proportion of male kindergarten teachers in public kindergartens in Jinan within 3-5 years. The specific approach is for Jinan to consider the demand for male kindergarten teachers and kindergarten staffing and job vacancies in the Jinan area, make a forecast of the demand, and apply to the provincial Department of Education for a pilot program to train publicly funded male kindergarten teachers at the municipal government level by commissioning higher education institutions. The Jinan government can establish a targeted training mechanism and entrust the training of male kindergarten teachers to municipal colleges and universities, such as Jinan Early Childhood Teacher Training College. Through the policy inclination, more outstanding high school graduates or junior high school graduates who are good at teaching and enjoy teaching can enter the preschool education program of universities, and the specific enrollment can be carried out according to the principles of voluntary application by students, recommendation by graduation schools, interview and assessment by municipal education authorities, admission by universities on the basis of merit, joint training by schools and localities, and arrangement for use by commissioned units, thus comprehensively promoting the government, universities and kindergartens. The "trinity" of government-school-garden collaboration to train excellent male kindergarten teachers.

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