



# Research on the Talent Cultivation Path for Preschool Education Majors in Vocational Undergraduate Education under the Background of Integrated Childcare and Preschool Education

Jinshan Wu<sup>1</sup>, Sukyoung Cho<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hainan Vocational University of Science and Technology, Haikou 571126, Hainan, China

<sup>2</sup> Sehan University, Seoul, Korea

---

**Abstract:** The integration of childcare and preschool education is a key direction in the current reform of preschool education. Under the background of policy and practical transformation, the talent cultivation for preschool education majors in vocational undergraduate education faces new challenges. When implementing the concept of integrated childcare and preschool education, universities still encounter issues such as insufficient goal setting, a curriculum system lacking the support of integration concepts, and a mismatch between practical teaching and teacher allocation. Based on the context of integrated childcare and preschool education, it is necessary to start with the positioning of integrated talent cultivation, improve the dual orientation of training objectives; strengthen disciplinary integration to construct a curriculum system that aligns with the core competencies required for integrated teaching staff; and deepen the reform of practical education to optimize the cultivation process, thereby exploring effective paths for talent cultivation in vocational undergraduate preschool education.

**Keywords:** integrated childcare and preschool education; vocational undergraduate; preschool education major; talent cultivation

---

## 1. Integrated Childcare and Preschool Education

In the 1990s, countries such as the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Finland took the lead in promoting the reform of integrated childcare and preschool education, gradually exploring coordinated development paths for early childhood education and care[1]. China's focus on this integration started relatively early. In 1997, the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission first proposed the concept of "integrated childcare and preschool education." Ding Yun (1999) pointed out that this integration encompasses two levels: management integration and education integration, with education integration being the core and key to achieving coordinated development between childcare and preschool education. The essence of integration lies in promoting articulation and coordination between different educational stages in terms of philosophy, goals, and content, as well as fostering the joint participation and cooperation of various educational stakeholders through internal and external integration. Internally, it requires the unification and integration of the educational philosophies and training objectives of the childcare (0-3 years) and preschool (3-6 years) stages. Externally, it emphasizes consistency and cooperation in educational philosophy and practice between childcare/preschool institutions, families, communities, and other social units. Through this holistic design, integrated childcare and preschool education achieves the optimal allocation and rational utilization of educational resources, effectively promoting the comprehensive development of children aged 0-6.

## 2. Current Status of Talent Cultivation for Vocational Undergraduate Preschool Education Majors under the Background of Integrated Childcare and Preschool Education

### 2.1 Insufficient Response of Talent Cultivation Objectives to the Demand for Childcare Teachers

Under the background of integration, preschool education teachers are required to serve the care and education of both 0-3 and 3-6 year-old children. However, due to long-term institutional separation, childcare and preschool services in China have been undertaken by kindergartens and nurseries respectively, leading to a division in teacher types and professional standards[2]. With the improvement of the public service system for preschool education, the supply of teachers for 3-6 year-olds has become relatively stable, but the shortage of teachers for 0-3 year-olds remains severe. Under new population policies and social demands, the development of integrated childcare and preschool education requires higher levels of compound and job-ready professionals. However, vocational undergraduate preschool education programs have not yet established a

comprehensive training system for 0-3 year-old childcare teachers, and the cultivation objectives lack systematic attention to teachers for this age group. This makes the current talent cultivation objectives unable to effectively respond to the demand for childcare teachers, hindering the in-depth advancement of integrated talent cultivation.

## **2.2 Curriculum System Lacks Internal Conceptual Support for Integration**

The integration places systematic demands on curriculum reform for vocational undergraduate preschool education. Currently, the curriculum system in universities primarily focuses on education for 3-6 year-olds in kindergartens. The training plans and course content mostly serve kindergarten needs, while courses on the care and education of 0-3 year-olds are relatively scarce, lacking overall attention to the development of children aged 0-6. This results in students having insufficient understanding of the physical and mental development, education, and care of 0-3 year-olds, lacking necessary professional competencies, and struggling to meet the demands of childcare positions. Although some universities have integrated knowledge related to infant and toddler education into their course content, overall curriculum structure adjustments are minimal. Practical teaching still mainly focuses on activity design in the five major areas of kindergarten education, neglecting the cultivation of abilities in observing, analyzing, and guiding infants and toddlers[3]. Therefore, the existing curriculum system remains at the stage of formal integration, lacking systematic support from the concept of integrated childcare and preschool education.

## **2.3 Matching Degree between Practical Teaching Conditions and Teacher Allocation Needs Improvement**

The combination of theory and practice is the foundation for cultivating teachers for integrated childcare and preschool education. However, there are still deficiencies in the construction of practical teaching systems for preschool education majors in universities. Practical teaching components targeting 0-3 year-olds are weak. The development of on-campus and off-campus training bases lags behind, and cooperation with childcare institutions, community childcare centers, etc., is insufficient, making it difficult to effectively support the cultivation of students' practical operational skills. In terms of teacher allocation, the knowledge structure and teaching abilities of preschool education teachers also need further enhancement. Since education for 0-6 year-olds involves multiple disciplines, it requires collaboration among teachers from different fields. However, current inter-disciplinary collaboration is inadequate; courses and teachers are not effectively integrated, and there is a lack of stable collaborative education mechanisms, which affects the quality of talent cultivation for integrated childcare and preschool education.

# **3. Exploration of Talent Cultivation Paths for Vocational Undergraduate Preschool Education Majors under the Background of Integrated Childcare and Preschool Education**

## **3.1 Establish and Implement Training Objectives for Integrated Childcare and Preschool Education Teachers**

The scientific positioning of training objectives is the logical starting point for constructing a talent cultivation system. Vocational undergraduate universities can incorporate content related to infant and toddler care and education into the existing curriculum system, such as courses on infant diet and nutrition, daily disease prevention, daily care, and parenting. Simultaneously, by establishing specializations in early childhood education or child care, they can gradually improve the talent cultivation system for integrated childcare and preschool education, ensuring the articulation and integration of preschool and childcare education. In addition, universities should strengthen top-level design and plan the talent cultivation objective system comprehensively. Specifically, they should combine the actual needs of integration, comprehensively analyze the different needs of children aged 0-6, and form a systematic set of training objectives and curriculum systems to meet the social demand for compound childcare and preschool teachers. By optimizing course offerings, strengthening disciplinary integration, and improving practical teaching, the overall quality of teachers can be enhanced, providing high-quality educational support for the development of integrated childcare and preschool education. Ultimately, the talent cultivation for vocational undergraduate preschool education majors will better align with the requirements of integration, promoting the comprehensive development of children aged 0-6.

## **3.2 Integrate and Optimize the Cultivation Content for Integrated Childcare and Preschool Education Teachers**

Cultivation content is the key vehicle for achieving training objectives. Following the training objectives for integrated

teachers, reconstruct the pre-service teacher training curriculum system. Curriculum design should integrate with disciplines such as pediatrics and nursing, adjusting the course system for 0-6 year-old child education. Utilize a structure combining basic courses, core courses, and electives to strengthen natural science education and solidify the disciplinary foundation[4]. It is essential to deeply understand the internal logic of disciplinary knowledge and integrate course content. This can be achieved by increasing theoretical knowledge and practical skills related to infant and toddler development and education to optimize the curriculum content for preschool education majors. Course design should help students compare the similarities and differences in the physical and mental developmental characteristics and care needs of infants/toddlers and children of different age groups, first identifying commonalities, and then conducting targeted teaching based on the characteristics of each stage. At the same time, schools can collaborate with external enterprises to jointly develop teaching materials for integrated childcare and preschool education that are closely aligned with actual job positions and parenting knowledge, integrating course content with practical application scenarios. This approach helps to integrate the curriculum system, improve education quality, and enhance students' practical abilities.

### 3.3 Innovate and Enhance the Cultivation Methods for Integrated Childcare and Preschool Education Teachers

Practical education is a crucial link in cultivating high-quality integrated teachers. First, build a teaching community to promote interdisciplinary collaboration. Interdisciplinary teaching should be based on real-world situations, guiding students to conduct project exploration and practical innovation through thematic activities, thereby combining professional knowledge with practical operational skills[5]. Furthermore, efforts should be made to build a "dual-qualified" teaching faculty, continuously enhancing teachers' comprehensive ability to integrate theoretical teaching with practical guidance. Vocational undergraduate universities should encourage preschool education teachers to obtain relevant professional qualifications and participate in practical work at childcare institutions and enterprises. Simultaneously, through teacher mutual-training mechanisms, invite external professionals or experts in infant medicine to give lectures on campus, achieving close integration of theory and practice, and cultivating "dual-qualified" talents. Finally, establish a comprehensive practical education platform and optimize on-campus training room facilities. Under the guidance of the integration concept, add facilities and equipment for the care of 0-3 year-olds to support teacher cultivation. Lastly, focus on off-campus practice bases as the core to create authentic work scenarios and improve students' practical abilities. By cooperating with high-quality early education institutions, maternal and child health hospitals, and other units to jointly develop training plans, students' practical experience can be enriched, and their operational skills enhanced.

## 4. Conclusion

The advancement of integrated childcare and preschool education brings new opportunities and challenges for talent cultivation in preschool education. When implementing the integration concept, universities need to address existing issues in curriculum design and teacher allocation by clarifying training objectives, optimizing the curriculum system, and deepening practical education. By strengthening disciplinary integration and practical teaching, a cultivation model that meets the needs of integrated childcare and preschool education can gradually be formed, laying the foundation for high-quality teacher cultivation and promoting the comprehensive development of preschool education.

## References

---

- [1] Xu Shumin, Chen Yuhua. A Review of Research on "Integrated Childcare and Preschool Education" in China in the Past Two Decades — Based on an Analysis of Journal Articles from CNKI (2000-2021) [J]. *Preschool Education*, 2021(21):62-64.
- [2] Fan Xin, Li Minyi, Ye Pin. International Comparison of Governance Models for Childcare and Preschool Services and China's Path Selection [J]. *Comparative Education Review*, 2021(1):104-112.
- [3] Liu Guoyan, Zhan Wenqi, Ma Sisi, et al. International Dimensions and Local Reflections on "Integrated Childcare and Preschool Education" in Early Childhood Education [J]. *Studies in Preschool Education*, 2022(4):15-27.
- [4] Ju Hongxia. Research on the Service Path for Integrated Childcare and Preschool Education in the New Era [J]. *Journal of Social Science of Jiamusi University*, 2025, 43(1):197-200.
- [5] Li Hongxiu, Cui Yaxue. Element Analysis, Problem Examination, and Optimization Path of Interdisciplinary Teaching [J]. *Curriculum, Teaching Material and Method*, 2023(1):74-81.