

# Strategies for Enhancing the Effectiveness of "Competition Promoting Reform" in Preschool Education Majors of Vocational Colleges in the New Era

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**Abstract:** The Preschool Education Professional Skills Competition leads the reform of talent cultivation mode in vocational colleges and has a positive guiding role in cultivating high-quality preschool education talents in vocational colleges. This study starts with exploring the reasons that promote the "competition driven reform" of preschool education majors in vocational colleges, and explains the main problems and their attributions in the current process of promoting "competition driven reform" in preschool education majors in vocational colleges, such as insufficient understanding and recognition, inaccurate educational goals, incomplete course content, and imperfect evaluation indicators. It proposes measures to enhance the effectiveness of "competition driven reform" in preschool education majors in vocational colleges by deepening the understanding of the integrity of competition driven reform, broadening the training standards of preschool education talents, and highlighting the integration of teaching and competition requirements.

**Keywords:** Vocational Colleges; Preschool Education Major; Promote Change through Competition; Practical Strategies

## 1. Introduction

The improvement of the quality of talent cultivation in preschool education majors in vocational colleges has important practical significance for promoting social development in the new era.[1] In recent years, Chinese vocational colleges with preschool education majors have attached great importance to the preschool education professional skills competition, especially regarding participation in national level competitions and winning awards as an important criterion for enhancing the

school's reputation and professional brand influence. Therefore, a large amount of educational resources will be invested in the preparation process for the competition. This is understandable, but some vocational colleges overly focus on the results of competitions and ignore the true meaning of "using competitions to promote change", which deviates from the correct direction of professional development. This study will elaborate in detail on how to promote reform through competition in the preschool education major of vocational colleges in the new era from three aspects: practical significance, main problems, and optimization strategies.

## 2. The Practical Significance of Enhancing the Effectiveness of Promoting Reform through Competitions in Preschool Education Majors in Vocational Colleges

### 2.1 "Skills Competition" Promotes the Improvement of Talent Training Quality in Vocational Colleges

The competition items, basic requirements, and evaluation standards of the skills competition mainly align with the typical work tasks and professional job requirements of kindergarten teachers, reflecting the requirements of professional ethics and abilities [2]. Adhering to the guiding ideology of "adapting to the adjustment of the national industrial structure, demonstrating the positioning and job characteristics of high skilled talent cultivation, guiding the reform of relevant vocational education and teaching, and improving the social recognition of vocational education", from 2016 to 2025, the National Preschool Education Professional Skills Competition Committee dynamically adjusted and systematically optimized the content and form of the competition based on the demand for talents in

the new era. The purpose is to continuously promote the coordinated development of students' theoretical literacy, professional skills, and practical abilities in vocational colleges through the "competition to promote evaluation" and "competition to promote reform" methods. Through a hierarchical and progressive selection mechanism, the demonstration and leading effect drives the positioning of talent cultivation goals, the structural adaptation of the curriculum system, and the education mode of preschool education majors in vocational colleges. Path innovation Reflect and reconstruct from multiple dimensions, including the efficiency output of professional construction. The changes in the rules of national level skill competitions have put forward higher requirements for the training of talents in preschool education majors in vocational colleges, with a greater emphasis on the overall improvement of training quality.

## **2.2 "Job Requirements" Require the Improvement of the Quality of Preschool Education Professionals**

In 2024, there has been a significant change in the content of the national competition for preschool education professional skills. The competition mode has shifted from the previous unified proposition orientation to an independent project generation mode. Participating teams can independently design competition content based on their professional expertise and flexibly select technical equipment. The competition only evaluates the quality of participating results through a multidimensional ability matrix, including core dimensions such as skill level, professional ethics, team collaboration, application value, and innovative creativity. This change reflects the demand for talent cultivation in the field of preschool education in the new era, which aims to cultivate new professional talents with dynamic adaptability, reflective practitioners, collaborative innovation subjects, and other characteristics. At present, vocational colleges have become the main battlefield for talent cultivation in early childhood education in China. However, with the decline in birth rates and the closure of many kindergartens, the employment situation for preschool education professionals at the vocational level is becoming increasingly severe. Therefore, it is necessary to timely connect with the "job demand" of the early childhood education market and carry out reform pilot projects for talent cultivation

models from skill output to literacy integration.

## **2.3 "Objective Facts" Reflect the Lag in the Reform of Preschool Professional Curriculum Teaching**

The content of the Preschool Education Professional Skills Competition reflects not only the demand of social positions, but also the achievements and effectiveness of curriculum and teaching reforms within the school. It requires that the pace of curriculum and teaching reforms in pre school education should closely follow or even exceed the existing needs of job abilities. However, in reality, the quality of talent cultivation in pre school education in vocational colleges is not satisfactory. Currently, there is a trend of increasing openness and thematic focus in skills competitions, which not only expands teachers' autonomy but also emphasizes the degree of restoration of the real teaching situation in kindergartens. This requires teachers to have a deep understanding of rich frontline teaching practice experience and solid professional skills in early childhood education, such as game stories, course stories, teaching and research activities. Vocational colleges need to effectively integrate them into the pre service training stage. However, the reality is that there is still a tendency towards "textbook centeredness" in the current curriculum system. In the current pre service teacher education, there is a significant lack of curriculum transformation of practical knowledge, and teachers have not effectively integrated situational cognition in the kindergarten field into the teaching implementation process.

## **3. Analysis of Problems and Reasons in Promoting "Competition to Promote Reform" in Preschool Education Majors of Vocational Colleges**

### **3.1 Insufficient Understanding and Recognition**

The vocational education skills competition has a dual educational function: it serves as a diagnostic evaluation carrier for the quality of talent cultivation in preschool education, and also constitutes a formative opportunity for the professional development of the teaching staff. Due to some subjective and objective reasons, there are negative phenomena such as goal alienation and inadequate understanding in the current vocational education skills competition

practice. Some vocational colleges' preschool education majors have fallen into the "competition based" mentality, resulting in limited beneficiaries and failing to play the substantive function of promoting reform through competition, and promoting the overall improvement of the quality of preschool education talent cultivation. Specifically, there is a lack of educational radiation effect; The failure to establish a professional development community under the mentorship system and the absence of a mechanism for building a teaching staff team; Failure of achievement transformation mechanism; The iterative optimization of talent cultivation plans without feedback from competition reflection, and the disconnect between curriculum system and competition results; Professional education is becoming increasingly utilitarian, deviating from the fundamental goal of "cultivating virtue and talent", leading to the emergence of "competition for competition" and a serious formalism.

### **3.2 The Educational Goals are not Precise Enough**

The training objectives proposed in the "Teaching Standards for Preschool Education Majors (Higher Vocational Education Majors)" revised by the Ministry of Education in 2025 state that "the professional spirit of loving and dedicating oneself to work and the craftsmanship spirit of striving for excellence, strong employment and entrepreneurship abilities and sustainable development abilities, mastery of professional knowledge and technical skills, and possession of comprehensive vocational qualities and action abilities". However, in the context of the industry where the demand for kindergarten teachers is gradually becoming saturated, the structural contradiction between the single employment channel and the limitations of career development is increasingly evident in the positioning of talent training goals for preschool education in some vocational colleges. At present, there is a diversified demand for vocational positions in the market that are highly compatible with the preschool education profession, such as caregivers, infant care teachers, and early education institution trainers. However, the current talent training program has not yet incorporated these emerging professions into the curriculum system and ability development framework, resulting in a significant mismatch between professional

supply and market demand.

### **3.3 The Course Content is not Systematic Enough**

In 2024, the "Notice of the General Office of the Ministry of Education on Strengthening the Construction of Urban Industry Education Joint Venture" clearly stated that "it is necessary to align vocational standards and job specifications, sort out technical requirements, process flow, typical vocational abilities, etc. in the production process, reconstruct the curriculum system, and reorganize teaching content". It is required that the talent training specifications and curriculum content of vocational colleges should be combined with market demand. At present, although the curriculum system of preschool education majors in vocational colleges can basically meet the fundamental needs of students' professional development, enabling them to initially form a scientific view of children, teachers, and education, and master certain professional theoretical knowledge and practical skills, the synergy between curriculum design and job competence, professional competition literacy, and professional qualification standards is still insufficient. The dynamic adaptability between course objective positioning and industry demand is insufficient [3]. Specifically, there are practical problems such as insufficient alignment between course content and job requirements, and low integration between course teaching and competition ability development.

### **3.4 Insufficient Evaluation Indicators**

Evaluation indicators are the basis for measuring the level and characteristics of vocational colleges, and also an important manifestation of implementing the function of skill competitions to promote evaluation. Although the current evaluation mechanism for preschool education majors in vocational colleges covers basic dimensions such as knowledge mastery, skill level, and professional ethics, there are still certain limitations in indicator setting, and it has not fully incorporated key indicators such as practical application ability, innovative thinking, and creative transformation emphasized in vocational skills competitions. The lack of this evaluation dimension has prevented the formation of a complete feedback loop between the quality evaluation of talent cultivation in preschool education majors in vocational

colleges and the dynamic development needs of the industry, thereby restricting the coordinated promotion of the construction and industrial upgrading of this major.

#### **4. Practical Strategies for Improving the Effectiveness of "Competition Driven Reform" in Preschool Education Majors in Vocational Colleges**

##### **4.1 Increase the Level of Attention and Deepen the Understanding of the Integrity of Promoting Reform through Competition**

The preschool education skills competition has a positive guiding role in the research and development of professional skills training for preschool education professionals in vocational colleges. Therefore, it is necessary to form a scientific understanding of the skills competition and accurately grasp the core essence of "using competition to promote improvement". One is to promote the sharing of high-quality resources. The organizer should achieve real-time interactive live streaming of the entire event process through a digital platform, establish a cross temporal and spatial participation mechanism, and promote immersive cognitive transfer among teachers and students; Participating universities need to establish a hierarchical training system, relying on structured knowledge transfer paths to achieve the diffusion of competition experience paradigms. Secondly, we should attach importance to the conversion of competition resources. Vocational colleges should establish a dynamic talent training program iteration mechanism based on competition feedback, and use systematic attribution analysis to transform the practical knowledge gaps exposed during the preparation process into the basis for revising curriculum standards, achieving a closed-loop quality improvement model reform of "using competitions to promote improvement". The third is to establish a collaborative education mechanism. Vocational colleges should strengthen collaborative cooperation with the organizers of skill competitions at the national, provincial, and municipal levels, accelerate the establishment and improvement of the comprehensive education mechanism of "job course competition certificate" in schools, and promote the transformation of skills competition resources. Thus, "reconstructing curriculum standards, iterating evaluation mechanisms, and

optimizing practical paths"[4].

##### **4.2 Clarify the Training Objectives and Broaden the Training Standards for Preschool Education Talents**

The Preschool Education Professional Education Skills Competition is a tool for evaluating and assessing the teaching quality of vocational colleges [5]. It is a concentrated display of the talent cultivation orientation, structure, path, and evaluation standards of participating colleges and universities. The "Skills Competition" reflects the new requirements of the industry fields involved in the new era for the cultivation standards, professional qualities, operational skills, etc. of the required talents. This requires that the preschool education majors established by vocational colleges should comply with the new requirements of society and the market for preschool education professionals, and re plan and position a qualified "modern early childhood educator" training goal that meets the needs of the new era society and students. That is, to construct a "kindergarten integration" composite talent training paradigm and a "market-oriented" vocational ability transfer model, combined with market job demands, to deeply promote the reform of the talent training mode of preschool education majors, and thus expand the vocational ability training of preschool education majors from a single kindergarten teacher to a "diversified job group of infant care services".

##### **4.3 Integrate Course Content to Highlight the Integration of Teaching and Competition Requirements**

Major is the basic unit of talent cultivation, and curriculum is the core element of talent cultivation [6]. The curriculum system is an important channel for vocational colleges to achieve their talent cultivation goals. When implementing the educational philosophy of "promoting teaching and reform through competition", vocational colleges should conduct a diagnostic evaluation of the existing curriculum system through a systematic competition mechanism, and implement targeted curriculum and teaching reforms accordingly. Scattered and repetitive courses should be systematically integrated to achieve reasonable course proportions, reasonable course arrangement order, and concise course content [7]. Specifically, when vocational colleges construct a diversified curriculum system that

includes professional courses, general education courses, practical teaching courses, and extended courses, they need to closely track the dynamic development of preschool education skills competitions in terms of competition content, evaluation standards, and organizational forms, and organically integrate these competition elements into the optimization process of the curriculum system, in order to highlight the integration of teaching and competition requirements and facilitate the implementation of professional courses.

#### **4.4 Reform Teaching Methods to Promote Diversified Presentation of Situational Teaching**

"Ability based" is the core of vocational education. The Preschool Education Professional Skills Competition has a significant leading role in improving the quality of preschool education talent cultivation in vocational colleges. The "skills competition" is a microcosm of the social workplace, which allows students to experience the pressure from the workplace and work in advance and prepare for adapting to future social life. The social challenges of the kindergarten teacher profession require personnel engaged in this profession to not only possess solid professional skills and good professional ethics, but also strong self-learning ability, innovation ability, coordination and communication ability, and teaching and research reflection ability. Therefore, the daily teaching methods of preschool education majors in vocational colleges should be in line with the practical ability requirements of the position, and promote the reform of the practical teaching system. Efforts should be made to fulfill the original intention of organizing vocational skills competitions, which is to take skills competitions as the guide, fully tap into the subject status of students in the education and teaching process, actively construct a situational teaching mode that integrates "teaching, learning, doing, evaluating, researching, and thinking" by imitating the competition method of skills competitions, and cultivate students' key abilities to analyze and solve problems in the practical field of kindergarten education. As a vocational college, it is necessary to actively build a diversified and deeply integrated talent training system that is characterized by "setting courses based on job positions, connecting students with job positions; setting standards based on

certificates, integrating courses and certificates; promoting learning through competitions, and achieving a win-win situation between courses and competitions" [8].

#### **4.5 Improve Evaluation Criteria and Establish a Practice Oriented Evaluation Index System**

In the assessment and evaluation of students majoring in preschool education, a comprehensive and multidimensional evaluation system should be established [9]. The characteristic of vocational education, which is oriented towards promoting employment and cultivating high-quality and skilled talents, determines that the evaluation of talent cultivation quality in vocational colleges should include social evaluation and internal evaluation [10]. Vocational colleges should take the professional ethics and practical skills of students majoring in preschool education as important assessment indicators for talent cultivation quality evaluation, choose diversified talent cultivation quality evaluation methods, and formulate professional course scoring standards based on the content and standards of the "Preschool Education Professional Skills Competition" assessment evaluation. The evaluation method should combine qualitative and quantitative, process and result. Abandoning the model of "one paper determines the universe", adopting the methods of "replacing exams with competitions" and "credit exchange" as the basis for corresponding course evaluation, in order to mobilize students' enthusiasm and initiative in learning, construct a diverse, multi angle, and all-round evaluation system, achieve deep integration and organic unity of course evaluation and competition evaluation system, and thus promote the suitability reform of curriculum and teaching mode in preschool education majors, and improve the quality of preschool education talent cultivation.

#### **5. Conclusion**

This study provides an innovative practical path for the preschool education major in vocational colleges to implement the concept of "promoting reform through competition". In order to further implement the educational purpose of the Preschool Education Professional Skills Competition and deepen the connotative development of professional construction, vocational colleges need to focus on four aspects

in the future. Firstly, a scientific cognitive framework for sports events should be established to systematically interpret the ability oriented concept contained in the evaluation index system of sports events. Secondly, it is necessary to reconstruct the talent training plan based on the OBE model, and use tools such as Delphi method and job competency matrix to achieve dynamic coupling between professional training objectives and the demand for preschool education talents in the new era. Once again, a teaching implementation system that integrates competition and education should be established, using diverse teaching methods such as project-based learning and situational simulation, and relying on school enterprise cooperation platforms to strengthen students' professional identity. Finally, it is necessary to establish a developmental evaluation mechanism to achieve synergy and mutual construction between formative evaluation of courses and summative evaluation of competitions. These reform paths not only enrich the research dimensions of comprehensive education in vocational education through job courses, competitions, and certificates in theory, but also provide feasible implementation plans for the high-quality development of preschool education majors in vocational colleges in practice.

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